

Just like when it seemed it was time to go on to the next series, I've had a second round here now, and been looking to give this particular series, but it has to be put on hold again for the same reasons as last Sabbath, as I mentioned. So, another interruption has come to the forefront and it involves, again, the subject of fellowship.

Now, hopefully it's becoming real clear that this subject of fellowship is very important. It's very important to God because that's why He's giving this to us in this manner. Because each time I think it's complete, it's not complete. God and Christ are the ones who determine what's given and when it's given and so forth and it's clear that this is a major concern to God and Christ to more thoroughly bring the Church into greater unity and to learn the lessons along the way.

Because that's a part of the molding process. There are things we have to experience in life in order to become convicted of them, and just being told something just by hearing it isn't enough. We can have knowledge. We can have truth given to us, but there are things that have to do with the convicting of the mind where we are in unity and oneness because of the experience we go through ourselves, and then we learn why God says things in the way He does, why He gives us what He does. It helps us to understand truth in a way that we otherwise wouldn't be able to. It's a matter of our choice and our decision to be in unity, to become convicted, and that's a process that takes time, a lot of time.

Again, this is a matter of bringing the Church into greater unity with God, with Christ, and with one another, that we have a stronger Body that's, again, more thoroughly prepared for Christ's coming. That's what this is all about.

So, we have had a four-part series on the sermon that was entitled *Danger To True Fellowship*, four parts, which was followed last Sabbath by the question that was asked, "Am I in true fellowship with God's Church?" So, an important need to always be examining ourselves and see where we are by those things that are being given. Today there is a need for a follow-up on this particular sermon and it's entitled, *Protecting Fellowship, Part 1*.

It's taken us through an entire gamut here of seeing things, of learning things along the way, and you can learn by this as well, to see how God molds and fashions us. That's what excites me the most when I see things like this, when I see it come together.

When I was focusing upon these different sermon titles, including the one for today, I was struck by some verses that concern what we hear year-by-year when it comes time to take the Passover. Then I was looking up verses by subject matter in a search; I have a system (most people do on their computers, obviously), you can go in and check by words if you're looking for files or something you've done before that's in a file. So you can find a key phrase or a key

word primarily and your different files will pop up and you can go to them. That way, it saves a lot of time for me, when I'm looking for specific scriptures, I can copy them because I have different things as far as Greek or Hebrew or whatever might be connected with it and I don't want to have to go through the entire thing again looking at it, looking it up. This is quicker for me.

So anyway, I was going through that process, and I was a bit bowled over by the first verse that popped up when I was looking for a particular word. Every once in a while we use expressions over here that they don't use in Australia or they don't use in South Africa, or wherever or over in Europe. Sometimes the translators, especially if they're translating it to a different language they have a difficult time because, "What is this 'bowled over'?" as an example. I'm sure that's going to be looked up, except by some because I was a little surprised where it came from. But to me, it seemed appropriate in my expression and my feelings at the time when I saw this, and I thought I'd just give the background of it.

Looked it up, thought, "Well, where did this come from?" It's about the game of cricket, which is British. It's the game of cricket where it means to knock all the balls off the wicket. So, it's that the expression basically means that "to be affected with sudden and great wonder or surprise." So, that would be, I guess, an exciting thing in the game of cricket. Because I really don't know. The only thing I've heard is it's the British concept of eternity. (You don't know the game.) It can go on and on and on and on is what I hear, but I don't know because I haven't really watched it that much. I've seen a little bit, but not very much.

So anyway, that's kind of how I was struck. To me, it's inspiring when those kinds of things happen. So, this definition of what I've just read is exactly what I felt. The verse that was staring me right in the face or at least it is going to be in the next sermon especially... We have this sermon and then the next sermon that's going to be given. The next sermon series, there's actually a verse in there that contains the same expression or word that's used, and to me it's a very powerful thing because it shows us where we're going, and it has to do with that subject matter that we're given. I'm not going to give it now. A little bit of a carrot, I guess.

But it all ties together in such an incredible way, and that's where it's leading us, to understand more fully what it's all about, what it is that we need to become more deeply convicted of. Anyway, it'll be given later as well. But I want to focus a little bit on one right now.

Let's turn to where we normally look at a particular area of scripture on Passover in 1 Corinthians 11, beginning in verse 26. We read this every year, every year at Passover. Passover doesn't change much at all. A phrase, something might be added because of a timeliness of something that's maybe happened in the world, but as a whole, it is the same and there is a purpose for that. Because we need to receive the same thing year after year. We need to focus on exactly the same thing year after year, so it's become a part of a pattern here of what God wants us to do at that particular time.

1 Corinthians 11:26—For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. So, very moving when we take this, when we partake of the bread and the wine during Passover service and what they represent. But there is a lot said here in 1 Corinthians. A lot.

Verse 27—Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Very strong, what it’s saying here. That has to do with not being forgiven of sin. It has to do with sin on our part. To be guilty of the body and the blood, it means the suffering he went through, the beating he went through to the point of pouring out his blood to the earth and dying. He did that for us so that we could be forgiven of sin, and so, this is what it’s talking. We’re to strive to live in a worthy manner though we know we’re not, but to strive to live in the manner that God has shown us, to respond to those things He’s given to us, and to live this calling that He’s given to us as well as we can, to pray about that help we need.

Because we need God’s spirit, and if we don’t follow through and do the things we know, we’re not able to live it. We have to become deeply convicted that we need God every day of our life. We need His help. The whole thing about Israel is that you can have the law, you can be given the law, Judah could have the law and even kept the law concerning this portion, the Sabbath and the Holy Days, to a point (and then they started messing around with that). But even there you can do something like that on a physical plane by knowledge but it’s not a matter of something that’s inside of you. It’s not a matter of God’s spirit that enables you to see the spirit of it, the purpose of it, and the purpose and plan that God has in all the Holy Days and the Sabbath, and on and on it goes.

So, incredible what God gives to us through the power of the holy spirit, and so, if we don’t realize that we need this every day of our lives, we’re lacking a lot. We truly are. If we’re not crying out for God’s help every day to live His way of life and to be on guard up here in our minds and our thinking, we have some problems.

Again here, on Passover night, very sobering thing to go through and read something like this, to realize none of us want to be guilty of that. None of us want to be guilty. It’s like saying you were there, you participated in killing the Christ, in killing Joshua. That’s what we’re being told. If we’re not living the way we need to, that we should be, and using that opportunity we have of God’s spirit in our life and striving to live this way of life, and we’re not repenting of the sin, the reason he died, so we could repent of it, and we’re not looking for and wanting and crying out for God and Christ to live in us - because that was the whole purpose of being forgiven of sin - so everything that Christ made available to us then through this process, if we don’t do it, if we’re not striving to do it we have sin in our life. As far as God is concerned, as far as judgment’s concerned, it’s as though we were there and we’ve said, “Kill him! Kill him! Put him to death!” Because that’s what happened. People were crying out, “Kill him! Kill him! Hang him on a pole!” Crazy.

But let a person examine themselves. So, that's what we're to do. We're to look in our own lives. You can't change other people, though we strive to. That's how we live life. As a whole, human nature wants to move, control, whatever, other people's lives, judge other people, how they should be living, but not looking inward. It's so easy to see something in someone else and we're doing the very same thing. We don't see ourselves sometimes. The matter of spiritual maturity is looking in here, looking at self and learning those lessons that we are to examine our self.

...and so let them eat of the bread and drink of the cup. So, if we're not examining our self by, as an example, sermons that we hear, whether it be on a Sabbath, on Holy Days and so forth, by what God is giving to us at any moment in time, if we're just listening but we're not striving to apply them to ourselves personally in asking God for help to see, then we're missing the mark.

Let a person examine themselves, and so let them eat of the bread and drink of that cup. For whoever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to themselves. That's exceedingly strong language. So, if we're doing something and we're not repenting of it, if we're living something and not changing as God molds and fashions us and responding to what He gives to us, this is what He's telling us. If there are certain things, secret sins in our life or whatever that we're really not repenting of and we keep going back to them, and we're really not examining ourselves and striving to conquer and overcome, this is what happens. It's a horrible judgment to fall into.

