

As I had mentioned last Sabbath I had intended this particular sermon here to – actually the one before this, to be the last sermon, and went ahead and decided to do this one as well to add on to it, but I had intended to finish last week. But we're going to continue in this current series one more time here, *On Guard and Ready, Part 5*.

It has hopefully become clearer to us as we've gone through this series that the story of Gideon is our story on a spiritual plane. The analogies of those things, God has brought this up over and over again here so it's something that we should be very familiar with. It's something that should be, in that respect, dear to us as well, that we're able to see those things on a spiritual plane of how God is working at this particular time. He's going to make it clear to the world that what He does is not by any large organization, but by His power, and in a very powerfully way at that.

So, God is the one who organizes, leads, guides, and directs the Church and we learn from that process over time, how He works with us. We can learn much by just looking at the Church.

I thought I'd mention here as well that in the particular moment here concerning how God is working with us on a spiritual plane that things are obviously speeding up in the world. The reason for this particular series was being given anyway because of the seventh chapter in the book about the Thunders. I knew before it ever started that things would be picking up because that's how God works, so as you'd go through something like this these things are hitting very strong in the world.

It helps to sober us up. It helps us to relate to this even more so about being on guard and ready, something that Gideon's army had to be. And we are small in like manner, in similar size, in that respect, and there are things that we are to learn from that and keep close to us.

But I thought I'd mention that last Sabbath when we were down in Florida, today in Georgia, I didn't mention that. So, when we were down there we had to make a quick get away because we were travelling on down in order to catch the flights and everything to get over to see Jeremy and Patricia, but to see Jeremy concerning the book. We had to catch certain flights, so we weren't able to stay around and visit very much with everyone.

Today we get to do that. We get to stay around and visit for a long time. And I miss that, that opportunity, but we'll try to get back down before too long to Florida. And here again, as well. We're trying to get places in more this round and the following year because the Church needs it, we need it, everyone needs it, we need each other. These opportunities are

awesome to be able to bring everyone together. We put a little more into it, all of us, when we have a large group like this, able to spend more time together, and that's a very rewarding experience.

But I thought I'd just tell you a little bit about the new book. Anyone here in this area that would like to see the cover of it, we have completed that even more so as of last week. So, anyway, it has to do with the fall of the United States (which is the title), and the picture on it is to me awesome, the message that's on it is awesome.

It might sound like it's an easy process getting everything ready on a book, but it's not. Just like the back cover, what do you put on there to give the thrust of what the entire message is about? It has to be short. So, that takes a lot of work. Jeremy put a lot into that and went through things throughout the book, and this time here (normally I've done that), but this time here I was having a stumbling block with part of it just because it covers so much. But he did it in an awesome way.

We talked about some of those things, tweaked it a little bit, and finally got it condensed enough that it now fits on that particular cover. Again, might seem like a small thing but it's not because you want a message even as condensed as that because people don't tend to read very much. They want to see what it's about, so they go there first a lot of times to see if they want to proceed and dig into it, look into it.

The same thing with the website, what it's going to say there, name of the websites and so forth, what we're going to use, how we're going to promote it. So, we discussed some of those things. I just thought I'd share that with you. I think we're going to try to do interviews again, get a publicist, if they'll have me. The first one we had for the first book didn't want me for the second one. So... I don't know why. Then we went to the east coast, had another publicist and they lined up different interviews and so forth that we did with *2008—God's Final Witness*, and haven't done any since that time. But we're looking at doing them again.

But things have changed a lot. It's amazing how much the world has changed, how people use the various kinds of things that are available to them today. A lot of things, as Jeremy brought up, are done by podcast now. So, we're going to try to approach it in that direction in the sense of interviews. They generally last longer; you're interviewed longer, and whether they be good or bad, some in the past have been good in the sense of how they treated me, treated us, treated what was written there. Others weren't of the same mind to treat us well.

