

Today is going to end this particular series. We've been covering a series entitled *In God's Presence*, and this will be number six, *Part 6*.

We've covered two unique times in history, and one was in a physical nature, one was in the spiritual nature, and comparing the two. These periods were similar in that they reflected great rebellion and murmuring against God and against those whom God has sent. Anyway, this series has been covered in a context of how so many through time have rebelled against God and chosen to turn away from God's presence.

That's pretty hard sometimes to grasp, that this is actually about the Church as well. The recent history of our Church going from Philadelphia on because so many whom God has called have turned against God all the way through the Church, and it's kind of mind-boggling how God has helped us to see this more and more, this battle that's there that we have to choose to be in, and to recognize how many have chosen that way or gone that way.

To me one of the most outstanding things was going through and making some of this comparison between the ten times that Israel rebelled that God referred to, and the ten we went through concerning what happened during Philadelphia, and realizing that what the Church did was far, far worse than what they did. Because those who were in the Church received the impregnation of God's holy spirit, and the judgment upon that, the choice of doing such a thing is far, far worse, is far greater, in that respect, than it was with a physical people who didn't have God's spirit. Rather mind-boggling when you think of it in those terms.

Well, today we're going to go back and review a few of the things that were covered in the very first part of this series in *Part 1* and pick up a few things. Because it all ties together, of those things we need to grasp and comprehend about how awesome it is that we are so blessed that we are able to at any time come into God's presence. Something that if we're not careful can begin to be taken for granted, which it was mightily during Philadelphia and Laodicea and on.

So, it's been an ongoing battle with God's people to not really be able to grasp some of that on the level that we really need to if we want to hold fast, if we want to stay spiritually alert. So, let's turn back to Psalm 100 and review again one of the very first areas covered at the beginning of this series in *Part 1*.

Psalm 100:1. It speaks of this as being, **A Psalm (melody) of praise.** Hebrew, the word means "thanksgiving." So, it's a matter of thanksgiving to God, and we have discussed some of this recently, especially as we went through a national holiday called Thanksgiving. Started focusing on what we need to be doing and thinking about more often is just being thankful as a people, learning how to be thankful. It's something that we have to learn because by nature we're not

thankful. By nature we're selfish, we're inward, and to begin recognizing things that are done for us or toward us in a good way, to have a mind that is thankful toward others.

But how much more then toward God for everything He's given to us? And that's something we need to have day by day, candidly, a thankfulness toward God Almighty. It builds a relationship, it builds a fondness in a relationship when you begin to grasp more deeply the sacrifice that was given, has been given through time, the patience that God has with us. That should cause us all to be thankful.

He's exceedingly patient. Sometimes it rather boggles my mind to think how patient God is with us. Because we're so weak, we are so puny, we are so small, we are so insignificant, but we're His focus because He's creating a family. That is awesome to understand.

Psalm 100:1. Again, some of these translations are not really the best. It says, **Make a joyful noise**, but it's a word that means "to shout" or "to cry aloud" **unto the Eternal, all the earth.** That's the way it should be, but it isn't. We have to learn that, to have that kind of a mind toward God in what's being covered here.

Serve the Eternal with gladness. In other words, with joy and happiness. You can't do that in a fake way though much of the world tries to. They go through routines and so forth and it's, I don't even know how you can describe it, this false mind that's out there that tries to put on this show, if you will, of being happy and joyful and whatever with what they believe. It's just not real. They literally have to put it on. It's something they have to learn and grow in. To me, it's so fake. It just kind of turns my stomach.

Come before His presence, come before God's presence **with singing.** In other words, "a ringing cry" as in praising Him. So, when do we do that? We do it when we pray. We pray to God Almighty, and this is our mindset, this is what our mindset should be, this is what we want to embrace, this is what we want to grow in, the ability to do that.

Being enthusiastic, in other words, when approaching God. Not just doing it because we feel it's a routine that has to be done in the sense of putting in our time. Because there was a time, and candidly, a lot of ministers kind of pushed that thinking anyway, where time had to be put in for so much study, time had to be put in for so much prayer, time had to be blah, blah, blah. And it's not about that. That misses the mark totally.

If people begin to think about that in a regimented way, they're doing it; it's by their ability. It's by their power. It's by what they can accomplish, and so it's about self again, it's not about a relationship with God that's done in humility. It's not something that's real and genuine. Because God wants something that's true. He wants us to worship Him in spirit and in truth. And if we're not doing that, it's put on.

Now, sometimes to learn something it's not bad to get into a routine, but to do it for the right reasons, because we want to, because we see the need, because we're convicted of it. That's what we want to grow in, in an ability to embrace that. So sometimes a regiment can help us in

that, but a regiment can also, if that's what we think we have to do and "I'm doing it because I have to do it," how do you think God thinks about that? They're doing it, he's doing it, she's doing it because she/he thinks he has to. Not because they want to, not because it's in spirit and in truth, not because it's coming from inside, that they're looking forward to it.

So, we have to work on that, we have to fight to grow in that kind of mindset. There's night and day difference there, there truly is.

Verse 3—Know that the Eternal, He is God. So we think this is in the Old Testament, it's in the Psalms, and we know that. Yet do we know it? There are a lot of people in the Church who didn't know that. Not in spirit and in truth, not in a genuine way.

"Know that the Eternal, He is God!" Now, if you know that with all your mind, with all of your being, you're going to react, you're going to respond to that. You truly are. Because you're not going to deviate from what He's given to you, you're going to want to please Him and do things the way He says.

If He's God then we should strive to do everything He says because He knows what's best for us. He knows what kind of a life we need to live. Anything else that's against that, that's a detriment to that, that's detrimental to our spiritual strength and health, that's a part of knowing God. It really is. Being convicted, seeking to grow the same mind, being of the same mind of God, that's what we should embrace with all of our being.