Over time I witness this in God's Church year after year after year. People leave and sometimes it surprises others in the Church, that "Why did they leave?" or "Why were they put out?" and it's like this just happened, how could they do that? Nothing just happens. God is very patient. He gives us a lot of time. He truly does. That's what grace is about, much patience, and gives us every opportunity and cries out to us once He's called us and given us of His spirit. The purpose He's done that for is so that we can succeed and change and become a part of His Family. That's why He calls us. That's why He gives people opportunities.

But He can't force it on anyone. To be in the God Family one must want it. To be in harmony with God, one must want it with all of their being. And that's a fight; a fight against human nature, a fight against the way of this world. Because it's not striving to live this way of life, and if they hear about it, they really don't like it.

For whoever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks – some scriptures say "damnation." It's "judgment." It's about judgment, meaning a time of judgment is going to come upon us, God's judgment. Some places use the word "wrath," the "wrath of God." God's not wrathful in the sense that we think of as human beings. He's very patient. But there comes a time when He's given us every bit of patience and time necessary and says, "No more." "No more. Told you enough. Warned you enough. Cried out to you enough. This is what you're doing?" Then the judgment, obviously, is not going to be pleasant.

Because to be cut off from God's way of life, what has that done throughout history? Started with Adam and Eve. With God's law there are two things that will happen, blessings or cursings. Now, our concept of cursings is that someone pronounces a curse upon you. That's not what it's about. It's about judgment. It's about the fact that if you don't live God's way of life certain things are going to happen to you.

If you reject God and Christ and the power of God's holy spirit, much worse is going to come upon you. Because if you've been given opportunity—and this warning is in scripture over and over again—if we've been given opportunity for the most awesome thing of all life, for the very purpose of having been given life, and we don't respond to it with the kind of gratitude and excitement that we should then far worse can come upon us. Not only that, but even the demonic spirit world can have more reign, no protection whatsoever from it.

I've seen horrible things happen in people's lives because of wrong choices. Sin brings horrible consequences. Being cut off from God brings horrible consequences, especially after you've known the truth, and sometimes the kind of guilt that can just eat away at people is a horrible thing to live through.

Whoever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to themselves. In other words, to be judged for their wrongdoing. There's a penalty for that. Curse? Yes. God tells what those are oftentimes. The ultimate of that is eternal death, death for all eternity unless some change takes place at some point in time, if we're able to receive it. Perhaps in the Great White Throne if we're able to receive it then.

...eats and drinks judgment to himself not discerning the Lord's body. Awesome! "Not discerning the Lord's Body." What does that mean? Used to be in the Church some of these things, well, most of this toward the end here was taken on a physical plane. It wasn't grasped for what it was saying spiritually. So, there's a physical element, yes, whereby we're able to learn. But there is that which in time then with God's spirit teaches us what is spiritual and the spiritual intent of why these things are given. In time God helps us to learn what those are, as with so many things in scripture.

It goes on to say, **For this reason**, in other words, **On account of this many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.** So, the physical part, if that's all we can see, we're missing a lot. We're still not where we need to be in what this is all about. So, yes, by not obeying God, our life, and even in a physical manner, can be affected by that. But just because something comes along of this manner, just because we die or just because we get sick doesn't mean that this is applying to our life at all. That's just a part of life. We learn through that process.

People get sick, and the reality is everyone is going to die. There is only a small few in 7,100 years, 7,000 years, let's say, that aren't going to die before they're changed. It's at the return of Christ. Those who are still alive who are part of the firstfruits, they're the only ones what

are going to be changed, as it says, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from mortal to immortal. Everybody else has to be resurrected from the dead.

So, those few would be like the same sort of thing, candidly, if you die at night in your sleep. You don't know it. You don't know diddly. Nothing happens. It's gone. It's over with and the next moment you'll be alive, either in a physical body or a spirit one. We understand that process. Well, we know in times past through history for some it's going to be 6,000 years, close to it. Amazing! 5,500, whatever it might be that people have been dead until they're finally resurrected.

To me, that's exciting going through that process. I have gone through it again writing about it in this last chapter that is completed now. Hopefully, everyone will receive *Chapter 2* by the end of next week. I told them to hold off even though it's totally done right now because I've just started on *Chapter 4*. *Chapter 3* has just started the process of going through editing. But finishing *Chapter 3*, going through some of that, talking about the hundred years, it's amazing to me how much more God just keeps giving to us and helping us to grasp and comprehend what He's doing and how He's doing it and when He's doing it. It's such an incredible plan.

I think of how the world, since they don't see those things nor understand those things, they can't even begin to grasp the kind of excitement that we can have in our life for what we are able to see, the kind of peace, the kind of calm that goes with that. With death, death is not something to be feared as though you've got to hold on to it with all of your being, with all of your might, and suffer in human life. That's not what God has given to us. That shouldn't be us within the Church. It's something that's there, and when it's not... Our lives are in God's hands. What's waiting for us is so much greater. Even if it's the Great White Throne it's much greater than this. I hope we understand that. Much, much greater.

For this reason, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. Spiritual! Spiritual! Spiritual! What happened to the entirety of God's Church at the end of Laodicea or toward the end of Laodicea, exactly what God said, in essence. Fell asleep spiritually because of this. We became weak. There are things that entered into the Church in time and a lethargy, a lukewarmness was hallmark of the Laodicean period, the last era, the seventh era of God's Church.

It takes us through all eras, from Ephesus all the way through time, Thyatira, the longest era, lasted over a thousand years, and then up through Sardis, and then Mr. Armstrong, Herbert Armstrong was called to raise up the Philadelphian era in the 30's. Lasted until he died, 1986. Incredible. Then a new era had begun. It already had started, and Herbert Armstrong knew that. He cried out about that.

I think about a time period when he said, basically, wondering "...if 50% of you get it," and then it got down to before he died, "wonder if 10% of you..." because he saw that spirit. And do you know where he saw it? In the ministry. He saw it in the ministry because those are the ones with whom he communicated. Do you know who he communicated with most and knew that?

The evangelists. He saw it in their lives. He saw the fruits of things that were going on and he was wondering, "Do 10% of you get it?" Because it was going by the wayside because of this sleep, this lukewarmness that was taking place. Because God was going to allow something else to happen in His Church, an apostasy. Prophetic.

God knows what will happen to human beings under various kinds of conditions. He knew what would happen to Philadelphia in time because of all the wealth of knowledge that we had compared to the world. We could see a huge difference, and in time that began to go to people's heads. Sad. Made them lukewarm. That's what happens to us.

So, weak, you start getting weak first, spiritually beginning to let down, beginning to get sluggish, lukewarm, not hot nor cold, as it says in scripture. Dangerous. Either we're on fire for God's way of life or not. If we're cold, that's pretty easy to see. Lukewarm? That's a tough one to deal with.

We've seen these things take place within the Church. ...**weak, sickly among you, and many sleep.** People can get totally cut off from God's spirit, totally cut off. Weakness starts, sluggishness, sleepiness starts, and then totally cut off, not able to receive any of God's spirit. Spiritual type of death unless God does something at some time, like the Great White Throne, or we go through something so horrific, like some are going to go through because of what's going to happen in this country and around the world very shortly. It's going to scare, shock some, to a sense of reality, especially if they've known the truth before, where God is going to bring them through for a purpose, as a witness of that very thing, of what He can do through His power to help someone to be awakened out of a spiritual sleep, a spiritual kind of death, if you will.

It's one thing to fall asleep spiritually. It's another thing to be totally cut off to where there is absolutely nothing there, nothing of God's spirit anymore, and where that can lead. Anyway, that's another sermon matter.

But when we are judged, it says, **we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.** So, what does that mean, "But when we are judged?" We judge ourselves, we strive to, and if we don't then God will intervene. God will intervene in some matter to bring things to the surface. At that time, we have an opportunity then through a type of chastening that God gives to us for the purpose He doesn't want us to lose out. He doesn't want us to fall asleep. He doesn't want us to be cut off from His holy spirit, so He gives us those kinds of opportunities.

But when we are judged, in other words, if we don't do it ourselves like we should and God begins to judge, right away the first thing He does is not to cut us off. There are things He gives us through sermons and so forth, and sometimes things that happen in our life to chasten us, to help bring us to a moment of decision, what are we going to choose when those things happen? Because, again, the desire of God is that we not cast Him off, that we not turn our back, that

we begin to hunger again for His way of life, that we come to repentance, of whatever that might be in our life that we need to repent of.

