

Welcome to this particular seventh-day Sabbath, brethren.

One of the greatest mysteries of life is understood by God's people. We understand the purpose of life, which is one of the greatest mysteries that mankind does not know and *cannot* know because to know this requires God's holy spirit. We often underestimate the knowledge and the understanding that we have been given from God. To know why we are called, to know what our life is about, to know we must choose to change our thinking, these are incredible things. To be called, to know why we're called, and to know that we have to change our thinking, this is one of the greatest gifts that has ever been given to us. But we underestimate this. The knowledge and understanding that we have about the fact that we must change our thinking is part of an incredible gift from God. The world has *no knowledge* of this incredible gift. They don't understand that they have to change their thinking. It is a mystery of God that they cannot come to see or understand of and by themselves. Yet, we have this knowledge. We have this understanding. What an incredible gift it actually is!

The purpose of this sermon is to explore what it means to change our thinking. So the title of this sermon is *Everybody Must Change*, and this will be *Part 1*.

Now, I wanted just to quickly go over how this particular sermon came about and the fact that it became more and more exciting for me personally because of the process of what happened. Normally with a sermon what happens is that something will come into my mind as far as a topic or an idea or a thought that is from God's word. Now, sometimes those thoughts can be from reading the book, *2008-God's Final Witness*, that a particular word may come to mind or a particular phrase may come to mind. Or sometimes reading back over the old posts, a particular topic may come into my mind, or a particular word, again, or a phrase may and that may be the start of a thought process that will lead me into God's word and then I set out to study it.

Well, this particular word, "everyone must change," or this particular phrase, "everybody must change," came into my mind and I began to realize that this was an important topic. And so I was quite excited by it. And as I went into this particular topic I had originally planned that it was only going to be one sermon about this very process. And as I went into it more and as I began to study various scriptures about it I realized that this is going to be more than just one sermon. This is probably going to be two, possibly three; it all depends how things go.

Well, it didn't take long to realize that mankind didn't understand the purpose of life or *why* they must change and they don't understand this whole process of change, yet we've been called to change this change of thinking. And as I went into the topic more and more what I discovered was *what it is* that we have to change. We have to change our thinking! But in what ways? And what is it that we have to change? *How* is it that we're going to change our thinking about matters? *Then* it started to grow and

grow and grow. So it became quite exciting for me because as I went into all the various topics - and there are *hundreds* of topics that we could go into (we may not go into as many as that), but there are hundreds of topics where we have to come to see that our thinking (the way we think about a matter) must change. We *cannot* remain in the way of thinking that we had before our calling. We have to *change* the way we think.

We'll begin this particular sermon series with this *Part 1* and we'll see how far we go. And we may get *Part 2* and we will see what happens from that point.

There are, literally, hundreds and hundreds of different topics! Now, much of it is on the Church website, but there are some things that go on in society that have influenced our thinking that may not be identified within a member of the Body of Christ, that we are maintaining or retaining a particular way of thinking. But it isn't God's way of thinking on a matter! And we may have been influenced without even knowing it!

Now, this can apply to many, many areas in life, because we live our lives, until called, with a particular mindset, with a particular way of thinking. Now, much of that thinking is from our education system or the way we were educated, and a lot of it comes from within our family, and then the rest of it is covered by the media and also TV and just general topics or sways of Satan's spirit that affects or infects the world. And therefore, we can take on attitudes without even realizing that these attitudes are *not* what God thinks and it's *not* the way that God approaches a matter. So, hopefully through this sermon series we'll get into some of those areas that we may not even be fully aware of within our own thinking.

So *what is it* that God wants us to do? God wants us to change our thinking. Now, this is a matter of conversion (change) because we were created a particular way, from that point, to enter Elohim, for the end product that God has designed, which is a family, a spiritual family, a family of spirit beings in Elohim. Everyone must change the way they think! Everybody! There is no one that is going to enter into the family of God unless they go through this process that we have started, which is changing the way we think. So the purpose of the sermon is to explore all these various changes that must take place within our mind.

Now, as we go into this sermon it's hard to relay to somebody how exciting it is for me as an individual, because as I go through it I get quite excited. In actual fact, I often want to pre-record or get the recording done as soon as possible because I'm so excited about the topic, but I've also learned that that's not necessarily the best way. It's best to take my time and go into these topics in more detail, and therefore, to go through them so that I understand them more on a spiritual level and I *believe* that God is *giving* these topics. Well, I found it was very exciting, because as it went on and on (and it took about a week or two to go through these various things), that more and more was given in the sense of what needed to be said or what *could* be said with regards to this need for everybody to change the way they think. Then I realized there was a lot within me that needs to change to change the way I think. Then I began to reflect on the things that have changed within me personally, things that I have had to change, the way I thought about various matters. And, God willing, we will get to some of those various topics.

So we'll start today by just confirming something that mankind does not understand and mankind doesn't know, but we know. So there's no new scriptures here, brethren, this is just about going into a very topic, a *reality check* within ourselves. Now, most people will not understand this, but God's people, someone that has God's holy spirit, will actually understand this sermon and the sermon series, because this is what has taken place or what *is* taking place within their life, within their thinking - this need to change - and they're actually undertaking this change and it's all done through the power of God's holy spirit.

So let's start with Isaiah 55:8. Now, this is a well known scripture within God's Church, and there's something that we understand but mankind *can't*. But we can. And we're going to go through Isaiah 55:8 for the very purpose of establishing some base facts, to almost like a reality check, to realize where we are starting or where we have started from. Because many in God's Church have been around for many and many a year and they understand these scriptures and we can recite them very easily. And we may think we understand them. Well, that's fantastic if God has given us that knowledge and thought process to "see" and understand these scriptures, but there's always more. There's always time to stand still and to look back and realize where we started from or when we started (a long time ago) and now where we're at and do the comparison to the way we *did* think to the way we *do* think. Or, possibly during this sermon series we may even get to the point where we will see we *still need* to change the way we think. Because everyone has to change. Everyone has to change the way they think before they can enter the Kingdom of God, God's family, to enter Elohim.

Isaiah 55:8—Now, this is God speaking and it's in relation to the way a man thinks versus the way that God thinks. Because this is the comparison. This is where we came from and this is where everyone in the world is going to have to start from, and then they're going to have to change the way they think for them to be able to enter Elohim. During the 1,000 years, this very process of changing of thinking, that's what it's about. And the last Hundred-years where there's millions and millions of people, billions of people, they're going to go through this very same process that we have undertaken, which is changing the way they think. Now, there's a lot of *basic* things they're going to have to do, but for us, as we go longer in God's Church, there's more *complex, more detailed* things we're going to have to look at within ourselves.

Verse 8—For My (God's) thoughts are not your thoughts. So God's thinking is not the same as our thinking. This is what this is saying. There *is* no comparison between the way God thinks and the way man thinks. There is *none!* One is white and the other is black, being man's thinking. It's in darkness, really, because it doesn't have the power to think like God. Now, it's only through the power of God's holy spirit that we can take on the mind of God. Now, this is what happens when somebody is called into the Body of Christ, the Church of God, they begin this process of changing the way they think. Now, because of that mankind will reject them!

Now, we've all had this experience, or the majority of us have, anyway. Not everybody, necessarily, instantly gets this. But as we go longer and longer in God's Church this is what takes place. Now, what is happening, really, when somebody rejects us, when somebody doesn't like the way we think anymore,

well, this is the very process, because God's thinking is being developed within our thinking. Because we started off in this darkness (the black) and we're moving towards the light (the white), God's thinking. "For My thinking," the righteousness of God's thinking, the *correct* way of thinking, the *pure* way of thinking, the *right* way of thinking, that thinking that God has is not placed within mankind. Mankind is born with a *natural* carnal mind, and that natural carnal mind, with its motives and intent, are *all* selfish. Every single thought is based on selfishness! Now, mankind doesn't know that. Mankind doesn't *understand* his own thinking. He can't! It's not built within him to understand it. It requires God's holy spirit for a person to be able to think like God, because it's God's thinking placed in the mind of man.