So, everyone has their little agenda sometimes as to how they want things to be perceived or received because it's their podcasts. And so again, I think that's an awesome direction to try to go. Maybe some radio as well, but TV, who knows what'll happen. But anyway, we're going to try to do what we can do. But it gives us some ideas.

It's things to pray about so that when we hit this we're able to hit it hard and quickly and to do it well, to honor God, to do things to the degree He wants us to do them because this is going to be a strong message that goes out. It's going to be a strong thing that's not going to be really liked in some areas very well. So anyway, things for us to pray about, to be on guard and ready.

Also, hopefully, there is one area of scripture that jumps out at us with greater meaning than ever before because of what we've been going through in this series. These verses have been stressed strongly in two previous sermons and they're going to be repeated again here in this sermon, especially here in Philippians 2.

I want to go to Philippians 2. I already did this last Sabbath, it's been looked at before, and we're going to look at it again because this is what needs to be in our mind to grasp the message that's being given to us so that it just reverberates in our thinking.

Here it says, **Philippians 2:2—Fulfil my joy, that you be likeminded.** I love this because of what it means in the Greek. It literally means "of the same thinking." That's what it's about. It's about how we think. God wants us to think the same in the sense of His way of life, in the sense of being in unity and oneness with His mind, His being, His thinking.

I love that expression in itself anyway because "The Word that was made flesh," it's about the thinking of God, it's about the mind of God, the being of God; everything that He gives in His word is about Him. It reveals God. That's why the truths are so incredible because they reveal God. The Holy Days, they reveal God. That's how we come to know God. That's how we get to know God and draw closer to Him. Because that tells us what He's like, what He thinks, what He wants us to see and agree with in the sense of the only true way of life to be lived.

So, we make choices then as to whether or not or to the degree we do that. That's a battle and that's something we have to always be on guard against or, in the sense of our nature or the world that might interfere with that so that we are of the same thinking. It's beautiful.

**...having the same love.** The same love. That in itself has to be something of unity and oneness because that love comes from God. So our ability to truly draw closer together as a family and love one another the way God desires us to has to do with how we think about one another, how we think toward God and so forth.

**...in,** as it goes on to say here, "as of one accord," but it literally means, "in living together." **...the same love in living together.** Because that's what it's about. **...in one,** again, "mind," but the word is **thinking.** **...in one thinking.** It's the same thinking, but it's one thinking, and the source is God Almighty. That's beautiful, truly is.

**Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory.** So, we've talked about this, what that means. Strife, there should be no strife in God's Church. There should be no contentiousness

within God's Church. There should be no disagreement in God's Church about how God leads, guides, and directs us. But there always has been ever since the Church began, and in time people have gone by the wayside.

But we have to learn from that that you have to keep fighting. You have to keep fighting. If you want this way of life you have to fight for it. It's not just given to us on a silver platter. God offers it to us in that respect that way, but to receive it continually, to receive Him, His life in us, Christ's life in us, you have to fight for that because you're always having to fight against this nature that we have, seeking to change.

I love what it says in Romans 12 about "Let this mind be in you." It's about the thinking that was also in Joshua, Christ Joshua, Joshua the Christ. You can say it either way, but I prefer "Joshua the Christ" in the way it's stated, as I have stated in the past. But again, one mind, that mind that comes from God and that spirit that we have to have to be of oneness with each other.

But again, as it goes on to say **...but in lowliness of mind**. This is a hard thing because people just don't have that kind of a mind in the world. They're not humble. It's about a humble spirit. We tend to esteem our thinking. We think we're right. That's why we judge the way we do as human beings. Because that's why arguments happen, that's why disagreements happen. Because why? "I'm right!" So, we take that position.

You see it on TV all the time when people talk. They're right in what they're saying. They know they're right. They're very convicted of it. At least you would seem to think that anyway. Depends on what their motive is and what their desire is. But again, they still believe that they're right in what they're trying to accomplish and what they're trying to achieve.