"Know that the Eternal, He is God." So, how many people who leave God's Church, how many people who lie against God, how many people who cheat and steal against God Almighty, how many people who go out and whatever, commit fornication, commit adultery, how many of them spiritually, physically, whatever, how many of them know that the Eternal is God? Is that really what's in their mind? Not really. Because that begins to be watered down. It begins to be seen through eyes that aren't clear. It begins to be seen in a false way, that you can do certain things, you can live, turn almost, as it were, protestant, and even worse. Because we know better or have the ability to know better.

He has made us, and not we ourselves. Awesome! **We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.** We have life because of our God. We're able to have a physical life and learn how to live it better because of what we know and understand. And what we look forward to? We can't even compare it to this, and so we embrace that because that's the goal of it all.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving. Where are His gates? Well, when you get on your knees, whenever you pray, whenever you bow your head, whenever you look up toward God, whatever it might be, and you go before Him in presence, in prayer, it's what it's talking about here. Spiritual; on a spiritual plane.

So, we're to do this in thanksgiving. I can't grasp having prayer that wouldn't have something in it about thanksgiving to God. That's something we need to cultivate if it's not a part of our thinking. It's something we need to focus upon and ask God to help us to grow in, that we be

able to mention things that we're thankful for. That endears us to God because "the Eternal is God."

...and into His courts with thanksgiving. Again, it's the same word in Hebrew. "And into His courts," in His presence, "with thanksgiving." It's almost like shouldn't come into His presence unless we do.

And praise unto Him and bless His name. In other words, in our thinking and in our minds, to grasp how blessed we are, of the blessings that God gives to us, that everything that God gives is a matter of blessings.

For the Eternal is good; His mercy is everlasting. We are able to experience that in this physical life, His mercy.

I think of David where David was given the choice, "What of these things do you choose, because there is punishment here." He said, "To be placed in Your mercy. You decide. You determine. You give it, not me." Awesome. Because he recognized His mercy.

His mercy is everlasting, and His truth to all generations. That's powerful, especially if you grasp and embrace the reality of where we are and how we have more than anyone who has ever lived. More than Moses. More than Peter. More than Paul. More than John. God has given us more because of the timing of where we live in time, because it was God's purpose to give more at the end, and we're the recipients of that.

We have the awesome blessing of being given more than anyone through time. That's incredible to grasp and comprehend, to build upon the things that God began to reveal - not only restore but to reveal and then add to what was given to Herbert Armstrong, and then what has been able to be built upon that since that time because of where we are, because we're at a time when His Son is about to return to this earth and He's preparing everything for a new age, including the Church. Candidly, most of all the Church.

So, we come into God's presence whenever we choose, whenever we want. Something to be thankful for. Thank God for that. So, it's something we want to make sure that is not taken for granted, because that's what we tend to do as selfish, inward human beings. We can begin to be lax and begin to take certain things for granted when we shouldn't.

Being able to be thankful is the opposite of taking things for granted or that something might be owed to us or whatever thinking goes on in the human mind sometimes. So again, if we take something for granted we fail to understand how valuable everything is that God has placed before us, truly.

Psalms 105, another one. This is the area of final verses that we covered in *Part 1*.

Psalms 105:1—Give thanks to the Eternal. I mean, so many of these Psalms you go through and over and over and over again, **Give thanks unto the Eternal. Proclaim His name.** Well, it isn't just a matter of in this that we talk about God to others. That's not what it's about unless that

opportunity is there that we're ready to stand and say what we need to say at a moment in time. But it's about what we live, that we are able to live this way of life and reflect a different life. Not that people understand it nor grasp it, but that's what we're to live. We're to live something different, truly. We're to treat people different.

People on the job should recognize the difference in how we treat them than how others treat them. There should be no prejudices that come across in any fashion or form by anything we say. There should be no bad language, no bad speaking, talking, or listening to that kind of stuff that sometimes people talk about even at work. They recognize we're different. We don't broadcast it; we just live it. That says a lot.

That's what our function is, in the sense of being called, in the sense of living in community or wherever we are in our job, that people recognize that we don't talk about other people. That's done a lot out there in this whole world, the boss or somebody else that somebody who had a spat with or didn't like what they did or how they treated them on the job or what they said, and then all this chirping behind the background that people do on a job oftentimes, and we don't engage in that. Do you think that doesn't spell a lot, cry out a lot to individuals? Because it does oftentimes.

Give thanks unto the Eternal; proclaim His name. Make His deeds known among the people. How do you do that? It's not by what we say. Again, it's what you live. We're to reflect God's way of life.

Sing to Him, sing praise to Him. Think about/upon, meditate, meaning meditate His wondrous works. These are things that you do that stir up gratitude and thankfulness, truly. **Glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Eternal.**

And verse 4—**Seek the Eternal, and His strength. Seek His presence evermore.** It should just be a way of thinking, a way of life - to seek God's way, to seek presence with God in the sense of being able to come before Him on a regular basis, day by day praying, making sure that God is first in our lives, keeping a focus, seeking to keep a focus that God is first in our lives. Quick to repent when there is need to repent.

It doesn't have to be a long period of time in repentance. If something is done wrong, wrong thinking, wrong speech, something comes along, repent right then and there. You say, "How do I do that? All these people around." You don't have to say it out loud. God knows exactly what you're saying here in your mind, in your being at any time. If it's directed to Him, He hears it. Incredible. To know our thinking, to know our minds, to know what's inside of us.

So again, **Seek His presence evermore. Remember His marvellous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.** So we go through different stories in scripture, and we remember some of those things, we see some of those things that God has done in times past. We've just gone through and looked at all the things that happened as Israel came through the wilderness and for a short time there. Finally, the rebellions one after another.