So if we stand back and look at this, God's thinking, the way of righteousness, purity, and right motive and intent all comes from God. Then we have *our* thinking, which is *our* motive and intent is self-satisfaction or selfishness. So they're poles apart. One is giving and righteous. The other one is taking (darkness) based on sin, based on inward thinking, selfishness. So we see in the world that someone may be seen to be doing good, but it's a human good, because deep down the person is actually acting *selfishly*. Now, they don't see it, they don't understand it, and they may go out and work for charities or do what would be considered "good deeds" towards others or towards animals or towards the planet (whatever it may be), towards a husband or to a wife, or toward a child, *but* deep down, the inner intent, the inner motive within the person - they can't see it, they can't recognize it - is one of getting back to self. It's based on selfishness, but they can't see it and they don't understand it, that that act of doing good is actually a self-satisfaction. Now, it's stroking something. Normally it's to do with the pride within the human life.

So this is the change. We have to move *away* from this intent of selfishness to allow God's intent of righteousness to live and dwell in us. So verse 8 is saying that, "My thoughts," God's thinking, "are *not* human thinking." They are poles apart. They have *nothing* in common! They have absolutely nothing! They cannot be connected; they are just so far apart. **Nor are your ways**, the ways of man, the way man thinks, the way man operates, his intent, his motive, **My (God's) ways**. That's not how God *is*! This is not how God *thinks*. It's not how God *lives*. And it's not God's *motives* or intent, **says the Eternal**. So they are far apart. They cannot be joined. One is selfish and carnal, the other one is spiritual and giving. It's based on love and righteousness.

Now, *this* scripture alone tells us *everything* about this need to change. Everybody must change. Everyone's thinking must change from their own way. Their own way, their own motives, their own intents must change to be God's ways, God's thinking, God's motives, and God's intent. Thoughts and actions are joined together. So God's thinking and actions are different and they cannot be matched to man's ways of thinking and actions. Well, this is the change that has to take place. We understand that this process cannot take place unless God's holy spirit is involved. And that's what a calling's about, God identifies whom He wishes to call. He desires to have a relationship with them. He desires that they start this process of changing the way they think, changing their motives, changing their intent.

Now, that's what's happened to us. We have been called to change our thinking, and we have to change before we can enter Elohim. No one with a natural carnal mind can enter the family of God. Only somebody that has had a calling and a conversion, a transformation of the way they think about *everything* in life, can enter Elohim, but it must be powered by God's holy spirit. Mankind, of and by himself, *cannot* change the way of thinking to think like God. He *cannot* think like God on a matter. Now, he may match up some rules and conditions that God may have, or commandments God has, like, "Thou shall not kill," and he'll introduce those, but it is *not* powered by God's holy spirit. It's actually, underneath, a *selfish* motive that's driving it, or it suits his society or it suits him individually to have that thought.

Now, we're going to go into a lot of these things where God declares one thing and man declares another, and we're going to look at those to see where we are at the moment, where *we* need to change our thinking so that we are thinking like God, that our motive and our *intent* is correct, that it's based on love for *all*, not just one or two, not just our own family.

Verse 9—For as the heavens are higher than the earth... Well, we can stop and look at that, what we understand, that the heavens are up there. When we look at the stars, how far they are, they're billions of light-years. Now, our minds can't grasp all of this, but billions of light years. We live eighty years, seventy, eighty years on average, It's nothing compared to the length of time it is for light to travel from planets that are light-years away. It's incredible! We have no comprehension of this distance. But for God, "as the heavens are higher than the earth," which is just incredible distance, **so are My (God's) ways higher than your ways.** Now, this really is saying, "You can't compare them!" It's impossible to compare them. Here is the earth, and there is, billions of light years away, stars and planets. Well, how can we compare them? We can't! Well, God is saying, well, the way He is, His thinking and His ways, you can't compare them. They're not comparable. And He goes on and says, **and My thoughts, God's way of thinking, than your thoughts.** They cannot be compared!

Now, the difference is one is thinking love and outgoing concern, and the other one is selfishness and it's intent is selfish. So we have to change what goes on within our thinking. So over a lifetime the purpose of a calling, why we are in the Body of Christ at this time, is that we have to change the way we think. And for anyone to enter Elohim, everybody must change the way they think.

Now, aren't we blessed, brethren? Aren't we blessed to have actually been called, to have been given the opportunity *now* to start to change the way we think. And as we continue to change the way we think, we understand the outcome of that because we don't have a relationship with the world. We can't! Because God has no way of thinking within that world. It's all selfishness, it's all carnal, it's all riddled with sin, so God's not in the world. God is in His people. God is in His Church. Therefore, "like the heavens are higher than the earth," what's going to happen? A great distance exists! So within our relationships there's going to be a great *distance* because *our* thoughts are changing. We are changing the way we think. And as we change the way we think we're going to have this distance develop between the two, between the natural, selfish, carnal mind of mankind to God's way of thinking. And as we take on

more of God's spirit, as we take on more of God's thinking, as we take on more of God's ways that distance is going to continue to go further and further and further and *further* apart. *Then* we can understand more and more verse 8, "For My thoughts," for God's thoughts, "are *not* your thoughts," they're not the way *we were*. We are changing to think like God. Therefore, what's going to happen? We're going to draw apart. We're going to draw away. We're going to be taken away from the way man thinks by nature. And therefore, it's very hard to have a relationship when, "Two can't walk together unless they agree." Guess what? Members of the Body of Christ, those that are converting, those that are transforming their thinking, those that are changing their thinking, *cannot walk* together with someone who thinks differently. "Two cannot walk together unless they agree." We do not agree with the carnal mind. We do not agree with the natural carnal mind of mankind. We do not agree with selfishness. We're being taken *out* of that selfishness, "Come *out* of her, My people." And that's exactly what's happening! We are coming out from a way of thinking.

Now, as we go into this sermon I got really excited because I started to see all of the things that have taken place within me personally that I think differently. Now, we understand from God's apostle what that really means. Repentance means to think differently. What's thinking differently? Thinking differently is fulfilling verse 9, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than yours, and My thoughts than your thoughts." We are being separated from the natural carnal mind. And by the power of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us we are now beginning to think like God in a limited way. And I must add, *in a limited way*, because we are limited because of what we are. But this is God's purpose, this is God's plan, that we have to change the way we think, and He will do it in us. This is the work of God within us, within those He has called into a relationship with Him, into a relationship with the Body (one another). It is the *transformation* of the mind, this thinking. And as we start to change, as we start to transform our thinking to be more like God (because it's *powered* by God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us), we are going to be taken away from mankind's thinking.

Now, this is incredible! We may be quite surprised as we go through this sermon series how many things there are that we have changed the way we think. And I found it so motivating and so encouraging! And we're going to look at the reasons *why* it is that way. I hope you're as excited as I am and I hope you get as much out of this sermon series as I have, to this point in time.

Jeremiah 10:23—O Lord, I know the way of man *is* not in himself. So God is saying here through Jeremiah that, "the way of man," man's thinking, "is not in himself." What it's really saying is mankind (man, humans) do not know or does not know his purpose. He doesn't know who he really is. Mankind cannot see his own motives and intent. Now, mankind will have a motive and intent behind every single thing they do, and it's reflected in what he does as a work, what titles he may put on his business card (some are necessary, some aren't necessary), other things, the way he dresses, the movies that he makes, the TV, the music. It's in everything! God is saying here, "I know," this is Jeremiah saying, "that the way of man," the way that man thinks, the way that man operates, "is not in himself." He can't actually understand himself and he does not know his purpose for life.

