

Welcome to this particular Sabbath, brethren.

The purpose of this sermon series is to explore what it really means to think differently. The title of this sermon is *To Think Differently*, and this will be *Part 3*. Now, in the previous parts of this sermon series we've looked at different aspects of how we are to think differently, and we've explored some ways or some areas where we do think differently.

The only way we can change our thinking is powered by God's holy spirit. So the way we can change our thinking is through the gift of God's holy spirit, therefore, that requires a calling. That requires the gift of repentance because repentance is to think differently. So we are to think differently, and we've been called to think differently. We must transform our thinking, but it must be powered by God's holy spirit.

Now, there are a lot of examples within scripture of the way to think. Now, everything with regards to the way we think has to be about our motive and intent, because that's the reality of God's truth, that's the reality of the truth, that everything God has given is about the way *He* thinks, *His* motive, and *His* intent. So being called means we're going to have to look at our motive and intent. Now, we have said in previous sermons that we are going to look at different aspects of where we think differently, and also, possibly, areas where we need to change the way we think. Well, today we're going to start that process of looking at this process of changing the way we think. Because even though we may *think* we have changed our thinking on various topics (some of these topics are reasonably basic within God's Church), the reality is, the *truth* is, brethren, that we haven't changed our thinking completely on many areas of scripture. Even though we think we have, the truth is, we haven't. We might think we have, but we haven't. There's always greater depth of understanding to be had. There's always greater spiritual motives and intents to be examined with regards to the way we think.

Now, we're going to pick up this sermon series and start in Matthew 5:21. The reason we're starting here is because Jesus Christ is now going on to explain the spirit of the law, which is all about the spiritual intent. Now, what God's intent is, which is pure in nature because it's based on righteousness, the natural carnal mind is not pure and it's *not* based on righteousness, it's based on selfishness. Now, Jesus Christ came, not to do away with the law, as He outlined in verse 17, but to magnify the law or to fulfill the law. Now, Jesus Christ is now going on here to explain the difference: one is physical and one is spiritual. It's all about the way we think. In these areas that we're going to cover today we can look at our own motives and intent, and just to see really, have we changed? Or are we still changing the way we think? Now, God willing we have the answer we are still changing the way we think. We might think we have changed it, but deep, deep down, placed in certain situations, maybe the thinking hasn't changed as much as we think, and maybe we just have to continue to work at changing the way we think.

Now, we are tested in these things and these are the areas where we're going to have to continue to grow in on a spiritual level. Because although Christ outlines the physical component of the law there is now the spiritual component which we must take on, which is the righteousness of the law.

Verse 21—Jesus Christ here speaking to the disciples: **You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not murder.** Now, this is the physical focus of the law from Exodus 20, "Thou shalt not kill." "You shall not murder," which is a physical act of killing somebody. ...**and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.** Because there was a penalty from the law God gave on Mount Sinai, which was the penalty that was to be for killing someone, for murdering somebody, the judgment, the penalty was death. Then Jesus Christ goes on to explain the spiritual intent of this law. It's not just about physical murder. It's not just about physically killing somebody, and therefore, a life would be taken for it. It's about the way we think. And now God requires us to think differently about this very Commandment, the spirit of the law. **But I (Jesus Christ) say to you that whoever is angry,** now, that word "angry" is about ill will. It's about the way a person thinks. It's not just demonstrating anger in a fit of rage. It's about the way a person thinks. So anybody who is angry, and that is desiring ill will, **with his brother,** and that is somebody in the Church or even out of the Church, it doesn't matter, **without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.** This anger is something spiritual in intent. It's about the way we think. Now, we, brethren, have been asked to judge ourselves. We are the ones who have to work out whether or not we have ill will, whether we have envy towards somebody, or we are angry at another person. We're not to judge *them*, but we're to judge ourselves. We're to judge our response. So if somebody does something to us, and we become angry or desire ill will or think evil towards that person, well, that's the wrong outcome. What we should do when something happens is we should examine ourselves to judge ourselves to see the way we are thinking. The more important thing is, yes, we should be angry at *ourselves* for the sin that is in us because it's part of our human nature. It's the way we are.

Verse 22—**But I say to you, that whoever is angry** (or desires ill will, or has this envy or hate) **towards his brother,** without a cause, just because they're human and they're doing something, because we have the wrong attitude, we have the wrong *spirit* towards a person (which is not love; it's actually hate) **shall be in danger of the judgment.** **And whoever says to his brother, Raca!** Which is to pull somebody down, to have this attitude against them, **shall be in danger of the council.** **But whoever says, You fool!** Which is an expression of hate, it's ill will to a person, "fool" based on imputing a motive or hate towards a person, **shall be in danger of hell fire** (gehenna fire), which is "shall be in danger of the second death," because this type of attitude, this type of ill will, this type of hate is not appropriate for somebody that is to enter God's family. This is about changing the way we think.

So just here alone, brethren, is great spiritual growth to be had by all of us. Because we understand the basic Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," that's simple, straightforward. But the spirit of this matter is completely different. Now, the spirit of this matter is, one, we wouldn't get angry, we won't belittle, we won't pull down, we wouldn't call somebody a "fool," or blame them for things with an ill will approach, which is hateful. Because if we do, if we have this wrong attitude or this wrong thinking towards other humans that don't have God's holy spirit, or even have God's holy spirit (it makes little difference), it's

about an attitude towards somebody, now, this is driven by pride. Pride drives these things because to have pride we will lift ourselves up and we *will* become envious. We *will* desire ill will towards another person. We'll become angry at them because of what they are doing, what they're doing - and generally it's what they're doing to us. Now, rarely do we have anger towards somebody that's doing something that doesn't affect us because all of these things go on in the world, well, we don't get angry at that - which is often sin. We just don't get angry at sin, but we should. We should get angry at sin within ourselves. But we get angry at others because they affect us if they do things to us. Well, this is about the test of attitude that we should have. Now, this is a test of a lifetime, that people will do things to us over our lifetime, and spiritual growth, the way we think differently powered by God's holy spirit, we're not to desire revenge. We're not to desire to get even, which is to become angry. We're not to desire to pull them down. We're not desiring to impute motive. We're not desiring to hate them, to have ill will towards them. Well, that is this Commandment being expanded.

Now, all of these things Christ is referring to on a physical level and points to something spiritual. There is a penalty to be paid for everything. If we have wrong thinking and wrong attitudes there *is* a penalty, and it's in the mind. Now, one of the greatest penalties that can be paid for a member of the Body of Christ is that God's flow of His spirit stops flowing to us because of unrepented sin. Now, Jesus Christ is saying there is a need to think differently than the natural carnal mind of selfishness. We went through the first sermon in this complete series of six so far where we looked at the fact that God's thinking and man's thinking are poles apart. Well, man's thinking is simply selfish, and therefore, we have to be overcoming this selfishness. So if we thought there was nothing that we could learn from God's Church, if we thought there is no growth to be had in this particular topic about "Thou shalt not kill," well, we're self-deluded if we think that. Because it's just *natural* to have ill will. It's *natural* to become angry. It's *natural* to become upset. It's *natural* to be offended by members of the Body of Christ. That's natural. And I'm saying it's natural because? The natural carnal mind exists in us all. We all, by nature, have this disposition towards murder, hate, anger, ill will, and taking offence, all of those things, these things that create unresolved issues in relationships, because God's way is about a relationship. We have to come into unity of thinking. So we should have no ill will, we should not despise another person, we should not pull another person down, we shouldn't let our pride get in the way, we shouldn't be taking offence about anything.

