

Well, brethren, it's good to be back in Minnesota once again. And it's just as it was the last time: It's hot! Even in Minnesota!

Brethren, we've been looking at how God is going to harvest a people from His garden. And we've been looking at that through some past sermons. So today we will continue to look at how God will do that in this sermon today. So that will be your title today, *God's Harvest*, and this is *Part 3*.

We began to look in the past sermons at how God uses His influence on the mind, the human mind, and also how Satan influences that mind. And we will look at, also, how our human mind, our human nature affects the human mind. And out of all of these three influences that we see - God's influence, Satan's influence, and our own human nature—we will see how important all of these are in the development of the spiritual mind that God wants you and me to have and to develop. We know that God uses the holy spirit to influence our minds, the ones that He has called and given the opportunity to be in His family, the one that He is creating, Elohim.

God let's you and me know about a spirit world that exists, and He lets us know about that spirit world that has a capability to affect the human mind. God lets us know about this adversary, an adversary that rebelled against the Great God of this universe a long, long time ago, brethren. So now Satan, that adversary, is trying to destroy all that God is creating - His family, Elohim. So God lets you and me know about this adversary that exists, who is a spirit being, a being that God Himself created, who rebelled. And he is our adversary as well, as he is the Great God of this universe and His Son. So God lets us know we are in a spiritual war. That's what we are in. So let's go over to 2 Corinthians 10. And let's start there today in 2 Corinthians 10. And we covered some of this in the last sermon, but this is relevant to the sermon today.

In 2 Corinthians 10:3 God lets us know that we are in a spiritual war against this being that rebelled. And the apostle Paul tells us about this war, this spiritual war. And he tells us about the weapons that we are to use in fighting this war that we find our self in. Paul tells us about the war and the influences of that being, Satan, the one that rebelled who is a spirit being, a powerful spirit being, who is invisible to the human eyes, the eyes of mankind. And we see all kinds of cartoons about this being running around in a red suit with a pitchfork poking people in the rear. And we also see some flames of fire. But God lets you and me know that there is a real being named Satan and he is a spirit being, a powerful spirit being. And God lets you and me know that Satan drew a third of the demons (as we call them today). They were angels at that time, but they rebelled along with that being. And they have the ability to affect the mind.

So in 2 Corinthians 10:3 we find what Paul wrote. And He wrote: **Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.** So we can see that God is letting you and me know what kind of war

that we find our self in. And it is not about the flesh. It is not about that physical war in the flesh, it is a spiritual war.

And verse 4 tells us about the weapons that we are to use. And it says, **(The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strong holds;)** casting down arguments, and every high thing—let's notice—that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. And let's notice what God tells that us we are to do: **bringing every thought into captivity**, because of a spirit world, because of our human nature. God tells us this about the mind so that we can see that it is spiritual. And that is what is being said, and that's what Paul is telling us about. And Paul is telling us it's about the mind, the mind that God is creating. And we are to bring every thought - God says every thought—into captivity. So it's about the mind and the spiritual war we find our self in against this mind, the human mind. And those that God has given His spirit to, we have to bring everything that comes into this mind, we have to weigh it and we have to focus on how we are to prepare the mind and how we are to direct that mind to the things of God. That's what we are continuously having to do. So God had it written in His book so that you and me could understand. And God tells us how to use this mind that He is giving us so that we can be harvested from His garden and become in His Family, Elohim.

God said through Paul about "casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God." So we are to bring those thoughts into captivity when they hit this mind, especially when the influences become strong. And you and me know that they do become strong. So we have to weigh and bring all of these thoughts, especially the wrong ones that enter this mind. And understand where it's coming from, and we have to bring it into captivity, and we have to weigh it. And the way God has had it written in His book, when He talks about weighing, He talks about sifting. That's what some of the words really means, "to sift through" to get to the truth. And you have that ability because God has given it to you.

Let's go over to Romans 8, **Romans 8:1**. God tells us that, ***There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.*** So God tells us here that we are to have a walk that has nothing to do with the flesh, the pulls of the flesh, but according to the spirit, because of what Jesus Christ did for you and me. He paid that penalty for you and me, and we know and understand that God has a timeframe for those that will be harvested from His garden. And at this time it's mainly about those that will be in that first harvest, the firstfruits, as God calls it, the first that will be harvested from His garden. And these are the ones that are walking according to the spirit, along with some others that have been called for a purpose, that will live into the millennial reign of Jesus Christ when He returns to this earth. They will be there. The Church of God does not cease to exist, brethren, it will continue on. And it's like the mustard seed that God told us about. It will grow and it will grow until it encompasses the whole earth. And the Church of God has a very important part to play in the Millennium, those that live into the Millennium. We understand that that Millennium will last for a thousand years, and we understand that there will be some sitting in this room that will live into that Millennium to be a part of the Church of God.

Let's look at **verse 2—For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.** So it's done the same for those that God has called, just like it did in Paul's day, that are living according to the spirit, just like Paul did. **For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh...** God tells us that this human mind is hostile to His ways, so there had to be a Savior, because of sin, what this human mind would do. And **God *did* this by sending Jesus Christ, His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin.** That's why it was done, because of that sin, so that we could have forgiveness of sin, so that we could be harvested from God's garden. And **He condemned sin in the flesh, (verse 4), that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us—let's notice who it is—who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.** So that is what it's about. It's about the spiritual, it's not about the physical. It's not about this human flesh.

**Verse 5—For those who live according to the flesh set their mind on the things of the flesh,** "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." And we've had a series of sermons about that very thing that affects man. And that's what most of mankind does, they succumb to those lusts. Even in the Church of God, brethren. We have walked side-by-side with brethren that have succumbed to this very thing, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." And it has taken so many out of God's Church because of those lusts. But those that have been called, **those *who live according to the spirit,*** God says, those that focus upon **the things of the spirit.** That's what it's about and that's who it's about. God says, **For to be carnally minded *is* death.** In other words, I guess you could say to focus upon those lust of man, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." If it's not repented of it will bring about death for eternity. God says "to be carnally minded is death."

**Verse 7—**It's what we were talking about earlier, about this carnal mind that is *is* enmity (hostile) against God. And God says, **it's not subject to the law of God.** And this is so important for you and me to understand, because when we deal with our wives, our husbands, our friends, our neighbors, who may not be in the Church of God, we understand this, this very thing. And we understand that it is not their time, brethren, and we should not be imposing what God has given to you and me upon them.

So it's not about this physical flesh that it can be done, this understanding. You can't do it with the physical mind. It has to be revealed to you by God. **So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** So when we read this in God's book, this is a very profound statement, brethren, "Those who are in the flesh cannot please God." So it is spiritual, and you and I understand that. And God has given you that understanding. He's opened that mind so that you can "see" these things. And that is the only way that you can do it, if God grants you the ability to "see." And it's only then.