It says here, **but when we are judged**, in other words, by God, **we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.** God doesn't want us to be condemned with the world. We were called out of the world - called out to succeed in this way of life, to be able to have opportunity to live it and to have great opportunity in His Family even, which is something that is very difficult for us as human beings to comprehend.

Let's consider once again the area of scripture where we ended in last Sabbath's sermon that was asking the question, "Am I in true fellowship with God's Church?" 1 John 3. Some of these things we're going through, it'll tie in later on even with the next series, which to me is dumbfounding, what God is blessing us to grasp and comprehend and see how all these things are tied together.

1 John 3:16—Hereby, again, we talked about this. It's not "how we perceive the love of God." It's, the actual translation is, **Hereby we can perceive love.** Love, which is agape, which we automatically know comes from God. It's God's love, yes, but it's a matter of this kind of love that we're able to perceive and comprehend, **because he laid down his life for us.** So, looking at Christ and what He did and what God gave to him to do, candidly, for all human life. Awesome!

Because he laid down his life for us we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. So, that was used in that context to put things in their proper perspective, to look at ourselves and say, "What is most important in life?"

We have a fellowship God has given to us. It's a very precious thing to God. Being His people is a very precious thing to God and to Christ, and we have to comprehend that truth. Not just a concept - that truth - because then that should affect our thinking toward one another and our concern and care toward one another in a right way.

Again here, recognizing what he did. Sometimes things like this bring reality to the surface so that we can see things in a way that we have not been able to see them, because these are words and what does it mean to "lay down your life?" When do you sacrifice for others? Sometimes for us in our carnal minds, even with God's spirit, it's difficult to grasp what it means to lay down your life for others. That means to put others first. Not your own will, not your own desires.

Now, I've seen that at the campout here. See, I know the kind of work and preparation that goes into something like that. Been there, done that, see. Now, if we all can grasp that and learn to appreciate that more and understand the sacrifice that's there and those who have sacrificed, it means more to us. We treasure that more and we treasure that relationship more. It's a precious thing.

Whenever it's been that way within the Church, that you recognize that people put time and effort into something, to making something special, then there should be that kind of gratitude and thankfulness for that, and that draws the Body closer together.

Sometimes that's a thing that is difficult to learn, it seems, in this age because one of the most precious things you can teach a child is to be thankful. To have to learn that through hard experiences in life, which most of us do once we're called. We begin to go through a process. God begins to show us, and we begin to make a maturity in that.

Sometimes a difficult thing is when you continue to give and there is no thankfulness for it, no expression of gratitude whatsoever. I'll just mention that this has happened to my wife and I a lot over the years. Still happening a lot, too much sometimes in God's Church. Because sometimes our minds aren't geared toward thinking of being thankful when something is done for them.

We need to appreciate that amongst ourselves in whatever takes place. Because if we can't do it on a physical plane with one another, toward one another, how can we do that toward God on a spiritual plane? How can we do that?

...because he laid down his life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. So, there is so much to learn in things like this, to understand, to grasp, to comprehend what it means not to put ourselves first but to really strive to think about others and their wishes, their desires. I've given a lot of sermons on that in the past.

Verse 17—But whosoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his bowels of compassion for him... So, it goes back to how do we think toward one another? How do we think toward one another? Is there something I can give in time, in sacrifice of my desire, my will in order to make something better for someone else, to give them a greater happiness, a greater fulfillment in life? Because that's what it comes down to. Because so often it's about our fulfillment in life, and sometimes the mind kind of just stops there. That's carnal nature.

So it asked, **How does the love of God dwell in them?** So again, these are things we have to examine ourselves in in life's events, whatever they might be.

My little children, let us not love in word and neither in tongue. In other words, we can talk, we can say things, but it comes down to what are we doing? And this is how we measure it then. **...but in deed and in truth.** That's what makes it true, candidly, is if we're doing it and applying it to our lives that's what the truth is about. Because that's what God wants us to see, it's going to take some sacrifice. It's going to take some fighting against your own nature, "Well, I don't want to do that." Well, what about others? What about someone else? Are you willing to do it for them? Yes!

Even by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. So, there are things God has given us that we can measure ourselves by to look at and say, "Yeah,

I'm learning. Slowly but surely, I'm learning." Because that's how we learn, slowly but surely. We're very thick-headed as human beings.

After last Sabbath's sermon, due to various conversations and email another matter became quite glaring. That's why there's been an interruption in the flow here. A matter of real weakness within the Body that needed to be addressed because of covering all the sermons on the subject that we have been. Again, finding the same thing. So again, this concerns the real need of the Body of Christ to be watchful, to be on guard.

So much of that is what we do, to be on guard spiritually, to be alert to dangers to the Body - hence the title of the sermon today - to be alert to dangers to the Body. Because, you see, that's going to determine the thrust of the sermon today, if we grasp that. It's a matter of truly seeking to protect the fellowship of God's Church, to protect the Body of Christ.

So, if you go back to Corinthians, what we read about Passover, "not discerning the Lord's Body?" There's been a lot of that in God's Church since my time in the Church, since 1969! Seen a lot of this within God's Church - too much of it within God's Church, in the environs of God's Church, of the lack of desire to protect the Body of Christ, to be able to truly discern the Body of Christ, what that means.

It's not just about a physical body of Christ. See, we can stop there as well when we think about "weak, sickly, death." But when you see that beyond a physical plane and you see it on a spiritual plane, when you talk about the Body of Christ, there are times when in times gone by, where Passover has been looked on more in a physical plane in some of these things, and stopped at the suffering and so forth, the body of Christ. That's not as hard to see and grasp, truly.

Taking the Passover, that should be at the forefront of our mind, all the suffering he went through. We read those verses and we think about how he was beaten, and the flesh ripped off his body and the skin and his face, and you couldn't even discern who it was he took such a horrible beating. If you know the kind of beating the Romans gave at that time, it's horrendous. And so, that and then being nailed like he was, the continual suffering, finally, a spear jammed in his side. You talk about suffering. And hanging up there like he did? Horrifying thing to go through something like that.

We can see that and be thankful he went through it for us and for everyone to be able to have opportunity when the time comes to begin living this way of life, to have part in the God Family in time.

But "to discern the Lord's Body" on a spiritual plane is the understanding God wants us to have. Because seeing the physical is not as hard to grasp. Seeing the spiritual and understanding that, that's something on a spiritual plane, "to discern the Lord's Body," the Body of Christ, the Church of God, who we are, how important this fellowship is, what God has given us of something of this nature in such a plane with such importance of where it's leading. Then to

recognize how small we are, and the smaller we become the more we should grasp that, how precious the Body is regardless of the size at any moment in time. To treasure, to learn to treasure, to be thankful for one another.

“Discern the Lord’s Body.” So, if we truly are seeking to discern the Lord’s Body and understanding what God has given to us, our desire should be to protect the Body of Christ, to stand up whenever need be. Don’t worry about what someone else is going to think of you! This annoys the “you-know-what” out of me sometimes.

This has happened ever since I’ve been in God’s Church, where people are afraid to say something to someone else, afraid to take a stand and say, “You know what, I don’t think we teach that in the Church.” And if you know, we don’t say, “You know, that isn’t what is taught in the Church. That’s not true.” But we’re afraid to take a stand to protect the Body of Christ! Why? Well, we’re afraid of ruffling the feathers of someone. We’re afraid of someone maybe thinking badly of us. Or we might lose a friendship.

You think, “You might lose a friendship?!” What kind of dumb thinking is that? You’re going to lose them, period, if you don’t say something. If the tide doesn’t turn, they’re going to be on the outside! What is worse? Losing a friendship week-by-week that you think you have if someone is going astray?

Do you understand where I’m coming from, what I’m saying? “Discerning the Lord’s Body.” Understanding what’s of greater value. Taking a stand for God’s way of life and having the guts to say, “We don’t teach that in the Church. This is harmful to the Body. If it spreads it can hurt mightily in the Body.” Well, anyway, not enjoyable to go through something like this, but it’s so needful that we look at things like this in our lives and recognize what is more valuable, what is more important to God. Do we grasp what is more important to God, what is the weightier matter of the law of God’s way of life, and be able to judge those things and discern those things, and recognize that there is a time to speak up?