So God is saying here through Jesus Christ that we need to have stronger relationships by having the right attitude, by looking at our intent, *our* spiritual intent of the way we act and what we say and why we say what we do. So there is growth, brethren, to be had here.

Now, this is a topic where we can grow in and we can continue till the day we die. And the reason is because we are natural, we have human nature, and God says He wants to transform the way we think to think differently. Now, the moment we start to see any of these things rise up within our nature, within our thinking, the answer is to repent (which is to think differently), to repent and go before God and explain to God why we feel this way. And why do we feel this way? Because of pride, because our pride's being affected. We need to make sure that we come into a relationship with God through repentance,

through thinking differently, and seek to think the way God does, to seek to think the way God does about every matter.

Now, from that we can then go into an area about this with regards to military service or being in an army, for example, and the reason that we do not kill, we don't take life, we do not join the army. The reason why, that we will not join the army, the reason we won't go to war or join a military service is because of what God says. It's what God says about life and death. Now, there is a letter that is available to those that require to explain the reason they won't join the army. This is part of the letter. I'm going to read part of that letter because it's very helpful with regards to this thinking differently. We think differently. We do think differently, brethren, than the world, and this letter goes on talking about... we are "...member of the Church Of God. No member can take life (kill others), nor participate or support any effort that does so." So that's the overriding principle: we will not take life, we will not kill others, nor participate or support any effort that does so. Now, that explains a lot of things about whether a person would want to give money or aid to a military group that is out warring. Well, we wouldn't donate money to a military group that is supporting war because we do not support any effort towards killing or taking life.

"The basic teachings of God concerning His law regarding war, military service, and killing is the sixth Commandment that states, 'You shall not kill' (Exodus 20:13). The New Testament magnifies this basic principle by saying, 'Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him!' (John 3:15)." And then Paul goes on in 2 Corinthians 10:3 (just referring to it). Paul says, "though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh," because our war is within our minds, what we just covered here about the way we think. We think differently. We don't do a physical act of murder, but we have no thinking about getting even or warring. *God* is our defender. *God* will fight our battles for us.

Then this letter goes on and explains a bit more about the person living in this particular country and what we do as members of the Body of Christ. "In this country I strive to be law abiding and obey the laws of God towards others." Now, that is thinking differently than the world, "but if any law conflicts with God's, I must obey God." God is first. So that principle, which is found in Acts 5:29, the principle is, Peter said, "we ought to obey God rather than men." Now, that's the overriding principle when it applies to many things in the way man thinks. We obey God. God makes it very clear that whoever hates his brother is a murderer! They are a murderer because of their motive and intent. Well, we can't go to war. We can't join a military service. We can't do things that will contradict God's word. We think differently, and that's the purpose of life and why God called us into the Body of Christ, to learn to think differently... to learn to think differently. We've learned one principle: We obey God rather than men. Now this will apply to many things in life; military service is just one of them.

Continuing on: "I believe the teachings of the Church of God regarding a kind of dual citizenship that each member has. We are born citizens or subjects to the government under which we have been born or naturalized. As such, we are loyal citizens and subjects. We love our country. We are subject to its laws and its authority." But - it doesn't say this in the letter - but it's based on we obey God rather than the authority. Now, if the authority is in rebellion against God, for example, if they enforce Sunday worship, we won't do it. We would rather die than to worship the sun on Sunday.

Continuing on in the letter: "But we also have a spiritual citizenship for the Kingdom of God." Because we're begotten sons of God. "As the apostle Paul said, 'we are ambassadors for Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:20). Therefore, a member has a type of dual citizenship and in this Christian way of life," because we're citizens of a nation, but we are also citizens of another country. We represent another government. We are ambassadors for Christ. Christ is the King of kings. We represent Jesus Christ. We represent God the Father on this earth because of the way we live. Therefore, we have a type of dual citizenship because we have a citizenship that is physical, but we have a spiritual one because we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us.

Here it says, "My primary allegiance is to the Almighty God and His Son Jesus Christ who is coming as King in a Kingdom of God." Jesus Christ is coming as King of kings. He's going to establish a new government, of which we are ambassadors for now. "As an Ambassador for Christ, I abide loyal to the laws, rules, and regulations of this country," the rules of man, "including paying my way and faithfully paying taxes to a federal or local governments." Whatever the government is over us, we pay our tax. Now, here in Australia our tax starts on the first of July and it finishes on the 30th of June every year. Well, members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, baptized members, have due diligence to pay with regards to understanding this spiritual component. We have to abide by the laws. Now, if something is not a tax deduction, we shouldn't be claiming it as a tax deduction, because that's lying, that's deception. We abide by the rules and laws. Now if something, because of the tax laws is a tax deduction, we can claim it and we shouldn't feel bad about it. They are the laws of the land. So whatever tax is to be paid, we are to pay it. If something's a deduction by law, it's a deduction. Some people have set up what is called "Trusts," or they have family trusts or different ways of dividing income. If that is legal in the law of the land, it's legal, it's man's way. Well, we're subject to those things. If that's the law, that's the law. But the underlying principle is, we are faithful to those things, the government, "But ... if any conflicts between the laws of this country," the country we are in, "and God's laws," if there is any conflict in it, "we must obey God first."

Now, there is a lot to be said in that, and there's still a lot to be understood in this very principle, because the reality is, between taxes and tithing, tithing is first. Tithing is actually first because *God* is first in our life. Now, God says to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to give to God what is God's. Well, that's what we do. But the main principle is that we obey God first. So we obey the laws of the land and

we obey God. But if there is any type of conflict, for example, like military service, like joining an army or going to war or taking up arms to kill, to murder, or to demonstrate ill will, or to demonstrate hate, or to demonstrate envy, as Jesus Christ outlined, or anything that would pull down a brother, another person, we should not be involved in that. Therefore, we have to be very careful about what we do on the internet, what we do, what we write, because we need to be very careful what we say, what we do, and more importantly, brethren, what we think. The way we think is the key to understanding what Jesus Christ is saying. It's the way we *think* about other people.

Now, if we understand God's word and the truth, we would *not* desire to join an army. We would not desire to defend our country by going to war. We would not kill another person. We rely on God to be our defence.

Another point that we can look at here at this same time with regards to this principle in Acts 5:29, about obeying God rather than man, is voting. The Bible reveals that it is God who sets up rulers and removes them according to His will. If we are voting, we're going against God's will. We're trying to enforce *our* will, *our* desire from the natural carnal mind. Any government holding power does it because God allows it. The governments holding power do so only as long as God allows it. While they do so, members of the Body of Christ, those with God's holy spirit are instructed to be subject to them. However, it's according to that principle, and that principle is: should there be a conflict between the laws of God and the laws of man, then, of course, we are to obey the laws of God rather than the laws that man has implemented or are establishing. Those that are converted to God's way of life are ambassadors for Jesus Christ, which we covered previously with regards to military service. As ambassadors and citizens of the Kingdom of God, which is soon coming to this earth, we're just simply representing the Kingdom of God now on this earth. We are no longer to be involved in man's systems of government. Therefore, we do not vote. We don't push our opinion or our view because that's not thinking differently. If we force our opinion or a view by filling out a voting form, "This is what I want." "This is the way we see it." No, we represent Jesus Christ on this earth as ambassadors for Christ. Christ taught that His Kingdom was not of this world, therefore, His servants have no part in it, but rather, are called out of this world, which Revelation 18 talked about, "Come out of her, My people."

Now, this is this whole purpose of this sermon series, is about thinking differently. We're learning to think differently. And if at any time we feel motivated to have a view or have an opinion about a government, we have to be very careful because God is the one who places the government in there for a reason, because it's *His* will and purpose that will be achieved. We are to live our life under the government of God and we are to fulfill the laws of the land as long as it does not conflict with what God says about things. An example, military service or voting.