God tells us that we are not in the flesh, let's notice, **but in the spirit, if,** there's that word "*if*" that keeps getting in the way, **if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you.** So to have this understanding from God you have to have God's spirit, to even comprehend what God is imparting to this mind. And without it, it is impossible. So we understand when that spirit can dwell in us. It's when God has called and when God has granted you His holy spirit (that guarantee) and that spirit is dwelling in you. Because **if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ *is* in you—let's notice what's being said—the body *is* dead because of sin, but the spirit *is* life because of righteousness. But if the spirit of**

**Him who raised Jesus from the dead**, so it's talking about God the Father, **dwells in you**, talking about that holy spirit, **He who raised Christ from the dead (God the Father) will also give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit which dwells in you**. So what this is saying: If you have God's spirit, the one that raised Jesus Christ from the dead will harvest you from His garden when your time comes. That's what is being said.

Look at Romans 8:12. So if we know these things, that it is not about the flesh, that it is about that which is spiritual, God gives us instructions in His book through Paul. And we see in Romans 8:12 what we are to do. And God tells us that **we are debtors—not to the flesh, not to live according to the flesh**, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." And if we live this way, just like we just read, we will die - if it's unrepented of. But if we live **by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, we will live**. So we have opportunity for eternal life. And it is a guarantee that God is giving you through His holy spirit. After you were baptized God gave you that guarantee that you would have a resurrection from the dead.

**Verse 14—For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God**. So if you're led by the holy spirit God says we are sons and daughters of God. So this is talking about you and me, those sitting in this room that have God's spirit, those that are led by that spirit. And God is telling us to prepare our minds and to direct our mind to the things of God. That's what we are to do. And we will cover some of this in this sermon about those three things that we talked about earlier at the beginning of the sermon, the influences of the mind; the influences by God, the influences by Satan, and the influences of our own nature, our human nature. This carnal mind, God says, is hostile to Him, so we have to direct our mind to God. And it is through the mind that we do it. And that is what we focus on, the spiritual things of God. We're told to come out of this world where we find "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." And there are so many influences there, brethren. I think I mentioned this in the last sermon: It's hard to sit down with your family and watch a movie with your children. You have to cover your eyes at some of the things that you see (and your ears) because of these very lusts that affect the mind. And we are not to focus upon the things of this world. We are to come out of that. And we are not to partake in those things that affect the mind, those lusts. And our human nature naturally attracts us to those things, to those lusts. I still don't understand - I've said it before - why it takes a woman in a bikini to sell an automobile. I don't know what that has to do with the automobile. But everything you see advertised just about has sex tacked to it somewhere. And man uses those things. So our human nature attracts us to those things that we see, those lusts. And we have to fight those battles, those things that physically affect our minds, the lusts of man.

Let's look at Romans 12, Romans 12, just over a few pages. God tells us what we are to do with this body that we find this mind in, that we find the spiritual mind that is directing this physical body that we find our self in. Paul wrote, **Romans 12:1—I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God—and let's notice how God had this written—*which is your reasonable service***. So that's what God says. That's just what is reasonable for you to be doing, the way you are to live your lives. That's what God expects; it's not an option. It's the

way we are to live. So this is how we present our physical bodies to God, by not partaking of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," that is in Satan's world, because of what it does to the mind. That's why we don't partake of those things, the mind that God is creating in each and every one of us that He has called and granted His spirit to. So God is telling us of a way of life that is expected. That's just what God expects you to do once He has called you and given you His spirit.

God tells us not be conformed to Satan's world, not to be influenced by the world that has been created through the influences of the demon world, the enticements that are there. Every time you turn on that little box with TV written on it you see those influences of the demon world, the system that has been created upon this earth and influenced upon by those demons. So we have to be aware of this system that is here, that has been created. God says that we are not to partake of that system, those lusts that we find in that system. God says we are to **be transformed by the renewing of our minds, that we may prove**—let's notice—**what is good and what is acceptable and perfect will of God.** God tells us to direct our mind to the things of God, and He says we do that by being a *living* sacrifice acceptable to God, the right and correct way to live our lives. And God gives us instructions of how to live in this physical body, not to participate in the system that has been created in this world that is hostile to God and the ways of God. We know about the mind, this human mind that is hostile to God and cannot be. God tells us to weigh every thought that comes into this human mind - every thought. We're to come out of this world and live a different way of life, one that will be acceptable to the Great God of this universe and His Son.

And by doing that it does renew your mind, and it's doing something else, brethren. It's preparing you for a Kingdom that is coming to this earth in just a short while. When God harvests those firstfruits there will still be the Church of God upon this earth, brethren, that will continue on into the Millennium for a purpose. That is just the beginning of the mustard seed, brethren. That's just a small grain at the beginning. God says it will eventually encompass this whole earth. Can we imagine such a time? I can't comprehend that. But that is in our future. God said it. He had it wrote in this book about that mustard seed that would grow. And it's about the mind.

So God lets us prepare our mind and prepare for that Kingdom. That's why you are here. That's our name, "Preparing for the Kingdom of God" that is coming to this earth. And God tells us in **verse 9** how to act, and it give us rules of conduct. And living this way prepares the mind for what is coming and it automatically brings about a way of life when we become obedient to the way that God says we are to live this life.

**Romans 12:9** it says, **Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.** In other words, focus upon those things and focus on what is good. God tells us that all good things come from Him. And that's where our focus should be, on Him and His influences upon our mind.

**Verse 10**—God gives us some rules of conduct: **Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit**—and let's notice—**serving the Lord.** That's what we are to be doing. And when we do that we can do something

else. We can **rejoice in hope** when we do these things. We can be **patient in our tribulation**, in our trials. And we can **continue steadfast in prayer**. And we talked about prayer in the last sermon, about how we should pray and the importance of prayer in our lives. Because you cannot prepare the mind that God is building in you without prayer. And you cannot direct the mind to the things of God without that prayer. That's what it takes. And we have to continue steadfastly in prayer is what God says. So God is telling you and me how we are to stay close to Him, and that is through that prayer, that prayer life that we should have. So we should heed these words that God had written in His book about that prayer life, and we should continuously be praying for His Kingdom to come. And I think everyone is ready for that Kingdom to be here.