Moses and Joshua and Caleb and different ones with whom God was working and this contrast and all the lessons that are there. So many lessons of things that we need to learn from on a spiritual plane.

So in one respect, we're always in God's presence. As His people, we're always in God's presence. Now, it's not a matter of going before His presence in the same as we do with prayer, but because of who we are we have a portion of God living and dwelling in us. Not just the impregnation of His holy spirit, but day by day His spirit, a power and a life that's in us that helps us to keep a focus, that helps us to have right thinking.

We can't do this on our own. We can't change, we can't be transformed, we can't always think right and be right without God's help. That's why we go before God day by day and ask Him for help to think right, to have the same mind, to be convicted of His way of life. Not just to do things because this "have to" thing I mentioned earlier. Even obeying God, it should be because we want to be in agreement with Him. That's the greatest desire and goal we should have, in that respect, to be of the same mind.

Because once you're of the same mind of God and you become convicted, that's what it's all about, being convicted, the same mind. Then it's your mind. What an awesome thing when you become convicted of various things of God, not just to go through routine, not just to set down certain things that we have to do, we need to do, but doing it because this mind is convicted, it's right, it's God. And once you're convicted of something, it's set.

Now, you can lose it if you let down. But if you come to that point in various things of life, you're of the same mind with God. What an awesome thing then when that's interjected into various things of judgment and dealing with people. Awesome. Because you can have a peace when you know you're doing, saying, whatever, the right thing because it's of God. Awesome.

Seek the Eternal, and His strength. Seek His presence evermore. Remember His marvellous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. Becoming at one with God, being in unity with the judgments of God, the mind of God, the thinking of God. Awesome!

So again, we are always before God's presence because we are begotten of Him, because His spirit dwells within us, and because we're seeking that spirit to continue to dwell in us day by day.

Let's turn over to John 1.

That's why I think of those scriptures that talk about "Where do I go from Your presence?" Well, how much more when His presence is actually in us? It's one thing that all people in this world God knows everything, He knows everyone, things we can't even begin to grasp, that kind of mind, that kind of power. But when we have the impregnation of God's spirit it's a portion of God's life, His being that's developed, being developed up here in our thinking.

That's why I love the scriptures that talk about the mind actually being transformed to think differently. Awesome! Repentance, which means "to think differently." Even the words. Awesome. We can think differently; something we have to grow in.

John 1:1. Let's go through this story here. Beautiful. **In the beginning was the Logos** (the Word), **and the Word was unto God.** So, we've gone through this in times past talking about how it's the revelatory thought, the mind, the thinking of God Almighty. It's going through this story talking about this thinking, this mind, this being, God Almighty, and it says, "The Word was unto God." So, in other words, it was God's, God's mind, His being. **And the Word was God.**

The same was in the beginning unto God. All things were made by... What? Him? Well, it's talking about, it's referring to the Word still. **All things were made by it.** Because it's the mind of God, the Word. So, what an awesome thing to understand.

We try to put God into a physical body. People make gods around the world, they have to see something physical, and they can't understand God. There is so much we don't know and don't understand yet about God Almighty, the power, the being. It's a matter of a reality of acceptance, of faith, of knowing by the things we live and the things we live through, especially in the Church.

In time we will come to see and understand things that right now we really don't have the capacity nor the ability to. Even in God's Family, once we're resurrected spirit, it's going to take time. God has a lot of time to work with us. There is so much out there into the future. Right now, we just have to worry about or focus upon right here on this little globe, and we can't get too much farther. God has made sure of that.

To the moon is about as far as you can go right now. We send Hubble out there, great, but you don't understand it, you don't grasp, you don't even begin to comprehend it. Some of the things that are out there? Pshew! Dumbfounding!

All things were made by, in essence, it; and without, or apart from it in other words, **there was nothing made that was made.** Because God did it. It's His mind, His thinking, His being, His purpose, His plan. All in God Almighty and His mind, His being, incredible. "Without it there was nothing made that was made." God determines everything. He planned everything.

I think of how incredible it is what God revealed to us even about a spirit creation. First of all, I don't even know how you describe it. A place to exist for a spirit realm. How do you describe that to someone? How can we even understand that very deeply? Then there are those things as beings within that spirit realm that He created. Angelic beings. We can't comprehend those things. Individual minds, individual beings, but they had an existence within a realm, and there wasn't anything physical yet, this is all just a spirit realm. All because of the mind and the thinking of God, the Word.

And then to go beyond that, to begin a creation of physical things? Again, what words can we use?

In it was life. Because that's God's plan and God's purpose. It's about life. He gave life, first to angelic beings, then to a physical creation, then to mankind. **In it was life, and the life was the light of/for mankind.** Because that's what it's about. Awesome to understand. I think, what an incredible thing that God gave to Herbert Armstrong, to understand that we're to become Elohim, in the God Family. Incredible.

In it was life, and the life was the light of/for mankind. Even the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness does not comprehend. "Lay hold of" or "seize it." Again, a little awkward language there.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light. Now, it's making a transition here in the story of what it's going to be talking about, an ability for mankind to begin seeing and grasping something that it really hadn't grasped before that would illuminate God, His plan, His purpose for His creation, that life that He intends.

...to bear witness of the Light, that all through, again, it's it might believe. Because it's about the Light still. So they're making a transition here before it states what it does. **He was not that Light but was sent to bear witness of that Light.** So now it's getting more specific, and we know it's about Joshua because it's through him that everything is going to be illuminated as far as God's plan, God's purpose for becoming a part of His Family.

That was the true Light, which enlightens every man coming into the world. Just happened to be going through this morning a rewriting of chapter 8, or editing it, candidly, because it's already been out there because chapter 7 is out, and chapter 8 focuses upon, that which if anyone makes it to chapter 7 they need chapter 8 because in there it's about the Sabbath and the Holy Days. So, don't see how a book could be written at this time, or even in times past in some of the things, without that information being there. Because it reveals the plan of God, beginning to end for mankind and the family of Elohim.