The reason I’m saying that is because after last Sabbath’s sermon bombarded by people sharing stories of things, things that, like 2012, 2013, in through there when different ones were doing things that were wrong - wrong, wrong, wrong - when different ones were coming up and taking a book and saying (*2008—God’s Final Witness*), finding things in it that they disagreed with and talking about those things with others. Do we just sit and listen? Do we just let it go by? Do we not grasp the danger in someone doing something like that of that nature, when something is given to God’s people, whether it be in a sermon...

I remember when I first came into the Church the first time encountering—there’s a lot of firsts—but hearing individuals have “roast minister” or, anyway, it was like starting to dissect the sermon. I was riding with them back to another area and they started going through the sermon, dissecting the sermon.

Now, I should have spoken up, but I didn't know enough to at that moment in time. I didn't know about going to your brother and what's expected of you and how you should do certain things and speak up and make a stand on something and realize, "You know, you can't do that. You can't talk like that. It isn't right. Where do you get off thinking that's right?"

So, you learn by those things. But after a time and hearing different sermons, we should be of a mindset to realize, "Wait a minute! I have to do my part. I can't just sit here idly and listen to something that I know is wrong without saying something. What am I if I'm not doing what I'm supposed to be doing? If I am not of a mind..."

I think of some sermons coming up, Feast and so forth, taking a stand for God, taking a stand for God's way of life because we recognize the importance, the value, the importance to God, the importance to Christ, the value of his Body, the value of what was sacrificed for the Body of Christ through time. If we don't grasp that sacrifice and the value of that then we might just listen to something we know is wrong and let it go by the wayside and not say anything about it.

"Well, that's not my place." Through time I've heard that one more than anything. "It's not my place to say something. The ministry will take care of that." That's a bunch of you-know-what - hogwash, stupidity, really. Because by the time I might hear something, if someone hasn't mentioned something that they feel is harmful to the Body, if that's the route they should follow, it's too late. Most of the time it's too late. Most of the time the damage has been done for so long I'm hearing of things that have been going on for a year, two years, three years, four years and more! I haven't even known about them? Why? If I don't know, what can I say?

Well, thankfully, God has a timing for bringing things to the surface and when they should be brought to the surface because that's how we learn and so forth. That timing is in His hands, but the responsibility is in ours. That's what we're to learn.

So, for those individuals that never said anything about some of these kinds of things that they saw different ministers saying and doing - because we're talking about some in the ministry - what can do the greater harm in God's Church than the ministry? That's the greatest harm that can be caused, is from them. That's why in some areas, I think of regional pastors, this is going back in the 70's, early 70's when I think of some regional pastors at that particular time. That's what they were called then, over many ministers in a particular region. I think of the Washington, D.C. area. Almost en masse the entirety of the Church went including all the ministers because, you see, they were around this one primary minister, regional minister, and he was talking to these other ministers, the little bit at a time, a little bit of disgruntlement.

You know, that's exactly what Satan did in the demonic world, to the angelic world when a third of the angelic beings turned against God. Mind-boggling! A third of the angelic realm followed Lucifer. Well, he became Satan, obviously, before that. A third of the angelic realm. That's how it works. It's called "merchandising" in scripture. His merchandising. He's selling his merchandise, what he wants, what he sees, how he thinks it should be. After a while they begin

to think, “Yeah, God’s not fair. He’s going to create these beings for a greater purpose than us.” That’s what happened to Lucifer. He was jealous.

He got to a point where he hated what God was going to do, that God’s purpose for creating human life, which He hasn’t created yet but had shared it with the angelic realm, that He’s going to create physical human beings. They didn’t know what that meant yet, but to think that their purpose is going to be able to become a part of the God Family, he became jealous of that. Third of the angels began to be jealous, began to think God’s wrong in what He’s doing. “It should be us. We should have this.” It wasn’t the purpose.

Anyway, because that creation can’t become a part of the God Family by its very nature, by its very creation, which is something that God has only given to us in the last several years, to be able to see something like that, to grasp that, to be in awe of it, the reasons why, and to understand it can only happen in human life through living human life that the God Family can be created. Now, when you see it, if you see it, it’s such a beautiful thing. There is no other way to create the God Family except that we live physical human lives - which is part of the focus of the Feast.

God’s even preparing us for that before we get there by things like this so we can receive more at that period of time. I marvel at how God molds and fashions us. It really is a beautiful thing.

I get worked up sometimes when I think about some of these things because I’ve heard so many sermons in times past, “Go to your brother alone.” So often I’ll ask someone, have asked people over time, “Did you go to them directly? Did you speak to them about what...?” “Well, no.” Why not? It’s your duty to protect the Body, to go to a brother alone, to give a person an opportunity before greater embarrassment and shame comes upon them, to save them from greater shame. Because if it continues on and it gets to the point where the ministry or someone has to get involved and a length of time goes on and something becomes so deep rooted in someone, so often it’s difficult for people to change then, to repent.

Now, I’ve been excited because I’ve seen a lot of repentance taking place in people’s lives and getting a lot of feedback on that, and that’s exciting. Because I’m just going to tell you, that has not been the history of God’s Church as a whole. Most of the time, the vast majority of time people leave at something like that. They do. They just leave. They find some reason that something is wrong and that that can’t be God’s minister, or this can’t be God’s Church, or I think it’s over there or I really think that I see it better. It goes back to Lucifer. Same old stupid mind, crazy mind, you know, unsound thinking. That’s what happens with sin, unsound thinking.

So, I hope you’re starting to get more of the drift of what I’m talking about, about protecting the Body of Christ, perceiving Passover, perceiving, discerning the Body of Christ. There’s a lot said there. There is so much said there.

So again, it’s about the basic principle of going to a brother alone, and if need be, to the ministry. Sometimes that’s a hard thing to know for sure. And if you don’t know, it’s better to

go to the ministry and say, “There’s a situation and something is being said. This is what was said, and I don’t know how to deal with this. I don’t know how to respond to this.” Sometimes that’s fine to approach it that way if need be. We’re so small now it almost needs to be at that point anyway.

So again here, it comes down to a matter of judgment that each person has to make when confronted with something that’s a true danger to the fellowship of the Church of God, of God’s Church. It’s better to do that by far than not to do anything at all. You can’t just go pray about it. “Well, I’ll pray about this for this person.” That’s not what God says to do. God doesn’t say you can just pray about it and it’s going to go away, He’s going to take care of it. He’s going to take care of it, all right, if you don’t do what you’re supposed to do. In time, it’s going to get taken care of. But whether God does it personally - and I’ve seen that a lot within God’s Church, that over time God just handles and does certain things and then many years later, in some cases, it comes out and it’s like, “Okay, I didn’t know that.” But God took care of it.

So, in order to do and handle something like this, because it is a responsibility and with it goes judgment as well, how we handle it, how we do it. I’ll go back to the time of Philadelphia and early Laodicea, because after a while it wasn’t practiced at all anyway. But toward the end of Philadelphia, as an example, when this had been attempted to be applied in people’s lives when they heard a sermon about it, so often it was done with a judgmental, condemning attitude. It’s like, “Now I have my chance. I’m going to go tell so-and-so off.” I mean, that’s basically what the fruit of it was. It’s like it wasn’t a matter of love, it wasn’t a matter of concern for them and a matter of protecting the Body and them as well. Because that’s what it’s about. It’s about protecting everyone so that we all remain in the Body, in the fellowship, and so discerning the Lord’s Body and the way it should be. But it was a matter of going and telling them, “You know what? We’re not supposed to be doing that in God’s Church.” Do you understand what I’m saying, the difference? Okay. Huge difference in this, okay, in the approach.

So, it’s to be done in a humble spirit because it’s not a pleasant thing to do. That’s the way it should be in your thinking; this is a horrible thing to have to do, not something you want to do because now is your chance to preach or to teach or condemn or to get on to somebody that’s bugged you for long, and if somebody has bugged you for a long time you’ve got some major problems to deal with yourself.

That was a problem with a lot of people, very self-righteous. It existed in God’s Church. Self-righteous, I’m better than so-and-so. That’s why judgments can sometimes be so hard against others because there is this self-righteous attitude, “I’m better than.”

It’s not what I read. “Better than one another.” Is that what it’s about? Shows you why we’ve gone through the things we have, because the reality is many have been called in time, but few have been chosen because it takes real conviction, a real response and dedication, and a desire

for God's way of life to deal with this first and foremost, self, and to fight this fight and to strive to have a right thinking and a right mind and a right love toward others.