**Verse 14**—It gets a little harder for some of the instructions that God gives us. **Bless those who persecute you**. And I said this last week, it's hard to bless the IRS. It's just a hard thing to do. And they *are* persecuting us, brethren, it's never ending. But God says that we are to bless those that persecute us. So it gets a little harder sometimes when someone is really persecuting you. And God says we are to bless and not to curse. And it's kind of hard sometimes because you want to pick up a big stick sometime and straighten the situation out. And with this mind we have we think we can straighten it out sometimes. If we just had a baseball bat, we could straighten some things up. God tells us to, **Rejoice with those who rejoice**, and that's us, and that's what we're doing today. We are rejoicing with one another. We're so happy to be able to come together with brethren of like mind. God says we are to **weep with those who weep**. And there are times that we need to do those things. God tells us that we are to, **Be of the same mind toward one another**. And don't set our mind on high things. So that's some of the things that we've been talking about, those high things that the human mind will just naturally gravitate to. It's just in all of us, brethren, that human nature. God says that we are to stay focused upon Him and His Kingdom that is coming to this earth. God tells you and me how to direct our mind. He had it written in a book about how to direct that mind, and we're reading about it today, what we are to do, what God expects you and me to do. And if we do those things we can prepare the mind for what is coming upon this earth in just a short while.

God says don't set our mind on high things, the lust of man, "the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life," the things that man thinks is important. The big, shiny automobiles, the sex that is out there. God tells us to **associate with the humble**. So when God tells us to associate with the humble, where do we find the humble? We find it here in the Church of God, brethren. That's where you find it. It's not in the world. We see the pride of man in the world.

We talked about the human mind in the last sermon and how it has the capacity to swell. And I talked a little bit about Donald Trump, because this room could not contain his mind, because it can swell so big. So I used that as an example because we can comprehend that one with this human mind.

God says, don't be wise in our own opinions. And when we turn on that TV and we look at the politicians, they have the answers to the whole world, brethren, and they have an opinion of how to solve it. Every one of them. They think they can solve it. God says don't let this mind swell up with the pride of life.

God says to, **Have regard for the good things in the sight of all men.** And we know that all good things come from Him. That's the only place that you can find it.

**Verse 18**—God says, **If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.**

Everybody, if we can. But when we look at this world, Satan's world, we can see the impossibility of doing such a thing. All we see is ISIS cutting heads off. The whole Middle East is on fire, brethren. It's coming to the whole world. The world is on the brink of chaos that I don't think our minds can understand. When the financial systems of this world collapse, I don't think we can comprehend the chaos that will be here. That's where we're at. We're on the verge.

God says that there is a time that He will repay, and He says that vengeance is His, that He will be the one to repay. Just like the IRS. Sometimes I would just like to repay the IRS with what I think they deserve, but God says we can't do that. We have to wait on Him. And God says He will repay. And He tells us about a lake of fire that is there. And God will clean it up, brethren, at the end. It will be cleaned up through that lake of fire.

God tells us don't be overcome by the evil that we find in Satan's world, but overcome evil with good. God says that's how it *will* be done in the end. That's how it will be overcome. We understand that that good will come from the Great God of this universe, to bring that Kingdom to this earth so that man can learn the true way to live life, the way that God says, the way that you're learning now, brethren. That's what you're doing Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day by Holy Day, learning how to live a life that God tells you to live in this book. We know that that good will be here when God sends it back to this earth with Jesus Christ to set up the Kingdom of God upon this earth, a just government upon this earth. And that will be the beginning of the good that will come to this earth.

Let's look at chapter 13:1. God set up a way in His Church to prepare the mind of those that He has called, and it's through the ministry that He does it. He does it through an apostle. He does it through the prophets, and down through the evangelists, through the pastors, and down to the elders. And that's the way that God works. And that's the way that helps direct the mind to the things of God - through God's ministry - so that we can learn the true ways of God.

Let's look at **Romans 13:1**—God says to, **Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God.** When we look at the way that God has set up everything, even the physical things, the universe that we see out there, God is the governing authority, brethren. And we've had sermons about this when we saw those angelic beings that were around His throne, governing the whole universe, brethren. It's not just about the earth, they're governing everything that is there, those spirit beings, those 24-elders that are there. But God is bringing His government to this earth and He has a form of His government upon this earth now through the authority that has been given to them through the Great God of this universe. I hope we understand that nothing could happen without God allowing it to happen. God has a purpose and God is bringing His plan to fruition. God is the grand authority of all - everything. And I hope we understand that. God says, **the authorities that exist are appointed by God.** That's how it's done.

**Verse 2—Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist—let's notice—will bring judgment upon themselves.** And if it's unrepented there is a lake of fire at the end of this age, to bring that judgment about. Just because judgment is delayed does not mean that judgment is not there. And we understand that the Church of God is under judgment now, and that's just how God is working.

**Verse 3—For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil.** So when we talk about the ministry and the way that God works, the ministry is not a terror to good works, but to evil. **Do you want to be afraid of the authority?** That's the question that is being asked. **Do what is good,** in other words, the things we're discussing today about how to live your life. And it will never be an issue, brethren; live the way God says to live and it's never an issue. ...**you will have praise from the same** if you do these things. **For he is—let's notice—God's minister for good,** that good that is coming to this earth when Jesus Christ returns to this earth in just a short while. That's the good. And what you're learning today helps prepare the mind for what is coming. And we always have to direct our minds to the things of God. And that's why God's ministry is here today, to help you to direct your mind to the things of God, to stay focused, brethren.

**Verse 11— Do this, knowing the time, that it is high time to awake out of sleep.** And I don't think you could say this at a better time in the Church of God than the time we find our self in. It's not a time to be dozing off. It's not a time to go back to sleep. And we have actually seen some go back to sleep. It has actually happened. It's a time to let God prepare your mind for what we will face in the near future. God says, **for now our salvation is nearer than we first believed.** This is very true for you and me, because we know the timeframe. We know how much time is left. We don't need this book, though, to look on the horizon and see the chaos that is coming, the destruction that is coming if God does not intervene in the affairs of man. So this is more true for us than it has ever been.

We are on a countdown, brethren, to the return of Jesus Christ in just a short while. If not, we would be a puff of smoke. Man would destroy every living thing upon the face of this earth. And we can see it. We can see it on the horizon. We can see it building. Russia has started up their nuclear programs again and they are building those nuclear weapons. We can see those in the Middle East are ready to arm themselves. Saudi Arabia probably already has done it. Iran, Iraq, the atrocities that are here. I wish God's Kingdom was here now. I cannot imagine living under the terror that some live under. They're giving women away as prizes to the soldiers in ISIS, those that are captive. Can you imagine such a thing? We don't focus on those things a lot, but it's happening. And we've turned a blind-eye, pretty much, to those atrocities. We can see Satan's world coming to an end though. We can see those things building. You want to talk about evil, that's evil, brethren, the way women are being treated. The good news is we see a new world right behind all these atrocities that we are seeing. And the good that we've been talking about will be here upon the face of this earth. And our salvation is near, brethren, and I can't wait.

