

Welcome, everyone, to this Sabbath. With only one day to the start of the Feast of Tabernacles to go, I'm sure we are all excited.

Today's sermon is titled, *Unity Creates Peace*.

Now, this is a key topic with regards to us all coming together in unity, because this unity, this one way of thinking will create peace at the Feast of Tabernacles and the eight days that we are together. Unity will create peace. "Unity" means "oneness," or "that there is full agreement." "Peace" means "quietness," or "rest." If we have unity of thinking, if we are at-one in the way we think, we are in full agreement, *that* will create peace. The only way true peace can happen is if we have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. God's way, God's thinking, produces peace. We understand and we're about to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles which celebrates the return of Jesus Christ to this earth to bring peace. Peace is created through unity of thinking. Unity of thinking is being in agreement with God, and therefore, if we are in unity with God, if we agree with God, *that* will create peace during this Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. So we have eight days, brethren, where we have this opportunity to create peace by being at-one, by being in unity of doctrine, is one example.

We're going to look now at James 3:1 and we're going to go through this because this is addressed to the Church of God. And it's with regards to *how* they are to conduct themselves and what is the outcome of this coming into agreement. Well, it will create peace because we have unity of doctrine. We are at-one with God. After that James goes on in James 4 and says, "Well, why is there problems? What creates war? Why is there war? Why is there war within the Church, amongst the brethren?" Well, we're going to look at that. Because it all comes down to this unity, this unity of spirit. And if we have this unity of spirit, it does create, it does produce peace. And we want eight days of peace.

Peace at this Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day is in *our* hands. It's whether or not we're going to yield to God's spirit or not, or we're going to allow our own desires to come up, or our own opinions to come up. Peace at this Feast is in our hands. It's our choices about what we do and what we say.

We're going to start by looking at **James 3:1**. And this is James speaking to the Church and speaking to the brethren about this matter of unity. **My brethren, let not many of you become teachers**, which is about having an opinion about God's ways or having an opinion about the truth. We have the truth in the Church. Well, we have to be very careful that we don't become so opinionated about what we believe it means. No, we should actually hold our opinions to make sure they are in unity with what God is placing in the Church. We can't go outside of it, adding to or taking away. Let's not become teachers. Let's not be opinionated, **knowing that we**, and here it's referring to the ministry, **shall receive a greater/stricter judgment**. So the ministry will be under judgment, or are under judgment, and they're going to be held more accountable because it's a matter of unity. For a minister not to be

in unity of doctrine, well, there's going to be an outcome, there's going to be a judgment. There is a judgment period now, which we are under. The Church is being measured for a period of time. Ministry is under judgment at *all* times about how they are motivated, what motivates them, and it goes back to having opinions or having views.

Verse 2—For we all stumble. Now, this is everybody, this is the ministry, this is everybody. Everybody stumbles! And we stumble in many ways. This is referring to sin or wrong thought processes or having pride. **We all stumble in many things.** Yes, we all stumble in many things because we have a natural carnal mind, we are natural. And the power of God's holy spirit is the only thing that causes us *not* to stumble. But we all do stumble and we stumble in many things. **If anyone does not stumble,** if anyone does not stumble **in word,** by what they say, **he/she is a mature man,** they are spiritually mature, they are using God's holy spirit. That's what it's really saying. To be mature, to be spiritually mature, they are now implementing self-control, they're not having their own opinion, they have great humility because they are seeing themselves as they really are. We also understand that God's word is truth, therefore, this person will be living the truth, they'll be implementing the truth into their life. They won't have their own opinion about things, they will be humble and teachable and they'll be listening to God. So, yes, we all stumble because of pride. And if anyone doesn't stumble in word, if they're not stumbling because they believe the truth, they are mature, they are spiritually mature... **able also to bridle the whole body.** Now, this is the implementation of self-control. They have self-control. They won't be putting their opinions out or having their views and forcing them on others. And that will create unity. That'll create unity and that unity will create peace.

Verse 3—Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body, because they have control of the head. If you control the head of a horse you can control its direction, which way it's going. Well, mankind does that to control the animal, put the bit in the mouth and they can pull it to the left or the right or pull it back (the horse will stop). So it controls the direction of the body.

Look also at ships: although they are large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. So the direction is controlled by something that is very small. A massive boat, but just that small rudder in the back, pointed in a direction, and because of the power of the boat, the boat will only go where it's steered. Its direction is changed by such a small thing. **Even so the tongue is a little member, within our mouth, and boasts great things.** Now, this is really coming down to the issue, things that disagree with God, God's word, and it comes out from the thinking, it comes out through words. Now, this Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day is a time where we should implement this very matter of self-control, controlling our tongue. Because it is small, but really it's connected to something else. The tongue is connected to the mind and it goes back to the spirit of a matter. What we say - what is the motive? What is the intent?

Well, our intent during this coming eight days and moving forward from that point, and has been now, is to control our thinking. We are in this war. We're in this battle to control our thinking, because our thinking will lift itself up and we will become teachers. We will be *opinionated* about things. We will

want to force our view, the way we see it. Now, there's a hundred ways to do things, and they're not all wrong. There are many things that can be done and they're all right, because the spirit of it's right and the action is right; it's in unity with God's word. There are diversities in the way things can be done, particularly in administrative ways. One person can have books about financial matters and have records of them differently than another person. It doesn't make one better. Same outcome; they end up with the same result at the end. They have a financial record of what happened. These are where there are diversity of things that can be done and they are not sin, because there's a variety of ways to do things.

Well, this is no different in life, brethren. There's many of ways to do things according to God's word, of course, but there's different ways to do things. Not every way is wrong, and therefore, there can be different ways. There can be two different ways to do things, which means there are two different opinions about a matter, how it could be done, but one is not exalted above the other. This is about the exaltation, it's about the spirit of the matter. Now, we should not do anything that disagrees with God's word. We shouldn't have opinions that differ with God. James is warning the brethren here about their tongue, which is really about the way they think, because this mindset is connected to the mouth. "Even so, the tongue is a little member and boasts great things."

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! So it all starts with something small but then they have this blazing bush fire. Well, everything starts in the mind, and if it's not controlled, if it's not managed and it's not brought into unity with God, well, what will happen? It will create trouble. It will create a massive fire! It will create problems within the Body of Christ, because this is about self-control, and this is about unity with God's word. And if we have unity with God's word we're exercising God's spirit in our life which is connected to self-control, we will have peace because we're yielding to God's spirit.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. So the tongue, what we say, can cause *massive* problems. **The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body,** which is talking about the Church. So things that are said can pollute. Things that are said can pollute if they're not in unity with God, if they're not in unity with God's spirit. **...and sets on fire the course of nature; and is set on fire by gehenna.** It is important that we come into unity of doctrine, because this unity of doctrine will create peace. We're not to have our own views or our own opinions. We are to yield to God's holy spirit and to be at-one with God, and to be at-one with God is to be in unity with Him.

Verse 7—For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. So this all starts in the mind. It's the way a person thinks. Now, this goes back to the way man is. No one can exercise self-control. It's only done by God's holy spirit. So no man, no physical man can control (tame) the tongue, because it's all about the spirit of a matter...the spirit of a matter. A man, no one, can control the tongue. They can't have the right motive and intent behind what they say. The natural man has no real self-control, because self-control comes from God's holy spirit, and any self-control, any controlling of the tongue, doesn't mean to say they're controlling the mind. Because all of this starts in the mind. **It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.** Well, that's the natural carnal mind. It's hostile against God, "not subject to the

law of God, and indeed cannot be." Only God's spirit can generate true self-control. Only God's holy spirit can bring true unity. And that unity of doctrine, the unity of spirit, will produce peace, because unity creates peace. And that's what we're striving to have in our life, brethren. We desire to have peace with God, because to have peace with God is to have unity with God. And the only way that we can have unity with God is through the power of God's holy spirit.