Now, this is the great mystery that I was talking about in the beginning. How blessed are we, brethren, that we understand why we're on this planet? How blessed are we that we know about a natural carnal mind? How blessed are we that we know about the spirit in man? Now, just talking about these things to anyone else, they think we're crazy. Well, this is a great blessing. For somebody to come up and say, "Wayne, I think you're crazy! I think you're a religious *nut!*" That concerns and supports what I know, that I am changing, that I am transforming, that I am in this process of changing my thinking powered by God's holy spirit, because it's the only way that it can be done. To be in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, is a great blessing! It's a great honor that God has called me to separate myself from the world, to come out from the world! Same for you, brethren! How great it is! How exciting is this? So that if anyone reviles us because of our beliefs, this is a time to rejoice. If we remember back when the disciples were taken to prison and they were locked up, and they came out rejoicing later on because they'd been beaten for Christ. They get beaten and were told not to go and talk about God's way of life, not talk about Jesus Christ in particular, and they were beaten and they were let go, and they came out rejoicing! They were suffering for God's purpose in life, which is the development of the way they thought. They were thinking differently than the Romans! They thought differently than the Jews and they got into a lot of trouble for it. And yet, they rejoiced.

Well, we're the same, brethren. If we're then persecuted because of righteousness—now, what does that really mean— "to be persecuted for righteousness' sake"? Well, what is righteousness? It's God's *thinking*. Righteousness is God's thinking within a person. God is righteous because God thinks a particular way. We're not righteous, of and by our self, with the natural carnal mind. So, if we're persecuted, if we're put down, if we're hated *because* of righteousness, because of the way we think (which is the thinking of God dwelling in us) we should rejoice because we're being persecuted for this transformation that's taking place. We're *changing* the way we think powered by God's holy spirit. We're taking on the mind of God. We are persecuted for it within family, with husband or with wife or with children, or with relatives, or the world in general, the workplace, no matter where it is we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, what a joy! What a rejoicing! Because now it's confirming, this is the *evidence* being provided that we are of God, that we're *fulfilling* God's will in us. What's God's will in us? God's will in us is that we transform the way we think. Because, remember, we were looking at Isaiah when it says, "My ways aren't your ways." God's ways, God's thinking is *not* our way of thinking, *but* once we're called and we start to move to the way God thinks (by the power of God's holy spirit), hey, let's rejoice, brethren.

So *if* we are persecuted because we are part of the Body of Christ, if we *are* persecuted because we think differently, we should rejoice! I know it's uncomfortable, and I realize it's uncomfortable and it's not a nice thing to go through. Well, what's that all about? Well, there's an element of selfishness in suffering because often we look at things the *wrong way*, where, really, when we are suffering, when we are being persecuted, there *should* be an element of rejoicing. Now, why is it that we wouldn't rejoice in suffering for righteousness? Because we've forgotten what it's all about! We've forgotten this very principle, everybody must change the way they think. Now, if we get into an environment where it is difficult physically, or it's difficult within a relationship, or we're being persecuted, the most important thing that we can do is to stand back and just look at what is happening really. We are members of the

Body of Christ. We were called into the Body of Christ - not because it's going to be easy - because it's going to be *difficult*, because we're going *to put to death selfishness*. We're going to get rid of *selfishness*! That's the key! So when there's pain, guess what's happening? We're getting rid of selfishness. Now, if there's no pain we're probably not getting rid of selfishness. But self fights! Self doesn't want to change. Self is right in its own eyes. That's what God says. God says that man doesn't understand who he is, doesn't know his motives and intents. Well, God's not a liar, so we don't understand why we're even doing what we're doing.

Well, with a calling we come to see what we're doing and why we're doing it. So the important part now is that if we are being persecuted, if family is turning against us, if society is turning against us, stand back and look at the reality of what *God* says about it. God says we're being persecuted because of *righteousness*, because we're *changing* the way we think. Righteousness is God's thinking. We're now taking on God's thinking, so guess what? We're going to suffer. We're going to be persecuted. We're going to be isolated. Because we're coming out of the world, because we're changing the way we think. How incredible is God?! How incredible is this calling?! How incredible is this calling that we're changing the way we think? We do things now for a different reason. We do things now for a different reason. We do it because we're taking on the very mind of God. We do it because we have God's thinking in us. Our intent, our motive is to benefit others, not to benefit self. And that's the big transformation that's taking place. It won't be recognized by others. It can't! They don't have God's spirit. So will we get persecuted? Yes, guaranteed. Will we suffer? Yes, guaranteed. *But* within all of that we can stand back and say: How incredible it is that I as an individual (as you as an individual), that we have been called by the creator of the universe, where He has created planets that are *billions* of light years away, and yet He is working with you, as an individual, with me, as an individual. What's going on? Our thinking is being changed. We are changing our thinking, and it's God that's doing it because it's done by God's great power, by His holy spirit. It's *transforming* our mind. We're thinking differently! And therefore, if we're thinking differently, we are on the path of salvation, as we've covered before in another sermon. We are now exercising self-control. Why? Because it's God. God is *powering* this to give us the ability to choose to change.

So as we choose to change we should rejoice in it. Will it be easy? No. Are we going to suffer? Yes. Are there going to be trials? Yes. Is it probably going to get worse? Yes. Is it going to be easy till the day we die? No, it's probably going to be very difficult. But the outcome, the eye has to be kept on the goal, the purpose of what this is all about. The purpose of this is to change the way we think. And as we change the way we think, we're going to be less accepted by society because we don't think like them and we're going to be in trouble, there's going to be difficult situations come up. But as we change we know the outcome, the reward, and it's given from God as a gift that lasts *forever*! It's for *eternity*! Our minds can't even grasp this. We're never going to sin again. We're never going to die. We're not going to feel pain. This life is short - seventy, eighty years at best, some people get to ninety, and in old age they know it's suffering. It's not always a good thing to get old. It's probably better to die earlier because you don't have to suffer that pain. But we're in God's hands, and as we change, as we start to see more of ourselves we can be changed to spirit at some point in time. How incredible is that?!

Now, as we continue with our calling, as we *begin* to come out of the world, and as we continue to come out of the world we see one thing, **verse 24—O Lord, Oh Eternal, correct me...** What's this correction about? This is about correcting the way we think! This is about a way of thinking. ...**but with justice.** We want God's mercy and justice in this because we want to have our thinking changed (we desire it), but we want it done with mercy because we're not worthy of anything. We have this natural carnal mind. We know and understand that we have earned the death penalty (and we do it every day, we earn the death penalty), but it has been covered by Jesus Christ through Passover. Well, we want our thinking corrected. Now, if we desire to have our thinking corrected all the time, ongoing through the rest of our life, we will be in a relationship with God. It's the moment we don't want to be corrected anymore we're in big trouble. We're in trouble! Because our life is a life of correction. We have to have the way we think corrected. Now, if we don't like change, if we resist change, if we fight change, we're also going to have difficulty in life because we have to change! Everyone has to change before they can enter Elohim. So we have to change, brethren. From the day we are called to the day we die, we have to be on this path of changing, so, "O LORD, correct me, *but* with justice (but with mercy)." "God show me mercy. Do it gently. Show me a better way to think, but do it in Your loving kindness." Now, God will do it through the power of His holy spirit.

Not in Your anger. So, because we sin we need to be corrected, but we don't want God to do it in anger, because what are we? We are nothing. God is almighty and all-powerful and we have no power...no power. The only power we have is power from God. God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us *is* power! It's the power to think like God. ...**lest You bring me to nothing.** When we have our thinking changed (and as we go through this sermon series where we look at the things we have already changed and possibly things we still *need* to change within our thinking), we ask God to do it in mercy, to do it in a loving way, in a kind way towards us because we see the need we have to change. We understand we need to change. That's our life.