God tells us that, **The night is far spent,** and it is because we can see the end. We can see the end of it all. We are the Church of God at the end of this age, brethren, and we are preparing for what is coming to this earth, that good that is coming. God says, **the day is at hand.** And it's not long before that

salvation will be a reality. God says, **Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness**, and He tells us something we are to do, we are to **put on the armor of light**. And we went through some of this in the last sermon about this armor that we are to put on. God tells us we are to put on all the armor, not just part of it. We're to put all of it on.

**Verse 13**—God says, **Let us walk properly**, in other words, let God direct your steps, direct the mind, or deem necessary for you. And that means coming out of this world and not taking part in this world which is contrary to the way that God says we are to live our lives. We are to walk properly. We are not to be associating with the drunkards of this world, the revelry that is out here. We're not to partake of the lewdness of the lust that we see. We're not to fulfill the lust of the flesh. That's not where our minds should be. Not on this flesh that has such pulls on the human mind. We are to let God prepare our minds and direct our steps to His ways.

**Verse 14**—God says, **put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts**. So God is telling us that is not where our minds should be, on those things. We are to let God prepare our minds and direct our mind to the ways of God, the ways that we find in this book.

Let's go over to Ephesians 4, Ephesians 4:22. All of us came out of this world. All of us developed ways of thinking. God tells you and me that we are to put away the old ways of thinking, those habits that we developed with that old way of thinking. We are to change. These old habits that we developed, most of them have to be put away. And we have to look at our human nature, our own nature and look at how our mind has been influenced by this world that has been created, Satan's world. And some of us really develop some bad habits that have to be changed. So we are to look at our nature and change. That human nature is "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." And if we don't change, it can take us out of God's Church, if we don't learn a new way of life. It can so influence our mind. And we have seen so many go by the wayside because they didn't do this very thing. They didn't continue to change. And they fell by the wayside because of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." That's what took them out. The mind begins to think, without God's spirit, how great it is. And it has the capacity to swell so big, brethren. I've said it before: It amazes me how God could contain something that could swell so big in such a small container. You know when you blow up a balloon? You know how it looks? That's the way the mind is. It can blow itself up, just like that balloon, and it can swell so big.

**Ephesians 4:20** tells us that we are to put off our former conduct, the way that we lived and conducted our lives that were contrary to God's way of life, the corrupt things that we did, the deceitful lusts that we partook of. We're not to do it anymore. We are to change.

Let's notice **verse 23**, what God says we are to do. We are to **be renewed in the spirit of our mind**, just what we're talking about, that mind that can swell so big. And we are to **put on the new man** (or the new woman) **which was created according to God**, what God is creating in that mind, **in true righteousness and holiness**, so that we can be harvested from God's garden, brethren. And to throw it away because of these lusts that we are talking about would be a horrible, horrible thing, brethren...to

throw it away. But we've seen many do just that, to succumb to those influences of our human nature, those influences on the mind. God says that we are to put on the new, the new man (the new woman) that was created according to God in true righteousness and holiness. God influences our mind through that holy spirit to lead us in the right direction. That's how God does it.

**Verse 25** tells us about this human nature, that we are to put away those old ways of thinking, the old habits, the old ways of doing things. And God says in **verse 25** to put away lying, and **Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor**. And we can see who it's talking about. God tells us who they are; **we are members of one another**. So that's who it's talking about. We are to speak the truth to one another. We are not to be liars in the Church of God. And when a minister asks a question of you, you would be lying to the Great God if you did such a thing. That's who you would be lying to. God says don't lie. We are to direct our mind to the things of God, and we are told to speak the truth to one another. We are a family, brethren, so God tells us we are to direct the mind to the things that He says we are to direct it to.

And **verse 26**—God says we are not to sin when we are angry, and we are not to let the sun go down on our wrath, **nor give place to the devil**. Because if you do, if you "give place to the devil" he will influence that mind and it *can* take you out of God's Church if repentance does not take place. Unrepented sin will give Satan and the demons all the space that they need to destroy you, and you could end up in the lake of fire.

**Verse 28**, God tells us, **Let him who stole steal no longer**, so we are to change, **but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give to him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification**—let's notice why—that it may impart grace to the hearer. In other words, God is telling us to direct our minds to the things of God. That's what God is telling us. **And don't grieve the holy spirit of God**, the spirit that He has granted you. And how would we grieve that holy spirit? We would grieve that holy spirit by committing sin. That's how we would do it. God's spirit cannot dwell in sin, and if we conduct our self in sin, that would grieve the holy spirit of God... if we did such a thing. God says, "Don't grieve the holy spirit" by/through which you were sealed. And let's notice, for the day that you would be harvested from His garden, "the day of redemption." God says to be harvested from His garden we have to do these things that we are reading about in His book.

**Verse 31**—We have to **let all bitterness, anger, clamor, evil speaking be put away, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you**. And it was done through that sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That's how it was done, that forgiveness, so that we could have that forgiveness of sin. Jesus Christ died a horrible death to pay that price, and He did it for us, and for the whole world eventually. But especially for us now, in the Church of God, those that are alive at this time.

**Ephesians 5:1**, God gives us further instructions, and He says, **be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God**

**for a sweet-smelling aroma.** So God tells us to be followers "as dear children." And when we look at children, I like obedient children, and I'm sure every one of you do too. It's hard to like an unruly child. God says to be followers of Him as children. We're not to follow Him as unruly children. We're to follow Him as obedient children, and that brings joy. It's a wonderful thing to see an obedient child. And I see the heads shaking, so I think everybody understands that, the way we are to follow God. So it's saying that we are to direct our minds to the way that God says to live our life, as those children.

**Verse 6**—It says, **Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God—let's notice what's being said—comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them.** You don't want to have God's wrath, brethren. I can assure you, you don't want to be there when God pours out His wrath. You would *definitely* want to be close to the Great God of this universe and His Son.

**Verse 15**—**See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.** So when God tells us to be wise and not fools, how do we do such a thing? Wisdom comes from God. And I think all of us understand that. We become wise by directing our mind to the things of God. That's how you do it. ...**redeeming the time (verse 16).** So life is short, and we can look on the horizon and tell that we don't have much time, those of us that are alive at this time. We don't have much time left. God says we are **to redeem the time because the days are evil.** And it's just like what we were talking about. The Middle East is on fire. ISIS is cutting the heads off, giving women away as prizes to those soldiers that are captive. And I can't imagine such a thing. But this is Satan's world, brethren. It's not God's world. We do have to redeem the time because those days are evil that we are living in. We live at the end of an age when some awesome things will take place upon this earth. And we can see them already. We see some horrific things at the end of this age that are taking place. We *do* have eyes to see that evil that is taking place. God says that you and me are to redeem the time that is ahead and stay close to Him and prepare our minds for what is ahead. We will see some horrible events take place upon this earth.