Verse 9—With it, the tongue, we bless our God and Father. Yes, we do that. We praise God through prayer. ...**and with it we curse men,** we gossip, we pull others down, we criticize others. Well, that's a contradiction. With this mind that we have we do these things. We worship God, we give God the credit, but with this same mind we belittle people, we pull them down because of our pride. ...**with it we curse men who have been made in the similitude of God,** or in the likeness of God. We in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, we have God's spirit. We have God *in* us, and therefore, we, brethren, should not be criticizing one another, "criticizing another man's servant," because those in the Body of Christ have God's spirit in them. They have *God in them*. So who would we be, brethren, that we would praise God with our tongue, with our minds, and yet in another instance pull down another person, gossip, belittle them, or think badly of them, when they belong to somebody else, they belong to God. Those in the Body of Christ have been made in the likeness of God. We have that likeness, just not only on a physical level but with the thinking of God dwelling in His people.

Verse 10—Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Now, this is the encouragement that is coming from James. We should be striving to have unity. We should be striving to create peace. Now, we have this opportunity over the next eight days to generate this. We can generate peace by being at-one, by being in unity, by not criticizing, not condemning, not judging, not pulling down others in the Body of Christ. We all belong to God and God has called us into the Body of Christ to be at-one, *one* body, *one* spirit. Now, if we are one body, the body won't criticize itself because of its one spirit. It has the mind of God, it has the thinking of God, and we are here to edify the body, to build the Body up. So the warning is, brethren, this is a time to strive for peace. This is a time to *strive* for peace. And if we do find ourselves having a strong opinion about something, or if we become aware of ourselves forcing our view or opinion, or being opinionated in any environment, this is the time to pull back, this is the time to *guard* our thoughts, to *guard* our words. And we can demonstrate that we desire unity and that we desire peace by being at-one at this particular Feast, the whole Body knit together.

We're all different but we are at-one when it comes to God's spirit. We're at one when it comes to God's spirit. We desire unity, and that unity will create peace during these eight days.

James 3:11—Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? Well, the answer is no. Because this is what the difficulty is with us as humans, that we should be producing peace. We should be producing peace from our words and our actions. Here the analogy is using a water spring. We should produce *nothing* that is contrary to God's word. Everything that we produce should be from God's holy spirit. We should not produce anything that is a contradiction of God's word, absolutely nothing. We should not speak against others. We should not criticize or condemn others in

any way because we can't be praising God and then criticizing God's called out ones. It's a contradiction. So does a spring send out fresh water and bitter at the same time? The answer is, no. **Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, well, the answer is no, or a grapevine bear figs? No. Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh.** We're either one or the other.

Now, this is a decision we have to make during this time of intense fellowship. Because it *is* intense. We're *together* for eight days. Now, this is not a normal environment. We're normally in a different environment. Well, here we are together as God's people to learn of God's way. Well, therefore, we have to strive to be yielding this fresh water. We have to be striving to yield to God's holy spirit, that we don't produce any contradiction to God's word. Now, we may hear things in sermons, well, we have to be on guard about the way we interpret those things and we have to be on guard to make sure we're at-one at all times with what God is placing in the Church.

Verse 13, talking about those in the Church and it's talking about works or words and actions, things that we produce because of what we believe. **Who is wise and understanding among you?** Which is the question. **Let him/her show by good conduct.** Now, this good conduct is by actions or works, and it can be by words or the way we live, **that his works**, his or her works, **are done in the meekness of wisdom.** Now, this requires God's holy spirit. Now, this is encouraging us, brethren, that we become teachable, we remain teachable, we are of a teachable spirit. Because everything we do, it's the way we act, it's the way we live, it's the way we speak is done with meekness, which is humility. Meekness of wisdom. We are humble, we are teachable; therefore, if we're humble and teachable we will not be opinionated. We won't be forcing our view on others. No, we will actually be standing back and controlling our self, controlling our selfishness.

But if you have bitter envying, which is a wrong spirit, but if we have this bitter envying against one another, **and self-seeking**, because it is about selfish ambition or trying to take to self or to improve our own image in the eyes of others. **But if we have bitter envying**, this attitude, and self-seeking **in our hearts**, within our thinking, within our minds, **do not boast or lie against the truth.** We are now to live the truth. So it's about the way we live. Because we can say things, brethren, that, oh, we agree with the truth. But are we living it? Are we living the truth? Well, here we have coming before us eight days where we can live the truth. And how will we see that we're living it? By the way we speak, by what comes out of our mouth. That's whether or not we're living the truth. Because part of the truth is that we know the 10 Commandments, which is the truth. We have the truth in the Church, the law of God. Well, the law of God tells us how to act. It tells us how to speak, which is to have *no* ill will to anybody, therefore, we wouldn't be saying anything ill against another member. So we're not to think that we're better than anybody else in the Body of Christ, and therefore, we're not to boast, we're not to exaggerate. We're not to do those things. We're to exercise self-control at this time. We are to come into unity of spirit, and that unity will create peace.

Verse 15—This wisdom, now, it's talking about this worldly wisdom, or the wisdom from own thinking, from the natural carnal mind, **does not descend from above**, it doesn't come from God, **but is earthly, sensual**, and actually **demonic**. It's actually what's called "devilish." So this spirit of

competition, bitter envying, because we're competing against others by pulling them down. What are we doing? So when we criticize another person to pull them down, to bring them down, what are we really doing? We're competing against them and it's *not* from God, it's from self, it's from pride. So this wisdom, this natural thinking where we think we're better than others, does not come from God. It just doesn't come from above, "but is earthly," it's natural, it's sensual because it's coming from self, this spirit of competition, because we're *competing* for a position. We want to be thought as *better* than others. And how would we achieve that on a natural level? By pulling somebody else down. And it all comes from the mind out on the tongue, which is through these words which creates problems. It is very destructive. It can cause a fire within the forest. It can cause big problems within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, because this tongue, with words that are spoken that are pulling another member of the Body down causes problems. It causes hurt. It causes suffering. And when one person in the Body suffers, the whole Body suffers because it's no longer at-one, it's no longer in unity, and therefore, what's the outcome? There will not be peace within the Body of Christ. There can't be because this one person or this individual is using their natural carnal mind which is from themselves, and they are now using their natural way of approaching things. They're not using God's word as their guide and they're not exercising self-control.

Verse 16—For where envy and self-seeking exist, which is this spirit of competition; they are *competing*. They only can understand it, but when people are envious they are competing. And when they are not exercising self-control, but they're actually self-seeking, they're trying to promote themselves, where this exists within an individual, what is the outcome? ...**confusion**, which is disorder, **and every evil thing will be there**. There will *not* be peace because there is no unity. There's no unity, therefore, there can't be peace. It's actually the opposite to peace - confusion and every evil thing, because it's all done from pride. Pride is at work. This doesn't come from God. This comes from the father of lies. This comes from the wrong spirit, the spirit of selfishness.