So again, to me it's awesome how all these things fit together and what God's purpose is and how that He just makes those things easier to see all the time as we go through time, candidly.

So, it goes on and talks about the Light. Let me back up here, "...was to bear witness of that Light," speaking of what he was going to see concerning Christ, and John was given a lot. It's quite incredible what John was given. Because to me one of the most exciting places in the Bible is John 14, that we talk about on Passover, and to understand what the world nor the scattered Church grasps and comprehends about Joshua the Christ coming, that it wasn't about a future coming or his past coming.

Because in times past even talking to some ministers in times past it was like it was a proof that he came, that we know he came. You think, well, the protestant world believes that so

what's so great about reading it that way? What is there? God was revealing then for this end-time that no, it's about him coming into our lives on a continuous basis. It's like a present progressive type of word, this coming into our life, the power of God's spirit that's living in us. And so, John wrote about those things and that had to be incredibly inspiring. It wasn't written by the others.

Then later in the book of 1 John, 2nd John, 3rd John, when you read through those, it even magnifies it more because it reveals more about the mind of God and about what, who God is, what God is. It talks about agape and that love that's there because of God's spirit because it's God. It reveals the thinking of God. Again, that that can come into our lives, we can grow in that, we can be transformed more and more into that, becoming more unified with that, into unity with that thinking.

Anyway, it says, **This is that true Light, which enlightens every man coming into the world, (every person).** That's the life, that's this life that comes into us that illuminates. It begins with Passover. We begin to see things because of God's plan and purpose. It has to start there with Passover and build upon that. It grows more and more and more. That's what these things are talking about.

"That was the true Light which enlightens every man coming into the world." So again here, very poor translation here. It does not say that something is given to "every man coming into the world." It's referring to that Light. So, that Light that comes into the world, not of people coming into the world. So again, it's about that Light, about Christ.

This is the true Light which comes into the world to give light. So it all begins with Christ. So again, writing that and going through Passover and talking about that, to me it's an awesome thing because we can't have the rest of the plan of God, we can't enter into it without starting there. He is that vehicle, that life, the being, the Son of God through whom God chose, that everything else is established upon him, and as we receive that then we receive this light into our lives. It's an awesome thing.

This is the true Light which comes into the world to give light to everyone. We're blessed to have that light living in us. We see things only by God's spirit, through Joshua the Christ, through our Passover, and if we didn't have that we wouldn't be able to see it.

So when people begin to sin and begin to live differently within the environment of God's Church they begin to cut themselves off from that flow, from that light, from the spirit of God and that purpose that God has for them. What a horrible thing! But it's happened. The majority of people who have ever been called have done that. Astounding.

He, or "the same," as it is, was in the world, and the world was made through him, or "the same" as it is here, meaning the same. In other words, God's purpose, His plan to establish everything through him, through Christ. ...and the world did not know him. Didn't know Christ

when he was here. So even there God had to draw individuals, begin to work with individuals, a few at a time. Finally, the Church began, 31 AD. Incredible, the things that took place.

He came to his own, and his own didn't receive him. So, the Jewish people who were there, he was born of that line, and they didn't recognize who he was because they didn't have God's spirit. They weren't being worked with by God, they weren't called by God. How awesomely blessed are we that we can see and know those things?

So, John was witness of these things in his life and that's what part of the story is here.

Verse 12—But as many as received him... All of us. All of those who are far greater in number, far, far greater through time, since the beginning in 31 AD, because of those who have turned away from God, who had opportunity, who had the impregnation, who were baptized, who had the impregnation of God's spirit, who had the opportunity to come in before God's presence in a continuing basis and for whatever reasons turned away, turned against God, rebelled against God.

I think we're just barely beginning to grasp and understand some of the things that God is showing about judgment there and about how serious those things really are, to do such a thing if we are so blessed to have God's spirit.

But as many as received him to them gave He power, the power of His holy spirit and the door wide open for us **to become the sons of God,** to be born into His Family, **to those who believe in/to his name.** That's what it's about, meaning the purpose for his name. What is his name? Christ, Messiah, the Messiah. To believe and understand what that is all about. To save, to lead to work with, to rule over in order to bring us into God's Family. Everything built upon him.

...who are born, in other words, begotten, **not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,** nothing to do with mankind and their choices, **but of God.** God, for whatever purpose, has reached down, figuratively speaking, drawn us to Him, sometimes has drug us, dragging us along the way, and desires to accomplish some of the first phases of His plan in our life.

If we could just grasp that! Of so few on earth who have ever been given such a thing, to treasure that. But we begin to take it for granted in time. We are in the Church ten, twenty, thirty, forty, whatever, ever how long it might be, and after a while because of human life—because I've seen this over and over again in the Church—people can begin to take such things for granted. What a horrible thing to do, not treasuring, not grasping what a treasure that is.

...who are born/begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. So again, in God's presence. Not only can we come before God's presence, but we're always there because of the begetting of God's spirit.

Even the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld its glory, his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. So again, awesome

scriptures, awesome things that are stated here about a process, about how God is working with us, always there before His throne. Because His focus is upon us. He wants us to succeed. He's called us to succeed, to become a part of His Family. It's just it's hard to grasp how we can turn our back on that. But we can if we let down in certain areas of our life, if we mess around with sin, if we begin to do those things that are harmful, that cut us off from the flow of His holy spirit. We can lose it all, every bit of it.

Hebrews 1. So again, we should be moved by, encouraged by understanding these things, that we've been given such an incredible life. To be able to come into the very presence of God. To be begotten of His holy spirit, that He would dwell in us, that His Son would dwell in us, and we can dwell in them on a spiritual plane in unity and harmony and oneness and with great desire and great treasure in the sense of our thinking, our minds towards them.