**Verse 17** tells us, **do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.** And we know what that is. We know that it is the will of God to create His Family, Elohim. We know that His will is to send 144,000 back to this earth in just a short while. That's God's will, to set up a new government upon this earth, a just government.

**Verse 18** tells us (last part) to **be filled with the spirit.** In other words, let God prepare the mind that He is creating. And we need to stay close to God. And we just heard earlier in the sermon, we do that through this prayer life, by praying to the Great God, so that we will not succumb to the lusts that are out there, as we have seen so many do even in the Church of God, "the pride of life," succumb to this human nature we have. We need to be praying to the one that can guide us and help us.

**Verse 19**—God says for you and me to **speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,** in other words, focused on the spiritual, not on the physical, not on the pulls of this world. We are to be **singing and making melody in our heart (our minds) to the Lord,** because we can see what's on the horizon, that Kingdom that is coming. And we do look forward to that time. And it's a unique way of

saying it, because I could see the happiness when we walked into this room. I could see that "melody" in your mind (better said). I could hear you down the hall. I didn't have to look at the sign, I just followed the noise. That's what it's talking about, that melody in the heart, the mind, the happiness that we see on the Sabbath day. I can see that happiness here.

**Verse 20—giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,** so we should thank God for our minds. We should thank God for what He has allowed you to "see" through this mind, because that's what it's about. But it is about a battle that takes place in the mind that Paul talked about, the battle for your mind that ensues. But we should always give thanks to God for opening our minds to His truth and to His plan, His plan for all of mankind. And we should thank God for that understanding that He has given to us, His family that He is creating, so that we can be harvested from His garden.

**Ephesians 6:11—God says to, Put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil,** the influence of the demon world to this mind. And that's the reason we put this armor on, because of the demon world that God lets you and me know about that exists.

**Verse 12** Paul tells us that **we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*** that can influence this mind, brethren. They are there. And it is a spiritual war, as Paul said, so we have to put on the spiritual armor that he's talking about to protect the mind. That's what it's about, protecting that mind. God tells us about the darkness of this age that has been created by that demon world, Satan's world, and He says they are "spiritual hosts of wickedness." That's what God says.

**Verse 14—Stand, therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,** in other words, living the way that God says live, **and having shod your feet—let's notice how—with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith** so that we can **quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one,** the one that tries to influence the mind that God is creating. **And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit,** the sword that we use, the sword of the spirit. Let's notice— **which is the word of God.** That's what that sword is. **...praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.**

**Verse 19—and for me, that utterance may be given.** So this is talking about Paul, because he lived in an evil age too in his time upon this earth. Paul fought the government of his day, just as we do. We fight the government of our day. And Paul wanted this prayer so that he could open his mouth boldly in his day, **to make known the mystery of the gospel.** And he was able to do that, because we are reading it today, brethren. We are reading what Paul wrote and what Paul did. And we've went back and looked at some of the trials that Paul went through.

Paul said in **verse 20—for which I am an ambassador in chains**; he was and we are. We have the governments of our day that do not like God's Church. Paul said we speak boldly, just as Paul did. And hopefully everyone prays for the ministry. I hope everyone is doing that.

God says we have to put on the whole armor of God. So we find ourselves just as Paul did, as ambassadors for Christ. That's what we are.

Let's go over to Colossians 3, Colossians 3. Brethren, when we look at the governments of this day and we see the morals of the governments in the United States of America, I think everyone knows the Supreme Court ruling that just came down and the moral issues that they addressed. We know that marriage is between a man and a woman, but the Supreme Court ruling today is against what God said in this book. The most powerful court on the face of this earth, and now they are contrary to the laws of God. So we do have to put on the armor of God in the times we find our self in at the end of this age.

**Colossians 3:1** gives us some encouraging words, and it says, **If you were raised with Christ**, in other words, if you've been baptized and given God's spirit (better said) we **seek those things which are above**, and we understand that that's where Jesus Christ is today, at the right hand of God. That's where He is. And He's preparing to come back to this earth. He's coming back to set up a true and righteous government upon this earth, not like man's, not like the Supreme Court that rules the United States of America, which has a moral problem today. God's Government will be a just government with the correct way to live life.

God says to set our minds on things above, on God's government that is coming. That's what we should be focusing upon. God says, **Set your mind not on the things of this earth**, earthly things.

**Verse 3—For you died**, in other words, what baptism is picturing, paints us a picture, going into that watery grave and coming back up and putting on the new man/new woman. And now we are to live a different way of life, a new way of life.

**Verse 4** tells us that if we do this thing, these things, **When Jesus Christ which is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory**. Now, this is primarily talking about the first harvest out of God's Church, God's garden, the firstfruits. **Therefore, put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry**. So we are told to live a different way of life.

**Verse 6** he tells us, **Because of these things**, we just read about, **the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you also walked when you lived in them**. All of us came out of this world, and all of us partook of these things at different levels. But now God says you are to put off all of this, **anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language**. And all of us have had to deal with issues of our past, the way that we lived our lives. All of us had to deal with the influences of our human nature, and its influences. All of us have had our past, and now we are to change. We are to be a new man or new

woman. That's what God says. And now we now have to let God direct our mind to the things of God. God says we are to be thankful for revealing the truth to this mind.

**Verse 12—Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. It's not an option, "You must do." We have to live a different way of life. We have to forgive one another. God says it's not an option, we must do it. It's not to take place in God's family. **But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God—let's notice—rule in your hearts** (better said, "the mind") **in which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.** So God is telling you and me that we should be thankful for revealing these things to us, for revealing His truth and His great plan for all of mankind. And for this, you and me, of all people, should be most thankful, to know the truth.**

Let's go over to 2 Corinthians 4, 2 Corinthians 4. **2 Corinthians 4**, and God says, **since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy** - and all of us have, brethren. God has been very merciful to us. And because of that **we do not lose heart**, because of what God has revealed to us about His plan. We've read the last page of the book. We know the end of it. We know the end of the story. So we have received much mercy by God letting us know the end of the story. **But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending our self to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But even if our gospel is veiled—let's notice who it's veiled to, God tell us— it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose mind the god of this age has blinded**, by his influences, even those that have walked side by side with you and me. That's how powerful it is. We have seen it take those out of God's Church. And now their gospel is veiled again. They have succumbed to the influences of the demon world again, and now their gospel is veiled. God tells us that the whole world is deceived. God says that He's had mercy upon you and me because we're not deceived; and that is merciful. God's opened our minds. That's how He did it. And He did it through the holy spirit. And God has begotten you and me, and it's through the mind that He did it, through that holy spirit. And He opened that mind so that we can "see." We can see the end of the book. We can see the end of the story. And we know who wins at the end. God tells us here that the "god of this age," that's who he is; that's who God says he is - and he has blinded all of mankind *except* those that God has shown mercy to.