And although we think we know a lot of things, we know *nothing* compared to God. And although we think we have right motives, we don't. We often have selfishness and pride driving *all* the things we do. We say words to others that later on (I know I've done this), that later on gone away and thought, "You know, I should not have said it that way because they may have misunderstood it." Now, I'm referring to people in God's Church, but also people in the world, where, with a particular sense of humor that sometimes that I say things that I shouldn't, but I have come to see that I need to be more on guard. I need to correct the way that I think. Now, this sermon in particular has brought out more for me about the way that I think about many a matter, and I have been corrected along the way by God through His ministry, through an apostle. I've been corrected in lots of things in the way that I *think* about things. And I still don't have it right, and I don't believe I'm going to have it right to the day that I die, but the important thing is that we have this attitude that's reflected in here in Jeremiah 10:24, "Oh LORD, correct me (change my thinking), *but* with mercy."

So to change our thinking we need God's holy spirit and we want God to do it in the way that He *is*, which is love. We want God to do it in love, which He is, so there is a guarantee here that He is going to work

with His children, begotten sons of God, and He is going to do it in love and mercy. But, because we're all different, all children are different, sometimes harder discipline has to be applied to a person because of their pride or their insolence, which happens within all of us. We all have pride to different degree in different things. We all have different motives and intents that are revealed at different times. So God has to work with us in patience. Sometimes it can be correction through a sermon. Sometimes it can be correction through thinking - that we can be doing our study and then all of a sudden we see something and we "see" it. Or it can be because of an experience or two relationships and there can be something go wrong and then all of a sudden God's spirit will be given to us where we say, "Oh boy, that wasn't right. I was wrong in that. I need to correct it. I need to change the way that I think." Or it can get to the point where the ministry have to intervene for the purpose of correction.

Now, when the ministry intervenes into a person's life, no matter what it is, it's God correcting them. Now, this is a difficult thing for humans to understand. It's even difficult for people in the Body of *Christ* to often understand or to see. Now, whether it's raising up an elder or changing the structure of leadership or removing an elder, *all of those things*, if they are not seen as coming from God, we have a problem within our thinking. We have a *big* problem within our thinking. Because what we're really saying is, "This is *not* God's Church." That's what we're saying. Because since this is God's Church and Jesus Christ is the head of the Church and Jesus Christ is inspiring the change - coming from God the Father through Jesus Christ to an apostle - if these things take place and we don't see that it's God doing it, "O God, correct me, but with mercy (but with justice)," if we don't understand that and don't "see" it, there's something wrong in our thinking. And therefore, what's going to be the consequence? We're going to be slipping back and using *human reasoning*. We're using the natural carnal mind of selfishness so our thoughts are going to be about the impact on self.

So if there is any hurt feelings in any situation where the ministry intervenes and does something within the structure of the Church and we have *feelings* about it that aren't correct, that aren't 100% in line with God's thinking (because this is God's thinking being enacted or enacted in the Church), we have a problem. We have a problem with not changing the way we think. We're thinking of *self*, the impact on *self*. These things, brethren, we realize that over time. Yes, we have changed the way we think (and we'll get into those), like the Sabbath and tithing and things like that, but there's much bigger issues to be learned in life as well. This is about a complete change of the way we *think*. It's about our intent. It's about the *self* versus God's way of thinking, love. We have to be corrected and we desire God to correct us, but *in mercy*. Because if it's not done in mercy, if God did it in anger, we would be brought to nothing. We'll be destroyed. Because what's the point of life? To change the way we think. Well, if we're going to resist changing our thinking and we're going to fight God in changing the way we think, what's left for God to do? Anybody that commits an unpardonable sin or anybody whose attitude is set against change, anybody's mind who is *set against change*, i.e., Satan and the demons are set against change, what value are they? The only value they have is to be brought to *nothing* because that's the best thing that can happen. *Anybody* or any being that resists God, that will not take correction to change the way they think, they have to be brought to nothing.

Jeremiah 17:9—The heart (the mind, the thinking, or the motive, even) **is deceitful**, it's talking about the deceit in mankind. Man's heart, man's thinking, man's motive, man's way of thinking is deceitful, which means it's not open and honest, **above all things**, so this mind is one of justification of self. This is a mind that resists God by nature. This mind, this way of thinking, is deceitful because it's selfish. It will do everything to protect self. Even though it's not obviously seen by mankind, they don't understand it, but this way of thinking is actually deceit. It actually is dishonest. Now, even if a person is honest in life, there's a reason behind why the person is being honest - talking about someone that's not called. It's motive is still self-protection, or selfishness, or pride. A person is honest because of pride, because it's in their *best* interest, and they don't even know it. But they know they're getting something out of it. And it's often to do with within the thinking. There's a gratification within the thinking and it's all to do with pride, because it's lifting the self up. We'd say, "I'm an honest person. I'm open and honest, therefore, I'm a better person." Well, there's pride in that.

So God is saying here, **the heart** (the thinking, the intent of mankind) **is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked** (inwardly sick, incurably sick). In other words, it's evil. Its intent is evil and it's not curable of and by itself. It cannot be cured by itself. It requires God's holy spirit. Now, this is the process that we're looking at about this changing. The mind that we have naturally is deceitful, it will justify, it won't exercise self-control unless there's some personal interest in it. It will not do *anything* without some gratification (which is gratification to its pride) and it is sick. It cannot be cured. It's desperately ill! Because it's all about self. Now, it can be healed, powered by God's holy spirit.

Who can know it? Well, mankind can't know it. Mankind doesn't know it. We've been called with this calling to come to know it. Now, who does know it? God knows it. God knows what He created. He knows what is going on. Now, He knows why He created it this way. God created it this way for a transformation to take place. Our part in it is we have to desire to change. We have to *desire* and *choose* to change. That's our part in it. Now, if we choose to change, once called, God gives us a glimpse of ourselves and we come to understand that we *are* incurably sick, of and by ourselves, we can't be healed, and we come to see that we are *desperately wicked* within our motives and intent and that we are deceitful by nature. If we see that (God knows it, He reveals it to us), we then have to choose to change. And if we choose to change we can be healed.

Verse 10—I, the Eternal, search the heart (search the inner thinking). This is what's happening with us, brethren. I (God) test the mind, test the inward parts, our motive and intent. **Even to give every man according to his way**, to what he has chosen. So now we have this opportunity to be rewarded with God's thinking because we're choosing to think like God. We have to choose it or we're going to be rewarded for *not* choosing God's way of thinking, and that's where the blessings and cursing's come in because the reward for not choosing God's way of thinking is more selfishness. We're choosing selfishness or we're choosing love. We're choosing *life* or we're choosing *death*. That's the reality.

So what is our choice, brethren? Well, if we're part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, God has given us the opportunity to choose life, to choose righteousness, to choose God's way of thinking.

Continuing on in **verse 10—And according to the fruit of his doings**. So we will be rewarded by what we choose, what choices we have made. Now, we understand the fruit is what is produced by something. By our actions, by our intent, by what we choose in life, the way we choose to think - God's way or our way - there is a result, there is a reward. One reward is a blessing from God, and the other one is that we're going to suffer. Now, we're going to suffer because of our own choices of staying in selfishness. So the natural carnal mind deceives itself. It's self-deceived. It thinks it's something it is not. Well, God has called us at this particular time for a purpose, and that one is that we're being called to change, to transform the way we think. Now, to understand this and to know this, there are *few* in the world (very few). Those that God has called to see it, they are the ones that know and understand this spiritual principle. So we're on this path of change and we're on this path of salvation if we are choosing to change the way we think.

Let's go back to **Isaiah 55:10**—Continuing on from that thought process, where God was saying that His thoughts are not our thoughts and that His ways are not our ways, and the distance that is between the two is not measurable, not even comparable, they are so far apart. Well, in **verse 10** we can look at this, how God provides the earth, and how God will provide for us, and that once we are called this transformation can take place. In other words, the two things will become closer together because this calling that we have had is about calling us (like the earth) to draw closer to the planets, or vice versa, the planets closer to the earth. They become closer and closer and closer - the light comes closer and closer, which is symbolic of God's holy spirit coming to us and we take on the mind of God so that in the end we are at-one with God. We're in unity with God because we *think* like God, and therefore, the transformation has been completed. How incredible is this, really?