It can't be that way in God's Church. We can't have contention. Can't have strife. Can't have disagreement. There has to be unity. It can't be about esteeming self, our own thinking.

**...but in lowliness of mind**. This says so much. Verses that sometimes we just read over in scripture. We don't think about what it's really telling us and saying, and we can miss so much. This is a sermon. This is really several sermons if we wanted to even go into this more, things that we need to grasp and comprehend about how we're able to have a relationship with God, how we're able to be transformed in our thinking so our thinking is one with God.

Different people, different minds, but of the same thinking as it pertains to God and God's way of life, to be in unity with Him, His laws, His ways.

Then **verse 5**, beautiful, **Let this mind (this thinking) be in you, which was also in Joshua the Christ**. He was the Word made flesh. It's about the mind of God, the thinking of God and how we judge. Not the way we think, not the way we think right and wrong, not the way in

how we judge others by our own prejudice or whatever it might be, or our own pride and we think we have the answers.

That's why we've had problems this past year. Because people had to address various things. God brought it to the surface to help us to see ourselves more clearly, that He desires this oneness and unity within the Church, but we have to know how He's working with us. We don't have the right to determine we're going to do something different than what God directs us to do within the Church, especially from an apostle! That's just the way it's always been.

I say that boldly because I know it's true. I'm convicted of it with all my being. It's not about me, it's about God! It's about what role He's given to different ones at different times. I saw this abused so mightily in the Church during Philadelphia with Herbert Armstrong who was God's apostle, and if people just had that one fact in their mind, that conviction of how God was working with the Church, we wouldn't have had nearly problems we had, the divisiveness we had. We had tons of division in the Church. It was horrible, it really was, when you really see it for what it was.

Anyway, I thought I'd read another section here because even though I'm repeating it, and I don't generally like to repeat scriptures, but there's a need to in this case. There are things we just need to have a strong hold upon in our lives, and these scriptures.

Another area of scripture is just a few verses down, **verse 12**. Again, last Sabbath, **Wherefore, my dearly beloved, as you have always obeyed...** Now, that puts us to the test as well. Now, he's telling them, he's assuring them of something, a confidence he's had toward them as a group of individuals in the Church at this point in time. But again, that hasn't always been that way and it isn't always that way, and then we have to ask the question, "Have I always obeyed?"

Well, we have to realize that no, we haven't always obeyed because we all have sin, but we strive to have unity and oneness, if we have been striving and continue to strive, because that's our mind, because we want to be of the same mind with God, in agreement with God, the same thinking, in other words.

"As you have always obeyed." So, this causes us to look at self if we really grasp it, what it's saying. We need to look at ourselves. Is this true? And where it isn't, if there is something that needs to be addressed, we need to address it. Because we don't have the right to disagree with God nor with God's Church. That's just the way it is. That's why we're so small.

I think of the Apostasy after it happened. I remember travelling, being invited to Minneapolis, my wife and I, to talk to a group of people. People were scrounging for something because we had been so broken up as a Church after the Apostasy and people wanted to hold on to

something. “What’s God doing?” “Where is God?” “And how can we hold on to...?” That was the question, “How do we hold on to...?” To what? To different ideas that different ones have or to what God had given us to that point in time through His apostle Herbert Armstrong?

Because nothing was given through the next one that came along who became a man of sin, the son of perdition. No truths came through him, period, exclamation mark. So again, what are we going to hold on to?

And then also, it was Phoenix. Two church areas that we got invited to, to speak to a group of people. So, they invited us in, but they invited a lot of different groups together who had friendships, obviously, as the Church was large in those areas. They invited different ones and different ones came.

But from every group there was different thinking, different things that they wanted to mesh together with the others. It’s like, “If you listen to me I’ll listen to you.” But they really had their minds already made up. If it had to do with Pentecost... Passover was the big one, 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> Passover.

