

The Removal of Curses, Pt. 2

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Feast of Tabernacles Sermon - 2016

Well today we're going to be continuing on now with the sermon series that began yesterday afternoon entitled, *The Removal of Curses*, with this being *Part 2*.

Now, yesterday we went through and talked about some of those things having to do with a process that began 6,000 years ago, a process that began 6,000 years ago of mankind living in curses, choosing a way opposite of God's. And it started from the very beginning in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve. And we talked about some of those things that came to pass, and understanding that curses are the result of wrong choices, a corruption in the mind that is a matter that leads to action that is sin. And so the sin, because of wrong thinking, the actions that follow lead to curses. And only by listening to God can that be turned around, be turned in a different direction. And that's what is taking place. We're getting so close to that beginning to take place in the beginning of the Millennium, because God's purpose is that this not continue on. God has allowed mankind to live in his own way for the past 6,000 years, and now we're getting to a point where God is going to begin the process of removing the curses. It doesn't happen overnight because curses aren't just a matter of something that are pronounced. They're something that are a result of something that is lived. And so it's by choices.

And so by God's government being established on the earth and people being shown what is true, people, with God's help now, as they're given such opportunity to receive the holy spirit as we are, and the truth is all over this earth because of only one Church existing on the earth and all other religions having been put down and put away and destroyed, now mankind can begin the process of learning how to have blessings in their life, which comes through listening to God and obeying.

And so, indeed, we're at the point of the beginning of the removal of curses. I find this awesomely exciting to understand that after 6,000 years we are blessed to be a part of helping to remove the curses from mankind. And it comes through what people do. It comes through a *change in the mind*, in the way people think because that's what leads to different actions. And obedience, those actions, lead to blessings. But the actions of deciding for ourselves right and wrong *always end in torment*, in destruction, in curses.

So this matter of taking several generations before family and society really begins to level out in a way that beings to really produce the kind of peace that we look forward to becoming deeply established in the Millennium is not something that the Church readily grasps. Much of this has to do with what was mentioned at the beginning of this sermon series yesterday, and I'm going to repeat it here: "Often times the tendency within the Church is for people, once they have been called, to believe that relationships and right thinking toward God and others is fairly well

addressed within a relatively short time. But then we are reminded through sermons, and far too often in personal experiences that everything in one's life has not been addressed and everything is *not* okay in relationships."

Do you "see" this? Do we understand this? And probably, even more importantly, do we believe this? To see and then have the ability to believe this is to know and have the conviction of what our human nature is really like, to know the battle and time that is required to fight against such nature. And perhaps, just as important, to come to see how wrong thinking, prejudices, and poor patterns of thinking are so deeply ingrained in our human mind. And that's why the process of the spiritual transformation of our mind is such a miraculous accomplishment and *why* this is the greatest part of God's ability and power to create. What an awesome thing to know, to understand this. This is why the process and active engagement on our part, with repentance, is so very important to our spiritual growth and development. And if we cannot see that for which we must repent then we cannot begin to address the need for change that has to take place in our mind in our thinking. It's hard for human nature to admit fault, to admit error, to admit, "I am wrong." And yet this has so much to do with the beginning of a process, with the removal of curses.

These things that have just been mentioned have been magnified powerfully over the past few years. In other words, this matter of how deeply engrained wrong thinking, prejudices that we are blind to having, and biased judgments that are deeply hidden in our minds have all been revealed to be far more deeply embedded in our minds than we had previously understood. We hadn't understood these things as deeply as we're able to now. And we have to grasp these things first, because we're the Church, and it's the Church and it's what God is giving to the Church now that is preparing for what we're observing here at the Feast, the Millennium, the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth.

So, do you know what it is that God has given to His Church over the past few years that far more profoundly reveals just how deeply embedded in our minds that wrong judgments and prejudices exist? I hope you know the answer to that quickly, because God has been teaching us this in a very powerful way over the past few years. Do you know when it was that God began to more deeply reveal how deeply hidden many of these things are in us? That's why I've been speaking of what Mr. Armstrong used to say that's going to take three and four generations. Because these things are *deeply* embedded in our minds, and our tendency oftentimes within the Church is to think that after we've been in the Church for a short period of time, that everything's been fairly well addressed in our lives. And the answer is, no, it hasn't! And *this one thing of and by itself more profoundly reveals this truth*, that there are things that are *deeply* embedded in us that we can't get rid of in just one generation or two, or three. *Awesome* to understand that!

So do you know when it was that God began to more fully reveal just how deeply hidden many of these things are in us, in the deepest part of our being, in our minds? Do you grasp the impact that this has had upon God's Church?

Let's turn over to Luke 8 and look at something that Christ said that truly relates directly with what we're addressing here. It's good to go over here and look at these verses.

Beginning here in **Luke 8:16—No man, when he has lit a candle, covers it with a container, or puts *it* under a bed...** What would be the purpose? That's what it's showing here, why did you light it? Well, you want to see. **...but sets *it* on a candlestick, that they who enter in may see the light.** See where you're going. So it's very simple, very simple. **For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *anything* hidden, that shall not be known (made known) and be brought into the light,** in other words, "made visible." And so there is a purpose in the light that God is bringing into the world more and more and more, and has done so progressively over 6,000 years, and so much more in the past 2,000 years. But we're at a time when great light is going to shine on this earth, powerfully so!

And he goes on to say, **Take heed, therefore, how you hear.** So the lesson in this, of what is being shown here, is a matter of what we're hearing. What is it we're able to see? So again here, **Take heed, therefore, how you hear,** in other words, to what you've been given here, **for whosoever has...** What's this talking about? It's talking about those who have listened. It's talking about those who have the ability to hear. And says, so, "whoever has," or "whosoever has," as it says here, and the context is, "whosoever has listened." Not just hearing something, but has listened because it translates into doing something with what we have listened to.

...for whosoever has, to him shall be given; and whoever does not... Does not what? Well, does not have, or essence here, does not listen. That's what it's talking about. **...and to whoever does not (does not listen, specifically), from him shall be taken even that which he seems to have.** What an incredible thing to understand here. So this word "seems" means... it means "to have an opinion," or "to think that they have." So there are people that think they have certain things, and sometimes within the Church we think we have certain understanding, that we see certain things, and the reality is, no. No, there is much more to learn. There is much more that we need to come to see that God is going to reveal in the light, by the light.

And so sometimes we think we've heard everything, when no, we haven't. And we have to be careful in that, because there is much to be given. And the more that God gives, the more that God will give to us. And that's why it says here, in this respect, "for whosoever has," in other words, has listened, "to him will be given," in other words, given more. And that's how it works. "And the one who does not," does not receive, does not listen, "from them shall be taken even that which they think that they already have." And we've seen it. You've experienced it. You've seen this happen in the Church around you, that there are individuals, who when they start making wrong choices and wrong decisions, that which they think they have, it's taken away from them, that which God began to give to them because they can't hold on to it because it's something spiritual, on a spiritual plane. God gives that which is spiritual.

So again, do you know when it was that God began to reveal and magnify how deeply hidden such things, as hidden prejudices and hidden bias, can be in our minds, in our thinking, that we don't recognize and readily see? It was when God revealed the 52nd Truth, brethren. I hope we know that. I hope we understand that. It truly is awesome, and an incredibly great truth, that God has revealed in the time of transition that exists between the end of the last era of the Church, in other words, the end of Laodicea and the beginning of a new era for mankind that begins the Millennium!