We can understand, brethren, that we're going to have problems in the world. We're going to have difficulties. Because as we take on more and more of God's thinking we're going to become more and more distant from others. That's just the way that it is. It's a guarantee! So as we think differently, and as we implement God's way, Satan's system and Satan's thinking is going to punish us under that system. But we know what's going on. Satan and the demons know what's going on. Satan and the demons know the reward that God is going to give to those who transform their thinking, who become at one with Him in the way that they think. Satan knows the outcome. The purpose of life will have been fulfilled within the human. Satan will do everything to *stop* this transformation, to *stop* this transforming of the mind, of changing a way a person thinks. Satan has a way of thinking, which is evil and selfish. He wants to transmit to stop mankind from transforming. As we've been called to transform, we're going to run into resistance. So we have to choose to change and we have to choose righteousness. We have to choose God's way of thinking.

Verse 10—For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, which is God providing it. God feeds the earth, **and do not return there, but water the earth**, so they're provided, the earth is provided for, they provide for the earth, **and make it bring forth the bud**, plants can grow, **that it may give seed to the sower...** So this whole process God is in control of and God has set it up as a part of a process or a cycle that takes place. The rain comes on to the earth, it waters the ground and the bud grows and it

produces a beautiful flower or, like, wheat, where there's a seed, and then the seed is taken so the cycle can continue.

Continuing on in **verse 10 ...and bread to the eater**, so then it's planted, it grows, they pick the seed, and then they can make bread. It's ground up into flour, and therefore, humans can survive because of the rain. God has to provide the rain for it to all work, and God does that. He provides the cycle so that humans can exist.

Well, now, that was the physical component. Then God says, well, this is the same as His word, or His power, or His spirit, and same as the truth. **Verse 11—So shall My (God's) word be that goes forth from My mouth.** So whatever God does, whatever God thinks, whatever God states is going to go out and it's going to produce something like the rain. Now, we understand that God's word is from God's holy spirit because a person can't understand God's word unless they have God's holy spirit. Mankind thinks they understand God's word. They think they understand the Bible and they mash it all up and we see hundreds and hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of different ways of living. Even within the Churches of God that were scattered, there's five-six hundred of them, they're all different. No one agrees, because if they all agreed they'd become one. But they don't. Well, the Catholic Church has divisions within the Catholic Church. The Protestants have various divisions. Islam have lots of divisions. The Hindu's have divisions because it's not of God, it's *none* of God's word. And the reason it's not of God's word is they do not have the power of God's holy spirit. God is *not* working there. God is *not* working in the Catholic Church. God is *not* working in the Churches that are scattered. God is *not* working with the Muslims. God is not working with the Hindu's. God is not working in those areas. God works in His Church. The Church of God, where God's spirit *is*, *that's* where God is working, and therefore, God's word (His spirit) which involves God's truth, God's thinking, God says He requires growth. So if God's working in the Church of God—PKG, God requires growth! God's spirit requires growth.

So as the rain falls on to the earth and brings forward a bud and it's sower then gathers it and plants it and it grows more, and he then harvests it, well, it produces wheat, and the wheat is ground to flour and then it produces bread for the eater, for the person. Well, this is the same principle within God's Church. God's word is provided within His Church—God's spirit is provided within His Church—that comes from His thinking. It's the same thing. It's from God's thinking. Because when God speaks the truth to the Church, it's God's thinking coming to the Church. **It shall not return to Me void**; it won't be empty. Now, it's going to go to the person with God's holy spirit and it won't come back void. It will return to God because it's God's thinking. It's God's thinking being developed in a person so then they can have unity of spirit.

But it shall accomplish what I please, so God's word will accomplish, it will *achieve* what it's meant to achieve. Well, what's God's word meant to achieve, when we're looking at God's holy spirit? God's holy spirit is to achieve a transformation, the change of a way a person thinks. Well, it's going to happen. God says here, "But it shall accomplish *what I please*." Well, it pleases God to call us. It pleases God when we obey Him and He can transform our thinking. So we are to think like God. **And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.** Now, this is encouraging. Because we can often look at these things on physical

levels, but this is incredible! It will happen (what it's really saying). "It shall prosper in the thing..." What's the thing? Well, we can look at this, whatever God says, it will happen. If God decides there's going to be such and such take place, like 50-kilo hail, well, it's going to happen. But this is talking about God's word, *God's spirit*. "It shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Well, God sent it to us! God gives it to us! God's provided it. He's given us a calling, we have repented (powered by God's holy spirit), it gave us the ability to think differently in the beginning. Then we've been baptized because we realize that's the process, and we've had hands layed on us by a true minister of God and God has honored His commitment to give us His holy spirit, His thinking in our minds so that we can transform the way we think. "It," God's spirit, "will prosper." God's word will prosper *in us*, "into which I (God) sent it." It's been given to us.

So, brethren, we are *on* a path of salvation. We're on this path of *being changed*, the transformation of our thinking. So God's word will come out to us (and it does) through the power of God's holy spirit. We have to choose to listen. We have to choose to want to think like God. We have to choose to want to be at-one with God's way of thinking. Now, the biggest danger for a human is what? To think we know everything, to think we're right. Because by nature we're right in our own eyes. Well, if we're wrong, we would change and we would go somewhere else to do whatever.

Now, people leave God's Church because they think they know better, they *think* they're right. God's spirit's no longer there so, what's the end result? Human nature. Human reasoning. And when we start down the path of human reasoning we can get ourselves in *big trouble*. So we need to stay close to God's word. I know the other day we were at a particular service and somebody mentioned a particular theory or a particular thing that they were looking into and had expanded within their mind. And I did say that I had learned through personal experience and through personal correction that there are some topics within the Bible that we should stop and not pursue and try to work out what it is unless it's already been given by God's spirit through an apostle. Because this is dangerous. This is spiritually dangerous. Because what happens is we might find a particular phrase within the Bible or particular words and we go off and do our own study and it doesn't line up with what God has placed in the Church. Now, this is where the danger is, because at times there are certain topics that are in the Bible that we don't fully understand, but God has revealed what He has revealed, and we need to stay with what God has revealed and not go outside it. We can take a topic like the Sabbath and we can study more into the Sabbath, what God has revealed to the Church, for example, and we can get a lot more through the power of God's holy spirit about the Sabbath, but it's going to be about how we should keep the Sabbath a better way, more in spirit and truth. *That's* what we're going to get out of it. We're not going to get out about changing the day or sunsets and those things because God's placed it in the Church; He's placed truth in the Church. We should stay with the truth, in unity with the truth, but we can study into the Sabbath to learn more about the Sabbath for *ourselves*, not to grow our heads and to be bigger in our thinking so that we think we've got a new truth or we see something that others don't see in the Church. No, this is about the correction of self. So we should study the Sabbath, for example, for the purpose of correcting the way we think so that we're in unity with God's word, not developing new theories or new doctrines about things. Why is that? Well, that is because God has established a way to work within the Church, and that

way of working in the Church is through Jesus Christ; it's through an apostle that truth will come to the Church. The truth comes through that way. It doesn't come through another way.

So, yes, at times there are things in the bible that we may not be a hundred percent sure of, or we just simply do not see, but it is *not* our role as members of the Body to go out and try to explore new doctrines. It's a highly dangerous thing and we shouldn't give our thinking over to these theories or these views that we may have because these are the things that can take us out of the Church.

Well, in the conversation I mentioned that a person should not waste their time in exploring a particular path of thinking, because they will get so bogged down with that thinking and that carnal mind is deceitful above *all* things and incurably sick, and it doesn't match God's thinking, so what will it do? It will take something and take it further and further and further and then if God's spirit's not there because the person is taking it to themselves, to think that they are *better* than others because they're seeing something in the bible, they're *seeing* something spiritual, and if they take it to *self*, sin has entered. And when sin has entered, God's spirit is not there. So then the thinking becomes the natural carnal mind and it starts to read into things that aren't there. And then all of a sudden a new doctrine, or a new theory has developed. Then the person is in great spiritual danger, and unless they repent, and unless they change the way that they think about the matter, to bring themselves back into unity with what God has placed into the Church, they are on spiritually dangerous ground and it can take them out of the Church.