Because that's what it boils down to, the love of God, a sacrificing kind of love. Because that's what God's love is. It's about a willingness to sacrifice for others.

Matthew 22:36, question was asked of Christ, **Master**, in other words, **Teacher**, **what is the great commandment of the law? And Joshua said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.** Whew! The reality is we can't do that. We learn as human beings we're incapable of doing that. But we're to strive to want to do that, to seek to do that with all of our being because we see our failure in ourselves because we have human nature, carnal human nature, and that prevents us from loving God with all of our heart, with all of our mind.

Because if we were able to do that you know what? We wouldn't have any sin in our life, period, because God would always be number one. We wouldn't put anything up before God. But sin is putting something up before God right there. Selfishness is putting something up before God.

We see that this an impossible task with human beings. But God tells us, this is what you're to strive for, to love God, to ask God for the help to love Him and His people, His plan, His purpose with all of your heart, with all of your being, with all of your life. When you do that, what is your life? It's in God's hands.

That's why it dumbfounds me. What's a jab? If it's for the sake of fellowship, if it's for the sake of God's people, if it's for the sake of a good Feast of Tabernacles without any marring of the Feast of Tabernacles. Anything else kind of blows my mind. We have to go through self-examination and thinking and learning because that's how God teaches us and molds and fashions us.

You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your life, that's what it's saying, with all of your life, with all of your mind. Because our lives are God's. They belong to God. Beautiful thing. ...and **with all of your mind**, in other words, with your thinking, your thoughts. To do that you have to fight against your own human mind.

This was quoted from **Deuteronomy 6:4—Hear, O Israel: The Eternal...** In other words, the Eternal Self-existing One, **our God**, our Elohim... So again, that family name that we're called to. So, there's Yahweh Elohim, the Eternal existing God who is the first, the only eternal living God. First in the sense of He is the God Family. Then the fact that others are brought into that family. He is to be first, in other words, in our lives.

And you shall love the Eternal your God, in other words, the Eternal Elohim, **with all of your heart, with all of your soul, and with all of your might.** Again, something given back in Deuteronomy, but they couldn't even begin to grasp these things. We've been blessed with

God's spirit that enables us to see these things on a spiritual plane and what this means, of what we're to strive for and how we can't do it without God's help, without God's spirit.

So, continuing. I should have told you not to leave there, but **Matthew 22:37**, again, **Joshua said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your mind, "with all of your life and with all of your mind," – This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**

I love the way some of these things are phrased. "Love your neighbor as yourself." Sometimes people think that they're doing that or they're able to do that. No, you can't. You can't love your neighbor, you can't love anyone as yourself, because you love yourself the most. That's the way we are. We do! We want self to be taken care of, and if something gets in the way of that, we choose self first. That's just our natural inclination, our comfort, our whatever it is we might want, what "I" want to eat, what "I"... It's just our mind. It's the way we think, what "I" want to do.

If we can see it, it's pretty much a day-by-day battle in life in relationship with others. Because self, self just really loves self, adores self. It's an amazing thing what we are as human beings, it really is. But to be able to see that and grasp that and recognize what your battle is, it's a big battle and you've got to keep focused on it because that's what it means to be on guard, to be watchful, to be alert, because it's always there wanting to put its ugly head up there. That's why it talks about, you know, keeping that body in the watery grave, because it wants to pop back up.

Verse 38—This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. They rest there. If we can begin to grasp those then we can begin to grasp all the rest of the laws of God. All the ways of God are based on this. It's about others. It's about the family. It's about God first and foremost. First four commandments, it's about God, it's about a relationship with God, how to have a right relationship with God.

Then the last six. Those are built upon the first because that brings out whether or not they really are, if we're living what has been given first in the first four commandments.

So again, this instruction concerning going to a brother alone can't be successfully applied or practiced, if you will, unless there is some basic understanding and primary motivation, that we actually begin to see our motivations our thinking. If you can understand your motivations for doing certain things, that's an awesome thing, when God begins to help you to see, trace it all the way back.

Sin can be traced all the way back into the mind because something motivated it. Somewhere, it started in the thinking. It wasn't just the action and giving in to the action that we shouldn't have done, it all started in the mind. When you can begin to get back to this point here of where it starts and ask God for help to see it and to fight it, that's the battle.

There is a success as well, of being able to grow spiritually, is grasping the motivation, what's behind it, where did it start, why did I do that, why did I judge them that way, why did I say that to them that way? We begin to see something in our thinking, we begin to learn about self. We all do it as human beings, but we have to grow.

1 John 3. Let's go back and look at some of those once again and build upon some of this again in this context of what we're talking about, "discerning the Lord's Body." Beautiful. I don't know about you, but I love what God gave to John. Because he was unique as an apostle, what he was able to see and the things that were written in John, John 14 and so forth that he came to see, that God gave him there to grasp and comprehend things of such a powerful nature, of the fact that he was dying so that he and his Father could dwell in us. Christ was dying. John was given that to understand and was able to grasp what that kind of love was all about as it goes through John 15. We read these during Passover because it's about the Body of Christ, it's about God's Church.

Then finally, when you get to 1st John, and this is a long time later now, all these things he's grown in grasping and God taught him along the way in the process, and then he shares it. Some things that we haven't come to grasp more fully until of recent time, candidly, as far as what all this means in a greater and a more beautiful way, of what God is doing.

That's why I'm excited about those whom God has called at this particular time, this particular age. Because there are some unique things being molded and fashioned in you - not the same things that have been molded in others in times past. It wasn't molded in Thyatira, wasn't molded even in Ephesus. Because each era people have had different experiences, different things that have been molded, that the focus has been upon, and I think you're going to be—well, I know you are—so absolutely dumbfounded when you come through all this and you see what God has done toward the end.

Because there is a maturing process at a speed of growth type of process and all that's gone on to bring us where we are. All for a plan and a purpose to fit somewhere within that structure that's exciting. It's all exciting, but because it's what we have experienced in this period it'll become even that much more exciting, truly, in ways we can't grasp. If only we could we'd be far more motivated.

1 John 3:10—In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. What a horrible thing to have to make a contrast in, because He's talking about God's Church. Wow! It's whether they practice God's way, His truth or not, or if they will practice sin. Because that's what ends up happening too often when people have to be separated from the Body or they choose to be separated from the Body. There is something else they're living. They've chosen to practice something different than what God gave them to see and to live. It just goes on and on and on.

As a pastor, as a minister, it's wearisome. It's hard to watch. And I think about God. I think about Christ and all the different ones He's called through time and all the people that have

turned against them after everything that's been given to them. The greatest of wealth of the universe. But it's hard for us to see that, to grasp what's there in front of us, the treasure.

We read through something like that and "the pearl of great price," you know, and we think about the pearl and how big was it or whatever it might be, and it's like, it's not about that. It's the greatest thing that there is! That's the point. It's the greatest thing you could ever have in life. What value is it? Then if we see those things then we put greater value on it up here above and beyond anything physical.

But people leave constantly over physical things. Physical. Physical. Physical. Something that's temporary. It's not even going to last very long. Think, boy, you sold that off in order to have this. It's the reverse of what it's supposed to be. It's just mind-boggling. When you see it spiritually it really is mind-boggling.

I think about God and how God receives these things. It has to hurt, because it's been happening for 6,000 years. He gives individuals opportunity, and the vast majority He's given the opportunities to have turned against Him after they've been given the opportunity. It's tough going through this physical life, but there is no other way to change, to grow, and to be able to become a part of the God Family for all time, for all ages.

So again, **In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.** So, which one do we practice? As a whole when this would be looked upon, if we looked upon it and looked at it and say, "I don't want the devil. I don't want Satan. I don't want any part of that." But yet we do things, if we're not careful, that that's what we're practicing. It's that mind that God wants us to learn about in this physical life that He's given us from birth. Because God gave us this—incredible, to understand that—for a purpose, so we can come to see that mind. It's one or the other.

Herbert Armstrong used to put it in the terms of give or get. Give is God's way. Get, self. Satan's. That's what it is. And so, it says here by measurement, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." What are we following? What do we believe?