**Verse 5—For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness—let's notice—who has shone in our hearts** (better said, "the mind")...and let's notice why and how, **to give the light of the knowledge**, it's how it's done, understanding. "To give the knowledge." "To prepare the mind." "To direct our paths to the things of God." So it's said in many different ways in God's book.

God says, **we have this treasure in earthen vessels**, and we do. I hope we all understand what God's spirit is worth. God calls it treasure. And I hope everyone understands the odds of God giving you His spirit in the age of man, for that 6,000-years. There are other scriptures that tell us about the pearl of

great price, and they tell us about a man that found treasure in a field and went and sold everything that he had so he could purchase and he could buy that pearl of great price.

God says that, **We are hard-pressed on every side**, and the reason why is because of the understanding that we have, yet we are not crushed; **we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken**; because we understand, because of the understanding that God has afforded you. So we understand about that spiritual war that Paul told us about, and He had it written in His book so that He could open our mind and understand those words of Paul. So we know that God has shown mercy to us and He's given us His spirit so that we can prepare for the Kingdom of God that is coming to this earth.

**2 Corinthians 4:14.** And it's talking about God that raised up Jesus Christ, and He will also raise us up with Jesus. **For all things are for your sake, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Therefore, we do not lose heart**, because we understand, because we know these things. That spirit that God is giving us is a guarantee that we will be resurrected into a spiritual body, just like Jesus Christ, *if* (there's the word "*if*") if we continue in the faith to the end. And that's the reason we don't lose heart, because we understand this and we understand death. And we understand the guarantee that has been given to us through that holy spirit, that we will be resurrected into a spiritual body.

Verse 17, Paul tell us about a light affliction. Now, we know Paul's affliction was anything but light, but this is the way he viewed it. Didn't matter what he had to go through, he recognized that treasure that God had given him. So Paul says it's a light affliction. That's the way he looked at it. And we don't look at the things that are seen. That's not what it's about. It's not about the things that we can see with these human eyes. It's about what God is creating. God is a creating God and He is creating His Family, Elohim, a spiritual creation. That's what it's about. And He's doing it through the mind, through His holy spirit. So that's the things we look at, what God is creating. And we don't look at the physical. That's why Paul said it was a light affliction, because he was not looking at the physical. He was looking at what God was creating. And Paul, it did not matter what he had to go through, it would be a light affliction, I think, for Paul, regardless of what he went through. So we see through the physical to the spiritual with this mind that God has afforded us. And we look at those things which are not seen. We have hope. We have faith. God says that we are like pilgrims in this world. And you and me are just like Abraham, we look for that same city that Abraham looked for, the City of God, the City of Peace, Jerusalem. Abraham looked to the spirit. Abraham looked for the spiritual temple that God is creating, the temple that God is building.

And we look at "the things which are not seen," because we're looking at the same things that Abraham looked for, the same thing that Paul looked for. We know that the carnal mind is hostile toward God, and it is only by God's spirit that we can "see" the things that are not seen. God says, **For the things—let's notice—which are seen are temporary.** That's the temporary part. **But the things which are not seen are eternal.** Hard to grasp your mind around what God had written, the things that you and me hope for, that spiritual body that will have eternal life, age-lasting life.

And when I look at the pictures of that Hubble Telescope I think that's the only way that I can think about eternity, because I can't grasp it with this mind. So we cannot comprehend eternity on a physical plane, something that has no end. And I know that what they see through that Hubble Telescope is limited. And it's massive, brethren, what is out there. And I'm in awe at what is out there in the universe that God has created. And I know there's a purpose for everything out there. God has a purpose for it. But I cannot comprehend a light-year, just one light-year. This mind will not comprehend it. I cannot comprehend a thousand years. I can comprehend seventy because I've lived seventy. I can comprehend that's very short. I can comprehend eighty, maybe a hundred years, maybe two hundred. But you know, when it gets past that history kind of fades away for us, because everyone that we were connected to is gone, we have no basis. Our grandparents are gone, the great-grandparents are gone. So when it gets past that for me things just kind of fade away. And when you talk about light-years, that's well above my comprehension, to comprehend such a thing. But I know it's there. God says it's there, light-years. Maybe you can comprehend a light-year, I don't know. But God says, "The things which are not seen are eternal." And there is no way we can comprehend just that statement, no way.

2 Corinthians 5:1. It's what we were talking about, a spiritual body, a spiritual body that we will have if we endure to the end. That is waiting for those that will be in their resurrection from this flesh, from the dead, those that will be harvested from God's garden.

2 Corinthians 5:1 tells us, **we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent**, so it's talking about the flesh, the body, if it is **destroyed, we have a building from God**, a spiritual body, brethren. We understand what God is doing. We understand that He is building His spiritual temple at this time. We understand the order. We understand the harvest and the different harvests that are in God's book. We know that He's called for 144,000 to be harvested from His garden at the return of Jesus Christ in that first harvest. We know that God has called some to live into the millennial reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth. And we understand that we all, regardless of when that change takes place, whenever we are harvested we have that building from God, that spiritual body that we will be resurrected into *if* we continue to the end...that word "*if*." We have that **house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens**, is what God says.

**Verse 2—For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed—let's notice—with our habitation which is from heaven**, so it's talking about that spiritual body that we all desire to be harvested into. That's what we look forward to, eternal life.

**Verse 4—For we who are in *this* tent groan**. And we do. We long to see God's plan fulfilled. We do groan. We are burdened in this flesh. And it's **not because we want to be unclothed**, as this scripture says, **but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life**, eternal life in that spiritual body. So we look forward to the day when all of mankind that wants this way of life, to have that age-lasting life that God is offering, the ones that want to become part of the God family, Elohim. We look forward to becoming that spirit being, to become in the God Family. But we know the end of the story, that all will not accept that at the end of this age. And God tells us there will be some, and it encompasses the breadth of the earth, that don't want what you want, brethren. And that's a hard one to

comprehend. But God had it written in this book. And we know about that lake of fire that will be there to clean it up, for all that don't want what you want.

**Verse 5**—God tells us how it's done, that, **He who has prepared for this very thing is God**, and for you and me it's preparing for the Kingdom of God, Church of God—PKG. It is God that has given you and me His spirit as a guarantee, that we would be resurrected into a spiritual body, age-lasting life, eternal life. And it's God that will do it.

