

Welcome, brethren, to this seventh-day Sabbath.

It's interesting, with the various fires that are taking place across Australia, mainly on the east coast, that one would think that it should humble people, and it has. It has actually humbled people. But there is one thing that's happening - the Church website, and as far as emails, there is not one Australian that has responded in that humility. Not one. People have been humbled. They've lost their homes. There's people died, family members have died.

So there's a lot of destruction. Yet with that humility, that humbling where there is nothing left, no one has responded.

You say, "Well, why would that be?" Well, it proves a point that God talks about. A person must be called. So what it's showing? God is not calling anybody to His Body at this point, the Body of Christ. Not one single person. Because if God was working, people would be responding because of the humility, the humbling.

So we can see that going forward we can have massive death and destruction, but unless God calls a person, an individual, it's just that, death and destruction. So death and destruction is simply that, humbling, but it doesn't mean a lot unless God intervenes and opens a person's mind.

Now, why did I cover that? It's because this sermon is about choice and it goes through the points of the whole process that God, when He calls, there had to be a choice that was made.

So our calling as an individual was a choice that God made. That's why we're here today. Because God called us, He made a choice "I will call this person into the Body of Christ at this time," for whatever reason that God knows.

We understand that we have to be called to overcome or conquer our selfishness. We've been called to engage in a battle. This selfishness in our thinking must be revealed to us by the power of God's holy spirit. So we can have people that are humble and that could be called, but God isn't calling them. They're not being called for a reason because God's got a plan and He knows what He's doing. But we can see people are being humbled in Australia in particular.

So once revealed ourselves to our self, that God does it, we must fight against our selfish desires. That's our calling. We know that overcoming selfishness in our thinking can only be achieved once it has been revealed to us, this selfishness that's in us.

Now, I can look back at my calling and I realize that did I see the selfishness that was in me? I will have to say no. I was zealous to obey God, to start tithing, keep the Sabbath and holy days, and love the brethren, but I must say I really wouldn't say that I saw my real depth of who I really

am, my own personal selfishness. I didn't see that, and therefore, the spiritual growth component was probably slow.

Now, we understand that we've been called for that reason, but it reveals our nature. So God reveals our nature. Then by a personal choice, by the power of God's holy spirit working in our thinking, a decision has to be made. Will we continue or won't we?

We can look at our nature and say, "Well, why was mankind created with a selfish nature?" The answer is: So that a transformation of the way we think can take place by a personal choice. Because God chose to call us. It was a choice He made. He called us. But He wants to see what we will do with the choice that we have.

Now, there's been thousands, and I mean thousands of people that have been called but have not chosen to be faithful, to continue on to be faithful. So once this calling has taken place God requires something of us, which is a choice, and it's by that choice of being faithful we can then enter Elohim at a point in time according to God's will and purpose.

So our calling is about the purpose of life, which is to enter a spirit life. The purpose of this sermon is to explore the fact that once we are called we must engage in personal choices. We must choose God's way of thinking and engage against or engage in the fight against our selfishness.

Now, that sounds broad and simple, but it isn't, as we know.

The title of this sermon is *I Choose You*.

Now, the "You" is with a capital "Y" because it's God. Another way of saying it? "I choose God." That's the choice that we have to make and we are going to look at the process of this. So the title is *I Choose You* which means "I choose God." That's what we have to do. It's about our choice. God made a choice, a decision to call us. Now it's up to us to make a choice ongoing the rest of our life as long as that is that's what we have to do.

Now, there's been many a time in my life where I've come to a decision where we were faced with either choice. It's either choose "this" way or choose "that" way. "This" way was God's way, and therefore, I made a choice at that time "I choose You." I choose God's way. What did it cost? Well, it cost a lot of physical things—temporary—which we understand in life. That's what it's about. As we choose God more and more on going in our life there's going to be an expense that is paid. A lot of it can be about being isolated, being considered weird and all those things, which are minor really.

But every time we are tempted with a sin in our life we can actually turn around and make a clear choice, "No, I choose You. I choose You, God. That's what I want. I choose You. I'm not going to go down this path of selfishness because that's what I want. That was my choice, my nature

pulling that way. No, I'll make a decision here I'm going to choose You, Your way." There's a blessing attached to that.

A point of fact is God must call someone to enter the fight against their own selfish nature. Without that calling a transformation cannot take place because it's a spiritual matter.

So why is it that nobody has responded after being humbled in Australia in particular? Because God has not called them. It's pretty easy for us to understand that. No one is coming to the Church website even if they're humbled because God hasn't opened their mind to see the spiritual component of what it really takes.

Revelation 17:14. We're just going to look at one particular component here that outlines everything and it's something that we can walk away with in our life as far as to understand that this choice we must make has to happen every day for as long as we live. We won't always get it right. But here it's talking about the 144,000, but this principle will apply during the thousand years and the hundred years, that people are going to have to make a choice about life.

Revelation 17:14—These, which it's talking about the armies of mankind, **will make war with the Lamb (Christ), and the Lamb (Christ as a spirit being) will overcome them.** He will conquer them. **For he is Lord of lords and King of kings** Because God has made him so, **and those who are with him**, now this is talking about the 144,000, **are called...** So they had to be called first.

So prior to this timeline where we are now there's been thousands of people called—thousands. More than a 144,000. Thousands and thousands and thousands of people have been called to enter this battle. There's something different here.

So once they're called they are then **chosen**, which is separate to their calling. This is about a choice now that we've made. Because you get the calling from God, then it's a personal choice. "No, God, I choose You. I choose God. This is what I want in my life." Well, if that's our choice then God can say, "Now I know you. I choose you to be part of 144,000" or to enter Elohim at a point in time. It's God's decision whether we enter Elohim but it's based on something - a calling and a personal choice that we must make in our life to overcome what we want in the natural mind.

There is another component here. So they're called first, they're then chosen by God because? ...**faithful**. Called, chosen, and faithful. So what does it mean to be faithful? Well, we're going to look at that.

Here we see the process by which someone can enter Elohim whether it's a part of 144,000 or at a point in time that God says, "Now I know you," and they die and they're resurrected or at the end of that one hundred year period. They're going to have to have been called. They're going to have to have been chosen—and they're chosen because they are faithful.

Firstly, we see they are called. Now, we're just going to refer to **John 6:44** (we won't turn there). **No one can come to me**, talking about Christ, **unless the Father who sent me draws him**. So no one is coming from the bushfires that have been humbled, not one single person, unless God the Father draws them, changes the way that they think, they begin to see things.

Then they must be chosen by God to enter Elohim over a period of time. It takes a lifetime or whatever God decides that He will turn around and say, "Now I know you."

Now, we will get to a point where we're going to look at when Abraham had to make a choice. That was about offering his only son, his son at that time, Isaac. I won't say "only." To offer Isaac. So we're going to look at that. But everyone looks at it physically and they say, "Oh, imagine being that and doing that." Well, guess what? We do exactly the same.

Abraham was asked to offer something that he loved the most. So what are we asked to do? To offer something that we love the most - self. We are asked to offer it, to get rid of it, to sacrifice, to kill it. That's what we've been told to do. That's part of our calling. That's why we were called, to conquer self.