Jesus Christ said He will return to set up a Kingdom of God, a world government with righteousness and justice. Now, the world today, there is *no* righteousness. They don't have the thinking of God at all (except those in God's Church, members of the Body of Christ, baptized members who have God's holy spirit), and justice. Mankind cannot deliver justice because He does not think like God. He does not think

differently. He hasn't repented of his natural carnal mind. Therefore, we have to wait for the return of Jesus Christ to see this world government changed. They all have to be gotten rid of. Jesus Christ has to come back as King of kings and rule with righteousness, rule with the thinking of God, and with justice, which is all about right motives and right intent.

Today's justice system, they think that they are doing something right by having their courts and jurors and lawyers. Well, all of that's going to be abolished. All of that's going to be gotten rid of. Lawyers are going to be unemployed, brethren, in the Millennium. Lawyers are going to be unemployed because they know a manmade system. They know what they *think* is the rules of conduct within a court system. No, it's going to be pretty straight forward, really, because a person is going to come before those that represent the Government of God that *have* God's holy spirit, and a person can defend themselves. We don't need lawyers to have tricks and use tricky words. No, stand before the judge. And the question is, "Did you do this?" Well, it's pretty straight forward. Yes or no. "What was your intent?" Cause that's the key. "What was your intent?" So someone can do something and their intent may be right or their intent may be wrong. Today judges try to work it out. They can't. They don't know people's intent. And we have *clear evidence* of that for what has happened to an apostle in God's Church; that the world's system of judgment, of court systems, of lawyers, of all of these things, they have no understanding of the spirit of the law, the intent or the motive behind it. Because they just can't because they don't have God's spirit.

Well, that's going to change. We can rejoice in it! Well, when we get into the Millennium the same thing is going to apply as what we just covered. There will be no military. There will be no military service. And there'll be *no voting*. There'll be no voting because we're going to have righteous government. We're going to have justice in the land because it's going to be implemented. And it's all done because the change of thinking is taking place. Jesus Christ's thinking, which is not carnal, it's not natural, it's righteousness, is going to rule this earth, and therefore, we're going to see a new way of education, we're going to see a new way of thinking introduced on the earth. And God pours out His spirit. Mankind, those called that yield to God, will be able to think differently, and they won't want to go to war. They'll learn not to have ill will. They'll learn not to have envy. They'll learn that voting is a pointless view; it's having an opinion is a pointless view. It's only wise to have an opinion if it matches God.

Now, in all of this we need to be on guard. Because history has shown that people that have come into the Body of Christ that may not necessarily have come to understand this very principle, about obeying God rather than man. But it has to be the way *God* thinks about a matter, not about, "I've been told." Because in times past it has been said, "I can't vote." And people say, "Why can't you vote?" "The Church said I can't." Now, can we see what's wrong with that? Or, "I can't join the army." "Why?" "The Church said I can't." What's wrong with that? Well, this is about the Church said versus I believe... I believe. What we do has to come from us, brethren. It has to be, "I don't vote because I want to obey God, I believe God's word, and therefore, I don't want to vote. *I* don't want to vote." It's not the Church said I can't. And this is applied to many things in life where we have to be very careful about the words we use. "The Church said I can't work on the Sabbath." No, "I don't want to work on the Sabbath because I would rather obey God than man." *That's* the answer. It's not "the Church said," because that's like a justification. In other words,

"Well, I don't really agree, but the Church is making me say this." No, we agree with God. "I don't want to work on a Sabbath. I don't want to vote. And I don't want to join the army. And I don't want to have ill will towards anybody. I want to be reconciled at the first opportunity I get if something goes wrong within a relationship." *I want it. We want it. It's not that "the Church said."*

Matthew 5:27—You have heard it was said to those of old, **You shall not commit adultery**, referring to the physical act of adultery, which is having an unlawful relationship. **But I say**, Jesus Christ says, who's explaining the spirit of the law, **I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust (desire) for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart**, in his inner thinking. This is now about the spirit of the law, this thinking that we have about other people. Now, it can be a man towards a woman, or a woman towards a man. Now, there's lots of ways that this can take place. It can be a single person who has this desire, who looks at a woman in a sexual, lustful way, this desire towards her for self-satisfaction or self-gratification, has committed sin. He has committed adultery in his thinking with her already. Doesn't require a physical act. Requires no words. It requires no actions. It requires a thought process. It's about intent or motive, to let that mind wander. Now, in the reverse role it can happen with a woman towards a man. Now, this can happen when two people are married, that the married person looks outside of the marriage towards another person - a man looking towards a woman and a woman looking towards a man for the wrong motive within the person's thinking. Their motive and intent is *self-satisfaction*. It's to do with a state of mind. It's to do with inner thinking.

So this is the spirit of the law. It's the spirit of the law. This is about that thinking differently. We have to learn to think differently than what we do by nature. Now, by nature man, most men, will always look at a woman for the wrong reason. The natural carnal mind can't control itself. The natural carnal mind will take to self, it will look for self-gratification. Now, these days it's promoted more that women do the same towards men. These days a man takes off his shirt and flexes his abs or his muscles - it just is done on the TV, it's done in the movies - and women taking off their clothes; all of these things are about this way of thinking. It's about this committing adultery in the heart because it's the heart or the inner thinking that is the problem. So nothing has to be said. There has to be *no* actions that take place. Somebody can break God's law sitting in a lounge chair watching a TV program. That's how it can happen. It's *all* within the thinking. So a person's intent can wander.

Now, we might have right intents, but because of temptations and because of testing's, we have to then battle against those thoughts. Now, if we don't we will fall into this trap of committing adultery, the spirit of the law, not just the physical act.

Verse 33—Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, **You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the LORD**. Now, in the Old Testament they would actually go up and make an oath. They would perform their oath.

Verse 34—**But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne**. So in the Old Testament they would go up and they would make an oath, they would swear something. In other words, they'd make a vow or an oath. And God is saying here through Jesus Christ that we should make no

promises to God. Now, why would that be? Well, the reason is that we don't know what is going to happen tomorrow. So we may make a promise to God that, "If this happens, I'll do that." That's not the right attitude, of course, to have, but to turn around and say, "Well, I'm going to do this. This is what I'm promising you to do, God." Well, that's being very, very presumptuous, because the reality is we don't know what tomorrow brings. We may not be in the role. We may not be in capacity or in the capacity to be able to fulfill what we said. What we promised, what we said we would do, well, maybe we don't have the health to do it. We should not make promises to God because it comes from the way we think. We have to think balance. We have to think righteously. Now, if we think the right way about this matter we wouldn't make promises to God because we know our human condition. We know who we really are. We know our natural carnal mind, and anything it promises is based on selfishness. But powered by God's holy spirit we don't make promises we cannot keep because we don't know what our life is.

Jesus Christ is saying here, "Do not swear or make a promise at all to God; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne," **nor by earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, so this is like making an oath, because you cannot make one hair white or black.** So we have no power in reality over anything spiritual, none whatsoever. So no use making spiritual promises because we have no power over spiritual matters. It's *God* that has the power over spiritual matters. We can't change anything, so we shouldn't swear by anything. We shouldn't make promises or vows about anything, because we don't even know whether we can fulfill them or not because we don't know what tomorrow brings.