Just like if God ordains somebody to a role and a person doesn't agree with that ordination or that person is removed from a role or adjusted in the level of their authority within the Church and the person does not agree with it, they are on spiritually dangerous ground because they have forgotten, they no longer "see" that this is God's Church and God does these things for a purpose. Now, what is that purpose? Well, sometimes we don't know. Sometimes we don't "see" the true purpose. Now, I can give you a classic example of that, of not "seeing" the true purpose. When I was awakened in 2005, late 2005, I did not "see" what God was doing. I realize that I was now "seeing" the truth. I looked back and I saw that over about a two-year period I was slowly coming out of my sleep. Being pretty slow, it took a fair while to come to see it. But in December in 2005, I made a particular phone call to a minister in the United Church of God and said to him that I was leaving the United Church of God, I was no longer going to be associated with the Church and that I had found the truth, basically. And I didn't really understand at the time what this *really* meant, but I had heard this and it was in my mind for some reason that, "Two can't walk together unless they agree." And I remember saying, "I don't agree with you so I can't walk together." Well, they didn't understand it.

So from that point I then began to develop more of God's thinking, powered by God's holy spirit, because I was where where God's spirit was, The Church of God. I was awakened to spiritual matters. And it's been exciting!

But I did not know the purpose of my awakening. I didn't have a *clue* what my awakening was really about. I didn't realize at that time, and I wouldn't have even *thought* about, that I was going to be

ordained as an elder of God's Church. That was the furthest thing from my thinking. It's actually terrifying to think about those things now when I'm doing it. I would never have realized that God was going to raise me up to the role of an evangelist. "Well, why would you do that? I'm just Wayne! Why would you do that?" Well, I didn't know what was ahead of us, just like none of us knew what was going to happen to God's apostle. We didn't see it; God hadn't provided it. Then to be made a senior evangelist - I didn't really know what that's all about. Now I look back and I "see," I see a lot more clearly that God had a purpose. God knows what He's doing and God has asked me for a particular time, for a period, to do sermons. Well, if you had said to me, that, in 2005 and 2006, there's just no way that I would have ever considered where I am today here in this small country town doing sermons and praying that God's inspiration is in everything that is said and done. Because if it's just Wayne Matthews, it's all an empty vanity, it's all a waste of time. And I *pray* that God's in the sermon, and I pray that God's in a person's hearing as much as it's in the speaking.

So why is a person ordained? We do not know. We do not know. And to assume or to presume that we do, well, that's a vanity, brethren, that's a vanity, because *we do not know what God is doing* about these things. Someone can be raised up as an associate elder, elder, or whatever it may be within God's Church, and we should not be so presumptuous as to think that we know the reason why. Because my experience is we have no clue! We might think we have a rough idea; the reality is "we ain't got an idea at all." We haven't got a clue at all!

Now, one person can be raised up for their own benefit - just for their own individual benefit, that *they* have an opportunity. Now, what they do with it, it's up to them. Another person can be raised up for the benefit of the congregation. It can test attitudes within the congregation. Some people may yield to God's spirit and see that it's God's Church. Others may not. It becomes *their* sin, it becomes *their* problem, but it's a test for them. So one person can be raised to test others, for example. Another person can be raised to test themselves, or to test their relationship between husband and wife, or to test one person in the congregation. Another person can be stood down altogether. Why? Could be because of age; it can be for other reasons also. It can be that it can test the person individually. And I know these things *do* test people. But in the end, it comes down to God's spirit. What a person thinks is all based on God's spirit. So we've been called to change the way we think, to think more like God. So if a person is stood down or if a person is taken down a level as far as a role of service within the ministry, what should be the process of thinking? Well, it's got to be *God's* thinking. It's not our reasoning, not our thinking, thinking, "Oh, I think that person's been taken down because of 'this' or because of 'that.'" No, this is God's Church, and if God has made a decision to stand somebody down a level of service within God's Church, the reason is God decided. God decided for a purpose. What's that purpose? Who knows! It could be for the individual. It could be for others. It could test others. It could motivate others. It could do a lot of things.

So, brethren, we're not to be presumptuous to think we *know* why things are done. The truth is, the reality is *we do not know*. The most important thing is that we change the way we think about the matter by coming to the conclusion this is God's Church, this is God's true Church, God's spirit is *in* the

Church, and it is God's Church and He lifts up and He pulls down and *He* knows what He is doing. That's the end result. God knows what He is doing and we are to yield to God's holy spirit. We're to come into unity with God's spirit. So if God raises somebody up, we rejoice, powered by God's holy spirit. If somebody is changed in structure, in their role of service, we rejoice. This is God's Church and God is in control.

So here it is in this scripture, it's saying that, "God's word that goes forth from His mouth," everything that He does, everything that He says, powered by God's holy spirit, "it will not return to Him void." It won't be empty because the people have the opportunity to think more like God. But it will accomplish "what I please," what God pleases. So God's word will be accomplishing something. God's doing everything for a purpose. This is part of God's great plan "to bring many sons to glory," to have *everybody* change the way they think. How incredible is God? What a great blessing it is, brethren, that we understand this.

We're going to soon (we may get time today or the next sermon series, *Part 2*) where we're going to get into all these things where we've actually changed. And they're exciting! I found them exciting! I find them *really* exciting! We have changed the way we think, so much so that we can't talk to other humans about it because they can't understand a word we're saying. They think we're all crazy! Oh, this is exciting! I (Wayne Matthews) have changed the way I think about many things. Still got lots to go. You have changed the way you think! How exciting's this? We rejoice, brethren. So when persecuted, we *can* rejoice because we've taken on the thinking of God. God's word, it *is* accomplishing what God pleases. God desires, God's pleasure is that we change our thinking. He made us one particular way, He desires us to think like Him. So the more we think like Him, we should rejoice. So it is exciting when we get into these various topics.

Romans 8:1—Now, it's impossible to go through a topic like this, "everyone must change," without going to Romans 8. Now, we go to Romans 8 often, but it actually does cover much of God's plan and it gives so much insight into what man really is, what we're having to change, what we're having to choose to change. Because man, by himself, cannot change, and Romans 8 actually covers much of this transformation that must take place. So we're going to go through Romans 8 and we'll start in **verse 1**—***There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Jesus Christ.*** So this is saying anybody that is repenting, anybody that has been called to change, to change the way they think, and they are choosing to change, they're yielding to God's holy spirit, there is no condemnation. Because? The sin can be forgiven. So if we are *in* Jesus Christ, we have the same thinking, the same mind of God, and we're taking on this thinking, we cannot be condemned to death ("the wages of sin is death"), and we cannot be condemned, we cannot be under the penalty of sin. Because? We are repenting. So if we are repenting there is no condemnation to those who are *in* Jesus Christ, who have God's holy spirit and they are yielding to God and under the authority of Jesus Christ in the Church. So we're no longer under the death penalty because we have the same thinking about a matter (which is this process of repenting), because repenting is really changing the way we think. It's thinking differently. So if we are thinking differently, if we are choosing to yield to God's spirit, we are *in* Jesus Christ because we have the same thinking of Jesus Christ. We are no longer under the death penalty because of this ongoing repentance.

...who, and this is what we do, **who do not walk** (who do not live) **according to the flesh**, so we no longer walk using our natural carnal mind, these desires of the flesh, desires of the mind, and the desire of the eyes (all physical carnal desires), well, we don't yield to these things anymore. We don't live that way of life and we don't yield to it, we yield to God's holy spirit. We are changing the way we think. So if we walk according to the flesh, which means we're using that natural selfish thinking (that's what we're doing), well, if we do not walk according to it anymore (because of the power of God's holy spirit), **but walk according to the spirit**, so is God's spirit, so now we're walking to the way that God thinks about a matter. We're no longer walking according to the flesh, this selfishness, we're walking the way that God thinks. So we have started this process of transformation of the way we think, and now we're choosing to yield to this new way of thinking.