I think, what a marvel at the period of time that God actually revealed such things and began to help us to see more. It was after Laodicea. The eras were over and we were in a new period, a transitional period that exists between the time of the seven eras of the Church, a specific time concerning a remnant Church, all the way to the end, which is the beginning, the coming of Jesus Christ, the establishment of what we're picturing here at this Feast.

I want to read this Truth #52 as it's listed:

52 (2) God is restoring knowledge concerning the rightful place of women in the family. This involves the start of the greater removal of the curse laid upon woman from the beginning which was the result of sin.

And so God has been teaching us more and more about right thinking, about a relationship with Him, about relationship with one another, about relationships, specifically in this case, starting in families between husbands and wives, but towards mothers, toward women, as a whole, in society. And even then women toward men, because it's not just about women, it's about men. It's about relationships! And God has chosen this as the cornerstone - *as the cornerstone* - to build upon great knowledge! To show to us, to reveal to us what began to happen 6,000 years ago that led to curses of mankind that mankind has lived with for the past 6,000 years, and that God is starting the process of a removal of those curses and He's doing so by revealing it first to the Church, and then the society around us, the entire world. What a massive change that's going to begin to take place! And this change is so deeply embedded in the world, in society, in people's minds, that it's not going to change quickly.

I think of the world of Islam and those who are going to have to change, and change the way they think about themselves, and about how men think toward women that is so far removed from reality of truth that it's going to take a long time. It *is* going to take three and four generations to break through much of those things. Because as much as knowledge may be there, the habits, the patterns of thinking, the things that are so deeply embedded in their mind, they're going to be taught to children by habit, by not even... unwittingly so because of choices and decisions that people are still going to make because this is so deeply embedded in them. That's just one example of so many, of wrong thinking that human beings have that become so deeply embedded in the mind that it takes *much*, and a long period of time to heal the mind, to heal the world.

And so what an awesome thing where God began. *And if you think that we in the Church have a really good handle on this now, and we're living this really well now, and you don't have any deep things still embedded in you in prejudice and bias in this area, you are deeply mistaken!* You don't yet see the depth! I'm just telling you the truth. I'm just telling you the way it is. I see it. I know it. There is still great prejudice and bias out there and it does not disappear overnight. There are deep prejudices and bias that people have in their thinking that's just a part of the way they've been thinking all their life in matters of race, in matters of judgment between people's because of various things that may have to do with all kinds of factors in life and society that are deeply embedded in your mind that you don't yet see. You don't yet grasp how deep they are. But God will continue to reveal them, just as He does through time when someone is called to begin whittling away and working with, and finally that spirit becomes set in the desire that is only geared toward wanting God's way of life, though everything within it hasn't been corrected yet. But God can give a new mind, a new life to go along with that desire that is very powerful when the time comes. But He's going to know first that character and the choice is Him, that He is first.

And so this is a very great thing that has been revealed to the Church. It's greater than what you really know yet. You may think you *know* it, but you don't yet know it fully. Trust me. Believe me. Don't trust me; just believe me because it's from God.

And then this was followed by Truth #53. What an *incredible truth* to follow! What an *incredible* thing that God gave!

53 (3) The ordination of women in the Church.

Now, people still don't have a grasp on this one. This is going to take some time. Those of you who are not going to be a part of the 144,000, those of you who continue on, you're going to have a lot of work to do on this yet. And you know what? By the time you've lived your full life, because of your having lived in this age, in this society, you will not have conquered and overcome all the things having to do with your prejudices and the bias that's in your mind concerning this matter. You're going to be battling it even into the Millennium. That's just the way it is. There are going to be things continually to be able to be refined in your mind, but the more you yield yourself to God, the more you seek to be able to understand and see this, the more you will grow and the more you'll be blessed. But let me tell you, there is always going to be the twinge here and there that will pop up from time to time that is based on something that is so deeply embedded in you that you don't yet see it. And in time that is how God will reveal it. Through time, a little bit here and a little bit there, certain decisions, certain choices will be made and God will show you, whoops, this doesn't agree with Him. This isn't in unity with His mind, His being, and you'll have to address a prejudice, a bias in your nature that you don't yet see. This is true. This is true. This is true about you. It's a choice whether you embrace that and seek to learn from it and cry out to God for help to reveal such things to you, because the more you cry out to God and seek God's help in it the more and the faster He'll help you to conquer and overcome much of that.

So, "The ordination of women in the Church."

With the revelation (as it says here) of the 52nd Truth, God is continuing to reveal the rightful role of women with the 53rd truth by showing that God has and will continue to work with and through women to help prepare the path for the return of Jesus Christ and to fulfill a breaking of bonds for all humanity.

But it's not going to happen just because the Millennium is here. It's going to take several generations until this is cleansed throughout society and the soundness and the balance is in unity and oneness with the way of God, the way God intends for it to be.

Now, that's truly a profound thing to grasp and understand. Now, I'll add at this point that there are a lot of people who have made great strides in addressing this in families and in the Church, however, there are many who have only scratched the surface of this. And I mean just barely scratched the surface. There is a great variance then in the ability to see this even within the Church. And the reality is that there is still a very great amount of work that still needs to be done. That's just the truth! This matter of a curse being removed from women is a matter of curses that are to be removed from many other areas in life as well.

And that's the thing to come to understand. God is using one of the primary things to set this world right, to begin to set this world right in society and in family that needs to be addressed at the beginning. But *please* understand this is only one of many things that have to be set right in the removing of curses, that are of things deeply embedded in the human mind that will take some generations to cleanse and to rectify in this process of the removal of curses. This is one of the greatest areas of change that's to be addressed at the start of the Millennium, concerning this matter of these two truths, Truth #52 and Truth #53. It is *far* bigger than most can even begin to grasp. Truly is. There is balance and soundness in all this that can only come from God. God has to give it. It's going to take time. That balance and soundness can only come through a continuing transformation of the mind generation after generation, which in turn comes from a process of repentance and the experience that can only be experienced from applying, living what is right in all this.

See, one can't come to understand something until they actually begin living it and doing it, and action follows by right choices that begin to give, then, the ability to see it, to understand it. So this goes very deep, deeper than most at this time can grasp. And we have been given the truth. What an awesome thing! We have been given this knowledge. But there is much change that will yet take several generations to fully address, reveal, and changed in both men and women. And it just takes time, but it's a matter of whether we see it, whether we believe it. Because to the depth we believe it is to the depth we will seek to change, if we are, indeed, motivated to do so.

So again, do you know where the greatest change in all this must occur? Do you understand why wrong thinking and wrong practices of men toward women, and of that of women toward

themselves has developed from the beginning? Do you grasp their origin and why they are perpetuated and even made worse? It's a matter of understanding just exactly what we have been going through in this sermon subject. It is about the origin of curses. Again, please have this deeply embedded in your mind. It is about the origin of curses and what causes them. It simply comes from disobedience toward God. Just saying the same thing again a different way here that I've already talked about. Curses are a result of disobedience to God! That's just... It's that simple. We don't need to make it harder than what it is. It's just plain. It's of a failure to live as He, God Almighty, shows His way is to be lived. It's about sin and what it does to our mind, our thinking, the corruption that takes place in the mind, the destruction that takes place in the mind. And that isn't easily changed. That isn't easily healed.