So it's an interesting physical and spiritual analogy that we can look at.

So then a person is chosen by God because they're faithful. They're chosen because they are faithful to what the commands are. Now, it's often emphasised about someone becoming part of the Body of Christ, one of the key factors that are looked at, not only is it Sabbath keeping but it is tithing. Because tithing is a demonstration of being faithful. Pretty straight forward. So if a person is not faithful in their tithing, how can they be chosen by God? Because they're not faithful in the little things.

Remember the parable about the talents and one's given so many and one's given a hundred, and some are given fifty. At the end when Christ turns around and says, "Well done, good and faithful servant." What's that all about? It's about spiritual growth.

So we're given a level of seeing self, well, God says, "Well, if I show you your self to yourself, this bit that you love the most, and if you're faithful to Me you will overcome and you will grow spiritually." So instead of having thirty talents you will end up with sixty because of spiritual growth, because we were faithful in doing what God said, fighting self.

Many have been called over the last 6,000 years. Now, we underestimate that because in times past there was a belief system that, virtually, once you were called you'd made it sort of thing. It's only been in PKG that God has revealed the truth of that matter, that many are called but few are chosen. Many called. So we've had 6,000 years before us that thousands and thousands and hundreds of thousands have been called but they won't be chosen because they weren't faithful. It's easy once we realize the truth.

The problem is that the majority of those called have not been faithful to God, faithful to His way of life. Because they have been chosen as unfaithful, that's the choice they made. They've been called, but they have never been really chosen because they chose to be unfaithful. So God is not to blame here. It's the individual because they made a choice.

Because we looked at the process. Remember called, chosen, and faithful. So it's a calling, then we have to make a choice. If we do, we can be considered as chosen and faithful. We're chosen because we are faithful.

The principle or fact will apply to those that will enter Elohim after the whole period of 7,100 years. They will be called, chosen, and faithful.

Matthew 22:14, which we know. **For many are called, but few chosen.** Now, when we look at that we just think, well, yes, there's been many called and there's been a few chosen. Well, why was there only a few that were chosen? Because people have not been faithful to God. There's measures in our life that we can look at.

One of those measures would be, well, God has revealed to His people that they need to overcome themselves. So if we're faithful we'll be working at overcoming our selfishness, therefore, we could be considered as faithful because we're working at it. Now, somebody who's not working at it is obviously is not being faithful to what they're being told, therefore, how can they be chosen? Because many have been called to this battle, but only a few are going to be chosen.

Many have been called to fight against their selfishness, but only 144,000 will have proven faithful to their calling. They have been chosen by God to enter Elohim at a particular point in time.

Some have now been called to enter a future period of time called the Millennium. So many of us have been called, but not chosen yet, because that's still to happen. But we know that at a point in time once God seals, there's 144,000 that have been called, chosen, and they have been faithful.

Well, there's another group of people of which we are, which is those that have been called but not proven faithful yet. Why I say "many of us" is because the final sealing hasn't taken place, therefore, it's still a work in progress.

"Many are called and few are chosen." Well, the choosing that God does in the end is about faithfulness.

Now, what is required of anyone that has been called now? 1 Peter 5:8. Now, we understand that once Satan is locked up for a thousand years that in the future people will be called, but they still have to make a choice. Just because a person's called, what does it mean? It just means that a person's been called for a various time, particular time, and what they need to do in that period

of time whenever they are called and their minds are open is they must prove themselves as faithful so that God can turn around and say, “Now I know you.” “Now I know you,” therefore, we can be chosen.

1 Peter 5:8. This is what’s required of us now: **Be sober**, which is be self-controlled. Control the lusts of the flesh that we have. “The lust of the eyes and the pride of life,” control it! It can be done by the power of God’s holy spirit who reveals it to us.

...**be vigilant**, which is watchful of self. Once we watch our self we then move into repentance because it’s by God’s great power that we even see what we see, and therefore, we can repent.

Why should we be sober and be vigilant? **Because your adversary the devil...** Now, Satan. Now, this is for this period here where it’s written. We have Satan who is now working to destroy us. We don’t often look at it that way, but Satan wants to destroy us, all of us. So many have been called and many have been unfaithful because they’ve given into this very fact, that their testing has proven, that Satan tested them, has proven that they’re unfaithful. They’ve chosen something different rather than God’s way.

Because Satan walks about like... Not that he is, but it’s “like.” So what does a lion do? Well, a lion stalks its prey. So it stalks it and waits for the ideal opportunity. So we may go for a period of time what we consider not having a trial (that’s a trial in itself), but we may think that that’s the case. Well, it’s just the fact that Satan is stalking, looking for an opportunity, because it stalks and waits and sees a vulnerability and then pounces. Well, it’s like a roaring lion stalks to kill because Satan wants to destroy us. Not physically, spiritually.

...**seeking whom he may devour.** Now, when you look at what really happens when you look at animal programs, a lion will stalk a group. Satan will stalk the Body of Christ, called out ones, which we are. And what does the lion do? Well, he doesn’t attack everybody. He waits until he sees the weakest link, the sick, the maimed, the straggler at the back.

Well, what’s that really saying? It’s saying we need to be very, very careful. We need to be sober. We need to be vigilant because if we are falling down in the key aspects of our spiritual life Satan will pounce and things will happen.

I was saying to my wife, it was either yesterday or driving down, I can’t remember. Probably yesterday I think it was, “What would it be like...?” We’re going through trials. Not us, but together. We have trials around us and “What would it be really like to try to go through these trials without God?” My mind actually can’t go there because the people that are having trials that are affecting us, I realize they’re doing it by themselves. They don’t have a fall back. I have a fall back. I go to God and say, “Whew...” Because I don’t know what to do sometimes. I don’t know what to do. I don’t know what to say. I know that I’m pathetic so what do I do? And I have to rely on God to try to guide me through it.

Well, people can't do that. They go maybe to the Catholic Church or Protestant group and they think they pray, but there is no guidance there. We get guidance from God all the time about these things.

So imagine living a life where God isn't involved in our life. That'd be terrifying. Because I know at the moment I would have fallen down badly by now. I have already in different things but, you know, really badly without God.

Verse 9—Resist him, fight the selfish temptation. So we're to fight what that is to choose another way. We're to fight that. ...**steadfast in the faith.** Be faithful to God's way.

Now, what is that really saying? Well, often we can be tested in various ways, but it's how we respond that is the key to all of it. It's the key, how we respond. Because without God's spirit we will respond a particular way, selfishly. It's the only way you can, true? We're selfish by nature so we'll respond selfishly.

But with God's spirit we can take a deep breath and go, "Well, I've got to think about this differently. How would God handle it? How would God look at this? How would God handle it?" Now, then once we see that, say, "Oh, I need to change a bit here. I need to think of it this way." Then we've got a choice. We can either go our own way or we can go what God has revealed. Personal choice.

At some point God will say, "Well, you've made this, your mind is changing, the transformation. Your talents have gone from thirty to sixty, that growth has taken place." God can say, "Well done good and faithful servant," because we've been faithful to God's word.

So we're to fight against our selfishness **knowing that the same suffering** (experience) **is experienced by your brotherhood in the world.** Talking about the Church.