See, that's why I know when people rob from God, when they steal—because I talk about that on occasion because this is one of the very common things that happens with God's people because of pressures of life and physical things and bills to be paid, and so forth, and having to change one's life totally when you realize you can't work at this particular time every week or on a Holy Day. That's going to mean so much in dollars. Well, what is the cost? What is received by it? By not doing it? Isn't that of far greater value than what we might have physically? And so, we have to weigh those things out and come to understand that.

Because we all have to make those choices when we first come into God's Church, and then even later on. Then people are tempted because times are tight, job is lost, whatever it might be, hours are cut back, and then people have to come face to face with what's inside. That's why some of those things are allowed to happen in life, to see where we are. So, God allows us

to be tried in different things in life to bring things to the surface that can be perceived or known in no other way. Because God gives us free choice. What are we going to choose?

The majority choose the world. The majority choose to rob from God. The majority choose to commit adultery. Those are the two biggest things in God's Church, the two biggest things that have led most people away from God's Church. To cheat, to lie, to have some physical pleasure, they think, for a period of time, for whatever that might be, or to have something physical, money, whatever we're talking about. Those two things. The vast majority of God's people in time have left the Church over those two things.

It brings out what's inside, doesn't it? What do we want? God? God's way of life? Love God with all of our heart, with all of our life, or love someone else, love something else we want? And then after we have it?

In a way, have to have a bit of a chuckle at times in life when people get their way. You think, "You fool. And you're not happy now. I wonder why. You chose something against God and God gave it to you, and you were able to have it (him/her). How did that work out? Were you blessed? Did things go well for you? Or did it just really go down the toilet in your life and the suffering and the mental torment that you go through because of it, and the anguish that you go through?"

Because that's what happens in people's lives. There is so much anguish, so much unhappiness when those things take place. They don't find the bliss and the happiness. They might find a little human (if you want to call it that) pleasure for a few times and then it's gone, just to be blunt about it. Then oftentimes what happens, they go off to someone else because they're going to find that happiness somewhere else now.

Isn't that an amazing thing? Because that's a cheating mind, a cheating heart. Getting what "I" want. Don't want that anymore; "I" want that. It happens. It happens all the time. It's the way of the world.

So, I'm not shocked and surprised when I hear things don't go well, when people have made bad choices, sometimes evil choices. That's why God talks about laughing at our calamities. "You want that? Okay. You're going to have to learn the hard way. It's not too good. It's not too bright! I tried to give you everything, laid everything out before you, told you what was going to happen, and you want that? Okay. You're going to really have to learn the hard way. It's by bad experience." That means not coming back into God's Church so often, the majority of times. Once in a while, even there, God will have mercy on someone for a purpose, as a witness to glorify Him. How blessed are they?

In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God. It's just that's the way it is if we don't practice this way of life in spirit and in truth. Neither he who does not love (practice love toward) his brother, sister, whatever. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should

love one another, not as Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother. And why did he slay him? Because his own works were evil and his brothers righteous. It reveals the motivation, the thinking of the mind. Awesome!

It is in times like this that we must ask ourselves what we practice in in our relationship toward one another in the Body of Christ. It's good to measure those things oftentimes, how we're thinking toward someone or about someone and weighing it out. Because that can really force us to dig deep inside, why we think the way we do toward anyone, why we might treat someone or say something to someone in a way that would be hurtful or harmful or whatever, why we don't say something we should say when we should say it because it's right before God.

We come back to, do we desire the kind of fellowship that builds up, that strengthens the Body, if you will, encourages, supports one another? Because that's what we are to do. Or do we press our own ways upon others? Sometimes that happens. Too often that happens when, especially in some of the things we've been covering, we have something that we're pressing on someone else.

It's like this newsy thing that I call gossip. There are many forms of it. But it's like this juicy thing that you want others to see what you see. Or it could have to do with doctrine. I've seen that oftentimes in the Church or some newsy thing that's out here that's taken from somebody, something has been read on the internet and it's like, "Oh, this is something we need to focus on right now. This is something the ministry, the Church needs to see and understand." Sometimes I get sent some things and it's like, "You need to see what's going on out there."

Sometimes we can press our own ways, our own ideas, our own pet projects upon others concerning those things that the Church doesn't support. The Church doesn't teach it. So, do we not grasp sometimes that there are physical things that happen that have a spiritual consequence in relationships, in things we might do? Because that's what these series have been about in large part.

Sometime there are things we can see in ourselves. This desire to teach; that's an evil thing. If that's our motivation, because we want to be a teacher (and God hasn't given it to us), but we want to be a teacher, whatever it might be. It might be something very physical in life but there is this need to press that upon others, that others need to know about it. It's that mind that we have to be careful of. It's a motivation. It's a thinking.

I've dealt with this a lot in the Church when it comes to doctrine and so forth. Thankfully, as a whole, we're way past that. It doesn't exist like it used to. This used to be rampant in the Church, different people come up with different ideas, sermonettes, whatever it might be, even in sermons or whatever, and someone has a doctrinal thing that they believe that they see and all of a sudden, they're talking about flying saucers and people taken to a place of safety and being shrunk down and taken to some other place. "Do-do-do-doo, do-do-do-doo." You think, what happened to the mind? Where did you go? Or were you ever here? Anyway, I'm sorry.

But it's like, how can that happen? It happened with a minister. Started teaching that way out in a remote area. Started teaching some of that stupidity. It was out there not too far from Roswell, but it worked its way into that particular part of the country and that big state. But anyway, crazy things that people can get a hold of sometimes. If they just could grasp what they're giving their mind over to and how they can even start thinking like that? Somewhere there is sin, there is something that's happened that's cut them off and something else has a hold of them because it's feeding something that they want. So often it's this concept here of teaching something different than what God is showing us. It's a real danger in that, it really is. So, much to be learned about it.

I remember many years back after I had left this area and had been transferred to Pennsylvania, referring to the area we're in (not right now), that I'd heard of conspiracy theories concerning black helicopters flying around. Now, I don't know if you've ever heard some of these kind of conspiracy theories and what's behind it and the government... Anyway, that was in the area of Cincinnati for a time. Got a hold of a bunch of people in the Church. Took them out of the Church. Conspiracy theories because someone was reading something. And of course, it wasn't the internet back then, that was just kind of coming on board, people were starting to communicate with each other on what I'm trying to get off of, AOL, and some other things. I've had it all these years. I've finally come to the point I'm so sick of it. Still using it but I'm phasing it out.

But anyway, you think, how could these things get a hold of people and they're told, no, this isn't of God, this is a conspiracy theory thing. And even if it's true, why are you concerned about it? How does this affect your life? Why do you want to share it with anybody else? Even if it were true, why is this so important to tell others about it?

So, sometimes these things happen. Wasn't too long ago farther south, someone came up with this idea, again, that's gone around from time to time, the world is flat. Think, well, you know, we've seen things fly up around there and they've taken pictures of this. I'm pretty sure it's round. Anyway. And you would think, where is the mind? How can such a thing get a hold of a human being? But it can be something like that that we can kind of laugh at.

Which, speaking of yesterday, I wish I had this thing that someone showed me on YouTube. It's this comedian and he's talking about this thing that I just talked about recently. It's so good. Somebody is being charged with a massage and they're telling them, basically, well, you can start any time. They said, well, I've started. I started ten minutes ago. See, yeah, my hands are above your body, not touching it, and you're receiving the energy from it.

Anyway, some things if we can pull back a little bit, we can begin to see the comedy of it. But the individual went on to say about his billfold, "I'm feeling it. I'm not touching it..." Anyway, he went on to talk about how he's going to basically pay them if you can receive the energy and maybe it can take care of your energy bills and anyway.

Oh, I got to tell you another one. This is so hard. This one got fairly close to an area up there in Cincinnati too, but it'd been around in other areas. It's these plumes and these jet plumes and how they're going across the sky and how they're governments poisoning people and there are things that they're doing and these ideas that sometimes people come up with. So, anyway, we knew an individual that we were fairly close to at one time, and they got a hold of this and were telling different ones about it. Anyway, any time my wife and I see a whole bunch of them crossing the sky we can't help but have a bit of a laugh. "There they are. We better get inside."

Even if it were true, what are you going to do about it? What...? What would be so important that everybody in the Church needs to know this? Why? Do you think that maybe if there was something that we really need to know that maybe God would give it to the ministry to give to the Church? Does He have that power and ability to perceive something that's of such great danger? If we need to know it, God will give it to us. Whatever we need to know, God will give it to us to grow, to mature and so forth.