Hebrews 1; we're going to consider some verses here in Hebrews that should help drive home this reality even more so. **Hebrews 1:1—God, who at different times and in different manners or in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets...** So, we've gone through different history at different times. Abraham comes to mind and how He worked with Abraham.

Not like He worked with us because there was no Church. He called certain individuals at different times and worked with them differently and in a world that didn't have the kind of knowledge rampant in it as we do today in the sense of time and history and just the sciences and so forth that we have today. Mankind didn't have those things, so God worked with people in a far different manner on a very physical plane, candidly, that they were able to see certain physical things in order to be moved by.

You know, we went through the Red Sea opening up, whatever it might be, manna, you can go pick up this stuff, and certain times it's good and other times it'll rot on you if you don't do it exactly the way God says. On and on it goes.

All these things that God has done at different times with people. A mountain, Mount Sinai looking like fire, like it's on fire and Moses is up there. Mind-boggling. But He's dealing with physical human beings who don't understand things in the sense of what we are able to grasp today so they had to be moved by things that they saw, things that they experienced on a very physical plane, and comparing that with things that they heard about other gods, etc. So, it's totally different.

Abraham, Abram, God started working with him, had a purpose for him. It's an incredible story from beginning to end. How he went before Him, how Melchizedek was there, how there are things that Abraham grasped to a point. But it was so limited in so many ways, it really was, compared to what we know today.

He didn't have all the scriptures. Didn't have Exodus and all of Genesis because he's kind of at the beginning of it in the story, not very far into Genesis. Working up to becoming Israel, and

then finally, the children of Israel leaving from Israel in Exodus. And so we're barely started in the Bible. They didn't have any of that. Just grasping those things is dumbfounding. Incredible!

He worked with people in different ways. We look at different times and how they were growing. David came along, finally, and think of some of the things that were revealed to him. Then you have some of the minor prophets and the things that they taught, and then finally you come to the time of Christ.

...has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things. Hard to grasp all this, of what it's talking about. **...by/through whom He also made the ages.** So again, there are things that are difficult to comprehend about God's plan and about God's creation and time and so forth.

Who being in the brightness of glory, even the express image... I like some of these words sometimes and things it brings out. But this word "image" here it's a Greek word for "tool for engraving." Here is Christ whom God works with as His Son and there is that power there for the purpose of molding and fashioning us to become something different. So, it's showing that through him as this tool, this one who He has set there, everything is through him that we're able to be molded and fashioned to become something different. Incredible!

...and upholding all things by the word of His power, all that was given to Christ that's from God Almighty because He's placed everything upon Christ to fulfill, to accomplish until everything is done, until all enemies have been brought under his feet, under Christ's, and then Paul talked about how it's given back to God.

So again, **Who being in the brightness of his glory, even the express image of his person, of his being, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.** Became our High Priest. So, he fulfilled being Passover, then our High Priest, and then King of kings that's yet to come. Awesome!

Being made, or as the word is becoming so much better than the angels, as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. So again, far, far greater in the sense of God's creation, and here the only Son of God, in that respect, the only one who in that true respect has ever been the Son of God, born of human life, but the Son of God. Incredible. Astounding! Mind-boggling. God's purpose in that, that there would be one to fulfill all this upon which everything would be built.

...as he has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels did He say at any time, You are My Son, this day have I begotten you? So, we go back, and we see this story and we see not only a physical life that he had as he was born, but later on when he was baptized and he received the impregnation of God's spirit. Not only the Son of God there in the sense of God being His Father and giving him that life in a direct manner

through Mary, but now as well adding on top of that to recognize he had to go through the same thing in the sense he lived a perfect life, nothing to be forgiven of like we do.

We have to go under water to be forgiven of sin. He went through a motion of something to reflect what we are to follow as an example, but he lived a perfect life, and he was given the impregnation of God's spirit. Then what God told him, "My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Awesome, that power, that might, the awesomeness of that moment in time that it had to be.

We can't even begin to grasp that, but it kind of sends chills up your spine to think how long did God wait, how long did He wait until finally He could say that? Because everything is about Christ, and everything built upon Him in order to have the God Family. And yet before anything was ever created it makes it very clear, before anything in a spirit world was ever created and made, before any beings were created in that world, before a physical creation began, God's mind, the Word of God determined there would be a Son, He would have a Son.

And how long was it then till that happened? We really don't know. It could have been billions upon billions, tens of billions, hundreds of billions? We don't know. It didn't happen overnight where it's like, "There it is!" in all its vastness. On the contrary. He let a family, an angelic family, participate in that. How? To what degree? God has yet to show those things to us. But given great power.

Satan had the power to nearly destroy this earth when he did what he did. Incredible power. God stopped it from being total destruction. But he is the one who tried to. He tried to destroy it because it was here that God was going to place mankind. Incredible. He loathed that. He hated that. He tried to destroy it.

Then again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to Me a Son? Incredible relationship. Awesome!

Then on down in **Hebrews 2:1—Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, unless we let them slip away.** The majority of all who have been called have done just that, let it slip away, let it go by the wayside, didn't treat it with esteem, with value, with understanding what it meant to be able to be in the presence of Almighty God.

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just payment—it's the word "payment for wages"—how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation. Something that sadly too many by the time they become weak can't ask that question anymore because when you get cut off from God's spirit and the mind is going, it's going. To treat with such disrespect, to treat with such carelessness. I don't even know some of the words to describe some of the kind of attitude and spirit that has to go with doing our own thing, doing something what we know is wrong and a lie and not true instead of living what God says we have the opportunity to live. To take the sacrifice of

Joshua the Christ with such disdain. That's what we're telling God Almighty. People who do that, that's what they do.