I knew exactly what was going to happen. Started preaching about Passover. Started preaching about, made comments about Herbert Armstrong, things we had learned, things we had been given. That’s what we’re to hold on to, hold fast to what God had given us to that point in time, the truth. Passover was a very powerful one at that moment in time because this is something that was divisive within the different scattered groups. Pentecost was another one that was very divisive within the scattered groups.

So when you become strong, and you preach strong what is true and what is right concerning those things, there are people who don’t like it. I basically told them, saw it in their attitudes and faces in different ones in the audience, “You’re not going to like this. Some of you already don’t because you don’t agree with what’s being said. You’re never going to be able to have unity by trying to build bridges.

So, I can’t remember which booklet that was in, but maybe the first one when I’m talking about the small booklets we have, *Time is Running Out* and *Time Has Run Out* and talking about that bridge that was an example of making, of comparison.<sup>1</sup> “The Bridge over the River Kwai.” But anyway, it’s like here different groups are trying to build a bridge.

Well, how do you build a bridge if some think one way about Pentecost, some think about Passover. That means somebody is going to compromise in the building of the bridge. The largest organization that emerged out of that tried to build bridges within the ministry knowing full well that nearly half the ministry believed in a 14/15 Passover. How do you teach

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<sup>1</sup> Time is Running Out, Pages 17-23, referencing a movie entitled “The Bridge On the River Kwai.”

the truth with that if you're of the conviction and you know, and you know that you know it's always been the fourteenth? Passover is in the fourteenth day, never in the fifteenth, no portion of it. I mean, that's a simple thing.

"Between the two evenings." Another simple thing to grasp and comprehend. Sunset to sunset, one full day. What day? On the fourteenth of Abib, Nisan, whatever.

Anyway, one mind; it's a beautiful thing. But it has to be in agreement with God and God's truth, God's word, His way of life, and what He's shown us. Because the only thing we ever have known as God's people is what He gave us when He called us. Everyone who was called into Worldwide everything they had that was true came through one man. That's the way it was.

Everyone who's come into PKG has been given through one person. Because that's the way God works. We either become convicted of those things or we don't. So, if something like Covid comes along and it test attitudes, "You're not going to be at the Feast of Tabernacles unless you do this in order to be of one mind and unity and oneness." Now, that was bigger in many regards than make-up, you know, because of it's very nature.

I'm so thankful for different ones who have come up and said, "I had a battle with that." And nobody has to tell me that, but I appreciate the desire inside to say, "I acknowledge that, and I've seen something that I hadn't seen before." That's what it's about. That's why God lets us go through trials and test, to bring the dross, that which is impure, to the surface. Because then and only then can we really address it. Because you didn't know it before that. You couldn't see it before that. But when God brings it to the surface through a test or a trial, hopefully, we'll acknowledge it, because that's the only way you can begin to accept it.

What's come to the surface? "I don't agree." Well, why don't you agree? Hmm. Somebody is wrong. Either God's apostle, and then this isn't God's Church, and so "Where is God?" "But I'm right." Awesome. It's not rocket science. Being of the same mind, of the same spirit with God from Him. It has to come from Him.

Those who came in the Church, as I was saying, incredible if we could just remember those things, how we learned what we did. That's why I mentioned last Sabbath I get livid inside, I truly do, inside my being I get hot, livid when I think of ministers who told me, and different ones out there who were saying this, "Herbert Armstrong, he was a good teacher."

I'm doing it right now! I feel a burn inside, I really do. I get riled up inside because I think, "You fool! You fool! Everything you ever learned that was true came through him! Who do you think you are?! 'Good teacher?' Yeah, he was an apostle! Don't you get it?!"

Doesn't that stir you up? Do you see how foolish that kind of thing was for ministers who had gone through all that they had, still not to know the most basic of things, how they were

called? That's about our calling. How are we called? Did we figure it out on our own? We figured out Passover, Pentecost, the Holy Days, the plan of God, the 7,100 years? Did any of us? Did anybody in the past ever figure that out on their own? No.