So, indeed, there is much work involved to reverse the course of all the damage that's been done to the minds, the very thinking of mankind over the past 6,000 years. So again, where does it begin? In one respect, again, this is simple, but in others it is... in its application it takes a lifetime to reverse, and even generations to correct.

So let me ask this: Do you know why there will be no need for the 10 Commandments to be written, to be given to God's family, Elohim? Why did the Commandments have to be given to Israel? ...to mankind? It's because man chooses to live his own ways. And those are against God! It's that simple. God's way is based on true and genuine love toward others. It is *outgoing concern* and *care* for others, for the *best* interest of others. And believe you me, we have a lot of work to do in this. We don't tend to think that way, to really consider the best interests of others. Instead, *we are selfish!* Again and again and again we hit this! Why? Because it's so deeply engrained in our minds and the way we think and the way we live that we don't fully recognize or accept this yet. And it's only in the acceptance of it and the addressing of it that we make headway. And the more we make headway, the more we address it; I should say, the more headway then we can make.

So we naturally tend to think, first and foremost, of our best interest. That's just the bottom line. That's just the way we are. That's where the battle is. That's where the battle begins and where it continues. So that comes first, just addressing the way we are, the way "I" am. That's where your battle is. It's not in others. That's why we had this recent sermon series about owning our choices, because it's so hard, it's so difficult to acknowledge what we are! It's so difficult, it's so hard to *accept* what we are! Instead, we try to make self better. We think self is better and we want others to see self as better. That's just the way we are! And that's just the way we think. Now, there is a lot of work there - three and four generations, really, for the world, and you're not going to possibly see all three and four generations are you? Because life doesn't always go that long. By the time the fourth generation comes along, you know, we find ourselves waning and the body falling apart and death coming upon the scene.

Let's turn over to **Philippians 2:1**— *If there be, therefore, any consolation*, a word having to do with encouragement, *in Christ*, and there is so much, but this is a specific focus being given for people to think about. "Encouragement in Christ," in the Body of Christ, in the Church. He says, if

any comfort (exhortation) **of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercies.** And so it's a matter of where are we in our growth? How do we think? Do we have a lock on these things or are we still working on these things? And if we're still working on these things, where are we in it? Do we have the encouragement that should be there in Christ, in the Body of Christ, that in the Church that encourages us constantly, continually, that motivates us and moves us? **If any comfort** (exhortation) **of love,** of Godly love in our life, of how we should be living and thinking toward one another. Exhortation - is it there? It is a part of our life? Is it a part of our thinking? Do we try to keep on top of that? "If any fellowship of the spirit." How deeply is that embedded in us, this "fellowship of the spirit," because of a relationship we have with God and Jesus Christ and because of that and our desire that it be greater and better, that we recognize the need to have better fellowship with one another - better fellowship - that we put more into it to love each other more, that we put self out of the way, that we go out of our way, that we sacrifice to do things in order to help others, in order to be there for others. What things can we literally do in life to accomplish such things? What changes can we make to make the Body better, to be able to *rejoice* more in our fellowship together, to be able to rejoice more in the Feast of Tabernacles together? "If any fellowship of spirit." "If any bowels and mercies." Do they exist, bowels, deep things that are...? This is referring to that which is deep down in your innermost *feeling* and mind and *desire* of life, "bowels of mercies." Mercies! How merciful are we? Do we have mercy? Is that something that moves and motivates us toward one another, to be merciful to one another? Do we not want mercy from others? Are there not times in our life we want some to be merciful to us? Are there not times in our life, regularly so, that we want God and Jesus Christ to be merciful to us? And if so be, then do we respond in kind because we value so highly this matter of mercy that we exercise and learn to be merciful to others? Not stupid - merciful.

There are times to be assertive, to be direct about a matter, to go to your brother alone about a matter. But it should be done mercifully. It should be done with that spirit above all other, not one of condemnation and harshness of judgment. Mercy should always be in the forefront. But does that come quickly, or is that a lifetime to grow in? Because of one factor, of one thing alone, that's one that is probably one of the most lacking in the Church, this matter of mercy, this matter of grasping the depth of it for ourselves and the matter of desire to extend it towards others. Because when is it you need to extend it towards others? Ah, therein is the answer to the question. "When do you need to extend mercy to others?" Well, there are things that come to the surface there, things come up in life to where you need to consider it. It's not done in easy times. It's not done in the times things are going well and good and everything is hunkey-dorey, peachy-keen. It's when there is some difficulty, some challenge, some challenge to you spiritually.

If any bowels of mercies, fulfil you my joy. He's telling here about his joy as an apostle in teaching others and his desire for the Church and how they lived toward one another, **that you be likeminded...** "That you be likeminded!" That you strive to do the same things, that you be filled with the same kind of mind to fight and to battle your spirit, the spirit essence of your being, to get rid of the selfish part and to yield self to God's spirit, to God's purpose, to His mind. ...**having**

the same **love, being of one accord**. It's a beautiful thing when we understand it, one accord, working in harmony and unity together, a purpose, having that as a part of our motivation in life. ...of one mind. What is that mind? It's the mind of God. It's the mind of Jesus Christ. It's how they think, how they have taught us that we should think and how we should live.

Let nothing be done through strife! Strife! Let nothing be done in your life through strife. The Greek word here is the word that means "rivalry as in ambition against others." That's where problems occur, when matters of strife, it's a rivalry. Who is going to win? You ever had a situation where an argument, a discussion becomes a matter of who's going to win? Because you know what you're striving to win? You're striving to win *your* point, *your* way, what *you* know is right over the other person. It's a rivalry. Love the way it's stated! "A rivalry as in ambition against others." What is the ambition against others? To be right. They're wrong - you're right. And what do they think? Generally when there's contention like that and strife, *you* are the one that's wrong. They know that. *They're* right! It's a rivalry in an ambition against others, which simply is the definition of selfishness. Isn't that amazing? It's just the definition of selfishness - this rivalry in an ambition against others. Selfishness! That's just ugly. Selfishness is just an ugly thing of human nature.

...or **vainglory**, as it says here, in other words, again, about self, not about others. Vainglory is about self. It's about how one wants to be seen. It's how one thinks about self, you know, lifting up self. Well, because you know better. Your way is better. There is a vainglory in self there that is being esteemed highly and can't be wrong. So stroking, stroking self, how one sees self.

...but in **lowliness of mind**. See, to break through that it takes humility, a willingness to lower one's thinking about self and about our own interests. There is a kind of backing away from, a surrender to selfishness. Don't let selfishness be in control. You let selfishness be in control, you're not in control. If self and selfishness is in control, then you're really not in control of your life spiritually, so that requires humility of spirit, a willingness to humble ones self, to be taken advantage of, to be spoken against, to pull back the way one might carnally respond, to strive to do it in the way God says to respond. That takes humility because you don't want to do it the way God says to do it, you want to do it the way you're accustomed to doing things as you've always dealt with them in the past. And that isn't the right way. That isn't the right way to resolve differences and issues and problems in life. How has that worked? How has that worked? Indeed.

...but in **lowliness of mind, let each esteem...** This is really profound, because it's one of the hardest things for human beings to come to see, maybe one of the hardest things to remember and to hold on to and to keep in the forefront of the battle against self. ...**let each esteem**; that means "to consider as in consideration or regard." People aren't very considerate today. You look around the world, people aren't very considerate. They put themselves first. They don't think of others. They think about themselves.