But as human beings there are many things that can pull us aside and many things that can interfere. I've seen—sometimes when I think I've seen everything under the sun, I haven't—some things that can come along to pull people out of God's Church. You think, over that? Over this? What's going on? Choices, choices, choices. God doesn't force His way on us. He gives us opportunities to grow and to mature and to discern and to learn.

Verse 13 again, **Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.** It means, obviously, loves you less, it loves a certain way of life more. We understand that.

We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. This is how we can know. This is what John is saying, this is how you can know where you are - **because we love the brethren.** So, how strong is this in our knowing, in our thinking, "Because we love the brethren"? Something to examine ourselves by.

He who does not love, in other words, does not practice this love toward his brother abides in death. Because it's sin not to practice love. If we get caught up in judgment or whatever it might be and not doing what we should be, it could be horrible in our spiritual lives, in our growth.

Verse 15—Whoever, it says "hates." Again, it's not that. It's not the word "hate." It has to do with a comparison, of loving less and what we love more. Basically, it boils down to is God first. Do we love God more? Do we love, because we love God more, do we love His people more, and more than self, or as much. We strive to as much as self. In other words, we're willing to sacrifice self for others, our wants, our desires, our time, our energy, whatever it might be.

So again here, the context is one, going back here, of not practicing love toward a brother. So, **Whoever loves less his brother is a murderer.** You know, it's amazing what God says at times. It doesn't pull the punches at all here. It's just this is what it is.

This is why I think of what happened during the Apostasy and when it talked about the guilt of, in Ezekiel and other places, where it talks about the guilt of God's ministry and blood is on their hands for the killing of His people. So often people read through those things and they can't understand what God is talking about. It's this. If there is not love toward God's people and people sticking to what is true and right that they've learned and teaching only that, but if they start doing something else and start hurting His people, this is what it comes down to.

What is worse? Something that is physical that destroys a person's life physically, that takes a life? That's a hideous thing. But to do it on a spiritual plane is far, far worse. To hurt someone to the point that such damage could be done, the potential is there that it could be done, can be done, that individuals can be pulled aside to where they begin to turn against God forever. What a horrible, horrible thing. And how do you think such individuals will be looked upon by God, who are guilty of such things?

Because there are a lot of them that took place during the Apostasy. There are a whole smear of people that were out in California who hated, hated-hated-hated-hated with all their being God's apostle. They hated God because they hated God's way of life. They hated what they taught, what he taught. It came out. That's why they wanted something different. That's why they began to teach something different. And how many people were hurt by that? Horrible what took place.

So, it states it what it is. Someone doesn't love another as they should, God's people, **and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.** So, no one has eternal life abiding in them. In other words, God's spirit is not in that environment. God is not in them.

Hereby we can perceive agape, God's love, because that has to come from God, the source is God. And if God's not in it, it's easy to judge.

Hereby we perceive agape, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren, as we looked at.

So again here, different things then because of this have come up, keep coming up. Another one that's come up then is this thing called "Grounding," "Earthing." Maybe you've never heard about it but some people in the Church have. And so, because of the other sermons that have come out this has come out as well. And so, I thought I'd just read about it here, what it is.

Just picked out a few things to read about it. ¹"Years of extensive research have shown that connecting to the earth's natural energy by walking barefoot on grass, sand, dirt or rock can diminish chronic pain, fatigue, and other ailments that plague so many people today."

Now, you know what? There are things that we can do physically that help us to feel better. When I walk in our subdivision I feel better. I'm in God's creation. I see the beauty. I have time

¹ What Is Earthing? (barefoothealing.com.au)

to walk, to get away from everything and not focus on anything else but that. Beautiful! There are things in life... But I haven't gone so far as going barefooted because that's uncomfortable and not needful. But, you know, if someone walks barefoot there is nothing wrong with that - unless it's for these reasons. Then it's wrong, wrong, wrong. Because this is demonic. It comes from a demonic mind, it really does. Not necessarily someone who gets a hold of it and starts telling others about it, but if you're not careful that's what will enter in.

So again, "...walking barefoot on grass, sand, dirt or rock can diminish chronic pain, fatigue and other ailments that plague so many people today." You know, have you ever heard of stopping and smelling the roses? There's some truth in that. If we grasp life, sometimes there's a need to lessen the stress of our life and take some time, you know, enjoy some of the creation around us. But that doesn't mean this.

"This connection is referred to as Earthing or Grounding." The only time I got really grounded one time was touching a wire on a fence. I learned quickly what grounding is all about. Or even better than that, the time on the John Deere and it wasn't running right, and my dad said to hold the spark plug and hold the wire and see if it's getting any spark. Ooh! Anyway, you find out what real grounding is all about at times like that, as you're a kid, so you can learn it early in life. But anyway.

"...when your bare feet or skin comes in contact with the earth, free electrons are taken up into the body. These electrons could be referred to..." Now, you know what? There is no measurement of this that people are receiving anything. But anyway, this is what's being taught.

"These electrons could be referred to as nature's biggest antioxidants and help neutralise damaging excess free radicals..." You don't want those radicals around, I'll tell you. I mean, I might as well have a little enjoyment through part of this. "...that can lead to inflammation and disease in the body. The Earth is a conductor of free electrons and so are all living things on the planet, including us."

So, here are some of the things: "Defuse the cause of inflammation, and improve or eliminate the symptoms of many inflammation-related disorders, reduce or eliminate chronic pain, improve sleep and promote a deeper sleep..." You know, somewhere you're going to get caught in some of these. You may feel the need then to look into this... "Yeah, I don't sleep very well at night. I might..." Anyway, "increase energy and vitality, lower stress and promote calmness in the body by cooling down the nervous system and stress hormones." I need that sometimes when I get on the freeway.

Anyway, "normalize the body's biological rhythms, thin the blood and improve blood pressure and flow, relieve muscle tension and headaches ... dramatically speeds healing time and can help prevent bedsores." Can't even get up, you have bedsores, and you're supposed to be earthing and grounding? I don't know. Well, you know what? You can buy something for that.

I love some of these things because you can buy things that plug in and yet you're supposed to stay away from all this electricity and all the fields that are out here. It's like but you can buy this thing here. It's only \$69.99.

“Protect the body against potentially health disturbing environmental electromagnetic fields (EMFs)” from surrounding electrical appliances and lightning.

“Throughout history humans walked, sat and slept on the ground, cultivated their land with bare hands and spent a lot of their time naturally grounded. However, today, we have become increasingly disconnected from nature by our modern lifestyle. Conductive leather-soled shoes of our ancestors have been replaced with insulated rubber and plastics.” It’s disgusting. “We sleep in beds and homes off the ground.” I got to go on the floor? “Plastics, synthetic fabrics, asphalt, tar, carpets, vinyl have all been introduced and block this natural connection.”

Yeah, we’ve got a lot of bad things in life. You know, you can get a new carpet in the house and be on the verge of killing yourself, you know. The fluoride, the different things that come out of some of those. I think of some hotels we’ve gone into when they’ve had new carpet put in and my heart starts palpitating and it just about kills me. But there are certain things, give and take, as we go through this age of learning, and it’s been that way with mankind for a long, long time. But we live in an age that’s fast accelerating and we learn then what doesn’t work well and what does work well. We just happen to be in that age. So, we get to change that. We get to be a part of helping to change that in a new age. Awesome! But we wouldn’t be able to be there if we didn’t go through this. Sometimes we just don’t grasp what it takes to get from one point to another.

“To add to this, we are also bathed in a sea of unnatural man-made electronic radiation from household appliances, mobile phones, wi-fi, microwaves and cell towers, which bombard us continuously with excess free radical damage to our tissues and cells.” Still living beyond seventy, but you know. Supposed to be a bit of humor in that one too, but anyway.

“The Earth’s energy helps to knock these excess free radicals down so that your body can heal and repair naturally, as it is meant to.” There is balance in life in how you deal with life. We are to learn those balances. This is not it, okay?

“Therefore, to remain in good health...” You can strive to do the best you can. Just like eating natural food or even take it a step farther, go organic. You pay tons of money. Sometimes you have to weigh what you can spend on that, what you can’t to strive to eat better. Everybody can strive to eat a little bit better as far as life is concerned.