Verse 37. What are we to do? Because this is about the way we think, we think differently. So we don't make promises we can't keep. We don't make promises *at all* on this level. **But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.'** For whatever is more than this, 'Yes,' is 'Yes,' and the 'No,' 'No,' so **whatever is more than these is from the evil one.** So it's from pride! It's from pride! Now, pride thinks we can control things. Pride thinks we are in control. That's what it thinks! But the reality is we're not in control, God is in control, Jesus Christ is in control. We do not have power over God, so there's no use making promises to Him. We don't know what tomorrow brings. We don't know what the next hour brings. So why make a promise? Why make a promise? If we make promises, we lack spiritual understanding. We don't have the right thinking. So if we're out there making promises or trying to bribe God, we have the wrong thinking.

We have to come to learn to think differently, brethren, and when we are thinking differently, we know ourselves, we know God's great power, He's in control of all things, and therefore, we won't make promises to God, we'll be very careful about what we say to one another. So let's let our 'Yes's' be 'Yes,' and our 'No' be 'No,' because we don't know what tomorrow brings. We know that we can't make promises because we don't know whether we're even going to be alive to keep them. So Christ is saying here we need to think differently about giving oaths and promises and commitments about things. We need to think differently. We need to think that pride is the problem in this, that pride will make promises, pride will have an opinion. God is saying don't do any of those things. Back away from making promises because we are ambassadors for Christ. We are ambassadors for Christ. We are begotten sons of God, and the only thing we know is that we're being called to transform our thinking. We've been called to think differently

about life, to look at the spirit, the intent, the motive behind what we do and why we do it. Why do we make promises? Why do we make promises? Pride. Pride's got in the way. We're thinking wrongly. We don't make promises because we *know* the truth. We're thinking differently than our natural carnal mind.

Another point, brethren, we consider is about funerals and cremation. Now, the world thinks a particular way because of their belief, their belief system. Now, people believe they die, they have an immortal soul and either go to heaven or hell. And some religions believe that you're not to be buried, some people believe you're to be cremated; they burn you. American Indians, I believe, used to burn people, used to put them on things and burn them, whereas the western world in general they would go to what is called a funeral and they would bury them. And I believe in times past they used to bury people and stand them upright, which means if they were buried in a hole standing upright they were buried that way so their spirit could not go up to heaven (would you believe), whereas laying down flat you could. Don't understand all of that, but they're just the thinking's of mankind.

So what does the Bible say about funerals? What does the Bible say about cremation? Now, some people can't think about cremation. Some religions believe that cremation would be sin; you're never going to go to heaven if you are cremated. Well, what's the correct thinking on this? Well, brethren, we think differently than the world. People have said, "Well, can we be cremated?" Well, what does God say about it? The Bible does not specify a particular mode of burial for members of the Body of Christ, those that have God's holy spirit. Burial examples show that Hebrews, at the time of Jesus Christ, put the dead in a cave-like tomb. So they weren't buried under the ground, they were actually put in a tomb.

So let's look at that in **John 19:40—Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen**, so it wasn't a sheet. It wasn't a full sheet. It was actually a binding that took place and there was this binding of strips that went around and bound the body. They were strips of linen. So it's not a full sheet like a wrapping that took place. They bound the body of Christ in strips of linen, **with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury**. So that's what they would do. **Now, in the place where He was placed on the pole** (or impaled, or nailed to a stake) **there was a garden, and in that garden a new tomb in which no one had been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby**. Now, this is actually a tomb, so it's an empty hole. It's like a cave. And they placed the body inside it. It could have been dug out of the rock and there could have been a ledge there or could be just flat on the ground. But they placed the body there. And this body, the body of Jesus for this example, was bound up with strips of linen. When we look at that we can see clearly that this is a form of burial. This is not digging a hole six-feet deep and placing them in the ground. Now, there's a reason why people dig a hole six-feet deep and put them in the ground, and it's to do with decay, and it's to do with whether the body decays and when it decays and what will happen. Because if it is too shallow when it's placed in the ground, animals can dig it up. So putting it six-foot down, there is a particular reason why that takes place.

Well, what about cremation? What about cremation? We've seen here that Jesus Christ is placed in a tomb. He's not buried under the ground six-feet deep in a coffin. He's bound up in linen and placed in a tomb and then a rock is rolled over it.

Now, an interesting thing there with regards to the binding and not a sheet. Now, we look at the "shroud of Turin" for example. So we're going to divert now and just talk about the "shroud of Turin." We understand what the "shroud of Turin" is, which is basically a picture which is from a sheet that was (so-called) layed over a body, and the outline of the man's body was on the sheet. And some have said that it is the picture of Jesus Christ. So some have asked if the "shroud of Turin" is a picture of Jesus Christ. That's the question. Well, we should know straight-away that, of course, it is *not*. So let's go through that. Though many have tried, the "shroud of Turin" has never been proven or connected with the burial of Jesus Christ in *any way*. In fact, tests have proven that it is *not*. Laboratory research by the Roman Catholic Church has demonstrated that this piece of cloth was woven in the middle ages. A cardinal was quoted as saying that the calendar date range assigned to the shroud cloth was confirmed to be about 1260 or 1390 AD. Now, the evidence within the Bible itself can be from the very fact of what we just read. For example, in John 11:44, it plainly shows that the custom of the Jews in burying the dead was that several pieces of cloth were used to bind/bound around the body. Jesus' body was wound in, or bound in linen cloths, which is John 19:40.

The shroud could not have been Jesus Christ's burial sheet because Jesus Christ did not have long hair. Now that's the simplest point. Soon as we see something like that we know it was not the body and it wasn't the print of Jesus Christ that is on that shroud or that cloth. **1 Corinthians 11:14** clearly says, **It's a shame for a man to have long hair. Does not even nature itself teach that if a man has long hair it is a dishonor to him.** The image in the shroud has long hair, therefore, that burial cloth that they say, had no part, no connection with Jesus Christ. And that is just fake. It's a fraud. *It is a lie*. And no lie is of the truth. So we have no association with that particular belief system or that particular image. It's all false. It's all a lie, and it is not of the truth.

We think differently about the "shroud of Turin." We think the truth because God has revealed the truth to us. We are blessed, brethren. There are millions of people that believe that that shroud is an image of Jesus Christ and that Jesus Christ has long hair. Now, that is a deception and that is a lie.

Back to the statement with regards to cremation. We understand that Jesus Christ died and was placed in a grave-like tomb and He was bound with strips of cloth (strips of linen). The practice of cremation does not violate any Biblical command and has been used by various cultures through the centuries. Whether one chooses a traditional burial or cremation has no effect on the future resurrection of the person that has died, the deceased. The Bible promises that all who die will be resurrected, those that haven't *set* their minds against God. There are factors, however, that should be weighed if anybody, a member of the Body of Christ, is contemplating having his body or her body cremated because this is a choice to be made, the emotional effects on one's family. Within the western world cremation is now a favored way because, one, it's cheaper. Two, it doesn't take up as much space. Because space is money. Plots of

ground, digging holes six-foot down, coffins, the services, all the things mankind does as an industry - because unfortunately today funerals, cremations, the whole thing is just an industry, whether you have this particular coffin with this much money with these types of handles, whether or not you have a service, whether you drive the cars for 5k, whether you have funeral cars and how many people - and all of those things, it's all about money. Dying is very expensive in the western world! Once a person dies they can be cremated or they could be buried or they could be placed in a tomb, they could be stood upright, that doesn't really matter. Because when a person is dead they are dead. But before that, if a person was contemplating these things and wanting to place it down in writing, there is a time to consider these things.