For the law of the spirit of life in Jesus Christ, talking about God's holy spirit, **has made me free from the law of sin and death**. Because? Freedom comes from forgiveness because God in His mercy has set up Passover so that we could be free from the penalty of sin, which is death. So we have been forgiven our sins if we are repenting.

Verse 3—For what the law does not do in that it was weak through the flesh... So this is really talking about, the law by itself is weak in the flesh because people cannot keep the law within the flesh. It gives direction to people to change. We cannot keep the law because we are carnal, because we're selfish, and therefore, because the motive is selfish even though somebody might keep the Sabbath in the flesh, which is with the natural carnal mind, because we're walking according to the flesh. And here it is saying, what's weak, the law is weak through the flesh. In other words, we can't do it. We cannot keep the law. So we can't keep the Sabbath in the flesh using the natural carnal mind because we're breaking the spirit of the matter because we don't have the spirit of the law in us. Because to keep the spirit of the law requires God's holy spirit. So this is referring to two ways. We either have God's holy spirit and we're living and yielding to the laws of God because it's spiritual in nature, or we're living in the flesh, the natural carnal mind, and we *cannot* obey the law in the flesh; it's impossible.

Continuing on... **God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of the sinful flesh**, in the likeness of mankind, **on account of sin**. So Jesus Christ was sent for the purpose of covering sin, of paying the death penalty, "the wages of sin is death." So Jesus Christ came, was provided for mankind (was created through Mary), for the purpose of sin, of covering sin. **He condemned sin in the flesh**, so that has been achieved. Jesus Christ has condemned sin in the flesh. He has paid the penalty for sin, therefore, we're no longer under the condemnation of sin because we can be forgiven. ...**that the righteousness**, well, what is the righteousness? Faith. We have faith in the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We have faith in the fact, and we believe God. We believe God has paid for the penalty of sin through Jesus Christ. ...**that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us**, so our *inner* motive, our *inner* intent *is* that we will live love in the law, **who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit**. So we choose to live according to the spirit of the law, the spirit of a matter. Now, this takes God's holy spirit to be able to see it. And we have to yield to God's holy spirit to come to see ourselves. This is a lifelong process.

Now, this is what this change is about. We have to change from walking according to the flesh to choosing to walk according to the spirit. That is the purpose of life. This is about that change. And this particular scripture is outlining this change. We have to live according to the spirit, not live according to the natural carnal mind which is according to the flesh.

Verse 5—For those who live according to the flesh, this selfish thinking, **set their minds on the things of the flesh**, they are selfish, everything is about self even though they don't know it. Now, we can fall into this trap, brethren, that we live according to the flesh in any given day. We may have God's holy spirit or have access to God's holy spirit and we may yield to God's holy spirit from time to time or choose to yield to God's holy spirit from time to time, but we still have our minds set on the flesh. That is the temptation of sin, and we get into it. We yield to our own *selfish* motives and intent. We yield to pride. We yield to pride. Now, often within somebody's life they don't see it. Now, in the world they don't see it. They may see little elements of it, but they don't understand the spirit of the matter. We have to live according to the spirit. We don't set our *minds* to the flesh. That's the point. "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds," now that's the difference. We don't set our mind to walk according to the flesh, we set our minds to walk according to the spirit. So we've set our minds not to be the way we are - natural - we've set our minds to obey God, to *yield* to God's holy spirit, to check our motives and intent every single day. Why did we do what we do? Why have we said what we said? Why are we thinking a particular way? Now, we often fail, and that's what repentance is about and God's great mercy towards us.

...but those *who live according to the spirit*... That's the difference. We've set our minds to walk according to the spirit. We want to obey God. We want to yield to God. We want to have love within us all the time. We want God's holy spirit to change our thinking. So we no longer walk according to the flesh. We haven't set our minds on the flesh, things that are physical, we've set our minds on the truth. We want to walk in sincerity *and* truth. We want to walk in the spirit of the law. We want to examine our intent. Why am I doing it this way? What am I saying? Why am I doing what I am doing?

Verse 6—For to be carnally (selfishly) minded is death, "the wages of sin is death." We're just under the death penalty. So we no longer can walk in this fleshly mind, this selfish way of life, **but to be spiritually minded**, to be yielding to God's holy spirit, to have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us, transforming our thinking, **is life and peace**. Why is it life and peace? Because God lives and dwells in us. And if God lives and dwells in us, we have life! We have spirit life in us. And peace, we have peace of mind, peace of thinking.

So let's just explore this. When we look at "peace," the natural carnal mind (of and by itself) cannot have peace. Absolutely impossible! Why? Because every thought and every motive is selfish. Now, in selfishness there *is* no peace. There might be a resemblance of a physical peace, but it's not true peace. It's not peace of *mind*! Now, to have peace of mind we have to have God's holy spirit. God must live and dwell in us. So let's expand "peace." To have peace, to have true peace, we have to have changed our thinking, we have to have yielded to God's holy spirit because God's way of thinking generates peace. God lives

peace. God's way of thinking *is* peace. Now, as we go through various components of the change that has taken place in our mind we'll be able to see that we have yielded to an element of peace. And by that I mean peace will have been started to have been formed within our thinking. Because to have selfishness is not peace. It's actually hatred and anger and all those things. But to have true peace is to think like God.

Well, we will see that as we go through all of these different topics, we're going to see how peace has interacted within our thinking. We're actually taking on peace. We're taking on peace, life and peace, because God's spirit lives and dwells in us. And if we *have* God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us, we have life and peace, peace of mind. Now, we're going to see that as we explore various topics.

Verse 7—But the carnal mind (the selfish mind) *is* enmity (it's hostile) against God; for it is not subject, in other words, it cannot be under the rule of God, under God's thinking, **for it is not subject to the law of God** (it resists God), **nor indeed can be.** So the natural carnal mind is hostile against God. It's actually resisting God. It cannot change on a spiritual level - it's absolutely impossible. It is selfish. Now, we've seen in previous scripture, we've established this mind. Well, this is what this sermon series is about; it's about this transforming of this mind, the changing of the way we think. Because *everybody*, everybody that's going to enter Elohim must change the way they think because the carnal mind is against God. It's hostile, it's enmity against God, "for it is *not* subject," it's not yielding or subject, "to the law of God, nor indeed can be." It can't do it of and by itself. It requires a transformation of the way a person thinks. It requires a calling. So *nobody* can change, *nobody* can enter God's family unless they are called. It requires God's spirit. It requires the gift of God's spirit to be able to enter Elohim.

Verse 8—So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. They can't obey God in spirit and truth. They're not free. They're not at peace. They have no life in them. Why? Because their motives are totally and utterly selfish. Their intent is driven by pride. *Every aspect* of the carnal mind is driven by pride. Pride is the underlying principle of the natural carnal mind. Now, God seeks humility. God seeks humility. One of the greatest gifts a person can be given by God, from God, is the gift of humility. Humility is the ability, the spiritual ability, to see ones true spiritual condition compared to God. How incredible is that? Humility is the power, the spiritual power, to see one's self as he really is. Pride. Riddled with pride and selfishness. Now, if we're given the gift to see this, to know it and understand it, how incredible is that gift? It's the gift of humility. Because compared to God, what are we, brethren? We are nothing! We should take absolutely nothing to ourselves. Nothing! Just absolutely nothing! Because if we do, it's pride. There is no pride in God; God *is* humility. So we have to take on the thinking of God. We have to take on humility. And it's a gift from God.

Verse 8 again—So then, those who are in the flesh, this natural carnal mind of selfishness, have wrong motives and wrong intent, **cannot please God.** We cannot obey God in spirit and truth. Absolutely impossible!