Verse 17, but the opposite now—**But, the wisdom that is from above**, which is from God's holy spirit, **is first pure**, so the motive and intent is pure. There's no selfishness. There's no pride in it. There's no self-exaltation. There's no spirit of competition. There's no hurt coming out of the mouth to hurt and destroy, because these people fear God. It's "the wisdom that is from above," which is God's holy spirit at work within a person. ...**is first pure**, the motive and intent of the person is clean. It is pure. ...**then peaceable**. It creates peace. It's peaceable. They are in agreement with God. And if they're in agreement with God they're at-one with God, they're in *unity* with God. And that unity creates this peace. It creates this peace. "Then peaceable," they'll be in agreement with God and they'll be in agreement with God's truth. ...**it's gentle, willing to yield**, because this is an attitude of not having an opinion, not trying to *force* an opinion on others. It's gentle. It's willing to yield. It doesn't really matter. There's so many things in life that they really don't matter; they're just physical things. There's no sin involved. It's a matter whether somebody wants to eat a particular food or doesn't. A person with God's holy spirit is gentle about it. They're not going to be opinionated and force their view. And this will create this peaceable attitude. There'll be this gentle approach about it, and they're willing to yield, they're willing to yield to God and they're willing to yield to other members of the Body, because it doesn't really matter. Nobody really worries about it. Well, someone with God's

spirit won't make a big issue of it. They're willing to yield to God. They're willing to yield to one another.

...**full of mercy and good fruits**, God's fruits, the fruits of the holy spirit, **without partiality**, so there's not going to be any favoritism. They're going to use the same measure, God's word, for everything that they do. They're not going to be partial in their judgment. They're not going to say, "Oh, that person's an elder in God's Church so I'm going to treat them differently than another member of the body." Well, that is partiality if that is taking place. No. Someone with God's holy spirit is not partial in judgment. They don't look for an advantage from the other person and they don't give extra to the other person because they might get something back, because *that* come from the natural carnal mind.

We are of one body, brethren, and not everyone can be the eye and not everyone can be the hand, and not everyone can be the foot. We're all different. We're all in the Body for a different reason, therefore, there should be no partiality in our decision making. There should be no partiality in our thinking. So we have no favorites, we just simply use the same measure (which is God's word) in every situation.

...**without hypocrisy**. So there's no falsehood taking place. We're not being fake. We are genuine. We believe God and we love one another.

Well, these are the things that are generated from God's holy spirit. During these eight days of the Feast, brethren, we have a choice. We're either going to be yielding to our selfishness or we're going to yield to God's holy spirit. We're either using God's spirit or we're using the natural carnal mind. We're either in a spirit of competition or we're *in* the spirit of God, we're using the spirit of God.

And what will that produce? **Verse 18—Now the fruit of righteousness**, which is God's holy spirit, is **sown in peace**. That's what it produces. It produces peace, because God's holy spirit generates peace. Because we're at one with God and it generates peace. "Is sown in peace," it's planted in peace, **by those who make peace**. Now, we can make peace, brethren, by yielding to God's holy spirit. We have to first be right with God. We have to agree with God. And if we agree with God we come into unity with God. We're at-one with God. We acknowledge that God's way of life is right, we're at-one with God. We're in unity with God. And what does it do? It creates peace. It makes peace.

Now, we, brethren, if there are issues in life, we need to resolve those. We need to *make* peace. We need to create it. How? By addressing issues, addressing issues of sin. So if we want to be at peace with God, what do we have to do? Well, we have to come into unity with Him. So what do we do? We repent. So if there is sin in our life, we have to make peace. We have to make peace with God. Sin in our life has to be repented of so that we come into agreement with God, we become in unity with God. And what does that do? It then creates peace. We then *make* peace.

Well, the key to having a successful Feast is to make sure that we're yielding to God's holy spirit and not to our own selfishness. And by yielding to God's holy spirit we will make peace. We will create

peace by being at-one with God. And if we're all at-one with God, we're going to be at-one with one another and that will create an environment of peace.

James 4:1—Still talking about the Church and members of the Body in the Church. **Where do wars**, where do battles and wrath and anger come from? **Where do wars and fights come from among you?** Talking about us, brethren. Well, *where* do they come from? Where does contention come from? Where does the spirit of competition come from? Where do these battles about pulling down others, about having wrong attitudes towards others in the Church? So where do these battles, these fights come from among you? From us, brethren! **Do they not come from your desires**, from your lusts, **for pleasure**, which is about sin, **that war in your members?** So it's all within our minds.

So, brethren, contention and strife are driven by pride. It comes from pride, these desires for pleasure, these desires to consume something on our self, to improve our image. For one example, we desire to improve our image in front of others, therefore, we'll be opinionated. "This is the way I see it. This is what I want." This being *self*-opinionated, or this battling with others to exalt self, well, it is sin and it comes from within our thinking. It's about our own pride. So we have to be on guard, brethren, that we *don't* strive with one another, that we come into unity with one another about God's way of life, and that we shouldn't have opinions about things that are irrelevant. Does it really matter whether one person eats vegetable and another person eats meat, for example? Well, it doesn't make any real difference. We have to make sure that we're on guard about our thinking, because all of the problems come from within our thinking. So where do these battles and fights come from amongst us within the Body of Christ? From pride. It all comes from pride, selfishness.

Verse 2—You lust and do not have. So this is about selfish desires, that we desire to be something or we desire to take something to self, but we can't have it. We say things that we shouldn't say. We've got these wrong desires. **You murder**, which is you pull down, you hate or you don't love, because we come into this spirit of competition, and therefore, we're *fighting* against. "You murder," we have ill will towards others, **and covet**, which is about being selfish, trying to consume to self, a desire to have it. For example, we desire to be elevated in the eyes of others, is one way. **...and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.** We don't ask God. We're doing it for the *wrong* reason. So this goes back to motive and intent. We have to be very careful. We have to be on guard about our motives and intent during these next eight days. We have to make sure we're not in a spirit of condemnation, a spirit of competition, we're not in a spirit of envy, we're not trying to build self up and trying to acquire to self, to satisfy self. Because if we want true peace, if we want unity, we need to ask God for it. We have to have the right attitude about these things. We're not to consume things for self. We're not to take things to self. We are to sacrifice the self. So we are to ask God for the right spirit, to be able to handle all situations with a right motive and intent. "Yet you do not have because you do not ask." We don't ask God.

You ask and do not receive. So we can ask God, but we've got to be asking God for the right motive, the right intent, not to consume to self, not to build self up, not for pride. **You ask and do not receive because you ask amiss**, we've got the wrong motive, we've got the wrong attitude about why we're

trying to ask for it, because we're trying to consume it to self, not for benefit of others, but to consume for self. So the wrong reasons why we're asking. ...**you ask amiss that you may spend it on your pleasure**, which is our own pride.

Adulterers and adulteresses! Which is having this wrong relationship with God, because we're being selfish, we've spiritually tried to consume something to self, to take credit to self, to take glory to self. Therefore, we're in this wrong relationship. **Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?** Don't we realize that we're being unfaithful to God? Because to commit adultery, to be an adulterer or adulteress we're being unfaithful to God, we're unfaithful within our thinking. And don't we understand, don't we realize that this friendship with the world, which is this having this relationship with the world, which is yielding to the selfishness of our minds, which is yielding to our *natural state*, which is this relationship with the world, do we not know this friendship with our own pride, friendship with the world, is hostile or enmity with God? We do know that, brethren, so we need to be battling and fighting against our own selfishness. **Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.** There's only two ways. We're either yielding to the world (our selfishness) or we're yielding to God's holy spirit. Our nature, our natural selfishness, can dominate us if we're not on guard. The tongue can set alight *a fire* that will turn to a burning *forest*, because we started something small (something small), something we said or something we did that was done with a wrong motive. It was a wrong spirit behind what we did it. And if we do things in pride it will cause problems within the Body.