The time following the death of loved ones is traumatic because people suffer. There's an emotional loss involved in anybody dying. And the most loving choice of disposing or getting rid of your own body would be one that is easiest on the family and friends. So it's not really about what we want, brethren, we have to consider all of these different impacts. We have to take into consider finances, we have to think about how other people will view these things, and what will happen to our family, the emotional impact on them, what makes it easier for family and friends. We would consider cremation after making a full consideration of all the facts. Cremation may not be necessarily the right choice for somebody because it might cause greater sorrow and suffering for family and friends.

So, brethren, there *is* no right or wrong whether or not we are buried, whether we're cremated, whether we're put in a tomb, whether we're laying down six-foot, whether we're standing up. It doesn't make any difference - face down, back down, cheap coffin, expensive coffin, plot in a cemetery, plot in a paddock, burned, cremated, put in an urn, put on the mantelpiece, put in a plot in the ground. It makes no difference to the members of the Body of Christ because they are dead and they are awaiting a resurrection. The only thing we could do would be consider the feelings and emotional effect on our family and friends. That would be the example because we love our neighbor. Whether a person is buried in the grave or cremated is a personal choice that an individual or family would make. Either way, the body returns to the dust from which it came and it's waiting a resurrection.

Well, brethren, that's just another example where we think differently. We think differently about the world because we believe the truth, we believe God. We know of a resurrection. So when we're dead, we're dead. Whether we're buried, whether we're burned, no matter what happens to our body, it makes no difference to us because we're dead, we're waiting a resurrection. But it *can* make a difference to those we love or those that love us, and therefore, we need to take into consideration *their* thinking, *their* thoughts about this matter when making such decisions. The reality is it is a personal choice, much like a lot of things in life is a personal choice.

Now, another area where we think differently, brethren, is about a topic like abortion or euthanasia, which is about taking a life. So let's look at what God says about it. We are not to judge whether life should or should not exist, as a matter of life or death belongs to God, the author of all life. Now, God says in 1 Timothy 6:13—I urge you in the sight of God, who gives life to all things. We are not to

choose if life should or should not exist based on our own understanding or thinking because this is wrong thinking. Now, if we think we have the authority to have an abortion or we think we have the authority to have euthanasia implied to ourselves, well, that is wrong thinking. That is unbalanced thinking. That's not how God thinks.

Now, what's the problem? Well, it's pride, because we're making the decision ourselves. It's coming from our self! When God said He is the author of life and He alone *gives* life and He alone can *take life*. It's not up to us. So how does this apply with regards to the death penalty? The death penalty is something from God. It is God's *authority* to take life. Because He gives life, He can take it. But we can't! We cannot choose of and by ourselves to do these things, to take life. It's not in our power. God provided the law as a spiritual guide to when life can be taken by man, and it's on God's behalf. So mankind *can* take life, but it's based on God's authority. So God has to do it. God has the authority and the power to do it. Well, God has transferred that power of life and death over to man under his government, so it's according to His Commandments.

Mankind does have the authority to take life, but it must be based on God's word. The law of God reveals when the death penalty was to be paid. Because of sin, such as adultery, rape, murder, etcetera, the death penalty would be implemented. The death penalty is for the sinner, not the victim. **Exodus 20:13—Thou shalt not murder.** So that's looking at it on the higher level, which is about the overview, that we don't have the control over life or death. It's not our decision. We, as humans, using our own judgment are very good at justifying sin. With this justification we find reasons why we could or should have control over life or death. We often make ourselves "more merciful" than God Himself. That's what we do. We justify why we can do it. "It's *my* body. I can do what I *want* with *my* body." "It's *my* body. I can put myself to sleep because I'm in too much pain." We're just coming up with a reason to express our selfishness, the way we want things to go. So we don't have control over life or death. We make ourselves "more merciful" than God by implementing these things.

To take someone's life because of one's own judgment is a matter that breaks the spirit of God's law, and God's law is the way of love, the way of agape, which is this outgoing concern. So if we were to take someone's life as a matter of our own judgment, it would involve pride, anger, unrighteous judgment, and other attitudes of the mind that are sin. Only God can judge mankind rightly, righteously. And if He (God) commands that life be taken, then those who serve God faithfully will do as God has said because it is a matter of God's righteous judgment and not man's selfish judgment. If we can find a way to justify why someone can abort a baby, we can also soon find a way to justify euthanasia, justify murder, revenge. Anything, all the sins, we just justify. We can just find a reason *why* we should go and burn somebody's house down. We can find a reason *why* we can kill somebody. We can find a reason *why* we can do lots of things in life because we're looking at it from the natural carnal mind's way. The main reason mankind will not obey God when it comes to taking a life of a murderer, a rapist - *why?* - is because they *refuse* to believe God about a second life, the second resurrection, the Hundred-years.

Now, mankind refuses to believe that, and therefore, they'll be "more merciful" than God and say, "Well, the rapist (or the murderer), well, we can't put them to death because then what happens?" Well, they don't know. Whereas, we know, brethren. God knows. It's His plan. He says a rapist or a murderer should be put to death because they have sinned, and they'll be resurrected to have an opportunity to come to know God, to repent, to *think differently*.

Well, we, brethren, think differently about euthanasia. We understand that it is sin. It is not our right to choose to take our own life! It is not our right to do it. We, as members of the Body of Christ, understand these spiritual principles, but the world doesn't, therefore, we think differently about these matters.

Now, another area where think differently, brethren, is that we don't form the thinking of astrology. We don't follow star signs. We don't follow lucky numbers, and all this type of thing, because it's a thinking of mankind. Now, every newspaper will have astrology charts. They'll have lucky numbers. They'll have the zodiac and the signs of when you were born and all those things. Well, that is *all* the thinking of mankind. Now, what's really wrong with astrology and the zodiac and all of that garbage? What's really wrong with it?

Astrology is a form of idolatry because it puts man's *advice* before God's *ways*. It puts man's *thinking* before God's thinking. It's a sin of idolatry. Now, what's idolatry? We're lifting something else up. We're relying on something else. We're *trusting* in something else. We're turning our thinking towards it. Therefore, it becomes our idol, it's what we put first. Now, if we put astrology before God's thinking it is idolatry. If we trust in *anything* other than God it becomes our idol. Now, astrology is working out what's going to happen tomorrow, how long we're going to live, palm reading, looking at palms and saying, "This line does this, and this line means that." The zodiac means we're going to do "this" next week and we're going to have "this" lucky number and we're all going to do "that," and all this other stuff. Well, that is idolatry. We're looking for guidance from something other than God. We're looking for guidance from something - can be anything, astrology is one of them - *other* than God's word. Because God's word doesn't say to turn to the things that man has made, man's thinking, which are idols. Astrology teaches people to try to obtain success by means of astrology. So that's what astrology's about. Astrologers, that's what they do; they teach people that you can be successful, you can have all these lucky numbers, you can do "this," you can do "that," you're going to marry someone tall, you're going to do "this," you're going to die then. Well, it's all manmade thinking. It's not of God.

God explicitly forbids this worship of the constellation and hosts of heaven. So let's look at that in **2 Kings 23:1**—Then the king sent them to gather all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to him. And the king went up to the house of the LORD with all the men of Judah, and with him all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which is the law, which had been found in the house of the LORD. So here it is the law of God, which is the first five books of the Bible, being read to all the people, "in their hearing." They're hearing the words of God, what God thinks about a matter.