I think about what's happened, you know, sometimes... it happens every year at the Feast, people who want the best room, the better rooms, the better view, whatever it might be, rather than

sometimes making decisions because of someone else's need above yours or whatever it might be, or a matter of honor toward others in a willingness to show honor to whom honor should be given. And so sometimes people make various decisions there and choices in life that just are a matter of selfishness, not regard for others, not a consideration of other's needs or wants or desires or happiness or fullness or whatever it might be. And so we tend to just think of ourselves.

I think of things that have happened in times past where people would know about where certain reservations or certain places are going to be, and when they're supposed to start making reservations. But they would jump ahead of time in order to get what was considered to be, perhaps, the better room, perhaps the better suites, whatever it might be. Like at an embassy suites, perhaps the corner room because it had more room in it, so "I want to be the first one in line. I want to be there first. Yes! Yes! Yes! Because *my* needs are greater than most other needs of people in the Church. See?" And so there are some people who need that, who have a legitimate need, especially when it comes to perhaps, even especially in the governing of certain situations within the Church, of working with people in the Church, perhaps of working with more people in the Church, whatever it might be... whatever it might be. But what is the consideration shown?

Today, there's not a whole lot of consideration and people taught to be respectful or to regard others. You ride up and down in an elevator and there are different things I have seen all over the world about how people treat others. And some are going to make it a point that they're the most important, they're the first *out*, they're the first *in*, or whatever it might be. Or "You better make room for me when I come in the elevator!" And when it unloads it's not a matter of being courteous or respectful or being considerate toward women. Because there should be something shown there as a matter of respect and consideration to people who are older, if that be the case, to people who are loaded down with luggage. So people just jump out of the thing there because the people who have the luggage and are struggling, oh, let them worry about the door closing, let them worry about trying to get out. Don't try to make it easier for them! Don't hold the door for them! It's all about self.

Little things in life! People walking down... I've mentioned this before, people walking down - you'll see it at the Feast, probably. If you're out in society much at all, you're going to see it. People walking down a sidewalk and three or four abreast, but here you are, there's not enough room - who's going to give? What do you do? Jump into a doorway somewhere so that they can get by? Because, I mean, after all, they are the important people on the earth right now. Or is it a matter of jumping off on the side there in the grass, maybe the wet grass, or whatever it might be in order to let them by, because they are the important people of the earth right now? That's what they think! And so shouldn't you give into that? And so we see those kinds of things in the world. People don't care about other people. They care about themselves. They're the ones that own it. And if you do anything and stand in their way it's like, "Who are you?! Who are you! What do you mean...?!" Incredible!

And so to turn that around, to let each esteem, "to consider, to regard, a matter of good respect toward others or it's a matter to think in a considerate manner towards." That's what this word entails. "To think in a considerate manner toward others." To regard them. So to esteem others better. Now, it's not "better *than*." That's not what it means. It's not this fake thing that others are better than me, and you're just the lowly life of the earth and you better go around with your head hung low, and you know, you're just the scum of the earth and you should act like that. You should act like you have nothing in life to live for. I mean, you're... That's not what this is about. ...**let each esteem other better**, "better." And the Greek word here really means, "to hold above." It means to hold above in themselves. That's what it means, others above themselves, or better than themselves. Again, it's not "better than." That's not a good word here. But it's a matter of holding others above ourselves in a sense of their needs at that time and a consideration and a matter of being considerate. In other words, "to consider others first above self." That's really what it's about. It's a matter of considering others first above self. So do we do that? People in an elevator. People walking down the sidewalk? People at a doorway? People in a car? Whatever it is, different things that people sometimes do. Do we always have to be first or are we willing to consider others before ourselves? That's really what it's talking about, to consider others before ourselves, to consider their needs before ourselves. Or do we always have to be the first to be considered?

Look not every man on his own things, better said, "Do not look to your own self interests first." That's really what it's saying in context here. "Do not look to your own self interests first, but be considerate of other's interests first." Isn't that a good thing? To think about others interests first and not always having to have ours first? Because as selfish human beings we tend to have us first, always. And that's not the way it should be. There is reward and enjoyment of life when you learn to share and do this very thing, of being considerate to others first. You know there are blessings in that? And to do it the other way, there are curses. Self just becomes more selfish, enjoys life less, enjoys people less. There is a great blessing in learning how to enjoy people and others by the way you think toward them, by the way you treat them and how they then respond, because they're being treated differently, they're being treated with respect. People don't experience that very much in the world. You treat someone respect, you show them consideration, it's amazing sometimes the response you can get back, we receive back. That's in a right way, a sound way - God's way, frankly. It's not a matter in order to get it, it's just a matter that that's just the way that produces right fruit.

But it goes on to say, **but every man also on the things of others**. So again, "Look not every man on his own things," his own self-interest, in other words, being first all the time, "but every man also on the things of others." Also! So it's not that we shouldn't consider things about ourselves and what we desire. There's nothing wrong with that. But when you include within that then others' interest and then begin making choices oftentimes in life to put theirs first, there is great blessing in that and enjoyment and reward in that, as well.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. That was his mind. He wasn't out here to do his own thing, to do what was best for himself. Everything he did was for others. Everything! Everything was by a motivation of esteeming, regarding, considering others first above himself. Everything! Awesome! What a life! What an incredible example in life.

Let's turn over to **Romans 15:1—We who are strong**, in other words, of those who have been growing in greater spiritual strength, *if* indeed we are, or perhaps it is just at that moment we may be in a position of greater strength when someone else has given into weakness. That happens. Sometimes in the environment of the Church someone had a problem, a difficulty, something weighing on them, let down spiritually at some point, did something that they shouldn't have done at that moment in time, whereas normally they would be much, much stronger than us in life, but at that moment.... So how do we respond? How do we react? **We who are strong**, at a particular moment in time; in other words, if we're able to not be caught up in something that someone else slips in, then there is a way that we're to act. And the reality is those things happen. Those things happen within the environment of the Church and in life, because none of us are perfect. None of us! Not a one of us! And so if we know these things and we apply what is right - happy are you, joyful, you, indeed, can be because of it.

So "we who are strong," so, in other words, at that moment, whatever it might be, or if you happen to be because of the length of time you've been in God's Church and the molding and fashioning that God has done in your life already, don't let it go to your head. Don't be lifted up by it. No one of that mind will be anyway, because they'll have a better understanding of where they are and what's taking place and how to deal with matters and will be more understanding of other people anyway, of things happening, and will understand with time they're going to come to deal with some of those same things and they will grow and they keep fighting the fight and they'll get to where they need to be, where, perhaps, you are at that moment in time already because of what you have gone through.