And to understand the judgment against that? I think we're just barely beginning to grasp some of that now. It should truly cause us to shake and to quake, to be scared spitless if we really grasp and understand what it means to play with sin, to fool around with sin, to disregard the sacrifice of Joshua the Christ.

How should we escape if we neglect so great a salvation which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard; God also bearing witness, both with signs, wonders, and many different miracles, and gifts of the holy spirit, according to His own will? We all have proof. We all have proof. It's why I've said over and over and over again, the truth you have is the greatest power, if we could recognize that, when mixed with God's spirit. Truly is. There has never been a time where so much has been given to so few. Incredible.

Verse 5— For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. But one testified... Now, we know these verses. But do we? Or how deeply do we? What do they do to us? **But one testified in a certain place saying, What is mankind, that You are mindful of them? or the son of mankind, that you visit, "attend to," in other words, visit them? So it's a matter of attending to. It's the care and concern—that's what it's about—that God has for His Family, for those whom He's called, for His children. Awesome! To always be in God's presence.**

Because God is watching us in a manner that He doesn't watch the world. They're doing their own thing. They have not been called. They have not been drawn for the purpose of salvation, for the purpose of God's plan yet. Most of them, well, a large, very, very large portion is going to be in the Great White Throne because a very, very large portion are just going to die. To grasp that, to understand that, well, another matter.

What is mankind that You are mindful of them? or the son of man that you attend them? Focused upon them. Awesome! **You have made them a little lower...** I was kind of dumbfounded by this when I came across this then. Read through these things so many times, have looked at different words, and never thought to look at one of the words. The words for "angels" here is not the word for angels at all. It's Elohim. It's referring back to, in the Old Testament it's about Elohim, because it's talking about the God Family. The words that are used, "One in a certain place testified..." and you go back and read some of the things in Psalm 8 and so forth and David looked into the heavens, and it says, "What is man that you're mindful of him, or the son of man that you visit him." It's what it's talking about here. That's where this comes from. The word is not about angels, and yet it does draw out that analogy later on showing that yes, it is lower than the angels, humans are. But it's about Elohim first and foremost. Awesome!

You have made them a little lower than Elohim. We have to live this first. We have to be in this first. Awesome! **Crowned**, also it means “encompassed; surrounded” **with glory and honor**, because of God’s purpose for all of us, for all of mankind. Yet when it’s all said and done how much is going to have rejected it? I think a very, very, very large amount. Incredible to grasp and comprehend that such would be not received and accepted - not even in the Great White Throne.

Then it says, **and set him over.** It means, just means “to rule over; to reign; to have dominion” **of the works of Your hands.** So what an incredible thing the life God has given us in human life and then what He purposes for what’s out there.

Putting all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all things in subjection under him... What “all things”? Everything. Everything that’s out there that’s been created. “Under the feet of” - God’s purpose for mankind. It’s about mankind, but mankind has to become Elohim to inherit it, to receive it. But that’s God’s purpose. That’s what it’s talking about here.

Putting all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all things in subjection under him He left nothing that is not put under him. God’s great purpose for life, for our calling. **But now**, meaning literally “at the present” **we do not see all things put under them. But we see Joshua, who was made a little lower** (in this case) **than the angels.** So, it’s driving the point home yes, it’s a lesser creation. But look at him, the Son of God. Look at him who became High Priest. Look at him who will become the King of kings.

But we see Joshua, who was made a little lower. So again, the beginning of God’s plan for mankind and the start of it, again, it goes back to Joshua, our Passover and our High Priest, and on and on it goes. **...for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor.** He’s Elohim. He’s in the God Family. Two now in the God Family - Father, God Almighty, Eternal God, Yahweh Elohim and Joshua the Christ Elohim. Awesome! **...so that he by the grace of God might taste death for everyone.**

For it was fitting for him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. So we learn from that. We’re reminded every Passover what he went through for us, for each one of us. Every one of us, he died for every one of us. Incredible that we can have our sins forgiven through one sacrifice, Joshua. Incredible.

So again, how deeply do those things affect our thinking and our relationship with God? To be thankful, to be grateful that we have such a thing we can do. The Israelites didn’t have that ability. Only a few through time, and that was in retrospect of the Messiah coming because they believed in the Messiah, and so they were granted that. It’s like the two loaves, one for those in Old Testament time to bring up to the time of the Messiah when he fulfilled the first portion of his role, and then on for the latter part.

Verse 11—For both he who sanctifies, and those who are being sanctified... What does this mean to us? Do we thank God that we have the blessing of being sanctified, set apart from all the billions on earth, set apart for holy use and purpose, to be blessed that our minds can be transformed now? We really can't grasp that, but just to be thankful for it, to accept it, to be grateful for it. That should fill our lives in a powerful way, it really should.

For he who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one. That same mind, the word. Becoming of the same mind in unity and harmony with God Almighty. The greatest pursuit of life, to become at one in the mind with God Almighty.

...for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren, so speaking of Christ and his relationship to us and his desire for us as is the Father's. Because he has the same mind, he's in unity and harmony. It's his mind. He's separate, but he has that same desire and purpose. He's filled with that purpose of God.

...for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brethren saying, I will declare your name to my brethren, and in the midst of the assembly will I sing praise to you. Even again, I will put my trust in him. So again, it's about his life, it's about what he went through, it's about his focus - all for us. **And, Here am I and the children whom God has given me.** So again, thinking of the Church over the past 2,000 years nearly now. Incredible.

John 15. So, just the fact that our existence, because we have the impregnation of God's spirit, puts us in the special presence of God, is awesomely unique in itself. Because we have the impregnation of His mind and His life that's in us. That's absolutely dumbfounding, the begetting of God's holy spirit that's growing inside of us waiting to be born.