Well, this is a time, brethren, that we are to come to be in true fellowship with one another and true fellowship with God. And that is all based on having God's holy spirit.

Verse 5—Or do you think that the scripture says in vain, The spirit which is in you, the spirit which dwells in us yearns jealously? Because it's all to do with pride. It's a way of thinking. It's about thinking about self first (thinking about self first) and others second, when God has called us into the Body of Christ for the purpose of thinking of others first, putting their desires first. Brethren, we can create unity at this Feast. And if we create unity by not being opinionated, by controlling ourselves and *yielding* to God's holy spirit and not yielding to our own selfish desires, well, that will create this unity and that will create peace, peace with one another. And God's way *is* peace. It's a fruit of the holy spirit; peace, true peace, rest, no contention.

The world looks at peace as the absence of war, but the reality is peace is a way of thinking. It's outgoing concern for the welfare of others. *That is true* peace, because we're working towards creating peace. We're working towards creating peace within our relationships. And we do that by being at one with God, first of all, being in unity with God, unity of doctrine, and therefore, we can create unity, and that creates peace.

Verse 6—But He (God) gives more favor (more grace). Therefore, He says: God resists the proud. Now, *this* is really the issue. This is really the issue. If there is an absence of unity, there's pride. If there's an absence of peace, there's pride. It's self-will. It's our own selfishness taking over. So, "God

resists the proud," anybody that is self-willed or trying to elevate them self, well, God's spirit is not there. God's spirit *can't* be there because the person's not battling against themselves. Well, God can't help them, because they have to be battling against themselves for God to help them, because it's about God's holy spirit. So, "God resists the proud," resists those that are unrepentant sinners, because God can't help them, because they're resisting God and God wants to show us favor. **But gives more grace** (gives more favor) **to the humble**, those that are meek, those that are fighting against themselves, those that are striving to be at-one with God and striving to be at-one with one another. And the outcome of that will be peace, *true* peace generated by God's holy spirit.

Verse 7—Therefore, so the answer is, how do we overcome this selfishness that's in us? **Therefore, submit to God.** Yield to God! Yield to God. *Yield* to the truth. Yield! That's the key. Yield! If we want to have peace we're to place ourselves under God, we're to place ourselves under (yield) to God. If we want unity, if we want *true* peace we are to yield to God, yield to God's holy spirit, yield to the truth. **Resist the devil**, fight against ourselves, fight against Satan's inspiration, fight against our selfishness, **and he (Satan) will flee from you**, because we're yielding to God's holy spirit. We're now exercising this self-control; we're no longer trying to elevate ourselves in pride because God resists the proud and we don't want to have anything to do with being proud. We want to be humble because God will give us favor, God will show us mercy, God will lift us up if we are yielding to Him in humility.

Because going back to verse 6, "God resists the proud." If we're going to lift ourselves up, if we want to be in contention, if we want to war and battle amongst the brethren, if we want to be opinionated, well, God can't help us, God will resist us. He will battle against us because the end result of the proud is their death. Unless they repent, they will face a death forever. "But," the opposite to it is, "But gives grace." It's God that will give us favor. God will give us more of His spirit, "to the humble," those that know themselves, those that know themselves, who they are and they cannot do anything. They can't do anything of themselves. We of ourselves can do nothing spiritually. We are *nothing* compared to God. God will resist those that lift themselves up and think they are something. But by the power of God's holy spirit we can be humbled, we can see that of and by ourselves we can do nothing, we're nothing. Well, God says if we have this attitude He will lift us up. He will show us mercy. He will give us the help that is needed.

Well, this is the key, brethren, about having unity at this Feast. Because God will resist the proud. Those that are proud will be opinionated and forcing their view, taking to self, consuming to self what *they* want. But God says if we are to discipline the self and fight against ourselves in our mind, He will show us favor and grace.

Now, the opportunity to take on more spiritual food at this Feast is incredible. The opportunity is there. If we have this humble attitude, if we come here to the Feast in a spirit of humility, we will grow spiritually. We will grow spiritually, because God at this time wants to feed us, wants to give us spiritual food. Now, we can only absorb this spiritual food if we have this spirit of humility, which is this spirit of being teachable. And if we have the spirit of being teachable, if we have the spirit of

being humble, we will have unity, we will have unity at this Feast. And *that* unity will create great spiritual peace. And to have peace means we have the thinking of God.

Verse 7, again, **Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.** This refers also to the time of fasting. **Draw near to God.** Now, we can do that through fasting. We can do this also at the time we pray. This drawing near to God is turning to God, going to God with our thoughts, going to God with our problems, going to God in a state of humility, a state of repentance. So, "Draw near to God," and **He will draw near to you.** Isn't this an incredible promise that God has? God says if we draw near to Him, if we yield to Him, if we place ourselves under Him, if we yield to His holy spirit, He will draw near to us. And if we are in a state of repentance and being teachable, God will help us, God will give to us. He will give us favor. He will give us grace. So, "Draw near to God," we can do that at any time, "and He," God the Father, the Creator of all things, "will draw near to you."

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, repent of what we do, repent of things that we think, repent of things that we say, repent of the things that come out of our mouth. "Cleanse your hands," which is to do with actions. So the things that we may be doing, well, stop them, cleanse them, get rid of the sin, get rid of the dirt off our hands, "you sinners," because it's all about sin, and **purify**, which is to clean, **your hearts**, which is your inner thinking. So it's about our intent. We, brethren, have to be careful about our hands, which is our actions, because our actions can cause harm to others, and purify, which is to clean our thinking, our hearts, our intent, **you double-minded**. Well, we are double-minded because we have the natural carnal mind and we have God's holy spirit. So there are two things that we are to work on. We're to work on our thinking, to "purify your hearts," our thinking. Make sure our *intent* is right. Dig deep down and see, "What's my motive and intent behind this?" Is it an act of selfishness or is it from God's spirit. "And cleanse your hands," the actions. Because from the thinking come the actions, from the thinking comes the words.

Verse 9—Lament and mourn and weep! Talking about repenting. **Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.** During these eight days we are to continue to examine our motives, and we're to fight against our pride, and we're not to be opinionated.

Verse 10—Humble yourselves in the sight of the Eternal, which is correct ourselves. Make sure we're measuring ourselves and correcting ourselves, and **He will lift you up**. It's God that will build us up because it's God's holy spirit that does it. God in us will help us through these things.

Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, this is to condemn him, **speaks evil of the law**, because it's not as God said. God says not to judge one another with condemnation. So, "Do not speak evil of one another, brethren." These eight days is a great time that we put this into use. Now, we have to start with our thinking. It's about our motive and intent. We have to work on the way we think. To not speak evil of one another requires self-control. It requires humility. Because the reason that a person will speak evil of one another is because of pride. "He who speaks evil of his brother and judges," with condemnation, "His brother, speaks evil of the law," because God said not to. God said not to do these things, not to speak evil of

our brother, not to judge with condemnation. Well, if we do, we're saying to God that He's wrong. "I'm lifting myself up above God." ... **and judges the law.** Because it's judging what God said. It's saying, "Well, I disagree with You." **But if you judge the law,** we're judging God, really, **you are not a doer of the law but a judge.** We're making ourselves better and lifting ourselves up above God. **There is one Lawgiver,** there is one Judge, **who is able to save,** He's the author of life and death, **and to destroy.** It's Yahweh Elohim. It's the Eternal God, the Self-existing One. There is one judge, "One lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy." **Who are you to judge another?** This is talking to God's people. We are *not* to pull down others within the Body of Christ. We are to consider our thoughts, words, and actions at this time. We're not to be angry against other people. We're not to have opinions. We're not to be in disagreement with others. Now, this is all to do with things that don't matter.