So, **we who are strong ought to bear** (carry) **the weaknesses of those who are weak**, whether it be at that moment or who are just weaker spiritually because they haven't been able to have the time invested and haven't had the experience through time yet to be where you are. So don't take that and let it go to your head, but use it to the service of God's people, to the benefit of others - which is what we should do. So again, **ought to carry the weaknesses of those who are without strength**, or are of lesser spiritual strength, again, maybe just at that moment. So again, **ought to bear with the weaknesses of those who are weak and not to please ourselves**. "Not to please ourselves." In other words, we're not just to have our own way, or have a final say because we're right, or are seeking to be or prove ourselves right in a matter, etcetera, etcetera... There is a way we should deal with and handle things. And sometimes it's just to carry, if it happens to be toward us or that we're involved in it, where perhaps a consideration or respect has not been shown that should have been, a consideration wasn't given when it really would have been better if someone had, and instead, placed themselves first and did that which was not good at the

moment and perhaps looked and did some things or said some things that were not good toward us, whatever it might be, or toward someone else that we're there and have to address one way or another in our thinking in how we're going to respond. So how do we? Do we bear? Do we carry something for a time, for an individual because of something they need to get a hold of and giving them some time to do it? Perhaps saying something that will help in a right way but not with a wrong way of saying it, not in a harsh way, but that matter, again, that is one of mercy.

Verse 2—Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. Now, in a marriage relationship, who is their closest neighbor? Relationship between husband and wife, who is their closest... each one of them, for each one of them, who is their closest neighbor? It's each other. It's the other person, their closest neighbor. So spiritually, to apply something like this, the closest neighbor you have in marriage is your mate. They're the closest one to you. So, "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." What is our attitude? Always, should always be there toward our mate. Do you ever find yourself out of line there for whatever reason it might be in life?

For even Christ pleased not himself, he didn't do things to be of greater benefit to himself, nor did he try to press any issue to prove that he was right. He never did that. You don't have to be right about things. Sometimes stating what is right and what is true in a pleasant, in a true way, as a matter of fact or whatever, is one issue, but to become emotional in a matter to where attitudes and sometimes other things come out and whatever just is wrong. Shouldn't be there. So again, "let every one of us please his neighbor for good to edification." Now, there's a lot said there. You know, there's really a sermon right there, and so there's some meditation and thinking and prayer that goes into that to understand what that means, to be able to do something that is an example that will help to edify - not to hurt, not to tear down, but to edify, to help build. Now, that's something that doesn't come natural with us. It's something that really has to come from God, to even know how to do that.

...but, as it is written, The reproaches, in other words, the disapproval, the rebuke, **of those who reproached, you fell on me.** What an example! Jesus Christ willing to take those things, willing to take injustices. How many injustices are you willing to take and perhaps address something at a later time? How many? What kind of things are you willing to carry and hold for someone else, to bear for a little while for someone else so that something could be done at another time or stated another time, addressed another time when the environment is one of calm and peace? Oftentimes, we're just not willing to do such things. We don't have that kind of control in our life, but we should strive for it.

I think of this in Psalms 69:9 (and just read it here, you can just jot it down). A prophecy that this is taken from where it says, concerning Christ, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me," and it is from some of this that's stated here in **Psalm 69:9 - For the zeal of Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches,** in other words, the disapproval, the rebuke **of those that reproached you have fallen on me.** So how do we respond to things in life around us and of

things that happen within, even, the fellowship, or our own personal lives together with those who are sometimes closest to us? There is that desire for God's way.

Now, this can be taken a couple different ways, but I'm addressing it in a specifically unique way here in the sense of an attitude we have toward God, of a zeal and a desire we have for what is right, and His House, you know, it's His Body, the Church, those in the Church, how we treat others. "For the zeal of your House has eaten me up." Is that something that fills our life, in that respect, and we strive because of our feelings toward God's people and toward the Church, that we want to respond in certain ways and to carry certain things ourselves because of an attitude we have toward God. That's what we're talking about here, an attitude that we have. We do what we do because of an attitude we have toward God, of honoring God. And so there are things we will do because of that. And that's the life of Christ, of things he was willing to do because he understood that it really goes back to people's relationship with God in the first place. How they do, what they do in life really goes back to whether or not they have a relationship, or to what degree they have a relationship. And that determines, oftentimes, then our response and what we are going to do.

Let's turn over to **Romans 15:4**. It says, **For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope**. We can change in our thinking; our minds can be transformed. We can grow and begin to experience this kind of love that comes from God, a sacrificing kind of love that does not put itself first. That's what we're talking about. So we hear sermons like this quite often about this sacrificing love. It's because it's not in us naturally. It's something we must grow in. It's something we must embrace. It's something we have to pray about. It's something we must enter into, fight, and battle concerning our normal human response that we have.

So again, "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through *patience* and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

Verse 5—Now the God of patience and consolation... God is patient toward us and there's a way we should be toward others. "And consolation," or this comfort and encouragement," **grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus**. So what kind of patience do we have? What kind of a willingness do we have to suffer, to carry something of others? Or do we try to just make everything right just then and there because we're trying to make others right? Or are we trying to make ourselves right? Do we want to make sure that we're living right, that we're responding to situations and circumstances around us in a right way that is a matter of right judgment that we have toward others because of God?

As it goes on to say here, **being likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus. That you might with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God**. What a blessing to be able to do this in the Church. You know, when we sing the songs here at the Feast with one mind, more than any other time we have that, and with one mouth we glorify God. And then to go out and live it

throughout the rest of the day, that's the challenge. We can do it together when we've been given that in front of us and the words are in front of us and the music is there and we join together and it's a beautiful thing and we know that it's a beautiful thing and we enjoy it, we are excited by it, we are thankful to be able to praise God, to thank God, and then to have that mind as we leave and to maintain that through that day and through the week and through the time to come, to have that kind of thinking on a regular basis? Well, therein is the challenge, because it really isn't a part of us, fully. It becomes more a part of us the more we yield ourselves to God's way and have more of that life living in us, that we be of **one mind and with one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, receive one another.** You know, this says so much! This attitude of mind to *receive* others.

How do we receive others? That means, how do you respond to others? Do you hold grudges? Do you hold them in a certain place because you see certain weaknesses they have in their life? Oh, this is done all the time in the Church. Certain ones have, perhaps, a certain weakness in life. What is your weakness? Well, probably don't really see it that clearly. But others see it, and how do they respond to you in life? Well, sometimes they may have a challenge in that how they receive you. But there is so much to do with, we can't worry about that part of others and how they're going to receive you as much as we have to worry about and be focused upon and concerned with the fact of what we do in receiving them. How do we receive them? How do we accept them into our life? What are we sharing with them and desire to share with them in our life? Family? Close family? Love? Desire for them?

...as Christ also received us to the glory of God. Who are we? How great are we? Well, that's the problem. Sometimes we kind of think we're a little greater than what we really are, this matter of glory to self, self-glorification, whatever. Anyway, we recognize, indeed - hopefully we all recognize, indeed, the battles in us. That's the battle. And it's not a matter of the fault in others. It's not a matter the weakness in others. It's a matter of our willingness to carry some of the fault sometimes and weakness of others, to look past those things because we are God's, because God is working with us to change and mold and fashions us. And if there are things that have to be addressed, God will address them. We don't have to. It's a matter of how we receive one another. We're all God's children and we're judged by and worked with by God, which sometimes then includes - not sometimes, but very oftentimes - includes things within the ministry and things that happen in our lives.

So, again, this matter of the 10 Commandments. So mankind had to be given the 10 Commandments. They didn't think this way. It wasn't a part of them. Adam and Eve did not love each other from the beginning as they should. Instead, they had their own best interests at the forefront... to the expense and even the harm toward the other. What an incredible thing to understand. Think about it. Think about it. That's what we've been talking about here, that which started from the beginning. And so, again, the problem is is that man hasn't had the ability, hasn't desired, hasn't chosen to listen to God, hasn't believed God, and because of that, hasn't lived

God's way's, and so God had to give laws about how to live to regulate human life. It isn't needed in Elohim because that mind, the mind is fully at-one with God.