So all of us, wherever we are located in this present evil age, we all are going through something. Everyone is going through something different. As it has been said, it's the best thing that could ever happen to you.

I laugh at it because sometimes in the trials that we go through I think, "This is good! This is really good!" Because I know it's a spiritual matter. It's not talking about physical things. That it's really seeing what I will choose. It's good for me, Wayne, it's not good for the people that are going through the trial. It's good for me because I now am put in position to make a choice and I'm given opportunity. What a wonderful blessing to have the opportunity to be able to make a choice. Incredible, really. I have the power by God's holy spirit to make the right choice. "Don't act selfishly, Wayne. Sacrifice what you want." I don't win all those all the time by any means.

So those in the Body of Christ all around the world at this very point in time are facing a level of a trial. Whether it's fully perceived or not, but we're all in a trial. Why? For our benefit. For our benefit so that at a point in time God can say, "Now I know you. I choose you to enter Elohim."

I've often sat back and thought about that. To enter Elohim, when you meditate about that, how humbling is that? To be with Yahweh Elohim, Joshua the Messiah for eternity, and that God has decided to sacrifice so much so that I, me, who could be part of that? That you could be part of that?

When you really analyze it you say, "I'm not worthy." There's nothing that makes us worthy. There is no way any of us can be worthy. Why? Because we didn't choose God. He called us which is a type of a choosing. He chose us to call us. He made a decision to call us. We didn't go around saying, "Oh, I wonder where God is and when I find God I'm going to do exactly as I'm told!" No, it's just by God's great mercy that He decided to call you and me. We are so alone in the world, when you look at the numbers in the Body of Christ, so alone compared to the world. But we're not alone because we have God. We have everything.

I know at different times my wife has mentioned to me that sometimes I think about things and think, "Oh, get to a certain age and what will we do and how will we do it? Don't have any money so I think..." You go through all this and I think, "Well, we actually haven't got anything." Fact. Truth. We don't have anything, so what will happen? Chris says, "We've got everything." It makes us stop and go, "That's right!"

House burns down? What's a house? Honestly, I have everything. I've got a calling. So you have everything. You've got a calling. All those out there going through losing their homes and all the physical things, they haven't been called to anything yet. Not called to make a choice. So deep down I realize, "Ah, Wayne, selfish thinking! I have everything. I've been exposed to the truth. That's everything. I've got the truth."

Verse 10—But may the God of all grace, mercy, who called us to His eternal glory by Joshua Christ/Christ Joshua, after you have suffered a while... Well, we're all suffering. Everyone suffers in the Body. If you ever think there's someone in the Body that's not suffering, we're deluded. Everyone is suffering, and if they're not, they're not in the Body. Because we suffer because we have to sacrifice our selfishness. We've got to suffer. It's hard work denying self.

...we suffer a while, perfect, which is we'll be perfected over time, **establish, strengthen, and settle you.** God will do it.

So He's called us to His eternal glory, to be in Elohim. What else could you want in life?

The purpose of physical life is a future spirit life in Elohim. Nobody knows that, really, compared to those who know it in the Body of Christ. We know why we're here, and therefore, no matter what happens to us, anything can happen, any physical thing can be taken from us, it really doesn't matter because our purpose of life is a future spirit life in Elohim. That's everything we do because we choose God. "I choose You." That's what we've all said.

It is not owed to us. God can call us, but it's not automatic and it's not just owed to us because God decided that He would call us, and therefore, it's automatic. That's what we used to think.

Well, no, it is by our personal choice. It is a personal choice that we have to make, and if we're not willing to enter that fight, why would God give us anything? It's not owed to us. If we don't take up the fight against our selfishness we cannot be chosen to be given spirit life in Elohim.

John 15:9—As the Father loved me, I also have loved you. How? Well, Christ demonstrated love, which took an action, by sacrificing himself. So we are the same. We have to be sacrificing our self to demonstrate love.

So when you really break it down and look at what love is, love of the brethren, we love another, what does that really mean? Well, one way to look at it is saying (use myself as an example), "Wayne has to sacrifice what his nature is so that others benefit." Because we often try to put it in terms, well, I've got to give up something. Well, I've got to give up Wayne. It's the way that I talk to others. It's the way that I think about others. That's how I can show love.

So you may not think that I love you. Well, if I'm working on myself (Wayne), and I'm overcoming my selfishness (Wayne's way of thinking and doing things), I'm actually demonstrating love to you by my sacrifice. You with me? Because, see, I'm changing internally and you really don't know the real Wayne. You're seeing the benefit of God's spirit that's been working with me for a long time to conquer self. As I conquer those components of my selfishness I can then live love to you because I'm changing. My talents that I was given are growing. That's what my demonstration of love is.

I know you're probably sitting and thinking, "Boy, he's got a long way to go." But that's where the demonstration of love is. Because we can overcome self, and therefore, we live differently towards one another, and therefore, that's expressing love to one another, sacrificing self just as Christ did.

...**abide** (continue) **in my love.** If we do not stay connected to the vine we cannot continue in God's love. We know that parable about the vine and being connected, where Christ said, "Stay connected to the vine." Because it's all about God's spirit because this demonstration of love can only happen if God's spirit is in me to live it out to you. Vice versa. You can only live love to me by sacrificing your selfish thinking. That's a battle the rest of the lifetime. We all do get stronger and stronger in these matters because God does it in us because we choose to do it, we make a choice. "I want to change, God. Change me in this way I think. Change the way that I talk. Change 'this.' Change 'that.'" Lots of things. We could list them.

Verse 10—If you keep my commands... Now, that command is to love by sacrificing self. So if you keep the command of overcoming self, which we've all been commanded to do, why our calling exists, **you will abide** (continue) **in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love.** If we continue in God's love we are being faithful to His word.

Now, this component of faithfulness is a wonderful topic that you may want to do your own personal study on it. But about being faithful, it's like anything; it's a demonstration of something.

Now, within a marriage, to be faithful, a person would control themselves so that they demonstrate their faithfulness to the partner that they have. That's a demonstration of being faithful, and therefore, it requires an act of self-control. Controlling thinking, watching thinking, guarding thinking.

We must live love to others, which is to have genuine concern for all. We are to desire the best for all. Now, that can only happen with God's spirit. It can't happen from the natural carnal mind because the natural carnal mind is selfish, and therefore, will always be an advantage to self.

What is the best thing for all? You might say, "I desire the best thing for all." What is the best thing for all? That we overcome our selfishness and be chosen to enter Elohim. That is the best possible outcome.

If we're fighting our self it benefits everybody. It benefits all relationships because we're not being selfish. That's where the advantage is. It's a wonderful thing.

These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain (dwell, live) in you, and *that* your joy may be full. We are to value all relationships, especially those within the Body of Christ, because this is where we can live love to one another because we can work on self. We are to place our relationships with God and God's people before human relationships.

Now, this can be a challenge. This can be a challenge. At this point in time there are many that have relationships in marriage or out of marriage, where they have friends, that the other person isn't called. Well, how can you live love the best to them? Fight self. Fight selfishness. That's the best way. It's a demonstration of love. They don't know it, but that is the best thing that we could do.