You know, take away the sodas. That’ll improve your life. I’ve known a lot of people that just have six, seven, eight, nine, ten sodas a day. You think, “Come on! You’re killing yourself!” But you know, that’s a choice and I’d like to discourage you from it a little bit and drink more water, that it is hurting your health. Not having maybe as many potato chips or not eating them as often. But you don’t want to become unbalanced in that either to where it’s like you’ve got on in your cupboard. “I’ve got some chips up there and they’re calling my name.” So, once in a while, I’ll open a bag of chips, okay? But to have a diet of some things every day? Sometimes we can improve our lives. We learn balance. We need to be balanced in our thinking and not go off on a tangent to the right or to the left.

I remember a minister out in west Texas that made a comment one time about me that when he went out on visits, I'd be with him, and that I'd be checking their cupboards to see if they had sugar, white sugar in their cupboards. Now, some people took this seriously. He was trying to joke but he didn't have a really good sense of humor and too many people took him seriously. He would be laughing inside and too often laughing at brethren. But anyway, that's another story.

"Therefore, to remain in good health it is imperative that we re-connect with this natural energy daily to..."
I got to stop there too.

One time he mentioned about honey, because there was a period of time within the Church a lot of us were making our own homemade ice cream. Now, I don't know about you, but if you've made some homemade ice cream the old way, it's good. It's really, really good. I really don't think I've ever found anything as far as anything made in the world that's as good, although there are a few that have some others that are really, really good. But natural...

So, we would get our ice and our churns and be making that. We'd have ice cream parties on occasion. Oh, we're going to have some ice cream tomorrow - today! Anyway, it's being brought in by a truck, right? Anyway. He made comment that he was telling... He meant it to be funny but he's telling everybody instead of using sugar, you're supposed to be using honey in that. Well, one time we had a visit, first time I'd ever met this couple, with a family that took him at his word, and they made it out of honey. They put the amount of honey in it that you would of sugar, and I didn't want to offend the people. I ate a huge amount of it because they gave it to me, and I didn't want to offend them. I about died. It was so horrible! It tasted so hideous. It was just like eating cold honey. Anyway, there is balance in everything in life and he was trying to be funny about it because that was at a time where we were addressing things within the Church that sometimes people go too far with certain things, and that was an example. But they took it seriously.

"Therefore, to remain in good health, it is imperative that we re-connect with this natural energy daily to counteract the damaging effects of our modern lifestyle." ... "Other Ways to be Earthed..." I love the way it said this. "Swim in the ocean or lakes, garden with bare hands, lay on the Earth," this one really gets me here, "Hug a living tree." To me, this took tree-hugging to a whole new level. "Lean up against a living tree." Now, if I were really believing in this I might lean against a tree, but I'm not going to have my neighbor see me hugging a tree. Get the white jackets.

"Sleep on the earth while camping." How many of you are using something underneath you? Oh, brother! And I'll bet it's made out of plastic! Pshew, I'll tell you. We need to be able to laugh at things like this, to recognize there are times to speak up. There are times if you don't understand something, to look it up, see what it's about, see what is being said. If it doesn't seem like it's right, if it seems like this, "I just never heard anything like this in the Church," just read a little bit on it and see what it says. Then you'll be able to make a better choice and decision about something and to recognize this isn't sound, it isn't balanced.

To maybe go to a brother alone and say, “Hey, I know this is being said but I just... If we need to go to the Church and ask to get it clarified, that would be great, but from my knowledge this isn’t something we do.” Protecting them, protecting the Church, wanting to see someone be helped, not to continue in something that might lead them farther away into something else, which is so often what happens.

“Wear natural leather-soled shoes instead of synthetic rubber/plastic shoes ... Reduction of EMF’s from surrounding electrical appliances and lightening.”

Anyway, then it goes on, some of these organizations or individuals, they promote other things then because it’s about making money and they have these things you can plug in to help in these areas. If you’re just maybe too lazy or you just can’t go out and do it, you don’t have the time to go out and walk on the grass or hug a tree, because it doesn’t give a time limit on that one so I’m not sure how long that takes to get those crazy radicals out of your body. So, you can plug this thing in and sit on it. They even have one for a cigarette lighter. You can plug it in and drive down the road. We all have to do a lot of driving anymore so there’s the time to get rid of those free radicals, and it’d probably help on all the stress driving in traffic. Whew.

So, they sell what are called “Earthing Mats” with the electrical supply, the seats, the vitamins and so much more. You know, if an organization was doing some of this, and I knew that these other things aren’t really sound, I wouldn’t be as trustful of what they’re selling either in other areas.

There are companies out there that do an awesome job of promoting vitamins for the body if you’re lacking in a certain area. Found out when I had my heart attack I had no magnesium in my system, basically, and that was one of the major things they gave. Matter of fact, they’re now finding, which they’re practicing, there was a nurse that came down from the Cleveland area that was working there, and she was amazed by the fact that after surgery they gave me a continual drip of magnesium the whole time I was recovering. They said it speeds up recovery far better than in times past.

They were using that and some other things that in times past they wouldn’t use. You think, that’s incredible. They’re finding out there’s a natural healing agent there that helps the body to recover more quickly. Candidly, after the four bypasses, compared to the three, I recovered fast, I felt, compared to the other one before. I feel like I felt better quicker. The only thing was my ticker wasn’t in rhythm, so I had to say there a little longer until they got that in rhythm.

But anyway, we go through different things in life and we learn different things, the value of things, so I don’t know about you but if there are certain vitamins you might be missing, what I try to do is find the ones that they’ve found are the most soluble. What helps it? Because it used to be the old story that they would clean out these port-a-potties and sometimes there’d there’d be a pile... well, you know there’s piles there. They would also, there would be little separate piles of whole pills on occasion, you know, people using them or whatever, and some

things never get dissolved in the body, they just go right through the body because the body can't dissolve some things that are made. It depends on how they're manufactured, how they're made when you talk about whole vitamins and so forth.

So, there's been this effort to make them so they're soluble. That is a science in itself. Be absorbed into the body, yes. Because if it's just passing through your body what good is it, you know? So, that's just a matter of research, of study, of wisdom or whatever in trying to find the best you can for yourself. There's balance in all those kinds of things.

How many in here take vitamins? See? A lot of people take vitamins. The older you get, you're about ready to try anything except this. But if there are physical things you can do for your body for health, for food? Because, candidly, our foods today, we just don't get out of the earth what we used to. The earth has been raped; it really has been. The way it's been done, the kind of things that have been poured back into it to get more to grow, it's very unnatural.

You know, I learned very early on in farming or whatever, that alfalfa, different clovers and so forth put nutrients, nitrogen back into the soil, help build up the soil. Even God gives us guidance in scripture in the Old Testament about leaving the ground fallow every so often, every seven years or whatever it is, and there's a roll over. There are farmers who actually practice some of these things not because it is in the Old Testament but because they have found, as a whole, it's the best way to care for the land if you really want good crops to be produced.

But most things are done now a days by what produces the most, the maximum amount for the least amount of money and it's a financial thing. Anyway, enough on that.

I know I've gone past time here so I think I will stop there. But all this, again, goes back to a desire we need to have in our hearts and our minds of loving one another, of caring for the Body, of understanding judgment, understanding when it's important to say something. Because, candidly, not saying something can be a far greater sin than sometimes the individual who is doing something out of ignorance or out of weakness. Whereas if someone will do their part because they know better, but won't do it, that's a dangerous thing.

If we know to do good, what does God say, and we don't do it? If we see our brother have need and we don't do what we need to do because we know what we should do, what God tells us to do, to go to a brother alone, and we're not willing to do that? We have to measure ourselves by that.

I would say that that's very needed within the Body of Christ, within the Church of God. It's been one of the greatest needs I've seen throughout my time in the Church, that if we would care for each other and do something out of love... Because we don't want to see someone hurt. We don't want to see someone pulled away by something that might hurt them, that might be causing them to become weaker in their thinking or whatever it might be on a spiritual plane.

Anyway, it's about love to one another and a willingness to stand up for that because we're learning how to discern the Lord's Body, to help the Body of Christ wherever we can because we truly love one another. This reflects that. If we're doing things God's way it reflects the degree to which we love the Body, love one another God's way.