And so, because of those choices to listen to what Satan told them, rather than listening to and obeying God, they chose for themselves what they wanted, and something began to happen in their mind—their very thinking process as they continued to turn inward and let selfish human nature rule their lives rather than God. They chose their own human nature to rule rather than God.

Removal of curses from mankind is a *long process* of transforming the mind and the thinking of people to be brought into greater unity and oneness to the thinking and mind of God. As Paul said in **Philippians 2:5—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.** Again, incredible to understand that mind, that thinking that we need to have in us, and an ability, as we just read a moment ago here, in going through that, again, a reminder, Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

So, this is a standard and a way of thinking that isn't actually possible with mankind to attain of himself. We just can't do it. But it *is* a way of thinking that can be chosen and then begin to become possible, again, by this transformation of the mind and the thinking that is in us. What an awesome thing that God has made it possible for a mind, a human mind to begin to think differently, to have this transformation take place. You know, God has challenged mankind to experience this kind of living and then shown how it can become possible, how it *can* be achieved.

Let's turn over to Matthew 22. I think of the young man that came before Christ and Christ brought him to address what was at the heart and core of right actions, right thinking, and living that one should seek to attain. A lot is said here.

Matthew 22:34—But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question*, testing him, and saying, Master, *which is* the greatest Commandment of the law? So again, this was continually going on where different ones were testing him because, to see what his response would be. And a lot of them for the purpose of trying to trip him up, finding fault, to find fault, especially with some of those religious leaders, that they could say, "Well, this doesn't agree with what God says."

Verse 37—Jesus said unto him, You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. Now, no one can find fault with that. That's awesome! "What's the greatest Commandment?" Who could say, you know, that that isn't the greatest? "What is the greatest Commandment of the law?" Well, there you are.

Verse 38—This is the first and greatest Commandment. But see, that's the problem, isn't it? Adam and Eve, they didn't put God first. They didn't choose to put God first, to love Him with all

of their heart, with all their soul, to listen to Him, to know Him, to regard Him as their God, to esteem Him, to honor Him, to love Him, to indeed, put Him first, what He says is first in their life. They didn't put Him first. No, didn't take very long, being came along, told them something, twisted something, distorted something, and they began to make wrong choices. **And the second is like unto it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two Commandments hang (rest) all the law and the prophets.** So if this were being lived, if people would think this way, if this was the thinking in the human mind, it's just the fact is that it isn't and it can't be because we're selfish creatures. So it's impossible to be this way! And that's why laws had to be given. That's why the 10 Commandments had to be given. Because these things are foreign to the mind of man and man can't live by them. He has to have God's help.

Let's turn over to... I'll just read it to you. Again, this is why many other scriptures are stated in the direct manner that they are. These are far more meaningful, important, and to the heart of it all than we can normally grasp. We can read through a story like this, and I've talked about it before, but how deeply do we really "see" it and grasp it for what it's saying? But it's, again, through these very clear and powerful words that the curses on this earth will begin to be removed. By people "seeing," coming to really "see" these things. Again, it's simple, but it's complex and impossible for human nature to accomplish. Yet, it's simple in what God reveals to us. But again, the problem is and the complexity is our nature. But, again, with God's spirit it will be accomplished. And that's what's awesome in this and that's what's awesome of what's happening in our lives, the blessing. How thankful are we that we can come before God and rejoice at His Feast because He's given us His holy spirit? Because that's the only thing that enables such a thing as what you're experiencing. What you're experiencing is not of yourself. It is not of your doing. It's solely of God's and the power of God's holy spirit that's transforming your thinking.

Galatians 5:14 says, **For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** So in our environment we should love our neighbor as our self. And the problem is we love ourselves too much. We love ourselves *first!* That's the problem! That's the spirit! That's the spiritual thing to understand.

Then let's notice **Romans 13:8** (you can turn over there). It says, **Owe no one anything, but to love one another.** That's what you owe! That's what we're to give. But we don't have it in ourselves to give. It isn't natural. But it's what we should strive for. It's what we should pray for. It's what God says we can grow in and attain to more and more and more, to love one another the way God shows us to love, the way God commands us to love, to do so in a manner that is sacrificing to self.

...for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. If we learn to love in this way there is no law, there is no need for law. There is no need to be told not to have graven images or those things of idols or things we raise up before God. There is no need to be told that we shouldn't carry God's name in vain in our lives. There is no need to be told to keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days, for

they're just a part of our thinking, they're a part of our mind in a relationship with God, to have a right relationship with God. There is no need to tell anyone not to murder or not to commit adultery or not to steal, see? In a mind that is fully at one with God, in unity with God, there is no need for written law like this to tell you "Don't do these things." Because you won't. Because to love your neighbor as yourself, to love in the way God says to love, well, that is the fulfilling of the law. It makes the law unnecessary because that's just the way you think. That's just the way you are! But human beings aren't that way so God had to give the law, had to give a codified law to tell people this is what you should and should not do. This is how you should live in order to love one another.

So, again, **For in these (the laws), You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, You shall not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** See? And as we come to a point where the mind becomes more and more transformed that's how we think. Now, that is not natural for the human mind, but it is for God. It's just the way God is. And the more God is in us, the more we're at-one with God, the more in unity and oneness, likemindedness of spirit - because it's of the holy spirit, it requires God's holy spirit *in* us, in our minds, in our thinking to transform the way we think to bring this about, to make this possible, how we live.

Romans 13:10—Love does not work ill, this word means, "no evil, nothing bad." Nothing evil and nothing bad **toward his neighbor**, toward anyone. It will not work evil. It will not work what is bad and what is wrong toward other people. It just won't do it. It won't talk to people in a bad way. It won't put people in a bad light. It won't tear down people. It just won't do it! **...therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.** It fulfills it. It accomplishes it. **And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed,** in other words, when we were first called. How much have we grown? How much have we grown? How much has our thinking changed? How much has our behavior changed toward others? ...toward one another? It says, **the night is far spent, the day is at hand.** Boy, this is truer than ever for us on a spiritual plane and in a plane concerning the end of an age and where we are.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness, when we're called we're to walk in the light. "The day is at hand." This is what we're being told. Not just because of the time in which we live in, but because of life itself and how we're to live toward being in the light and walking in the light. **...and let us put on the armor of light.** So this is the process of curses being removed from this world. The more light there is, the more we put on of the light and walking in the light, in the truth, in the ways of God, the more that curses are removed from this world. And that's where we are. And that's what we're to be living. We are to be living that especially in a very *focused* way at the Feast of Tabernacles.

So again, this is the process of curses being removed from this world, learning to walk in the light. A process that could have been chosen at the beginning, but wasn't, because of what we're like as human beings.

Verse 13—Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in wrong behavior and wrong actions and doing wrong around other people, living wrong around other people, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. So we've already touched on some of this, about strife. And then there's this matter of envy. Oh, the matter of envying and jealousies that sometimes exist within the Church. And I'll tell you what, they're here at the Feast. They'll be here at the Feast when people do certain things, when people have opportunity for certain things. That's just the way that it is. And people have to fight attitudes towards certain people. And that shouldn't exist! Where is the love of God in that? Where is the mind of God in that? Well, the problem is it isn't, and so we have a battle. And so we have to put on the *armor of light*! You need God! You need God to fight through such things and to bring things into subjection to God and to God's rule and God's law.