This is my command, that you love one another as I have loved you. By sacrificing ourselves to benefit others. **Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends,** which is to sacrifice self to benefit others.

Verse 14—You are my friends if you do whatever I command you. "You are my friends if you are faithful." That's really what it is. God says, well, you're my friend, and Christ will say you're my friend if you're faithful to what I command, which is about fighting.

Verse 15—No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing. But we know. It's interesting isn't it? But we know what God the Father and Joshua Christ are doing. They are working with us so that at some point in time because of our choices they can say, "I choose you because you've been faithful." So we know what's going on. The world out there has no idea, none whatsoever.

I was mentioning before we went to a fire meeting and I found it very difficult to sit through it. There was a lot to learn there. It was very encouraging because we've had bushfires around our areas and there was probably 60 or 70 there. But there was also all the different areas you don't realize. Like, you had the CFA, you had the Forestry Management people; there all these other bodies of peoples that are all fighting the fire. It's not just one little group called the CFA. There's multiple agencies all coming together to fight fires.

They all have to eat. They all have to sleep. So there were tents set up for them, the fiery's, which we call them fiery's (fire brigade), fiery's all turn up, they all have shopping trollies in Woolworth's, and they'd be stacking all this food on because they've all got to eat. They'd have to put it through the check-out because of the computer system, but loads of fruit. Incredible to see this voluntary people. Every morning we would see the fire people and different agencies all heading out in their fire. Because they wouldn't fight it at night in certain areas because they had to have rest. There would be all these trucks, like thirteen or fourteen trucks all going past, going out to fight the fire. Every single day they're doing that.

Well, we went to this meeting and all these agencies are all together, and in the end the mayor was there and saying different things and what app's you could have on different phones. Someone would say, "Well, I don't have a smart phone." They'd say, "Well, we'll send you text messages and listen to the radio," and all this different went on.

Then there was a particular man there from the aboriginal community. Well, the amount of what we would call "butt" going on, it made me sick just to think. You know, like everyone is bowing and stooping because the Konda Lakes area was "sacred" ground. You know, the elders, and he got up and he said they'd been there 60,000 years of course.

I felt like jumping up and saying, "Therefore, you don't believe what God says about the flood." But I thought, "Shut up!" It just made you sick, really, to watch and everyone is cowering to a group of people because they've been here "60,000" years and they had some rocks they used to catch fish in with their spears and traps. You think delusion of mankind, delusion.

Then I sat there and think, "They're not called to know any different, so just sit there Wayne and just listen to it all." They're not called to it. But one day they'll be called to it and they'll go, "How stupid was I?" Just like we've gone, "Oh, how stupid was I, the things I used to believe." They're trapped in a spiritual trap because God has not called them to be chosen yet. We've been called so the choice can be made.

Verse 15—No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing. Yet we know what our master is doing. That's why we can be called friends. God is creating Elohim in us. Incredible thing.

But I have called you friends, for all things that I heard, which is to see spiritually, which we do, we see spiritually, God's written word, from my Father I have made known to you. So Christ

revealed what he saw, what God the Father revealed to him that he could see spiritually. He revealed it.

You did not choose me. That's true. Not one of us chose him. He called us first so that He could make a choice if we make a choice. ...**but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit**, which is about this spiritual growth, change the way we think to think like God does about a matter. ...**and that your fruit should remain.** So it's about this changing of the mind so that in the end we think differently, we just think differently about lots of situations.

Sometimes watching the news can be just so, so, so, so frustrating, so frustrating because we think differently. We do. We just think differently about what could be happening now, how it could be because man is doing everything for a selfish motive.

We were talking before about politicians. When a politician turns around and says, "I'm resigning from the cabinet because I'm going to spend more time with my family," what he really is saying, the interpretation is that "I have another job that's going to pay me more money, but I'm going to take a five or six week break." Sure enough, they all pop up with a new job somewhere that's earning a lot more money because everybody is lying about everything. It's just the way of the world.

So God wants to change us, to bear fruit. ...**and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask...** Now, this is about spiritual things, it's not about physical things, about a personal spiritual growth. So what is the best thing for any one of us? Spiritual growth. So when we pray for others we pray for spiritual growth.

Now, one of the things that I learned about people with illnesses or maybe sick at a various time, it's very difficult to turn around and say, "Well, it's the best thing that could ever happen to you," to somebody. But it can be if they have put God first and it is the best thing for their spiritual growth. Not physically! It's a spiritual growth matter. Because if they repent, if they see more of themselves during that trial it is the best thing that could happen to them because they're growing, they're going to bear fruit. What a wonderful thing if a person bears fruit during a trial.

...**the Father in my name, He may give you.** So if we ask for something spiritual that will benefit us, see more about our selfishness or pray for another person that they will be able to see what God wants to reveal to them during that trial, it's fantastic, it's an exciting thing. That's why we love one another. To see spiritual growth is an incredible thing.

Verse 17—These things I command you, that you love one another, that you fight against your own selfishness is another way.

We can only choose God once we have been called to make that choice. Once called to that choice we are required to be faithful to His commands and to live by the spirit of the law. Now, this is a difficult thing to cover with people that are in the world because the spirit of the law,

really, is talking about the intent, why do we do what we do. As we've said, a person can be generous about something, but it doesn't mean to say that sin isn't involved. Sin can be involved because they're doing it for the wrong motive. That's one easy example.

Well, we're to live our life examining our motives, why are we doing what we're doing. It goes down to our prayer life. Why do we pray about a situation and for someone? Because it all really has to be spiritually connected to have any real meaning.

Once called we can make a personal choice to be faithful to God. Now, what does that mean? Well, it's about an ongoing process. Because we're not always faithful. We'll make mistakes. Well, we can then repent and say, "Ah, I did it the wrong way. I thought the wrong thing. I said the wrong thing. I did the wrong thing," whatever it is. But this has to be over a long period of time. Then God can say, "Now I know you."

Well, look, hold your place there in John 15:17. We're going to look at Genesis 22, which we talked about Abraham and Isaac. Genesis 22:9. The world will only see this event on a physical level, but really it has a great spiritual component.

Now, we also know that there's symbolic areas of this where we could say that Abraham points to God the Father who was willing to sacrifice His Son, Joshua Christ. We've heard that. But there's also another component, that it's not just a physical story, it's for our benefit because Abraham was asked (which we've been asked) to sacrifice something he loved. So there's a thought process because it took him a while. He had to travel a fair journey, he had to do something, which is build that altar. He had to do all that and in his mind he knew what he was going to have to do even though he knew that he wasn't to kill. But here he was, he was to sacrifice his own son. He wouldn't have understood it all. Not to the degree we do.

So here is a great advantage to us to look at it and look at it on our behalf, how we see this on a spiritual level. **Genesis 22:9—Then they, Abraham and Isaac, came to the place which God had told him.** We've come to a place that God has told us about. It's called the Church of God, the Body of Christ, the called out ones. **And Abraham built an altar there and placed wood on in order; and he bound Isaac his son...** Now, we just look at the story and think here he is, he's tying him up.