Now, when it comes to sin, well, we can disagree with somebody that may be sinning and thinks that they're doing something that is sin. Well, that's not the point. The point is we agree with God. We keep the truth. We yield to the truth. And because of that, this yielding to the truth and keeping the truth, we become in unity with one another. We're at-one with one another. Therefore, we agree with God. Now, if we agree with God it will produce peace. Now, if you've ever experienced peace (and we all have brethren), it's a wonderful and joyful thing. There's been many-a-time when we've spent time together with the brethren, and sometimes we haven't said a lot, but the peace that is generated, there's just a knowing that takes place that you can't explain to people in the world. And unless a person's experienced it you can't give it. But often it's just being in the person's company knowing they are of God and that they, too, have God's holy spirit. You don't have to say a lot. There is a spiritual bond, a spiritual unity that creates this peace. And yet, very little can often be said. It's just that the people are of God. They are *God's* people. It's *God's* Church. And not a lot has to be said. But because they have the same spirit and they're part of the same Body, they're in unity of doctrine, they believe the same things, it creates this peace that doesn't exist in the world other than in God's Church in those people that are of God, that are yielding to God's holy spirit.

Proverbs 17:14—The beginning of strife is like releasing water. So what we can see is maybe just a small hole in the side of a dam; it begins small. So it's like strife, it just starts off small. It's like that fire in the forest, just starts off small. So the beginning of strife, this contention and disagreement and trouble (spiritually), is like the releasing of water. **Therefore,** because it starts off small and turns into something massive in the end. **Therefore, stop contention before a quarrel starts.** Now, this is a power we have, brethren. We can stop contention. When we see things that are starting to build up, where it might start to turn into disagreement or strife or debate, all of these things that we see, now, we are aware of it, we see it within our own spirit, that this is something that is going to build into something greater. This small fire is going to turn into a forest fire. This small leak in the dam is going to turn into a dam bursting! It's going to be huge! It's going to cause massive problems! What do we do, brethren, with the power of God's holy spirit? "Therefore, *stop* contention *before* a quarrel starts." So we are to nip it in the bud. We're not to engage into this disagreement. We can agree to disagree, for example, but we're to shut it down. It's not worth it. It's not relevant to things. We're not talking about sin here. We're talking about things that don't matter. It doesn't matter. So we're to stop this contention, this disagreement about something. And if it's to do with doctrine, it's actually involving

sin, therefore, we need to deal with it. But to stop this contention, something that doesn't matter, before a quarrel starts, before this argument starts, because it doesn't really matter. But when it comes to sin, brethren, we do need to make sure we engage to make sure that we stand firm in the truth.

So, if anybody is bringing up something that is contrary to doctrine, we have to make sure that we are known to have stood in the truth, and we need to *deal* with the matter! And if somebody disagrees with us, we believe in one thing and they believe in another, but we have to be known to have stood for the truth. Now, within God's Church, that is key. But outside of the Body of Christ, well, there's no point in trying to discuss the truth with others because they can't hear and they're not interested. So why would we say anything? "When reviled, He reviled not." Well, we, brethren, have to be very careful how we handle matters when it comes to doctrine. But within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, when we're in fellowship, well, this is an area where we need to make sure that we do stand if anybody disagrees with God's word, if they disagree with the truth. And the way we stand is not to pull them down or ridicule them, it's to make sure that *they* know where we stand, that we stand with the truth, we stand with God.

Verse 15—He who justifies the wicked, someone who's justifying sin, because it's to do with sin, **and he who condemns the just**, anybody who pulls down the just... Who are the just? God's people, those that have God's holy spirit. So if somebody that is now saying, "Such and such out in the world, well, they're good. They're doing this and that," and yet he condemns somebody in the Body of Christ (the just) for being obedient to God, **Both of them alike**, both together, **are an abomination to the Eternal**. Because they both are sinning. Anybody who justifies sin is sinning, and anybody who condemns, who pulls down, who ridicules, who belittles the just, the righteous, members of the Body of Christ who have God's holy spirit, well, what does God say. God takes them both as being the same. They're both sinning. And sin is an abomination to the Eternal. Well, we, brethren, have to make sure that we're not justifying sin within our own life and that we don't pull down the just, those that are another man's servant. They are servants of God, members of the Body of Christ; we're not to condemn, we're not to judge with condemnation God's people. We are to turn everything on ourselves and we're not to justify sin in our life and we are to measure ourselves. We're to measure ourselves according to God's word. How are we doing? How are we controlling our mouth? *Are we creating unity? Are we generating peace by the way we act, by the way we live, by the way we speak, the words that come out of our mouth?*

Proverbs 22:10—Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; yes, strife and reproach will cease. So this is talking about someone that's mocking or casting down God's word, anyone that's scoffing or mocking at God's people. And if we were to get rid of them, if we don't listen to them, or if we're to stand and not have anything to do with them, well, if we get rid of them, "cast out the scoffer," get rid of the scoffer. Now, there's lots of ways to do this if we look at this on a physical level. Somebody that's there and there is somebody scoffing, well there's a time to "answer a fool according to their folly," and there's "a time to *not* answer a fool according to their folly," and that's a judgment that each individual has to make. Well, if you get rid of scoffing, "contention," which is this debating

and causing strife, "will leave. Yes, strife and reproach will cease." It will stop. Now, this is really focusing in on about the individual. We, brethren, have to control this. It's not just looking out at others and saying, well, let's get rid of the scoffer and everything's going to be fine. We need to turn this in on ourselves. We're to cast out the scoffing and contention *within ourselves*, what we do, how we behave. "Yes, strife and reproach will cease," if we control our self. So if we gain control of our thinking, if we can control our tongue, what will happen? We're casting out the scoffer within our mind. And contention will leave because there won't be contention in the Body of Christ because *we're* implementing self-control. We're implementing the fruits of God's holy spirit into our life. "Yes, strife and reproach will cease." Yes, it will cease around us because we're not instigating it. *We're* doing the right thing. We are the ones that are trying and striving to be at-one with God. We're trying and striving to be in unity with God. And what will happen from that? Contention, strife, and reproach will cease because *we're* implementing self-control. We are the ones working on our self. And if we work on ourselves, brethren, all of this will cease within our own thinking, because we're repenting, we're striving against our self.

2 Corinthians 6:14—referring to something that is now spiritual. **Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers**, talking on a spiritual level. So we shouldn't be around environments that are going to lead us from God. We're not to be yoked to those things. Now, there are many examples about this, that at work environments we have to be very careful about the environment we place ourselves in. To be "yoked" to them, which is to be held by them. So we "don't be unequally yoked." Well, we know what unequally yoked is. It's about a belief system. "Together with unbelievers," which is somebody that is fighting against God and resisting God. So we have to be on guard about what environments we are in, referring to something on a spiritual level.