Verse 3—Then the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and keep His commandments, His testimonies, and His statutes, with all *his* heart and with all *his* life, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took their stand for the covenant. Now, brethren, this is similar to us. We stand before God, and after baptism, receipt of God's holy spirit, we agree to follow the LORD God, Yahweh Elohim and keep *all His commandments* in spirit and truth. We're going to think differently than the world because we're keeping God's law. The world doesn't want God's law. They don't want to know about God's law. They don't want to keep God's law. They think it's foolishness. And we have said we will keep all His testimonies, all His words, all His statutes, which are all the instructions that He has given about how to live, and we're going to do it with *all our heart*. Now, this is with our inner thinking because we're going to do this with the right spirit, which is led by God's holy spirit, the right motive, and the right intent. We're going to examine ourselves every single day to see what our motive was, of *why* we did what we did. We're going to think *differently* about life. We're going to think *differently* than our natural carnal mind because we want to be like God; we want to be righteous. Powered by God's holy spirit we can live righteousness.

Well, here the king is saying that he's going to keep the commandments, the statutes, and with all his heart, with all his inner thinking, and all his life he's going to dedicate his life to it. He's going to implement all this change into his life, "to perform," which is to do the words of this agreement, which this covenant about God's law, "that were written in this book," which is the Bible. "And all the people took their stand for the covenant." So they're all agreeing for the covenant. They all stand and they're all agreeing with what the king is doing. "Yeah, we'll be with you."

And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, a false god, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven, which is like Ishtar, which is one of the goddesses of the Assyrians, and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. So here we see he's destroying false religions, anything that is false, anything that is idolatrous, which is "the hosts of heaven," which is astrology, which is to do with the zodiac and these things from the natural carnal mind. Now, all worship of Baal is from the natural carnal mind. It's a false god. It's something that man has set up in his thinking. Well, here it is a king is pulling it all down. Well, this points us to the return of Jesus Christ, our High Priest. He's coming back as King of kings and Lord of lords and He's going to do exactly this. He's going to *destroy* all of these things. All of these things are going to be taken out of the world. They're going to be burned before mankind, and the ashes are going to be spread all over the place because Jesus Christ is going to destroy them. It's *idolatrous* things, they're idols. They are things of astrology and they're things of the zodiac and all of these images that are put up to worship manmade gods. They're going to be destroyed.

Verse 5—Then he removed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense on the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places all around Jerusalem, and those who burned incense to Baal, now, this is talking about false religion. *All* of the religious orders, whether they're Catholic, whether they're Protestant, whether they're Muslim, whether they're Orthodox, doesn't

make any difference, whether they're Hindu, whether they're Jewish, they're all going to have to think differently, otherwise, they're going to be destroyed. And here we see the king is getting rid of all of that religious order, all of those that carry titles that are not of God. They're not belonging to God's true Church. They're going to have to be brought down. They're going to have to be destroyed. And all of those who burn incense to Baal (all false religion), **to the sun, to the moon**, all those that worship on a Sunday, those that now worship on wrong days instead of what God has established, **to constellations**, which is astrologers - all going to be destroyed - **and to all the host of heaven**. Anybody that is involved in the zodiac and all the astrology, all the star signs are going to be destroyed. **And he brought out the wooden images from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook of Kidron and ground it to ashes, and threw it on the graves of the common people.** So he got rid of this false system of worship, this idolatry that was taking place.

Going back now to the statement about astrology. Some firmly believe that the success of their crops depends upon planting by the phases of the moon and the signs of the zodiac. It's human reasoning! God, nowhere in the Bible tells us to build our lives around moon phases or signs of the three zodiac or as astrologers teach. So all of these things that man has made are just simply lies.

God prophesies that He will burn up unrepentant astrologers. So let's have a look at that. **Isaiah 47:10—** **For you have trusted in your own wickedness**, well, from the thinking of man, evil within our thinking. People have *trusted* in that. **You have said, No one sees me**, as if God doesn't exist and God doesn't know everything. **Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you**, it's twisted your thinking, **And you have said in your heart**, in your inner thinking, in your mind, the way you think, **I am, and there is no one else besides me**. In other words, "I exist and there is no one else that's watching me." **Therefore, evil shall come upon you**, because of this wrong thinking. Because people think that they can get away with these things. Well, they can't and evil is going to come upon mankind because of it. **You shall not know from where it arises**. They're not ready for trouble. They don't think it's coming, **And trouble shall befall you** (trouble shall fall upon you), and that's what's coming, brethren. Tribulation is trouble falling upon mankind. **You shall not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly**. It's going to start quickly, and when it happens it's going to be sudden. People are not going to know what's going on. **Which you shall not know**.

Stand now with your enchantments, so all of this evil thinking, all of this astrology, and all this manmade thinking, well, stand with it and see whether it's going to help you. It says, "Stand now with your enchantments," **and the multitude of your sorceries**, all the things you trust in, well, just see how you go while this is happening, **in which you have labored from your youth**, because the education system, people trust in education, people trust in money, people trust in religion, false religion. Well, it's all going to be pulled down. **Perhaps you will be able to profit. Perhaps you will be able to prevail**. So this is the thinking, "Well, this is what's going to get me through, the astrology, the soothsaying, things I trust in, my money, my zodiac signs, my astrology, what my charts tell me, all these things I rely on." Well, just see how you go when the tribulation starts.

You were wearied in the multitude of your counsels, all this thinking, going to people and asking, "Well, what does my star sign say today? What does my lucky number say? Going on the internet, researching all this garbage, well, what good's it going to be? **Let now the astrologers, and the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you**, well, let's just see what happens when the tribulation starts. See whether *any* of this is going to do you any good. **For these things shall come upon you**. Trouble and destruction is coming, brethren.

Behold, they shall be as stubble, and fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves, so none of this is going to. Astrology is not going to save itself. Astrologers aren't going to save themselves. Nothing is going to help them but repentance, *but thinking differently*, in trusting and relying on something different, which is God, relying on God's word. ...**from the power of the flame. It shall not be a coal to be warmed by**, so it's not going to be a benefit to you where you'd have a fire and you'd be able to warm yourself and get some relief. No, this is going to be a flame and a fire, and a coal that's going to *destroy*! It's going to be a big disadvantage to you physically because you have trusted in something else! You have not turned and trusted in Yahweh Elohim, the one true God. **Nor a fire to sit before!** There's not going to be any comfort in this. This is about destruction. **Thus they shall be to you with whom you have labored, your merchants from your youth; they shall wander each one to his quarter. No one shall save you.** So, brethren, we have to be careful that we're not trusting in *anything* outside of Yahweh Elohim, the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ. We are *not* to turn to astrology. We shouldn't be even *considering* looking at lucky numbers or lucky dates or looking at star signs or guidance or counsellors or astrologers or soothsayers. It's all *garbage*! It's all from the thinking of mankind! All of it! And we should have *nothing* to do with it whatsoever!

We can see, brethren, from these things that we've discussed that we are different. So why are we different than those of the world? Well, firstly, we have been called by God the Father to be different. We were in the world, we thought like the world, we had the natural carnal mind, and then God called us into a relationship with Him, into a relationship with one another, members of the Body of Christ. So we think differently than the world because we've been called to think differently.

God has placed truth into our minds, therefore, we *can* think differently. Now, this is something that is going to cause us difficulty with the world, difficulty with those that love us and that we love, because as we come out of the world, as we draw away from that way of thinking we're going to run into difficulties with them because we don't agree with them on certain matters. And the things that we don't agree with them about are the things we've discussed in this sermon series.

So the first point is we've been called to think differently, therefore, we are going to be persecuted by the world because of that change, the change that God is fulfilling in us. And this change will enable us to think differently. And this change is all brought about by point two: we have received the gift of God's holy spirit. We have received the gift of God's thinking. We have received the gift of God's righteousness that can dwell in us that we can yield to it. Now, that is a choice that we have.