What are we asked to do? We looked at it before. We're to bind up the thing we love. We're to bind, hold it. Self-control. It's called self-control. Hold it so it can't do what it wants to do. Because I'm sure Isaac would have been a bit concerned at this point when your father is tying you up and putting you on an altar. Because he's had a mind that's going, "Hang on..."

So we have the opportunity to bind up the things that we think, bind them up to control them. Same type of thing. I'm looking here, using an analogy.

...and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. Because the intent was there. I'm going to go through with this. Same as us. "I'm going to go through this. God, I choose You. All the

consequences of what's going to happen, doesn't matter. No, God, I choose You. It's You that I want to obey. All the rest of it doesn't matter. I'm prepared to do this."

We must bind up the thing we love the most—self—bind to control it and be willing to sacrifice it. So all of these things within our nature that God reveals to us we must be willing to get rid of it. That's what it's about, the desire to get rid of it.

Now, it's not necessarily about the getting rid of it. Speaking from experience. It's the desire to get rid of it. "I don't want to think that way anymore. I don't want to do that anymore." It's the desire even though we fail. It's the desire to do it. Just like Abraham, "I'm going to do it." We're going to do it. We're going to continue to fight as God reveals things to us.

Verse 10—And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

Remembering that the world will look at this and think, "Oh, this is pretty horrendous that God would ask this." Like, really. "What sort of a God is this that has asked this?" That's what God asks us. Why? Because we know God's plan of salvation, that we can enter Elohim. It's not owed to us. But unless we're willing to do an Abraham and sacrifice self there is no choosing that's going to take place.

So we're not willing to following the instructions? Abraham did. He did exactly to the last second. Unless we're willing to do it to the last second there is no "I know you." Can't, because we're not willing to do it. But we are willing to do it.

Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. We've been called to sacrifice. Same thing. We've been called to be faithful to God. Abraham was faithful. He's noted in Hebrews about one of the faithful. Well, we're the same. We have this opportunity to demonstrate to God our faithfulness.

Verse 11—But the angel of the Eternal called to him from heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham! So he said, Here I am. Now, we have been called by God the Father. This says an angel calls out, God calls out. Well, God called us. What are we willing to do? Are we willing to sacrifice our self? We can answer the same way, "Here I am. I'm willing to bind and sacrifice my selfishness. I'm willing to fight ever how long it takes. I'm willing to do that. That's my goal in life," knowing that we don't only win. But that's the gift of repentance, the beauty of it.

Verse 12—And He (God) said, Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God. Isn't that a beautiful thing to be said about us? That over a period of time of battling self that God can say this. Now, we know the 144,000 haven't been completed yet and we know that those that are going to live on into the Millennium are going to have to go through this - continue to fight self so that God can say, "Now I know you."

...since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me. Now God can say, "Now I know you have not withheld your selfishness. You've not held it back and protected it. You're willing to sacrifice it. Now I know you'll do it, and therefore, I will give you a gift of eternal life,

to live in Elohim forever and ever and never to die.” Never to sin; think totally differently than the way we think now. What an incredible opportunity. Doesn’t it magnify our calling? Our calling.

I often reflect the fact that I am guilty like many others, all others that were awakened, that in some ways God chose me twice. God doesn’t make mistakes. So God called me and I was in Worldwide Church of God and I went to sleep and for some reason, which is baffling, that God decided to awaken me and others here to be part of the Body of Christ after Laodicea.

So there’s a double portion of thankfulness to be awakened. What have I done in that period? Ten years of stupidity. That’s reality. Ten years of stupidity, took me. But God in His mercy decided that He was going to give others an opportunity and for a reason God placed me and Chris and some of you here into the Body of Christ for a reason. It wasn’t a mistake. There’s a reason why we’re here. The reason is so that at some point in time God can say, “Now I know you because you are willing to fight, to sacrifice yourself to the end, and because of that you’re proving yourself faithful, and therefore, now I know you, now I can choose you to enter Elohim.” Never worthy of that. How could you be worthy of that? But we are required to continue to make a choice.

Another way to cover this statement that God said, “Once we have chosen to be faithful,” because it is a choice to be faithful. We have a choice. We have to choose. Over a long period of time God can state “I choose you” (with a small ‘you’) because called, we choose God, then He can say, “I choose you to enter Elohim because now I know you. I know that you’re willing to bind and sacrifice yourself. I know that. That you will choose My way always no matter what the cost to self is.” That’s another way to put that.

So no matter what the cost to self is God knows that we will always do that, that we will choose Him even though at times we’ll slip and fail. Yes, that’s part of what we are, our nature. We have to choose to sacrifice something from our self, which is what Abraham did. He chose to sacrifice something from himself - called Isaac.

We know from the parable of the ten virgins, which Ron has covered of recent, that there’s a point where Christ has returned. You know, the parable talking about Christ returning, the bridegroom locks the gate, then the other virgins turn up and knock and say, “Let us in.” What is the statement from the parable? “I do not know you.” “I don’t know you.” Why? Because there is no relationship there. So, “I don’t know you. You’ve given up. You’ve been unfaithful so how can I know you? Because you’ve not had any connection with me, no relationship with me for a period of time. The oil is gone. The holy spirit is not there, and therefore, you’re obviously just like everybody else - carnal, selfish. You’ve not desired to continue on.”

So that parable says, “I do not know you.” Christ says, “I don’t know you. I’ve had no relationship with you.” Because it is all about a relationship with God and with Joshua the Messiah.

People of the world cannot choose God until they have been called into a spiritual relationship with God and Christ. So we should never, ever look at anybody out there under any circumstances because they really don't know what they're doing. Because they've never been called to anything; they cannot choose God.

So all of the fires around Australia at the moment and there's people dying, people losing loved ones, there's people being humbled, they have no home, some don't have insurance. There are all sorts. They don't have food. There are all sorts of things going on. Well, they won't be able to choose God. They might go to the Catholic Church or a Protestant Church and cry out to God, but they can't have a relationship with God because they were never called to it.

Personally, I know you all do as well as I do, I look forward to the day that God does start to call people. We've had a book go out with the truth and no one listened. No one listened. When the new book goes out it's all going to go back to God calling a person. I know for a fact that the evidence is that even though you can spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on advertising and marketing the book on websites and all that thing, if God is not calling it's meaningless. It has to be that God calls a person. God can call a person at any time. So we wait for that day. We yearn for that day, looking forward to it.

So people of the world cannot choose God and we shouldn't expect them to choose God.

An interesting thing that I have noticed in the news was that everybody is blaming everybody about the fires. People are saying it's climate change and other people are saying all different things. I've never heard God mentioned in all of this. No one is saying, "I repent." God's not in it, not even in the picture. It's all these different reasons. God's never mentioned.

Those that have tried to mention God from Protestant perspective have been hound down because one particular person you know here, you'd know who it is, he was a football star, he got up and quoted a particular scripture and it was verbatim of the scripture that was murderers and all these different things, and homosexuals, would not enter the Kingdom of God. In other words, he said would not enter heaven.

Well, the outcry by one particular group was horrendous. It wasn't the murderers and the liars and the cheats and all that - everyone except them. They're not going to. But one group of people the outcry is unbelievable! Well someone else has got up and quoted a scripture and said certain things and the outcry is unbelievable because people aren't called to any of this. They're not called to see.