For what fellowship, what relationship, **has righteousness with lawlessness?** So what does God have to do with sin? What does righteousness (God's thinking) have to do with disobedience? So what does obedience have to do with disobedience? Well, they're poles apart. They're not yoked together, they're not bound together, they're the opposite. **And what communion**, what fellowship, **has light with darkness?** Well, we understand, none. So what fellowship does the truth (God's way of life, God's way of thinking) have to do with darkness which is sin and evil? Well, they're not connected. There is no relationship there at all, they're poles apart.

Verse 15—**And what accord has Christ with Belial**, which is to do with truth and error? Well, none. We know God has no relationship with sin and Christ had no relationship with sin. **Verse 15**, again, **And what accord has Christ with Belial?** ...with falsehood, with error? Nothing. Truth and error, well, they can't share. They're poles apart. **Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?** Well, we don't have a relationship with them because we can't. Because we have a spiritual relationship with God, they can't, therefore, even in the marriage environment where there's a believer and unbeliever, it is difficult, because it's difficult to share, because we can't share spiritual things with them because they can't comprehend. Well, there can be marriages and there can be relationships that are to do with believing and unbelieving, but the reality is we simply cannot share. We cannot share. We cannot have this true relationship. We cannot have this true fellowship.

Well, during the next eight days we, brethren, are a group of believers, and therefore, we can share! Therefore, we can have this relationship. So, "Don't be unequally yoked with unbelievers," well, this is talking about spiritual sharing. We can't share. But we can share with one another.

"For what fellowship (what relationship) has righteousness with sin?" None. None, whatsoever. But we, as the members of the Body of Christ in righteousness, can share. "And what fellowship," or what communion, "has light with darkness?" None. But we can have a fellowship because we believe the truth. "And what accord has Christ with Belial?" Compared to what we believe, we believe the truth, and yet the false religions believe error. We can't have a relationship with them, but we can have a relationship with God and Jesus Christ and with one another. "Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?" Well, it's difficult. You can't have a relationship on a spiritual level. You can have one on a physical level, but not on a spiritual level. You just can't share.

And what agreement has the temple of God, which is the Body of Christ, the Church of God, with idols? None. None, whatsoever. We cannot have a relationship with false god's, with false doctrine. We don't desire to be around sin because God lives and dwells in us. We are the temple of God, and therefore, we don't have a relationship, we don't have fellowship with things that are false. **For you are the temple of the living God. And as God said: I (Yahweh Elohim) will dwell in them.** God dwells in us, brethren, therefore, we can share this relationship. We can have true fellowship over this Feast period. We can have true fellowship. **And walk among them, or walk in them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.** The joy, brethren, that we can have is to do with sharing. We can share in relationships. Now, we can't share in this spiritual relationship with anybody that is an unbeliever. It's not possible! Yes, we can have physical relationships with them. Yes, we can have marriage relationships with them. Yes, we can have relationships in the work environment. But the reality is the only place that we can share the truth, powered by God's holy spirit, is in the Body of Christ. We can have true fellowship with one another over the next eight days. True fellowship! But it's all based on this spirit, or the right attitude, which is why we do what we do.

Brethren, we have this opportunity during these eight days to make sure that we are communicating with one another in the right spirit, that we're having true fellowship with one another in the right spirit because we *are* yoked together. We are bonded together, and we're bonded together by unity of doctrine. We're bonded together by the power of God's holy spirit. And those two things together will produce something that is incredible that no one else can share in. No one else can share in what we have, brethren, which is peace. We have peace. An *incredible* thing that God has given to His Church! Well, this Feast that we're coming into we can actually have peace *if* we are in unity of doctrine and we are in unity with God and have God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us. That will create peace, something that is incredible to experience. And I know that we have all experienced it. Well, this is a time to live peace, during these eight days. Let's live peace.

Verse 17—Come out from among them and be separate, says the Eternal. We are coming out of the world and we're coming out from unbelievers. And we are being separate. At this Feast we're being separate, which is to think differently. We think differently. We obey God. Well, they can't, they

haven't been called to it. "Come out from among them, My people." "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Eternal." **Do not touch what is unclean.** Well, what's unclean? Sin. So let's not be in a state of sin. Let's be in a state of repentance. So we're not to handle sin. We're to come out. And these eight days are a great time to come out from the world, from those attitudes, and to have true fellowship with one another. "Do not touch the unclean." What is unclean? Which is sin, those things that are relating to sin. **And I will receive you,** which is He loves us, He will receive us if we are striving to overcome, if we're in a state of repentance, if we're in a state of thinking differently. We've come out of the world and we're here to celebrate the Feast over these eight days.

And I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. Yahweh Elohim says this. The Almighty God says this. We have been received by God. We are God's sons and daughters. We're members of the Body of Christ, the Church of God. We have come together to share in true fellowship, something the world can't do. The world can't come out from itself; it's not possible. It requires a calling from God. It requires a calling that makes us separate. "Come out from among them and be separate." Well, that's what we're doing, brethren.

Obedying God does this. If we obey God and have come to the Feast (where we can), or if we're at home, we're keeping the Feast at home, we're still coming out from the world and the ways of the world and we're separate. We are not yoked to them. We're not sharing with anything with them. We're not sharing in their sin and we're not touching what is unclean, which is to do with sin and disobedience. We are being obedient. And if we are obedient, what will God do? "I will receive you. And I will be a Father to you." Well, what does a father do? A father sacrifices. A father loves. A father gives. Those are the things that God does for us. "And you shall be My sons and daughters." God is going to nurture us. God is going to protect us. God is going to provide for us. God is going to provide food for us, spiritual food. And He says it with a promise, "says the Lord Almighty." God says He will do these things. He will.

And so we have this opportunity now to come into this fellowship, to be yoked together with believers... to be yoked together with believers. All for the purpose of believing God, hearing what God has got for us, all for the purpose of creating unity of thinking, this one way of thinking, this thinking differently than the world. And if we think differently than the world and we think like God we will have peace. We'll have peace within ourselves, and *that* will generate peace within the Body of Christ.

John 10:22—Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him (Jesus Christ) and said to Him, How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, "If you are the Messiah," tell us plainly.

Verse 25—Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe. Now, this is the key, brethren. Believe in God, believing in what God has placed in the Church, believing the truth. "I told you, and you do not believe." **The works,** now, "the works," are the words and the deeds that are done. So all the things that Jesus Christ spoke, all the things that Jesus Christ did, they are the works. **The deeds**

that I do in My Father's name, so all the things that He said that He did and the actions that He did, they bear witness, they provide evidence, of Me. So, "They prove who I really am. They prove that I am from God." He did them in His Father's name, Yahweh Elohim's name.

Verse 26—But you do not believe. So they didn't believe the works that He did, the miracles that He did or even the words that He spoke. They didn't believe who had sent Him. They didn't believe where He was from. He was from God the Father. He was from God the Father's thinking. **But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.** So they haven't been called; they are *not* of God! We can take this now and look at it. "But you *are* My sheep," because we believe. We believe God. Verse 26 says, "But you do not believe, because you are not My sheep." Well, we can reverse this. We do believe, therefore, we *are* His sheep, we are *of* Jesus Christ, we are followers of Jesus Christ, we believe God, we believe Jesus Christ.