And so that's what it goes on to say, **verse 14—But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not make provision for the flesh**, don't be overly concerned with taking care of self, pampering self, getting your way. Be of a humble spirit, seek humility, seek to wear sackcloth. Don't lift up self. Don't strive to lift up self. Just love others. Love others. And so again here, **put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not make provisions for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof**, in other words, the selfishness in it. Don't try to satisfy self. Slap self. Bring self under control. Put self in it's place. Get rid of it. Put it under the watery grave. Keep your foot on top of it's head when it tries to come up out of the water.

Let's turn over to **James 2:8**. Notice this: **If you fulfil the royal law according to the scripture**, so "royal law?" Royal? Of God in all of it's beauty, in all of it's stature. **You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well**. And how much more meaningful this is when people come to recognize their closest neighbor is their mate, their spouse. And then in the body, in the Church, in the fellowship, then we expand upon that because that's our family. And our family, well, those are the closest to us, above and beyond so much that's in the world, obviously.

But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin, if you have "respect to persons." Now, sometimes some don't have any respect to some that they should show respect. But another matter. **But if you have respect to persons, you commit sin**, and so if it's a matter of choosing some over others because of something you get out of it, because of something you want out of it, because of a way you see yourself. Well, it's not that great, is it? Okay? And so it has to do with how we think. It says, **you commit sin, and are convinced**, or the word is really "convicted" **of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all**. And see, that has to do with curses. It has to do with wrong thinking. Because it'll carry over into other things you do. It'll carry over into other actions in your life. And curses just compound themselves. And we want blessings. We want to be blessed by God. We

want to be blessed in our fellowship. We want to be blessed in the happiness and the fullness in our life so that we can do the very thing we were told at the very beginning of the Feast here, to rejoice before God. That's how we rejoice. The more in unity we are with God, the more we live God's way, the more we're able to rejoice because we're walking in, we're experiencing God's way of life more fully. And the more fully you experience God the more you just will rejoice. You can't help it! The more grateful, the more thankful you will be.

Verse 11—For he who said, Do not commit adultery, also said, Do not kill. Now if you do not commit adultery, yet if you kill, then you have become a transgressor of the law, you know, curses follow, the mind becomes corrupted, one thing leads to another, one area spills over into another. It multiplies, horribly so, like a cancer. So speak you, and so do, as they who shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, who has shown no mercy; and mercy rejoices against judgment. You know, what an awesome thing. I think one of the most profound things in a lot of ways to come to understand is this matter of grace that God gives to us, to come to understand more fully what grace is, to understand the factor of mercy in God's grace, that if you have received it from God shouldn't you live it toward others? Shouldn't there be a change in your thinking as to how you, then, respond to others? There are some parables in scripture that talk about such things. If you're judged in a certain way and then you turn around - because you were given mercy by God and judged mercifully by God - and you turn around and are harsh to others, harsher to others? What a horrible thing! Shouldn't be that way. So we have to have God's help to grow, to change, to see things in a right way.

Let's turn over to Galatians 5 and notice a portion of what is written here. Galatians 5:13. So, so much of this message about the removal of curses has to do with the mind. It has to do with how we think. And God is blessing us to learn how, to have a process work within our minds that goes beyond even our ability to know and understand even, is this transforming of the spirit of our mind, in the way we think. And it all has to do with the choices we make that we're presented with and to how we respond to God's guidance, direction, instruction, and so forth. And so we have great opportunity at the Feast of Tabernacles to really work on these kinds of things in a more direct manner when we have opportunity to come together to live more closely together as a Body, as a Church, to meet more throughout the week, opportunity that we don't get to have during the rest of the year. And so this is an arena whereby we have opportunity to put the test these things and try these things, and to draw closer to God because of it, to put these things into practice in our life so that we can do what God *commands* us to do - which He wouldn't have to command us if we fully lived this toward one another, because we would automatically be thankful beyond words towards God Almighty and Jesus Christ, that we can live a life that brings about blessings and gets rid of the curses and the hurt and the harm that comes in human life in relationships.

Galatians 5:13—For, brethren, you have been called into liberty, great freedom that God has given by bringing us out of Egypt and that process. We're not out of it yet, and that's much of the

problem. And much of Egypt still is in us. ...**only do not use liberty for an occasion to the flesh**, in other words, to be self-serving. Even within the environment of the Church, don't use things and opportunities and life and the Feast to be self-serving. Because too often people do. What *they* get to do. What *they* get to do. Where *they* get to be. Where *they* get to stay. Where *they* get to eat out. Whatever it might be, little things that are big things spiritually. It's little things in life we're judged by because it reflects what we are, it reflects who we are.

...**only do not use liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another**. Is that where our thinking is? It's about serving others, about giving to others, about helping others, about placing other's desires above our own? Because that's where serving comes in. About being there to help others to have a better time, a better enjoyment of life, a better fullness of life, whatever it is we might be able to do to help promote that. Or are we out in the forefront trying to be the recipients of everything that's good?

Verse 14—For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; You shall love your neighbor as yourself. And here at the Feast of Tabernacles we have neighbors that we don't normally get to be with throughout the rest of the year except on Sabbaths. And oftentimes people don't even have that opportunity. So, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Don't put yourself first. See, "Love your neighbor," love others, "as yourself."

But if you, notice, if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you are not consumed one of another. Sadly those things sometimes exist and sometimes creep into the Feast. Don't let those things creep into this Feast and don't let them creep into your life when you return home. ***This I say then, Walk in the spirit***. How do you do that? You cry out to God for His holy spirit, because it isn't in you of and by yourself. It's only in you to the degree that God gives it to you. The holy spirit comes from God. God is the source. God dwelling in you is your power, is your strength of life, your ability to hold on to the truths to see the truths, to be in agreement, unity, and oneness with the truths, the ability to love others within the Body as your family, to see them as your family, to love them as your family. To see differences, yes. To recognize you work with and deal with different situations in different ways. But to have the primary motivation of one of love, of what is best for them and how to best serve and help them in life, whatever that might mean.

This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. In other words, you won't be living selfishly. Over and over again scriptures talk about this, our human nature. We have to be able to admit it. That's where the change begins. The beginning of the process, it's in our lives, of getting rid of curses and seeing those things removed from the world as they are able to be removed in our lives in a smaller way now within the Church - that's soon to be something that happens throughout the earth. What an awesome thing!

Verse 17—For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. It's a battle! It's a battle going on inside your mind. There is a *war* taking place. That's why I've made comment

over and over again you've got to fight for this way of life. If you're not you know who's winning out? Your mind! The flesh! Selfishness is winning out. Don't let it win out! ...and these are **contrary, one to another: so that you cannot do the things that you want**, in other words, that you might want of yourself. So what's that say? You've got to have God's help. That's why you have to cry out everyday, and so much more when you're living closely together with others in God's family, to treat each other in the way God says we should, to love each other in the way that God says we should.