**2 Corinthians 5:6**—**So we are always confident**, and why we are confident is because we know God's plan. God tells us about this spiritual body that we will have that is waiting for each one of us if we continue to the end. So that's why we are confident, **knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord**. And the Protestant world really does a twist on these scriptures, brethren. They use these scriptures to say that you go to heaven when you die. But we know the truth of the matter and we know that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

**Verse 7**—**We walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and be present with the Lord**. So that's what we all wish to do because we understand about that spiritual body, that Jesus Christ will be here with those that have a spiritual body, that has been harvested from God's garden on the Day of Pentecost in our near future - in that spiritual body, in that first harvest. So can you imagine the confidence that it will give those at that time that live into the Millennium? And just to know that they knew some of the 144,000 when they walked upon the face of this earth - just like it was in Jesus Christ's day with the apostles, the disciples. They saw Jesus Christ in the flesh and then they saw Him appear and disappear. So He gave them a taste of what it would be like during the Millennium. So we will have the Church of God that continues on into the Millennium that will know some of those 144,000. And they will know the end results. They will know that they are next to be harvested from God's garden. So can you imagine the confidence that that would give?

Let's go over to Hebrews 11, **Hebrews 11:13**. And it's telling us about those that died in faith, **not having received the promise** that we are talking about, that eternal life, that age-lasting life, the promise of that spiritual body that we are discussing. There's many that have run the race. And we heard about that race from Ron last week, that you didn't hear about. Ron said that we are at the end of the race, it's just about over. And we need to remember, just as Ron admonished us last week, that we are facing the hardest part of that race, when you're running a race and you're getting toward the end of that race and you're tired and you just want to give up. But we have to stay focused and realize where we are. We're at the end of that race, as Ron talked about. And that race will be over and Jesus Christ will be here with the first harvest out of His garden.

**Hebrews 11:13** tells us that **These all died in faith, not having received the promise**—but let's notice—**but having seen them afar off**, just like you and me. We see those promises. And they were assured of them, embraced *them*, and confessed them, that they were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. And I've said this before. We *are* strangers and pilgrims upon this earth, just as they were, those that live at the end of an age that are in God's Church. We don't fit in this world. It's kind of like putting a square

peg in a round hole. We just don't fit in Satan's world. We're looking for that new world that is coming to this earth in just a short while. That's the world we look forward to. God said "all these died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off," just like you. And they "were assured of them, they embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon this earth." And that's what we are. **For those who say such things—let's notice why—declare plainly that they seek a homeland.** This is not our home, brethren. This is not it. This physical body is not what it's about. And we seek that homeland, that spiritual body. We seek the Kingdom of God that is coming to this earth, to be a part of the God Family. That's what we look forward to. We seek that city that God is building.

**Verse 15—**And this is telling us that **if they had called into mind the *country* from which they had come out, that they would have opportunity to return.** And they did have that opportunity. And we all do until we get there. There is the "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" out there, and all of us can turn to it so quick, as we have seen so many do. **But now,** God said that, **they desired a better, a heavenly *country*.** That's what they desired. That was their focus. But they had the ability to turn back, just like you do. They could have turned back. You can too. But they didn't. God said that all these died in faith. They did not succumb to those lusts. They stayed focused on that heavenly country, which they saw. The same country that you and me see. That's our desire, just as it was their desire. And that's what we are preparing for, that city, that Kingdom that is coming to this earth. They saw this same city that we see. We can see it in our minds. We can picture it. We have a Feast of Tabernacles every year that pictures when God's Kingdom will be here, the millennial reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth. And it paints you and me a picture in our mind every year. God brings it to our mind every year so we can "see" what He is preparing.

**Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.** And He has prepared it for you, brethren, *if* you continue to the end. "Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them."

Hebrews 11:40 tells us... **Hebrews 11:40—God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.** So, in other words, those called to the first resurrection (it's what it's talking about) it will happen at the same time - the dead in Christ will rise first, and those that are living, they will all be changed to spirit at the same time, some just a little bit ahead of the others.

**Hebrews 12:1—Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance.** Let's notice how it's said. Ron told us about the race that we are in and that we are at the end of that race. And he told us about when we are three-quarters through that race that we just think we cannot make another lap, but you can see the finish line. And it's a good analogy, brethren. Because that's where we are at. We are at that race and we are at the end of that race. All we have to do is look on the horizon and tell that Satan's world is coming to an end. Paul said through God's word that we need to run the race with endurance, the one that God set before us. And we need to look to Jesus, **the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.** That's where He's at, preparing to come back to

this earth. He's not coming as a lamb this time, He's coming as a lion to set up the Kingdom of God upon this earth, to set up a just government upon this earth where there won't be an IRS. A just government will now be here to teach mankind about a way of life that produces peace and happiness. And now mankind, the rest of mankind, will have opportunity to come into the God Family, to become Elohim.

There is a process that all have to go through to be in the God Family. Everyone has to do this. Everyone has to change and live a way of life that God tells us about in His book. But during the Millennium some changes will take place. There will be a being that will be put in prison for a thousand-years, and that being will now not be there to influence the mind of man. But something else will still be there - human nature. With a mind that is naturally hostile to God it will be there, but it will be without the demon world. But God tells us about a mind, that human mind, that it is just naturally hostile to Him. So man will have to deal with that mind during the Millennium, but it will be a little easier for man. God says that you and me are to consider what Jesus Christ endured. God is telling us that we need to focus as we are running our race, about the price that was paid for you and me. God is telling us we have to focus on what Jesus did so that we could have this opportunity to become Elohim in the God Family, the one that God is creating. And God's word tells us we are to always consider this.

I cannot comprehend the suffering that He went through. I cannot comprehend the beatings that He took, till He was unrecognizable for who He was. I cannot comprehend hanging upon that stake and having those nails driven through His hands and His feet and having that spear thrust up into His side. He did it without sin. So God tells you and me that we are to always remember that price that was paid for you and me. We're to *never* forget it. We need to understand why He did it for you and me, and for those in the future that want to become Elohim, the ones that want to be harvested from God's garden when it is time for them to be harvested.

If we don't focus on these things, that price that was paid, God says that we could become weary and we could become discouraged. And that's what happens to so many. That's why they're not here today, because of this very thing. They forget that. They forget that sacrifice. They forget that opportunity that was offered to them, and they become weary and they become discouraged. God says that we have not yet resisted to bloodshed. Blood has not popped out of our heads yet, brethren. And I cannot imagine that. Jesus Christ did. He perspired droplets of blood. So when we talk about stress, Paul called it "a light affliction." He knew what Jesus Christ went through. And what he was going through was very light in comparison, brethren.