So there is no point in quoting scriptures to anybody because they can't see. So the point is we should worry about our self, our selfishness and what we can sacrifice so that we can benefit others in a relationship.

John 15:18, back to that. Talking about us, brethren. **If the world hates you, you know that it hated me (Christ) before it hated you.** If we weren't called, we wouldn't be hated, in the sense

of not that word as English would describe it. But really, the world would love you because you'd be partying with them and all those other things. But we don't do that, and therefore, Christ is saying the only reason that anyone would be hated, part of the Body, is because you were called. Christ revealed to us the truth, and therefore, we're hated because of the truth. We love the truth - they hate it with a passion.

Nothing anyone can do or say should hurt us. So that's a principle. No matter what is said to us, what anyone says or does, we really should hold nothing against them. They don't know what they're doing. Now, if we do react to anybody saying something about us or to us what can we learn from that? Pride exists in self.

So if we react to anybody saying anything negative to us (what we consider negative), or if anybody hurts us because of any particular reason and we react with feelings, what it's really saying is the pride that is in us is still existent. It's still there. Because we should not be affected by what people say and do. We should expect it, actually.

Verse 19—If you were of the world (carnal), the world would love its own. In other words, we'd be accepted. **Yet because you are not of the world,** we don't get involved in worldly things, **but I chose you out of the world.** So Christ is saying to the disciples here, "Well, it was me. I came along because of God the Father, but I called you and said, 'Follow me. Follow me.'" So because of that the world would hate them, which is what happens to us.

...therefore, the world hates you. This world's system is of Satan. The world hates the truth. We love the truth. We choose to live the truth. God's word is truth. So really it goes back to the fact we have the truth, they don't.

Verse 20—Remember the word that I spoke to you, A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me (Christ), they will also persecute you. We think, "Well, how am I persecuted?" Well, we are in lots of ways that we often forget. I know, been around a while, so you tend to forget like the Sabbath. The fact that I will keep a Sabbath, won't work Friday night, Saturday, is a persecution. I've mentioned before I've been in interviews where I've turned around at the end of it, even though it was in the front document, and say, "By the way, I'm a Sabbath keeper. Can't work Friday night, Saturday," and it was out the door, "Next!" They're not interested. Well, that's actually a type of persecution.

Remember the word that I say to you, A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If you keep my word... Which is what we do. We've made a choice to keep Christ's word - tithing, Sabbath keeping, holy days. That's what we choose. We choose not to enter into worldly things that the world will do.

...they will keep yours also. So it's a choice here, one or the other. It's either God's way, "I choose You," or it's the other way, selfishness, we're choosing our own please self.

Verse 21—But all these things they will do to you for my name’s sake, because they do not know Him (God the Father) who sent me. We know God the Father. Now, we wouldn’t go out and tell people, “You know, we know God. We have communication with God through His holy spirit.” “Okay! Next!” We don’t. But we do know that. We have a direct relationship through the mercy seat to God the Father. How incredible is this, really? If we put it into a real perspective, this is the only important thing in our life. Everything else doesn’t matter, really doesn’t matter.

Verse 22—If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin. Now, the reason was they would never sin because they wouldn’t know any better. But here is Christ, the Word of God made flesh, telling the truth, and they had to make a choice. They made the choice that they would normally make, selfishness. “He’s a threat to us so let’s get rid of him,” which is what still happens today. In politics, if someone is a real threat in politics, what do you reckon happens? “Let’s get rid of him.”

I remember here, in particular, in Australia you know who I’m talking about, particular female candidate. She got up and was talking quite black and white about various things. Well, what happened to her? The liberal government decided that the best thing for her was a period of time in jail because it’s a bit of a threat. That’s what you do with threats, you sort it out. History hasn’t changed. Mankind hasn’t changed, and it’s not going to. That’s the way it is.

Well, the same things happened to God’s apostles and prophets, they’ve been sorted out. People sort them out one way or the other. It’s just because Satan’s system will make sure they’re highlighted and there’s a punishment involved. Unjust, but that’s what happens. That’s the way of the world.

Verse 22—If I had not come and spoken to them they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin, because it was obvious that Christ was in unity with God, he was chosen and faithful. Because God chose him. Because he was the Son of God; he was chosen to do, fulfill that role at a particular time and he was faithful.

Verse 23—He who hates me hates my Father also. So that’s really about words spoken and actions. Because what he spoke was the truth, and his actions, he lived the truth, therefore, people hated him because of it. But he was only living what we should live, the truth. We should live the truth and fight self.

Verse 24—If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, because he was doing miracles and things like that which showed them up, **they would have no sin.** But because it was obvious he was of God they had a sin, they rejected it. They really hated. Because of their authority they hated Christ. ...**but now they have seen and also hated both me and my Father,** because they’re in full unity.

But this happened to the world that the word might be fulfilled which is written in the law, They hated me without a cause.

Deuteronomy 30:10. We would know this chapter because it's about God putting to mankind (this is physical Israel) about making a choice. Now, they had a choice because people can make physical choices to do things. Hence, we know there is a group of people that culturally keep what they think is the Sabbath day, which is the Sabbath, seventh-day, but they keep it on a physical level and connected to that there are all the rabbi's and all the other things that they call themselves (which they're not supposed to), that made all these rules that you're not allowed to press buttons and you're not allowed to turn lights on, all that.

Well, we know that they think they're doing the right thing because they don't know the spirit of the law, but they think they're doing the right thing. Well, this is about a choice. So mankind could make a choice.

Men, mainly men could make a choice not to murder, physically to murder. It's difficult when it comes to hate. Some people would struggle. But physical murder, it is a choice when somebody grabs somebody by the neck and squeezes it until they stop breathing. That was a choice the person made. They know it's wrong, but they still would do it because of what they've chosen. But they did choose. Not everyone goes around killing everybody. It's a choice. Somewhere along the line a choice was made which damages the mind.

Deuteronomy 30:10, the choice of life and death, but we're going to look at it spiritually. **For if you, if you choose to obey (is another way to put it), of the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes**, in other words, be faithful. If you choose to be faithful, **which are written in the Book of the Law, and if you turned to the Lord your God with all your heart**, which is your intent, "I choose God." That's our intent. That's what we want to do. **...and with all your life**. We've made the changes in the way we think and the way we live.

Now, we've done that. That's why we're here today. Sabbath day. God has revealed to us our self. God has revealed to us tithing, holy days, Sabbath keeping, and much more, the intent of the law. We have made a choice to change, to think differently because of the power of God's holy spirit. But He revealed it to us. We didn't do it by ourselves. Therefore, there's a blessing. We've decided that.

For this command, about making a choice to obey or not, **which I command you today**, which is Moses, **is not mysterious for you**. In other words, it's not hidden, **nor is it a far off**. So it's reasonably straight forward. It's easy to see. It's easy to see for us if we have God's holy spirit.

It is not in heaven, that you should say, Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it? So that's physical Israel. But spiritually, God's way of life is not far from us. We have been instructed for many a years on the way to live and the way to think. We just simply have to make a choice to follow that way.