That's why I love Herbert Armstrong's example there that he was given to understand, like a baby that's begotten in the womb growing but not yet born, not yet born. We're not yet born into the family, but we're begotten. And how much in the presence of God Almighty is that as we grow and are being transformed? Awesome!

And who is our mother? How does God work in our lives? It's the Church. Christ is the head of the Body, of the Church. Incredible, the things we grasp and understand being in a relationship with God, always in the presence of God...unless or until we cut ourselves off because of sin because of idolatry, raising up that symbol before God Almighty and worshipping something else besides God and treating shabbily, horrifyingly so in our thinking, the sacrifice of Joshua.

Every time you sin, every time we sin, you remember the occasion when he was coming in and they spit upon him? What they did is nothing compared to what any of us do when we sin against God! We might as well spit upon Christ just as much as those physical Israelites did, those Jewish people did when he was there and going through what he did, the individuals who looked down upon him in the manner that they did. Obviously, there were Romans there but there were others there as well who judged him, who were of the leadership of the Jewish people. That was their mind, their thinking.

It's just like the Israelites back in the Old Testament, rebelled against God ten times. That's nothing, nothing, nothing compared to the rebellion that took place in God's Church during Philadelphia or later, obviously. That's why that contrast was made. Look at them. Who is worse? What was worse?

When you have God's presence on a spiritual plane because you're the begotten children of God and if we do those things? Far, far, far worse! And that's what needs to be in our minds, to grasp that and understand that reality of this relationship that we're able to have with the Great God of the universe. Awesome! We are so blessed.

And why would God be giving us more of these things now? We are so close. We truly are. Now, I have believed since 1969 that we're close. I have lived my life, "We're close." Every car was the last car. Our children would never be adults, and on and on it goes. And yet now we are almost there.

It's awesome what's happening in the world, things that are taking place. I mean, it takes a pretty blind person not to grasp that we're on the brink of a horrifying war. We truly are. That's where the world is right now. Just teetering. Where is it going to start? Where? Incredible where we live in time.

So, we should be moved by that, to recognize where we are in time, what lies in front of us, and why God continues to pour out upon us things whereby we're growing. To me, ever since 2008, and then a giant step in 2013, and this escalation and things that God is giving to us that are hard to grasp and comprehend. But as time goes on He gives us more understanding and we keep pushing forward. The reality of what we've been given, of what we have because of where we are in time, how blessed are we?

And yet every year. It hurts when individuals are at a point that they can't hear any longer. It only takes a few. We're not very large. You hate to see it happen to anyone, but we all have the power of choice. So, how real is being in the presence of God to each and every one of us? Only each and every one of us can answer that between ourselves and God.

He gives us opportunity to grow in that and become stronger and become accelerated even more so in our growth. That's my great desire, that we just grow really fast. But you know what? You can't speed growth. You can't in the womb, and you can't here. There is a process that God takes us through. He is in perfect control of all the timing of it, just that we don't know it all. There are reasons for that, obviously. But we're close; it's just there over the horizon. That's the next series.

John 15. So again, changing gears here. We are in the presence of God all the time because God loves us, because we're His children. He wants us to succeed. He's given us everything in order to succeed and all it requires is our choice every day of our life. Choices, choices, choices, the choices we make, what we want, what we desire, what we cry out for.

We understand that portion of being in God's presence just because of the impregnation of God's spirit, because He has called us to a purpose and wants to live in us. He wants us to live and dwell within Him and His Son and them within us. Then we have this unique opportunity to come before Him even in a closer manner through prayer whenever we want. So we're coming back to that full circle in this series.

John 15:6—If anyone does not abide in me, in other words, obeying the truth, seeking to live by the unleavened bread of life, which again, is largely dependant upon our prayer life. Because our prayer life is, well, it determines our relationship. It determines where we are in a relationship. It determines what we're crying out for, what we see, what we know, what we want. We want that spirit and that power to be in us. God will give that, but we have to ask. We have to ask for it day by day. We have to know what we need. We can't do this on our own.

And so, if we believe those things and we cry out for those things, you know what? He just promises He gives it to us. He does. That's what He promises. When you go through John 14, "Ask what you will and it will be given to you," it's not about, "Well, I would like that new... or this new... or the lottery. Pray about that one, whatever else that would make my life easier and better."

That's not what it's saying. It's the things that Christ was talking about, the life we're able to have with God through the power of God's spirit. It's all about receiving of His spirit into our life, of them dwelling within us, and if we'll ask for those things God says, "I'll give them to you." Awesome!

John 15:6—If anyone does not abide in me he is cast out as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and throw them in the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in me, so in the truth, in the way of life that God has given to us, the true manna, we partake of that, strengthen in us through prayer, a prayer life, and my words abide in you, the word, the logos, the mind, the being of God, being in unity and one with Him. Awesome. ...you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done. A promise. Incredible!

By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so will you be my disciples. As the Father loved me, I also have loved you. What an incredible thing. It's about this relationship God desires with us, to be able to love us and it be reciprocated and love back to God. We're able to grow in that. That's His desire for a family. That's the kind of family He wants, one that is filled with that kind of thinking. Not like the world, but that which is true.

As the Father loved me, I also have loved you. And we're to love one another. That's what 1st John, 2nd John, 3rd John is all about. It's about this growing that we receive from God. But it's not a one-way street where we're just on the receiving end, it's about a change. That's what grace is. It's about a change that has to take place in us to where this then goes out to the Body from us, each one of us toward one another.

As the Father has loved me, I also have loved you; abide in my love. Agape. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. What an awesome thing to understand, that by seeking to live by what God has given, by the true bread of life, the unleavened bread of life, by seeking to live what is right and fighting against the things that we see as God reveals them to us, of wrong thinking that need to be repented of, that we do that because we want this.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love. All about a relationship.

So it's about prayer. Full circle. Prayer. Every day there should be a prayer in our life, that which we pray to God about. It's about a relationship. It's about thinking. It's about wanting to be at one with Him.