It goes on to say, **verse 18—But if you are led of the spirit**, that means you're looking to God, you're praying every day for God to live in you, you're praying for God's holy spirit and Jesus Christ and God the Father to dwell in you, to help you to be in control of self, to not let self take over, to not let self get in the way. So it says here, **If you be led by the spirit you are not under the law**, you're not under the penalties and curses of the law. They're not going to be regulating your life. **Now the works of the flesh**, selfish things that people do, **are manifest**, they're revealed by... And then as it says, **which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness**, you know, a strong desire to have something that we shouldn't be seeking. **Idolatry**, raising one's way, our way above God's way, whatever that might be.

...**witchcraft**. It's an interesting word. It comes from, "pharmakei." It's like the word "pharmacy." That's where that word comes from. It literally means in Greek here, "the wrong use of drugs or medicines." The wrong use. So that can be done on a physical plane, and it can be done on a spiritual plane that we let into the mind.

...**hatred**, so we're talking about that which is spiritual. So we start to see things by that, which is physical, but then we come to understand things on a spiritual plane too. ...**hatred**, failure to love others. That's what it's talking about.

...**variance**, quarrelling, strife. I'll tell you what, brethren, I truly hope and pray there is absolutely *none* of that at the Feast this year. No strife. No jealousy. No envying. No motivation of things that are wrong, because of these things that happen. You know, I've known of too many situations that have happened, that happen in the Feast where people try to take the limelight at certain things, where they try to be the center of attention, where they do things in order to become the center of attention, where they want focus or a light upon themselves. That just brings about curses and it brings about distaste within the family. And it's not the way of giving and so forth. Of things of envy and jealousy that sometimes happen that motivate other thoughts or other actions in people's lives, of why they choose some of the things they do. Sometimes there are all kinds of things that happen when people get into conflict, get into strife because of some disagreement, something that someone didn't do their own way, didn't do the way they wanted it to, or whatever it might be. Sometimes it's the most frivolous, small, simple things that people let something bad come into the Feast of Tabernacles, some distasteful thing, some uncomfortable thing, whatever it might be. Don't let those things happen. Because if you can fight it here then you can learn to take that battle with you and fight it all the time. And so the

thing is, again here, we don't let it happen here at the Feast. We are able to focus in a manner, in a unique way at the Feast because of all the food, and guidance, direction, instruction, correction, love, mercy, and so forth that God shows us so that we can apply these things more fully now and in this eight day period that God gives to us, so that indeed these lessons and these things we can carry with us and use them more fully in the following year. That's what it's about. It's about what we can learn. And to recognize the objective is to help remove the curses that exist on this earth from this earth. And God has called you to begin the battle that's in you, to begin to set things right. Not in a lot of people, just in those of you who are listening here at this Feast.

Going on here, again, over and over again, things that are continually said here, things that are not to be a part of our life. "Variance," in other words, this matter of quarrelling and strife (in Galations 5:20), **jealousy, wrath, temper, outbursts**. You know, sometimes people have outbursts. I've heard of different things. I heard of things last year. You know, different things that sometimes people have an outburst, they're upset at somebody else and others know it and it causes something to happen that exists that just isn't enjoyable, that takes away the enjoyment and the reward and the blessings that could otherwise be there. And curses just aren't good, brethren. They hurt. They cause torment. They cause suffering.

So, **no strife**, in other words, selfish ambition, **seditions**, it says here. Greek means, "to stand apart, dissension." Shouldn't be any dissention in God's truth and God's way. No **heresies**, you know, "factions which are the result of one's own opinions." We shouldn't try to force our own opinions or want our own opinions. We should want to have whatever comes from God that agrees with God. **Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings**, again, these aren't just physical things. For us in the Church they become that which is spiritual. And it goes on to say, **and such like. Of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.** So God's very strong about what He says about these things. But even if they happen in a smaller way, meaning within a refined way, within a spiritual way - because those which are blatant and outright, that are really obnoxious, really bad, those are more obvious and able to be seen. And people don't turn away from all these things but keep these things more out of their life, but there are smaller things that can happen that reflect the same spirit that isn't good.

But **verse 22—But the fruit of the spirit**, in other word, you're crying out to God. Get in the habit of doing that more here at the Feast. Cry out to God. Ask Him for help. Don't go out in the day without asking God for help, that His spirit dwell within you. You need Him. You want Him and Jesus Christ to live and dwell within you in spirit and in truth in how things are addressed, that we be blessed, that we be able to have blessings, bring more blessings into the Body, into the Church. **But the fruit of the spirit**, that which will, again, remove the curses on mankind. **But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.** These are the things, brethren, that we should be able to look at after each day is over, to realize this is

what's been in our life - joy, peace. There shouldn't be anything that doesn't reflect peace with everyone else in the Church. Longsuffering - that should be reflected there because in order to have peace there's going to be periods of time you're going to have to have some longsuffering towards differences in others. Gentleness - gentleness! Goodness, faith...**meekness**, you know, a teachable spirit, to be willing to look at ourselves, to look at ourselves, of that which can be done to make something better. ...**temperance**, it says, **Against such there is no law**. Again, when we're in unity and oneness with God there is no need for law. There is no law because it's the mind of God. God's mind is a way of love, and when love is there, there is nothing against it.

And they that are Christ's have nailed to the stake their flesh with its affections and lusts. So we want to be Christ's, indeed. We want our sins to be covered, to be forgiven, indeed, and to live in spirit. And that's what it goes on to say in **verse 25—If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.**

So, brethren, what an awesome thing here at this Feast of Tabernacles, to focus on such things that have such simplicity in many ways, but in other ways are so complex because of our nature and the things that are so deeply embedded and hidden in us - prejudices, judgments, things of bias that we just don't grasp in our thinking because our thinking has to be healed and be made different.

So, in the conclusion of this sermon series, I am going to read again what was stated at the introduction: "It's an exciting time that we're observing in this Feast of Tabernacles because of all that it pictures that is so soon going to be ushered in—into the Millennium, brethren! We have a lot of work ahead of us! As Mr. Armstrong used to say, there are those things in families and relationships that will take three to four generations in order to get much of the dysfunction, bad traits, and selfish habits that are learned from parents and society, straightened out."

"Often times the tendency within the Church is for people, once they have been called, to believe that relationships and right thinking toward God and others is fairly well addressed." Well, it isn't. I hope we see that. I hope we know that. And really focus on this during this Feast, to make things right before God in everything we do.

So again, "Often times the tendency within the Church is for people, once they have been called, to believe that relationships and right thinking toward God and toward others is fairly well addressed within a relatively short time. But *then* we're reminded through sermons, and *far too often in personal experiences*, that everything in one's life has *not been addressed* and everything is *not* okay in relationships."

"We soon learn that there is much work that must be practiced/lived before true peace begins to really exist within our relationships." And that's something we can focus on very much so in this Feast of Tabernacles. Let's do it! "It takes much time to address such matters, to come to see such things within our own nature, our own selfishness that's a matter of our natural thinking that must

change!" Understand that. Believe that. Be sobered by that. And be determined to be one of those, brethren, who is helping to remove the curses and to bring in the blessings in life.

So within the first few decades of the Millennium, brethren, we do have very much work ahead of us. And this will be a process of changing the ways of mankind, from the way that produces the experience of curses to the way that produces blessings. And that's what we get to live here at this Feast. That's what we're to focus upon at this Feast because this process is beginning in us, the Church. So as we enter the Millennium, we'll begin a process that begins to remove the way of curses from mankind, and to usher in the way of peace, of abundant blessings. What an awesome opportunity and blessing that God has laid before us.