Once called and once given the gift of repentance and received the gift of the holy spirit, we then have the capacity to think like God. We have the capacity to choose to think like God. Now, this choosing to think like God will separate us further and further away from the way of the natural carnal mind.

Another point, we believe God. Now, we yield to God, we yield to His thinking through the power of His holy spirit, and we believe Him. We believe the truth that He places into the Church. Now, because we believe the truth, we're going to be different. Now, this is the badge of honor that we wear. We *are* different because we believe God. So over this last series of sermons, the six that we've been through about thinking differently, how we think differently, and some of the topics (not all of them), some of the topics where we do think differently, it is all about believing God. It's about believing the truth. Now, Jesus Christ said we have to have faith, and those that have faith can enter the Kingdom of God. Well, having faith is believing God and then implementing it into our life. Faith is living what we believe. Now, we believe God, we think differently than mankind, than society, than the natural carnal mind. We think differently than the way we *did* because we believe God. And because we believe God, we now live it. And we live it by implementing it, therefore, there is a change not only in our thinking but a change in our behavior. There's a change in the way we think. There's a change in our actions. And there's a change in the way we approach our relationships. We have a different attitude than the world.

Point four is we live the difference. We have a different attitude than the world. Now, the world has various attitudes about many topics. Well, because we think differently we are changing the way we think, we change our attitude. So when we are reviled, we don't revile back, because we think differently. We've changed our attitude about it. Now, all of the topics that we've looked at, we have a different attitude than the world. Whether it's euthanasia, no matter what it is, whether it's about marriage, all of those things, we have a different attitude about it. And the most important thing about having this different attitude is that we simply live it; we live it into our life. We don't have to go telling people about our different way of thinking or the different attitude we have; we are to implement this thinking, this change of thinking into our relationships with one another. Yes, we will be different. Yes, we'll be persecuted because of the righteousness that God is implementing into our life that we're yielding to. Key to it all is that we yield to God's holy spirit, that we believe God, we believe the truth that He places into the Church, and we live a different way than the natural carnal mind. We think differently. We *choose* to be different, and we choose a different attitude every single day, a different attitude than the natural carnal mind.

Let's have a look at **Acts 17:22**. This is Paul and Paul is out preaching repentance and preaching about the one true God. **Verse 22—Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill** (can be "Hill of Areopagus") which is one of their locations where they worshiped gods. **Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious.** So what he's doing, he's just outlining here the way that they thought. They were thinking a particular way and they would consider themselves religious, which is following a religion. **...for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship,** we looked at this previously with regards to all of the objects of worship. Mankind worships God in many, many ways which are not the ways that He says He should be worshiped. But man, with his own natural thinking, worships God or gods

according to what suits *him* as an individual. I even found an altar with this inscription, and the inscription read: **TO AN UNKNOWN GOD**. Theos, to an unknown Theos, which is an unknown God. So the many gods they believed in, they gave credit to all of them. Well, they had a particular monument, or inscription, or altar that was for the purpose of making sure they didn't miss out on worshipping a god, just in case there was another god that they weren't aware of or was more powerful, maybe, than their own gods. Well, they had to have an altar to this unknown God because they didn't want to leave any of the gods out because it would be a disadvantage to them.

Well, Paul recognized their foolishness, but he's highlighting to them that they had this altar to this unknown God. **Therefore**, he's now bringing in the one true God, **Therefore, the One**, because there's one true God, **the One whom whom you worship without knowing**, this God that you're missing out on, this God that you don't know about, well, this One God that they don't know of Paul is now going to explain who this God is. ...**the One whom you worship without knowing it**, the one you're trying to give credit to, **Him I proclaim to you**. Now Paul would have their interest because they would be wanting to know about this one God, because obviously this God they're not aware of, which is this unknown God, and they've got this altar to this particular God.

Verse 24—God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is LORD of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. So now Paul is letting them know that there is a God, Yahweh Elohim. He's not telling them that yet. He's saying, well, this Theos, "This God, who made the world and everything in it," including you as a human being and everything else, the total creation, everything that has life, God gave it, "since He is LORD," He is the master," of heaven and earth, and He does not dwell in temples (buildings) made with hands," not manmade churches, not manmade temples or altars. That's not where He dwells. Now, we understand, brethren, because of the calling that we were given, because of the truth we were given, because we believe God - those are the reasons why and we have a different attitude because of all of that - we have a different attitude towards this very topic about "dwell in temples." We know, because of this calling, that God dwells *in* whom He calls to dwell in. God dwells in us, brethren, members of the Body of Christ. God the Father dwells in *us*. How does He achieve that? He puts His thinking, His righteousness into us. His thinking is in us, therefore, we have access to righteousness, we have access to the very mind of God and we think differently because we yield to that thinking.

Verse 25—Nor is He, he's talking about God, **worshiped with men's hands**. So there's nothing a man can do by the sense of building something for God. It's a pointless exercise unless God gives the instruction to build it. But man worships in different ways and we've looked at that. Man worships all of these god's in different ways, and most of today's society worships something that is false, that is related to self. Self is the biggest image that is put up before God. Man worships himself, and by that it's the self-satisfaction, or the selfishness, that is trying to be fulfilled within the human. Paul says, **Nor is He (God) worshipped with men's hand**, can't make anything physical for Him, **as though He needed anything**, which He doesn't, **since He gives to all life, breath, and all things**. Now, we looked at that with regards to God provides life. Now, God provides everything for all life. So, since He, God, gives all life, everything,

including breath, and food, and shelter, everything, God gives humans thought, God gives humans the breath of life. God gives breath to animals. All life, all thinking, whether it's robotic in the sense of animal thinking, which is without the spirit of man or without the spirit in man, God provides that as well.

So this is the God, the creator of all things, who created everything. He is the master. He is the God of heaven and earth, and He doesn't dwell in anything physical that can be made by hands, like church buildings and all of those things that man has done. And He can't be worshipped by something that man makes, the way man thinks God should be worshipped. No. God clearly outlined the way He is to be worshiped. How's that? In spirit, which is from the inner thinking, which requires a calling, from the spirit, the spirit of the law, and in truth according to God's word. His word is the way He outlines how He is to be worshipped. So man can't do it any other way, although He tries. And man worships God as if God needs something. Like God needs a building, and you have to wear this particular robe before you can have incense put up to Him, and you have to kneel and you have to turn up on a Sunday. All of that, it's all garbage and it's all rubbish, the manmade thinking. It's manmade gods that man is worshipping. Well, he doesn't understand it because man is not called at this time to worship the one true God in spirit and truth.

Well, that day is going to change, and that day changes at the end of the Day of the Lord, which is that last day when Jesus Christ intervenes into this earth; there's going to be a change of thinking. People are going to be required to think differently at the end of that day. Now, after that man will have the opportunity and the potential to worship God in spirit and truth.

Well, this God that gives life to all things, and **verse 26—And He has made from one blood every nation of man to dwell on the face of the earth**, which is all from Adam, one blood, all from Adam and Eve, of the one blood, of the one flesh. All men descend from Adam. All men, all women descend from Adam and Eve. And that's where creation started, and that's the reason man should never elevate himself thinking he is better than anybody else, that he is above somebody else, whether it's to do with color, whether it's to do with any component of the physical life. One person should never elevate themselves over another because everybody descended from Adam, therefore, we should have no prejudices, no bias, we should simply be thankful that we even have life itself.