I wanted to use this opportunity to mention something, that I feel like we've become more balanced in the sense of pulling away from prayers for a long time, for a purpose, to learn something through this process. That it's something we do individually. God wants to know and have that relationship with each one of us on an individual plane.

That's why before we come to services we pray to God to feed us. We want that. We desire that. We don't have to have it at services, though there will be come occasions, perhaps at a Feast site or whatever, where there will be prayer for the Body, for that occasion of a Holy Day, Feast of Tabernacles particularly that we will have those kinds of things. But again, for ourselves individually and as families we have gotten away from the thing of praying at every meal by that which we've been guided in and directed in to do.

Because we want to shed anything to do with this protestant world and learn from that process, that whatever is done must be done in spirit and in truth. Not about show. Not about self. Not repetition. Because that's what happens if we're not careful. So, we learn those things through processes we live through, and we see how the world deals with that, and we don't want to be like that.

I think it would be good (I know it would be good), if occasionally that whether it be as a family, a special meal, maybe Friday night, whatever is special to you that there be that moment and that time that you set aside to be special as a family unit. If you're one in that unit, so be it. If it's more than that...it just multiplies or whatever as far as the family unit is concerned. But on occasion to start bringing that back into our lives where we can. That depends then upon whether or not we're all a part of the Body of Christ. There are things we don't want to do.

Special occasions when we're maybe together, a large group of God's people together, there might be the occasion to do that, that we're thankful for the opportunity to be able to share together in certain fellowship of something special, that maybe we can do that on occasion, that individuals can do that on occasion. But we have to be careful of the environment we're in

because we don't want to be offensive to others and we don't have to do it, in that respect, at that time. I hope you understand what I'm saying.

That it's not a matter of trying to push our way down someone else's throat or make someone feel uncomfortable, because that's not what it's about. It's about a relationship with God and opportunities when we do have them that we use them.

So again, I think it's a great thing, especially when there are children in a family, that they begin to learn that there are those occasions that are special, and they see parents who engage in something like that and recognize we're to pray. Maybe teach them, have them on occasion as they grow and mature, or to just ask, "And what do you have to be thankful for?" Maybe saying something about something.

You know, that's a time for thanksgiving too before God and it's not just about "Thanks for the bread and butter and whatever we have here tonight and bless it to our nourishment." No, it's more. It's more than that. It's about our lives. It's about a relationship with God. But it's an opportunity within an environment of more than one person, in that respect, to vocalize that, to encourage one another through that process.

We're looking for balance and a desire that God has that we worship Him in spirit and in truth. Children don't just absorb this way of life. It doesn't just automatically happen by absorption, by hearing sermons once a week. We have a direct part in it.

Ephesians 2. We'll end in these verses here. **Ephesians 2:4—Now, God is rich in mercy through His great love wherewith He has loved us.** Again, it's talking about agape, a love that God has. But again, to recognize the mercy that we are blessed to have from God Almighty in our lives, truly, and to recognize this relationship that we're able to have with God the Father and with Joshua.

...even when we were dead in sins, has made us alive together with Christ. How blessed are we to have been called to have this relationship with God, to have an elder brother as we do, to have a High Priest that we can go before every day through to God Almighty? Because it's about God Almighty.

...for through grace you are saved. Even He has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly in Christ Joshua. In other words, he is the first of the firstfruits. He is there at the right hand of God and he's about to come to this earth. Everything we have is through him in our relationship with God.

That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Joshua. We can't even begin to grasp what's in front of us, what the Millennium is going to be like, what our opportunities are going to be like as the Church continues on, as some become part of the 144,000. We can't even begin to grasp what it's going to be like to have a spirit body, to have functions and responsibilities in that family, abilities that we don't even, can't even begin to think of right now because our minds are

pretty puny. Awesome! Things that we are just going to experience that are going to be so incredible.

For by grace are you saved through faith. God's mercy, God's patience, God's love, God's kindness because we're able to believe what He's given to us. ...and that not of yourselves. **It is the gift of God.** There is nothing you can work up on your own, it all comes from God. Though we have to fight for it as though we're doing it on our own, with all of your being.

For by grace are you saved through faith; and not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. Not of works, not by what we do though we have to do, we have to work, **unless anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship.** What an incredible thing. God is molding and fashioning us all the time if we yield ourselves to the process. Everything we go through day by day. We don't think in those terms as a whole. We really don't. But we need to more and more, to recognize God is continually working with us to put us into a specific place in the structure of what He's building.

It's not like a carpenter and who just gets his saw out and measures twice and then cuts. That's done pretty quick. We aren't. It's a lot of work day by day. How long have you been in God's Church? God's been working with me for a long time, since 1969, still have things being whittled out, taken care of, shaped in order to fit into a specific place. Incredible. He just works on us. We're His workmanship. So, we're in His presence just in that alone, that He's working with us if we will yield to that process, and He's molding and fashioning us.

We so often just can't grasp how we have a job, whatever it might be, we have a certain function, a certain routine each day, and how it is that God in that routine can work with us. But He does. He can because there are things to be learned in that. I hope we see that. I hope we recognize that there are things. How? Because there is something in the mind all the time that needs to be worked with, changed, to grow. Growing never stops. Being molded and fashioned never stops until we're there.

We might be at a point where He says, "Now I know you," but you're not there until you're there, and you're still going to be worked with even after that point because you're not complete yet. God knows when it's complete, and for a lot of people it's when life stops. Then you know. Well, you don't know anything, let's back up there. You don't know anything, but you will later. But that's how it works.

Not of works unless anyone should boast. Pride is such a sick, hideous thing, and is a constant battle of the human mind. **For we are His workmanship created in Christ Joshua unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.** Awesome to understand we're always in the presence of God.