Verse 13—Nor is it beyond the sea, in other words, way over there, **that you may say, Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us that we may hear it and do it?** In other words, there's

no excuse. There is no excuse for us at all, not one. We can't turn around to God or Christ and say, "Yeah, but..." "Yeah, but I didn't know." "Yeah, but I..." No, no excuses. Choice. One way or the other. No excuses accepted.

God has called us and shown us the way by His power, which is His holy spirit. God has placed us into the Body of Christ, which is the Church, the called out ones. That's what the word "Church" means, "called out ones." We are called out of this world for a purpose. It's not just a game or yes, I'm part of the Body. This is serious business, as they would say. This is really serious because we've been called for a reason. "Many are called, but few are chosen." Why? Because people are unfaithful, people will be unfaithful. As Ron often says, it's not over yet.

And if people leave the Body of Christ, it's not over yet. People will leave the Body of Christ. Why? Why do people leave? They're unfaithful. They're choosing something else. They're choosing not to sacrifice the thing they love the most when it boils down to it. They love it. Well, deep down underneath we don't realize how much we love our self. We love ourselves. That's why we do what we do often, because we've still got to choose to fight against it for the rest of our life, and he, Christ, has revealed the way we should think and act spiritually. It goes from God the Father to Joshua the Messiah to his servants.

Verse 14—But the word, God's way of thinking, is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, in your thinking, that you may do it. So there's an action required here. Actions demonstrate faithfulness or unfaithfulness, whichever.

See, I have set before you today life and good, which we, the Church of God—PKG, from God to Christ have set before us life and good. The opposite is shown to us, **death and evil.** Which way will we choose?

The choice is physical prosperity for the Israelites or physical trouble and affliction. That was their choice. For us on a spiritual level the choice is to fight our selfishness for a spirit life or to choose not to fight, which will bring death.

I'd be fantastic if this could stay in my mind all the time where, you know, you realize there's a choice here; this is a battle of life and death. This is not just, oh well. No, this is life and death. To be chosen at some point in time by God requires a choice of life and death, choosing life all the time even though we slip.

Verse 16—in that I (Moses) command you today to love the Lord your God, which is sacrifice ourselves and obey Him, **to walk in His ways, to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply,** which is that we may live spiritually and grow. It's growth, spiritual growth because of the choice to obey. And love the Lord your God, **and the Lord your God will bless you in the land in which you go to possess.**

Now, we can prosper spiritually because we are in a type of promised land. It's called the Church of God. It's not that it is the promised land. We know the spiritual promised land is the Kingdom

of God, entering Elohim. But we're in embryo being nurtured ready for a birth, as Mr. Armstrong used to put it. Well, we're here, we are attached to the umbilical cord (God's holy spirit), and therefore, we have to continue on to be born. That's what we have to do.

Spiritual food is available to be eaten if we choose to consume it into the mind and take action. So spiritual food is given to us in sermons on a regular basis, but we still have a choice. Because we can sit there and hear, yes, we should fast, and yes, we should pray, all these things that we should do, we should have a stronger relationship with others because of what we're doing, choosing to sacrifice. Well, that sounds good, but unless we're willing to do it and choose to do it...

There's a couple of tools in my life that I've found helpful. One of them was whenever something came into the mind that I wanted to get out of the mind I would sing *In Thy Loving Kindness, Lord*, in my mind. Because the words mean a lot to me personally, "In Thy loving kindness, Lord, be merciful to me." It just does something to me. It may not to you in the same degree. You might have your own hymn or psalm that you may want to repeat.

But this title of the sermon has also helped me greatly. Because when certain thoughts or something come in I can really say, "No, I choose You, God. I choose You. That's what I choose so I'm not going to go down that path. I'm not going to think that way or do that thing. No, I choose You. I want to be faithful and choose You." I've found that it's of great benefit to me personally that when I've been in situations where sin is manifesting that I can actually do that. Say, "No, no. I choose You."

That's what God wants to hear. What do we choose? He's chosen us, called us, then it's all about what we choose. Then at some point God can say, "Now I choose you," because why? Why does God choose us? Because we have chosen Him. Straightforward, really.

Verse 17—But if your heart (your thinking) **turn away so that you do not hear**, in other words, you won't listen to the encouragement to fight selfishness, because we are being encouraged. Ron mentions about when he says people say, "I'm sick of hearing about my sin, how bad I am." Well, when you really look at it, "I'm sick of hearing the truth!" Because that's what we are. We are bad. Left to ourselves we are bad. That's just the way we are.

If we really love others we'll be fighting against our selfishness, we'll be living love because God will do it in us because we're transforming our thinking.

So people won't listen to the encouragement about fighting themselves. It's all too hard and when we give up, well, we know the outcome.

...and are drawn away. Now, they're drawing away, in other words, become lukewarm and self-reliant, relying on self, "I can do this." No, no one can do it by themselves. It takes God's holy spirit.

...and worship other gods and serve them. Who are the other gods? Now, people that turn away don't necessarily know, because some of them turn away from God and have nothing. Well, it's still another god. The other god is our selfishness. The other god in us is what we desire, our selfishness. Our selfish nature is the other god! Because people give up, become unfaithful, they turn to something else called self-reliance, self, look after self, don't want to hear God's encouragement.

In saying that it is relevant, I believe, to realize what God is achieving in us. Because often we can hear things, "Ugh, I'm bad and, well, I know I'm bad. I don't have to be reminded of it." But God is actually encouraging us to continue to battle. That's what's really going on. It's not about revealing, "Oh, you're bad!" With God's spirit I know I'm bad. I know you're bad. Because we're all the same. We all have different battles. But it's an encouragement to continue on so that God can say, "Now I know you." That's what really is happening. "You've chosen Me. I'm going to choose you! But I want to make sure that through your life you keep choosing Me no matter what happens. You keep choosing Me, keep choosing Me, and therefore, I know you can be faithful, you're faithful. He'll give you the gift of Elohim - you'll be faithful because you've chosen Me in this physical life." It's incredible encouragement, I find, if we just keep it.

When we see ourselves we shouldn't be despondent, we should be encouraged what God is revealing to us, because He wants to see what we're going to do with it once we see it.

Verse 18—I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you'll be cut off spiritually. ...you shall not prolong your days in the land, you won't be able to stay connected to the vine in the Body of Christ. You can't because you've chosen something else. **...which you cross over the Jordan,** which is, "You've come out of the world and I'm offering you something, the gift of eternal life, but I can't give it to you because you haven't chosen Me."

Verse 19—I call heaven and earth as witness today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, because that's what it's about, choosing a way of life.

Verse 20—that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, by a choice, **that you may cling to Him,** which means put everything in God's hands, acknowledge how pathetic we really are, how pathetic we think sometimes, things we do that are pathetic. But acknowledge them and put them before God and say, "I've done it again, but I need Your help. I choose You. I want to do Your way. I know my nature is pulling in a different direction."

...for He is your life and length of days; that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them. Well, what's that? People just think physically. What did God really give to Abraham? Spirit life. So God wants to give it to us if we choose Him.

God has given us the Church (called out ones). God has given us His Son, placed him over the Church. So really, in the end it comes down to our personal choices.