Verse 9—But you are not in the flesh, because we've been called, we have repented, we have been baptized to have our sins forgiven to that point in time, we've received the gift of God's holy spirit, so

now we have the capacity, the ability to choose to think like God. So we're no longer setting our minds on the things of the flesh. We're no longer focused in on selfishness. We're focused in on living and yielding to God's holy spirit, which is yielding to God! We're yielding to God. **But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit**, so we're repentant all the time, we're yielding to God, we are wanting to change the way we think, we want to think more like God about every single aspect of our life, we want to *be* like God's thinking, we want to be love. Now, this is happening, **if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you**. So we *cannot* change the way we think without God's holy spirit. Absolutely impossible! We cannot be truly repentant unless God gives us the gift of repentance. So we require God's holy spirit to live and dwell in us. We have to yield to God's thinking. Now, how do we know we have God's holy spirit? Because we think differently, because we think differently than the world. Now, if we agree with the world and we're yielding to the world's thinking, God's spirit is not in it because God's spirit (God) is not thinking and does not think like the world because the world is influenced by Satan and his demons. Their thoughts are selfishness, total and utter selfishness and pride. Every aspect, every component is selfishness and pride. Well, we're not like that.

So if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you, so we want God's spirit, we're yielding to God's spirit, we now are transforming the mind, we're changing the way we think, we're going to be rejected by the world. Fantastic! It's exciting! This is the time to rejoice! "The world doesn't like me! The world doesn't like the way I think! This is good news!" *This is* good news! To be rejected by the world is good news, brethren, because it's one of the evidences of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us because we're taking on the mind of God.

Now, this is all said and done with the understanding that a person is part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, we're *in* the Body of Christ, that we actually *have* God's holy spirit. Now, God's holy spirit is *in* God's Church. Love exists within God's Church, and it's spiritual love. It's not talking about a physical love, like, you know, the ways of the world, "Oh, I love you." No, this is God's way of thinking about a matter. People don't understand the fact that for God to love somebody may mean they have to die. Well, people say, "What do you mean God's going to kill millions of people?" Well, guess what? God in His love will humble mankind. Well, mankind can't understand it. They don't see that love means the implementation of a death penalty. "You should keep me alive for 30-40 years in jail and let me rot in jail." That's not love; that's actually evil. That's actually *selfish* thinking! That is *not* mercy. Because God's way, God's spirit tells us that that is *not* love. Now, the reason that happens is because they don't understand and they don't believe in resurrections. So man's thinking is twisted and perverted and they can't come to the knowledge of the truth because they're influenced and they have chosen to *not* go down the path of even physical obedience to God's way of life.

Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he is not His. He doesn't belong to Jesus Christ, doesn't belong to God.

Verse 10—And if Christ is in you, through the power of God's holy spirit, **the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness**, because of the thinking of God, God's holy spirit is

living and dwelling in us. "But the spirit *is life* because of righteousness." God's spirit lives and dwells in us. We are obedient to God's law. We are yielding to God. We're choosing to change. We're choosing to change to think more like God.

Verse 11—But if the spirit of Him, talking about God the Father, who raised Christ from the dead, which He did, dwells in you, which it does, He (God) who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit which dwells in you. Now, this is an amazing scripture, brethren. This is the encouragement we need! *Why* are we trying to change? *Why* are we battling? *Why* are we accepting the rejection of the world? Rejection of people that say they love us? *Why* are we taking the mocking and the ridicule just like Jesus Christ did? *Why*? Because God's spirit lives and dwells in us and, "He who raised Jesus Christ from the dead," talking from physical man and changed Him from mortal to immortal and placed Him in Elohim at His right hand, "will also give life (give *spirit* life), to *our* mortal bodies," to our physical bodies. How? "Through His spirit which (dwells in us) which dwells in you." Isn't this amazing? So this, brethren, is God's promise.

We are to continue to desire to change. We are to continue to *yield* to God's holy spirit. And if we endure to the end, at some point in time God will change us from mortal to spirit. God's purpose will have been fulfilled. God's word will have gone out and achieved what it had set out to achieve, which is to transform our thinking so that we can be brought to glory. This is amazing scripture. This scripture tells us everything about the need to change. We've got to be moved from a physical way of thinking to a spiritual way of thinking, and if we do that, God says He will raise us up just like He did Jesus Christ. This is an incredible promise! Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, dwells in you, because it's now an active word that's being used here. Because God's spirit dwells in us, Jesus Christ dwells in us. Because? They are at one. It's the same mind. It's the same spirit.

Verse 12—Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, so we don't owe the flesh anything. Now, we have to be fighting against the selfishness in us, **to live according to the flesh.** So we don't owe it anything. So we have no physical desires that we're going to want to fulfill. Now, the problem is we are debtors to the flesh if we are not fighting sin within our mind. But we're fighting sin. We don't owe the flesh anything because we're fighting against it. We don't want it anymore. We don't want to think the way we think naturally. We want this transformation to take place.

For if you live according to the flesh, carnal, selfish, focused on the physical only, focused on pride and selfishness, **you will die.** We will die because the wages of what it earns, the natural carnal mind, is death. **But if by the spirit,** if by God's spirit, **you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.** Now, we have to be fighting these desires. We have to sacrifice the self. We have to implement *self*-control. We have to be wanting, desiring to change the way we think.

The first thing to do in yielding to God is to admit we are wrong. That is the very first thing. The natural carnal mind of and by itself is totally selfish and filled with pride. It has its own selfish desires that it desires to have *self*-satisfaction. It's right in its own eyes. How do we fight all that? Through the power of

God's holy spirit. And the first part is we have to *know* what we are, to *admit* this is the way we are, and not to think that we're not like this. Every single one of us has components of this in our life.

So the way we can now prove that we've got life living and dwelling in us is we have to be fighting the fight. If we are not fighting our selfishness, we are dying, and it will lead to death. *But* if God's spirit dwells in us and we are putting to death, we are killing, we are getting rid of the deeds or the words or the actions of the body, the natural carnal mind, we will live. So if we're desiring this change we will live.

Verse 14—For as many as are led by the spirit of God, have God's spirit living in them and are actively working on their motive and intent, to bring it in line with God's motive and intent, they're getting rid of their selfishness, they're becoming self-*less*, **these are sons of God.** Isn't this an amazing scripture?! So we are begotten sons of God if we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us and if we're being *led* by God's holy spirit, we're yielding to a change of thinking. We have to desire to change the way we think.

Now, I'm sure that in *Part 2* you will be even more encouraged by the many things that we have already changed. We have gone from this natural carnal mind to think more like God. And in *Part 2* we're going to go into a lot more detail, into all the elements where we have changed our thinking. And at the conclusion of this sermon series we will be able to understand more fully why we're going to be rejected, why we're going to be hated, why we're going to be despised, why we're going to have trials, why we're going to have tribulations, because we're changing the way we think and we do not think like the world and we don't want anything to do with the world. We don't want to *think* like the world at all! We are happy to be transformed because we understand verse 11, "But if the spirit of Him (God the Father) who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you," well, it does, brethren. That's why we're part of the Body of Christ, "He (God the Father) who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through/by His spirit which dwells in you." This is what life's all about. This is why we are *in* the Church of God. This is why we must change.

Just a quick comment in relation to Amos 3. I did refer to Amos 3, and the fact that I did make this statement to a minister in United Church of God, "Can two walk together unless they agree?" Now, this principle, which is actually a spiritual principle, needs to be explained in more detail. Though I do intend in *Part 2* to go into Amos 3 in a bit more detail, to explain this on a spiritual and physical level, because it has been applied to business relationships, has been applied to marriages, and there needs to be a clear understanding, to actually understand more clearly on a spiritual level what God was actually saying in Amos 3:3. So I do intend to pick that up in *Part 2*.

So, brethren, we'll pick up the sermon series next time, or next week.□