Verse 27—What's the proof that we are of God? My sheep hear My voice, Jesus Christ speaking. We hear what Jesus Christ says. We believe Jesus Christ and in believing Jesus Christ we believe God. ...**and I know them,** Jesus Christ knows us, **and they follow Me.** Why? Because we're of the same mind, we are of the same spirit (to the level that God has given us). So the principle really is here that we are of the same spirit... the same spirit, the spirit of God, the same mind. *Because* we are believing God, *because* we are His sheep, and because we hear His voice, and Jesus Christ *knows* us and we *follow* Jesus Christ, we are at-one with Him. We're in unity of doctrine, we're in unity with Him. And because of this great unity we become followers of Jesus Christ, we are the sheep of God, we are the sheep of Jesus Christ.

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish. So life can only come by following Jesus Christ. Life can only come by believing the truth. What Jesus Christ has said previously is that, "You do not believe." Well, we believe, brethren. We believe God. And therefore, this believing God, we can have eternal life through the Passover, through the death of Jesus Christ, by believing Jesus Christ, by *following* the voice, the voice of Jesus Christ, the words of God, the Word made flesh. We can have eternal life. It can be given to us *through* Jesus Christ. Verse 28, continuing, "and they shall never perish," **neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.** Because this is to do with a relationship with God. So no one by force can remove us from the Body of Christ. It is a choice that we can make. We can choose to leave. We can choose to leave. We can choose *not* to believe. We can choose *not* to follow. The choice is ours.

Verse 28 [29]—My Father has given to Me, is greater than all. Because God the Father has called us and placed us *in* the Body of Christ. It's God the Father that has placed us *in* the Body of Christ under Jesus Christ. He is greater than all. Yes, He has the power. ...**and no one is able to snatch them,** by force, **out of My Father's hand.** It has to be a free choice. Satan can't take us out. Satan doesn't *make* us do anything. It's our choice. We cannot leave the Body of Christ, be forced out by someone else. No, it's a choice that we have. We are called into a relationship with God. We're called to be in unity with God. We're called to be at peace with God and with one another. And nobody can make us do anything. We choose it. We choose it, brethren. We can't be *forced* out of the Body. It's by our choice that we

leave the Body. **I and My Father are one.** This is that complete unity. They are in *full* agreement. They're at one. It's the one mind. "I and My Father are one." Well, we can have this same mind to a level, to a degree, because we can have God's holy spirit, which is the mind of God in us. We can have the one purpose, the one intent, which is God's intent. When Jesus Christ is saying, "I and My Father are one," they were in *full* agreement. There was no division at all. It's complete unity, therefore, that unity created something - it's a fruit of God's holy spirit - peace, true peace.

John 17:20—I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, talking about those in the future, those that would be called into a relationship with God, called into unity of doctrine, the same spirit.

Verse 21—that they all may be one. So this is that complete unity. It's the one spirit. It's the same mind. Now, this is *our* opportunity, brethren, here at this Feast, that we can be at-one with one another, "that they may be one." We are one Body. There is one spirit. We're at-one with God. And that produces something. This unity, this being in full agreement produces something that we can experience. ...**that they may be one as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us,** because this is about complete agreement. We, brethren, can strive to be at-one with one another. And this can only take place if we're at-one with God. We have the same attitude, the same intent, the same spirit, the one spirit. If we believe God, if we believe the truth. And if we do that we can be at-one with God, we can be at-one with Jesus Christ, and we can be at-one with each other. And *that* will create something that is incredible. From the power of God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us it will produce peace. ...**that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.**

Verse 22—And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, which is the power of God's holy spirit, the ability to think like God. The glory in Jesus Christ that had been given to Him was from God the Father, was His thinking, the Word made flesh. "Which You gave Me, I have given them," which is the Word of God, which is the thinking of God. ...**that they may be one,** which is this different way of thinking, **just as We are one.** It's the same Word. It's the same mind. It's the same glory. It's the *truth* in the mind. It's God's thinking in a person. **I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one** - only achievable by the power of God's holy spirit. Because it's all from the thinking of God. It's all from the mind of God. We can have this unity. "I in them," which is Jesus Christ in us, which is the same thinking in us, the Word in us, "and You," God the Father, "in Me," God's thinking in Jesus Christ, "that they may be made perfect," which is made mature, "in one." A complete unity of spirit. At-one. Agreement. Unity. ...**and that the world may know that You have sent Me,** which is something in the future.

This oneness that we can have, brethren, this unity that we can have, this peace that we can have (which we can have now) one day the world will have this opportunity, that they will know that God the Father was in Jesus Christ and that Jesus Christ was in the Father, and that we're in the Father and the Father *in us* because we are at-one, we agree, we're in complete unity. All powered by the gift of God's holy spirit. So in the future people will "see" this and they'll be able to experience what we can

experience at a Feast. Amazing things that God has promised! Mankind one day will have the same opportunity that we have over these next eight days, which is to be at-one, which is to have peace, true peace, to have a sharing, to have fellowship, true fellowship, true sharing of God's spirit, because it's God in us doing the works. We can share this experience. We can experience God' spirit. We can have the affects of God's spirit. Because it will produce this peace of mind. It will produce peace within the Body - one Body, one spirit knitted together.

Romans 12:1—I beseech you, "I urge you," **therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you yield/you present your bodies a living sacrifice**, which is what we can do during these eight days, that we can yield, brethren, we can have this giving attitude. We can yield our bodies, our inner thinking. A living sacrifice. We can put our selfishness down and allow God's spirit to live and dwell in us. So we, **by the mercies of God, that we present our lives a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service**, which is your logical service. So during this period we are to yield to God. We are to deny our selfish desires. We are to create unity. We're to have a sharing, a giving attitude.

So this is the opportunity that we now have. We can serve God. We can be obedient to God. And we can love one another. We have this opportunity. And if we do these things it's going to generate something that mankind cannot experience.

Verse 2—**And do not be conformed to this world**. So let's not go back to the things of the world. The selfishness that is in us, let's not exercise that during this period, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so this refreshing, this regeneration or this new motivation that we have, this new conviction that we have, we are to think differently. During this period we have this opportunity not to go back to the world, not to blend in with the world, but to come out of her and to be transformed. How? By the renewing of our minds! Powered by God's holy spirit. **...that we may prove**, that you may prove, that we may test by living this way of life, **what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God**, which is about God's intent. So we're not to be conformed to selfish thinking. We're to have our thinking renewed by learning to think like God. This is that opportunity that we have.

We have an opportunity to learn to be at-one. We have an opportunity to learn to live peace. We have an opportunity to learn to live peace.

Verse 3—**Therefore, I say, through the grace given to me**, or the mercy given to me, which is Paul speaking, **to everyone who is among you, not to think himself/herself** (anybody) **more highly than he ought to think**, which is about pride. So we have to rely on the way God sees it, not to rely on the way we see it. We're not to have these opinions, to try to force our opinions on others. "This is what I say." We're not to lift ourselves up, because this is all to do with pride. "Do not think him/her self more highly than he ought to think." So let's not let pride get in the way. Let's not have pride. Let's not lift ourselves up to think we're better. **...but to think soberly**, which is to have this sound mind and not to have an opinion, not to be quick to judge, not to be judgmental, not to be opinionated but to think

soberly, just to know who we really are, that we have this capacity to have wars and fights, to have envy within us, to have pride within us. So we need to stop and think.