**Verse 5 ...My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the Lord loves He chastens, (better said) "corrects," correction is given, and scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, in other words, correction, God deals with you as sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten (correct)?** We live in these physical bodies with these physical minds, but God has given some of His spirit as a guarantee, and now He calls us "sons of God." That's what He calls us, because we have that ability. And now He chastens us as sons. He corrects us through His holy spirit and through His ministry so that He can open our minds to this understanding. God tells us not to despise His chastening so that we can be harvested from His

garden. That's why chastening takes place, correction takes place. It's why God has a ministry, so that you can be harvested from God's garden. And it is for good, as we read earlier.

**But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.** But you repent. God cannot dwell in sin, so there *always* has to be repentance, so that we can be sons of God.

**Verse 11—Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward—let's notice what it does—it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those—let's notice—(better said) who have been trained by it, who learn from it.** That's what it does. It trains the mind in the correct way to live life so that you can be harvested from God's garden, those that let God prepare their mind. God says, **Therefore, strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet.** So God tells us how to do it and God corrects us as we go down that path with the present truth. That's how He does it, the present truth. God prepares the mind, He corrects the mind, and He directs the mind to the things of God.

Let's go over to James 1, James 1. We understand that with God's calling, God lets us understand we will suffer, that we have trials and we learn through trials. And we understand that God uses those trials to train the mind. God says we will have the fruit of righteousness through those trials. So we will have trials to prepare our minds for the Kingdom of God that is coming. So God allows you and me to have trials, and then He directs the mind to the things of God so that we can have a better focus.

And **James 1:2** we find God said through James to **count it all joy when you fall into various trials.** "Count it all joy." So when we read this scripture our mind naturally thinks, "How can we count it joy when we are in the middle of a trial, a hard, hard trial? How can we do such a thing?" We understand that God is in charge and God said through James to "count it all joy." But when we look at this scripture, "to count it all joy when we fall into various (which is 'different') trials" through our lives, when we look back at those trials, I would not take anything for the trials that I have been through. I wouldn't take anything for any of them because of the results that it has produced. I would not take anything for where I have been in the Church of God. And when I look back at the trials, it was an amazing thing that took place. And it's when we can look back when we can really understand what has taken place.

When we look back at where we have been in the Church of God, especially the trials upon the Church of God down through time, and in our time we can look back and I am so thankful for the recognition of who the man of sin was...so thankful. God let us know that it was Joseph W. Tkach that was that man of sin. And I can look back and I can see how God has prepared the Church of God—PKG, preparing for the Kingdom of God that is coming to this earth. And it marked a specific time, brethren. It was a sign. The preparation of the Church of God—PKG that ensued after that Apostasy is very inspiring to me now, and I know that it was through those trials that it was formed. I know that is how it was made, the Church of God, the Church of God at the end of an age. And so now I can look back and I can "see" that God was directing some minds - some that would be in that end-time Church, the Church of God that would be

preparing for the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. I knew that there would be an end-time Church upon the face of this earth that would be here. I knew that.

So when James said to "count it all joy," I do. I do count it as joy. I am so glad that God gave me the ability to "see." I'm so glad I'm here. And hopefully, everyone sitting in these chairs count it all joy to be here, because now you have a front-row seat to see the most awesome events that will ever take place upon the face of this earth. What would you give to have that front-row seat? What is it worth? Is it like the treasure in a field? Is it like the pearl of great price to you? So what is it worth, brethren? Do you count it joy to be sitting here today? You will now have a front-row seat to see the most awesome events that have ever taken place, brethren, inside 6,000-years of man upon this earth, to be there at the end to see that, the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. And it's so inspiring to understand and see how God has been preparing this Church, the Church at the end of an age.

**Verse 3—knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.** And it did. It produced much patience. We sat Sabbath after Sabbath after that Apostasy with just a... I think it was 6 people, Sabbath after Sabbath. 6 people. And we had sat in congregations of 15,000. And now they were all gone and we were looking at 6 people. After the Apostasy I always focused on one thing that God said in His book, that He would never leave us nor forsake us. And that was my focus. And it took much, much patience. My wife and I have seen thousands fall - thousands, not hundreds. Like I said, we've sat in congregations of over 15,000. They are gone. There were over eight million *Plain Truths* that were going out at one time, eight million a month...eight million a month.

We know that God is building the spiritual temple for the millennial reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth. And it's through the trials that this spiritual temple has been molded and fashioned. And I count it all as joy because I know what has been created in those that had these trials, even though they are in the grave. Paul called it "a light affliction" because he knew what it was worth, he knew about that pearl of great price. So we know about those that have been molded and fashioned through the trials that they faced while they were alive upon the face of this earth. God tells us about some in Hebrews 11. He names them. God says that we can liken it like the fashioning of a piece of pottery. That's how God says it in His book. And God uses the examples that we are the clay and He is the Master Potter. And God has been molding and fashioning the whole time, brethren, for 6,000-years, through the trials, to prepare those that will be there for the Kingdom of God that is coming to this earth, that first phase. Then a different phase will begin.

**Verse 5—** God says, **If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God**, because that's where it comes from. If you need wisdom, that's who we need to be going before in prayer, as we read about earlier. And God says that He **gives to all liberally and without reproach**, wisdom. So you can ask these things of God if you have His spirit, as a guarantee, the holy spirit, **and it will be given to him**. That's what God says. **But let him ask in faith**, and we can notice the rest. There are requirements to ask, to ask such a thing. God says **let him ask in faith**—and let's notice the rest that was written—**with no doubting**, no doubting, **for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind**. But, brethren, I can tell you that those 144,000 that have had all those trials, that God has molded and fashioned through those trials

that they endured, they will have that wisdom that comes from God. They will have it. And it will be given liberally to them, all of them. And there was no doubting in their minds who the Great God of this universe was, because God tells us that they all died in faith, every one of them that He names in this book, in Hebrews 11.

**Verse 7—For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; for the one that doubts, because *he will be a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.* That's what it will be. That's how they will be, if he doubts. God says, "he's like the waves of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind." So God is preparing the minds of those that will be harvested from His garden at this time, from those that are alive - hopefully some are sitting in this room. So God is directing the steps of those that will be there to the things of God, whether you live into the Millennium or whether you're a part of that 144,000, in that first harvest. Really doesn't make any difference.**

**Verse 12—God says, *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life,* just like what we've been talking about, harvested from God's garden into that spiritual body, **which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.** Eternal life, to have age-lasting life. God says that those that are offered eternal life are blessed, and when they have been approved they will receive the crown of life that the Great God of this universe has promised to them, to be harvested into a spiritual body. So, blessed is the ones that have the crown of life that will be harvested from God's garden.**

So that will conclude the sermon today.□