And continuing on, verse 26... **and has determined their pre-appointed times and boundaries of their habitation**. So God is in control of everything. God is *over* everything. God has set *limits* to where man will dwell. For example, man dwells on the earth. This is man's habitation. Going off to the moon, going off to all these other *planets*, what's the point? You can't live there; there's no oxygen. It's artificial. If you go there, you're going to have to take oxygen tanks. You're going to run out of food. Everything that supports life is available on this earth. Well, God has appointed a time, which is 6,000-years of man's self-rule. He has determined this. He's appointed times, the 6,000-years, then He's appointed 1,000-years without Satan. *Then* He has appointed the 100-years without Satan, where mankind will be resurrected

to inhabit the earth, to learn the truth, to think differently. What an incredible God! What a wonderful plan! Well, Paul is now highlighting this very fact.

Verse 27—so that they should seek the LORD, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. Well, how's He not far from each one of us? Well, we know God is spirit, but the area here that he's covering is about prayer and obedience. God is not far from us, brethren, if we're willing to communicate to Him, if we're willing to seek Him in prayer and in obedience. Because if we're disobedient, it cuts us off from that relationship with God. Well, mankind, if called to it, doesn't have to grope in the darkness. They can have a relationship with God because they're called to it. But unless we're called, man gropes for God. Man cannot *find* God. They can only set up gods, the things that they worship from their mind.

It requires a calling, which we're so blessed to have. We are so blessed to have had that calling. We have had the gift of God's holy spirit. We've received it, mankind hasn't. We have a different way of thinking. We should be thankful for a calling. We should be thankful, the fact that we do think differently. Well, God has given us this opportunity that He is not far from each one of us at all. ...**for in Him**, in God the Father, Yahweh Elohim, **we live and move and have our being.** Well, they have their being because God created them, and they're alive because God wills it, God allows it. And they live and move, they live their life, they have their being, they have the breath of life because God allows it.

...**as also some of your poets have said, For we are also His offspring.** Yes, brethren, members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God *are* God's offspring. Now, mankind is, in one way because they're physical and God created them, but we are genuinely His offspring, brethren, because we've been called. And because of this calling we are *begotten* sons of God. We are *sons of God* with a potential to enter a spirit life, to be *sons* of God in Elohim.

Verse 29—Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped the art of man's devising. In other words, it's not physical. God's nature, God's personality, God's spirit is not physical, it's spirit. You can't make it from the thinking of mankind. It requires God's holy spirit. So we shouldn't think that we can have God's spirit or we can have God's nature just by desiring it ourselves without a calling. It has to be that God calls us first.

Verse 30—Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, because all of the things they were doing, all the physical things they were doing, well, God knows these things. And here it is saying that, well, in man's ignorance, well, God overlooks that, **but now commands all men everywhere to repent,** which is to think differently. God desires that man will think differently. Now, God desires that we think differently because we've been called to it. Well, when we get into the Millennium, God will give the opportunity to this, to this very scripture. **Truly, these times of ignorance,** the first 6,000-years of man, **God will overlook,** because man is going to live his life as he lives his life, in his own natural thinking. But now, once we get to the Millennium, **Now God commands all men everywhere to repent,** to think differently, **because He (God) has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness,**

which is, **by the Man**, which is by Jesus Christ, **whom He has ordained**, whom God has sent. God established Jesus Christ. **He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.** So this is the promise for mankind because Jesus Christ has been resurrected we have that same potential. Because He has been resurrected from the dead we have this assurance of a promise that we also can be changed to spirit. What an incredible thing that God has promised to mankind. But it's all based on verse 30, that God is looking for all men everywhere to repent *if* they're called to it. So during this 6,000-years, we, brethren, are so blessed, because we've been called to repentance. Mankind is now facing a Hundred-years, and a thousand-years to this very call, that men everywhere repent. Men everywhere are to think differently, and it's going to be through a calling, and it's going to be through the gift of God's holy spirit. And once they have received God's holy spirit, they then can believe God. They then can believe the truth. And based on that, brethren, they will develop different way of thinking. They will think like God. They'll think righteousness because they'll believe God and they'll think the truth, and they'll develop, over time, right attitudes, right attitudes about life, right attitudes about God.

Matthew 4:17—This is just covering now the beginning of work that He was doing. And what was that work that He was doing? Well, when He came the first time He preached something to the people. **From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.** This is talking about Jesus Christ *is* the way. So there is a time to begin to think differently, to draw close to God, because via this repenting, this thinking differently, we have access to the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven. And it is at hand because Jesus Christ was there. He was enabling the way. Because it's at hand because Jesus Christ was there to enable the way. Remember when Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, I am the life," because it's all through believing Jesus Christ. It's all through believing God that we have access to the Kingdom of God, we have access to God's holy spirit. We only have access to God's holy spirit because Jesus Christ died to cover our sins.

So Jesus Christ went and preached. The first thing He was doing was preaching, which was, "He began to preach and to say, Repent," think differently than the natural carnal mind, but it has to be powered by God's holy spirit. The way that it can happen is through the gift of God's spirit. It's through a calling. It's through believing God, through having access to God's spirit, to God's way of thinking.

So, brethren, the time is coming when this very scripture will be fulfilled more fully than it ever has, which is at the beginning of the Millennium. And the same things going to happen. Jesus Christ will continue with this message. He came the first time with this message. Well, the second time the same message is going to come to mankind. "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." *He* is the way. This is the only way that mankind can enter the Kingdom of God, through repentance, through thinking differently. The same is going to happen during the Hundred-years when man is resurrected. The same message is going to go out, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" Jesus Christ is the way to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mark 1:14—Now after John was put in prison, Jesus Christ came to Galilee, preaching the gospel (the good news) of the Kingdom of God, so this was about a new government that's going to come to this

earth. It's about the family of Elohim; it's about the family of Elohim, the Elohim of God, the Family of God. So Jesus Christ came preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God, the good news of the *family* of God, which is really about how to enter Elohim. Mankind has the potential to enter Elohim, which is the good news *from* God, the good news *of* the Kingdom of God, **and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand**, because Jesus Christ was there. **Repent**, change our thinking, change the way we think from the natural carnal mind. And what else is required in repentance? Because when we're called, brethren, we're called through the gift of repentance. We're called as a gift from God. We're granted the gift of repentance. Repentance is the ability to change the way we think, from stop using the natural carnal mind and what *it* thinks is right and wrong to what God says is right and wrong. Stop thinking that our motive and *intent* is righteous of and by itself, because it's not, and change our thinking to have the motive and intent of God. And that motive and intent of God is love, where man's motive and intent is selfishness, it's ill will, it looks after self.

So what do we have to do to change our thinking? Well, firstly, we have to repent, which is to start this process of changing the way we think. Start yielding to God's holy spirit, the way God says things should be done, the way God outlines life should be lived in obedience to Him, keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days, Tithing, to mention a few, **and believe in the gospel. Believe** God. Believe in the good news about this family of God. Believe in this good news *about* Elohim. Believe the good news of the plan of God through the Holy Days. Believe in the return of Jesus Christ. Believe that He is the Passover sacrifice for the covering of sin. Believe in the Day of Pentecost where God poured out His holy spirit. Believe in a calling. Believe in genuine repentance. Believe in the forgiveness of sin as an ongoing process because of our repentance. Believe that God has established one true Church. Believe in the fact that we have the opportunity to have this personal relationship with God. And believe that through the power of God's holy spirit we *can* think differently, we can change the way we think. We *can* think righteousness.

And the key of all of this, of course, is that we are in a process of changing the way we think. That's why we were called. We have been called to think differently, to not yield to our selfishness but to yield to God's holy spirit, to yield to righteousness.

Well, we'll end the sermon series here, brethren. □