Continuing on in verse 3... **as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.** The ability to see the truth, the ability to think spiritually all comes from God, because God is the one that gives faith by measure. It's measured out. And it's all for a purpose. It's all part of a Body. It all creates a unity. But not everybody is the same! Not everybody is the same. Not everyone's an ear. Not everyone's the mouth. Everyone is *different*. We, therefore, need to make sure we're not trying to be something other than what we are, because we're not to lift ourselves up, not to have opinions, not to try to see how spiritual we are to others or try to prove how spiritual we are to others. Because that is pride.... that is pride. If we ever try to prove how spiritual we really are by quoting scriptures or giving views and opinions about things, it's actually pride. Selfishness and pride have got in the way of humility.

Verse 4—For as we have many members in one body, the Body of Christ, the Church of God (there's many of us but there's only one body with God's holy spirit), **but all the members do not have the same function,** we're all different, **(verse 5) so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ.** We're *in* Christ because God the Father and Jesus Christ live and dwell in us, because we have the one spirit, we're of the same mind, we have unity. We have unity because we are one, we agree with God, we agree with Jesus Christ, we agree with the doctrine that God has placed in the Church. ...**and individually members of one another.** We're at-one. We're one body. Brethren, we have this opportunity now to be at-one, to be in agreement with God.

Psalm 119:161—Princes persecute me without a cause, but my heart stands in awe of Your word. This is David now writing this Psalm and he's saying that his inner thinking is in awe of God's word. Well, this is the opportunity we have, is to stand back at the awe of God's word, which is to believe God, which is to understand spiritually what God is saying, to understand that God has planned the end from the beginning.

We, too, brethren, should be in awe of God's word, because God's word is truth. And we should respect what God has done for us because God has called us to understand His word. The only way we understand God's word is through a calling. Without that we can't understand it.

Next verse, **162—I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure.** We're excited about God's word. And during this Feast we can be *excited* about what we find because God reveals the treasure of His word to us. We don't find the truth, God finds us in the sense of calling us and places us in the Body of Christ for the purpose of being able to rejoice at God's word, because we find the truth and it *is* exciting. To know the truth is so exciting! "As one who finds great treasure." Well, we can rejoice at this Feast because of the treasures that God is going to give to us.

I hate and abhor lying, which is this self-deception in self, which is pride. "I hate and abhor lying," which is all to do with pride. Pride within ourselves causes us to lie. ...**but I love Your law,** the way that God thinks, the way that God instructs us to live, which is all to do with righteousness. Because

God's law is righteousness, it's the way God thinks. Well, we, brethren, are to love God's instructions. We're to love the law.

Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments. Because everything that God does is in righteousness. His motive and intent is righteousness. **Great peace have those who love Your law.** So this is the way that we can have peace, brethren. We need God's holy spirit to enable love. And it's through God's holy spirit that we can have "great peace to those who love Your (God's) law," because we love God's way of life. And if we implement these things into our life we will have peace, because we're in unity with the way God thinks, we're in unity of doctrine, we're in unity with God's law, what He instructs. All of these instructions, we agree with God. If we have complete agreement with God we will have great spiritual peace... great spiritual peace. ...**and nothing causes them to stumble.** Nothing causes them to miss the mark, which is to do with sin, because we're striving to overcome sin in our life. And in the sense of stumbling? Yes, we will stumble, but we will *not* completely fall and stay down. We will always get back up because we are in a state of repentance.

Verse 166—Eternal, I hope for Your salvation, and I do Your commandments. We strive to be obedient. We strive to be at-one with God. We strive to come into unity of spirit with God. **My life keeps Your testimonies. I love them exceedingly.** It's part of a desire that we have, which is this desire to obey God, to fight against self. **I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies.** We see spiritually, we see the things that God is doing.

Let my cry come before You, O Eternal; give me understanding according to Your word. Let my supplication (my plea, my prayer)... Let my prayer come before You; deliver me according to Your word. My lips shall utter praise, for You teach me Your statutes. Well, we're here brethren, for this purpose, that our lips will praise God. We'll give God all the credit. We give God the credit for our calling. We give God the credit for *all* that He has shown us on a spiritual level. We give God credit for the truth, everything that He has given us to believe. For He teaches us His statutes, His law, His commandments, His instructions. It's *God* that teaches. Well, the next eight days is about God teaching us His ways.

Verse 172—My tongue shall speak of Your word. Now, this is the key, brethren, to unity and peace. Our tongue, our words shall speak unity. It's *God's* way of being. It's *God's* truth. That's what we do. That's how we can have unity and that's what will create peace. "My tongue shall speak Your (God's) word," **for all Your commandments are righteousness.** So God's law is righteousness because it comes from the mind of God. And that's what we should speak about, the glory of God. We should give God the credit for what He is doing in our life. Yes, we've come out of the world because God has called us out of the world. Yes, we're separate and we're going to be at the Feast for the very purpose of hearing God's instructions - *His* instructions, *His* commandments about *His* way of life. And what should we speak about? We should speak about what God is giving us. Not to be having a different opinion. Not to be pulling down. Not to be diverting it. We should take what God is giving us and we should speak the words of God, what God is giving us. And the most important thing is to take it on within ourselves and to live it. Not just to speak about it, but to actually implement it into our life and *live* it.

Let Your hand become my help, for I have chosen Your precepts. So this is the key. "I have chosen." It's a choice, brethren! We are free moral agents to make decisions. So whether we want to control our tongue, whether we want to control our thinking, whether we want to pull somebody down or lift them up, whether we want to condemn and judge - all of these things are a choice. "For I have chosen Your precepts." We have to choose the ways of God. We have to take it on board, think about it, and make a conscious decision *not* to sin... to make a conscious decision not to sin. And God says He will help us. "Let Your hand become my help," because it's God's power that can help us on a spiritual level. It's God's holy spirit living and dwelling in us that can help us to overcome sin.

I long for Your salvation, O Eternal. Yes, brethren, this is what we do. We desire to be saved from who we really are. We desire to be saved from this physical mortal flesh to immortality, to be in God's Family. "I *long* for Your salvation." We *long* for God to have His plan fulfilled. And we're going to the Feast for this very purpose, to live the Millennium, to live the Last Great Day. We're to live peace. Because Jesus Christ comes to this earth for the purpose of introducing peace, true peace powered by God's holy spirit. **I long for Your salvation, O Eternal, and Your law is my delight.** Because this is how we grow. This is how we learn. This is how we learn to control self. **Let my life live, and it shall praise You.** So physically he wants to remain alive so that he can praise God. Because if we're dead we can't praise God. So, "Let my life live," on a spiritual level, "so I can praise You." "Grant me your holy spirit. Keep Your holy spirit with me so that I can give you *all the credit* for *all* things." So that's what we desire. **And let Your judgments help me.** "Let Your judgments (your instructions) guide me in life, so that I can praise You, so that I can worship You, so that I can keep the Sabbath and Holy Days."

I have gone astray like a lost sheep, which means he's sinned, **seek Your servant, for I do not forget Your commandments.** So what David is saying there, that, yes, he has gone astray, but he knows that God will grant us the gift of repentance and that we can return to God, that God will seek us by giving us His holy spirit, the gift of repentance. And he says that he doesn't want to forget God's commandments. He doesn't want to forget God's instructions.

We're coming to the Feast, brethren, for the very purpose of hearing God's voice, for hearing what God has for us, because we don't want to forget His commandments. And by attending this Feast, by attending the eight days, we are declaring before God, "I do not forget Your commandments. I do not forget your instructions as outlined."

Let's go to this Feast for the purpose of creating unity within ourselves, within the Body, so that we can have true peace.