Proverbs 1:23—Turn at My rebuke. Which is when we're shown something by the power of God's holy spirit, turn means to turn a different direction than where our self was going. Choose another way, change directions.

...surely I will pour out My spirit on you. This is the power to think differently. Because we can't think differently of and by ourselves.

People in the world can change the way they think about a matter, but it's not spiritual, it's physical. It's a change of opinion, change of view. Some say climate change exists. Some say it doesn't. They may change their views based on certain environments.

This power God is talking about that He's going to give to us is if we were to turn at any correction that He gives - through sermons we hear it or we may read something, go "Ah, that sounds like me. I've just read it. That looks like me. That's what I'm like." Well, if we turn and just make a choice, no, we don't want to be that way, God says He'll pour out His spirit so that we can think differently, we can have a different view on things - which I know we do.

I will make My words known to you. We see spiritual things. We look at things and go, "Isn't that incredible!" because we see it spiritually. Other people can't. I remember an example burnt in my brain was when I was first called and there was a young man and he came around to the house and I remember looking at a scripture and it says, basically, that if you don't keep God's commandments you're a liar and the truth is not in you. I said, "See!" Well?

It meant something to me because I was being called and it was obvious you're a liar unless you keep God's commandments. The truth can't be in you because you're not keeping the commandments, which is Sabbath, holy days. They're commands! So if you're not keeping them you're a liar and the truth is not in you.

That was good. That went down well. He couldn't see a thing. Well, now I know why. All these years later I really know why. He was not called to see. We've been called to see. We should glorify. Every time we read God's word or hear a sermon that pricks the heart we should glorify God that did it.

Proverbs 1:23, which we just read, **I will make My words known to you**, which is what happens. The ability to see spiritually comes from God alone, no other way.

Verse 24—Because I have called and you refused. Now, this has happened. Remember the parable of the sower and some falls on this ground and whatnot and it goes through different stages and at the end some grew and whatnot. Well, we understand that some have been called but they refused. They refused. They refuse to fight self, and just tolerated sin. Now, we have a tendency by nature to tolerate sin.

Now, generally what happens is that we don't see the sin in our self, we see the sin in others first. It's easy. It's just the way we are because of our pride and our self-righteousness. We see, "Oh, that person's doing that..." "Boy, they've got their sin." They can go around for thirty years with that sin and they may never know it, but we see it. But that's not the point. The point is we're supposed to be working on self.

Now, if we see someone else's sin and we see it we have to realize what we've done, generally, in our own mind. We've judged them. We've become God. Because that's what we normally do. We turn around and say, "Oh, that person, they're always doing that." Well, we've put ourselves in place of God and become the judge. We have to be very careful. We should look at ourselves.

Other people have sin. I have got sin. Everyone's got sin and just because I've got particular ones and you have particular ones, not the point. The point is I've got to look at my sin and deal with my sin. The sin you see in me I've been working at for a long time and I'm aware of some of those things even though you may not see that I am. I'm trying to... I fail and... You understand what I'm talking about. I'm using me as an example.

Well, we're all the same. We shouldn't look at other's sins we should look at our own and try to work on them.

Verse 24—Because I have called and you refused, refused to fight against self, I stretch out My hand and no one regards. In other words, they won't listen, won't take the correction. Because you disdained all My counsel, won't listen to the counsel, and have none of My rebuke, therefore, there is going to be a consequence.

So if God calls us and we reject that calling and we won't fight against our self there is a consequence. This is not just a game where we can just get away with it.

I (God) also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes, when that fear comes. When your terror comes like a storm, and your destruction comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you, because it's coming. It's just a matter of time where this world will implode on itself. The consequence of choosing not to listen is coming on mankind.

Now, they have had lots of warning, but they could make some choices to listen, but they don't. There's a consequence coming. They have to be humbled.

...then they will call on Me, but I will not answer. Now, this is referring, basically, to someone in the Church. They had a chance, wouldn't listen, and when they realize it's all going on and they yell out will God be there? Well, not necessarily. Not necessarily, just because somebody decides, "Oh, hang on, I need to save myself by coming back in contact with the Church and try to become part of the Body." It may be too late for some. They may have to live again in that hundred year period.

A person under great distress can call on what they believe to be God because that's what's happening now. Some people turn to religion and fill the churches back up again for a period of time, Protestant ones, because some want to turn to God because He's the solution. But unless the one true God calls them they will suffer the outcome of choosing selfishness.

Verse 29—Because they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear of the Eternal... They didn't love the true, one true God. Well, there's going to be a penalty to be paid. **They would have none of My counsel and they despised My rebuke.**

The conclusion is **verse 31—Therefore, they shall eat the fruit of their own way**, which is death, **and be filled with their own fancies**, which is their own counsel or their own plan. It'll consume them. Because they've planned something physical: "I'm going to do this. I'm going to rebuild it all." Well, we'll see.

Verse 32—For the turning away, the apostasy, the backsliding, that word is, the backsliding from God's word, **of the simple**, the foolish, **will slay them**. So someone who has been called and decides to go another way. It doesn't mean to say that if they realize, "Ah, all of a sudden, look, Europe is uniting," it doesn't mean that God is there. Not for all. Some may realize it, but they may have to pay a penalty of the first decision that they made. Others will be given opportunity. God's decision. God's choice.

And the complacency, which is that self-reliance, **of fools will destroy them.**

Verse 33—But whoever listens to Me, which is us, brethren. We have to listen to what God is saying, **will dwell safely, and will be secure**. Now, that word "secure" is "to lull, be peaceful, be at ease, be quiet, at rest," **without fear of evil**. So we can take a benefit, I find, of knowing.

So when I can watch the news and you watch the news we can be at rest. They don't know what they're doing. They can't make right choices. Politicians can't make right choices. It's absolutely impossible because they don't have God's spirit to make right choices.

I'll conclude on Joshua 24:14-15. This is Joshua speaking to the children of Israel at that time. Because life is about a choice. Anybody that comes into the Body of Christ, it is all about a choice. They are called. They have to make a choice about what they want to do about their own selfishness. Then God can make a choice because of their faithfulness.

Joshua 24:14—Now, therefore, fear the Eternal, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, which is about being genuine about what we do, **and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt**, which is all about family traditions or religious traditions. **Serve the Eternal!** Which is what we are doing. We're serving the Eternal. We ask to set our minds to please God. "I choose You." "I choose God."

Verse 15—And if it seems evil, which is disagreeable... **If it's disagreeable to you to serve the Eternal**, which I know none of us say that, **choose for yourselves this day whom you will**

serve. Choose God or choose selfishness. But it is our choice individually. ...whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in which the land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Eternal.

Isn't that a beautiful thing? I'm moved by that because here a choice is being made. Joshua is saying, "Well, you make your own choice, what you want to do. But as for me and my house, we choose God. We choose God." Joshua is saying, "I choose You. I choose God." That's what he's saying, "But you out there," as far as Israel, "you've got to make your own choice."

Well, God is saying the same. It's our choice. We're called to make a choice. Once we make it then God will either say, "I don't know you," or He's going to say, "Now I know you. I choose you."

With that we'll conclude.