Some learned it. They knew it because of God's inspiration of His holy spirit, and then they taught others because that's how God works. But that's how we come into the truth. Anything that disagrees with that it's easy to measure.

Sometimes it's good to go all the way around full circle and come back and think about some of those basic things. Our calling. How is it we are here? How is it we are still together? Because we believe those things. We believe how God called us and has worked with us and especially even since the Apostasy, for what small group is still remaining. Awesome!

**Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not in my presence only...** Now, I understand more deeply now what he was saying than ever before because of some of the things we're going to take a look at in a moment. But he's revealing something here about a struggle that he's going through about the Church and how he's worked with the Church, and that deep desire that we should all have for each other, candidly, but how he had this desire for those that God gave him in raising up the Church in different areas for the gentiles and so forth.

He says, "not in my presence only." So, it's a way of life we're to live no matter who's around. Like after the Apostasy, what do we continue with? We should have continued with what we'd been given that was true that we knew that we were convicted of when we were called.

**...but now much more in my absence.** That's important because when he was absent then there was more upon them to make sure that they held fast, that they were on guard and ready always spiritually. Because it wasn't going to be easier for them, it was going to be more difficult for them.

**...but now much more in my absence...** Where was he? Well...? **...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.** Because if we're not able to be ready, on guard, watchful, spiritually alert on a continuing basis in our lives, just letting down a little, we can go by the wayside so easily. It's a struggle. It's a battle. It's a fight. That's just a reality of life. We're in a kind of warfare, obviously, but it's the most important of our lives because we've been called to it. It wasn't meant to be easy. It was meant to be hard. That's how this can change, because of the hardness, the pressure, the stress, the fire, the trials that get deep inside, and then we have to make choices along the way.

It's really a beautiful process because there is no other way to be transformed. And yet God uses that as a process with His holy spirit to change our thinking, the way we think, to bring



us more and more in unity and oneness with Him - if we make those choices as we go through those things.

So, fear and trembling because the vast majority have left. The vast majority in the past 2,000 years have left. That's a sobering thing to consider. It should be a thing to fear, how easy it is. How easy it is to become Laodicean! Tens and tens of thousands became Laodicean in God's Church, lukewarm, to the point God chose not to dwell in them anymore.

So, all of us who are a part of that, God chose not to dwell in us anymore. He wanted us to grasp that message. We were vomited from His presence because it's a loathsome thing; it can't be a part of the Church if we're not on fire. "I wish that some were hot or cold." So, there is no middle ground because it compromises, it lets down, it becomes weak.

So if we just give up, leave or quit or go do something else, that's obvious. If it's a matter of being hot and staying on fire and staying close to God that's obvious too. It's the middle part that's disappointing and hurtful and painful, because what can you do to stir that up? Well, what stirred it up in the Church was an apostasy. Just take everything away, take it all away, separate everyone from the Body of Christ, from His spirit for a time. Short time perhaps or a longer time, whatever that might be, and then begin to awaken some out at different times. Incredible how God works.

**For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.** So, God's called us according to His will, that we come into agreement with His will and of His good pleasure. It isn't a matter of our good pleasure. Most have left the Church because of their good pleasure, because they wanted something different than what was pleasing to God.

Anyway, if we can just hold on to those things. That's why these things are so important to grasp, to comprehend what we're being told.

So one other section of verses that are powerfully tied into this is what we focused upon last week in the beginning of the sermon. It concerns what Christ said on that last night of His life on earth as a physical human being. It's just like what we read here, "Let this mind be in you which was in Joshua the Christ." To me, this is beautiful, awesome that we read on Passover night. To understand what it's really saying is a powerful thing.

**John 17:22—So the glory which You gave me,** as he was talking to his Father, "The glory which You gave me." What glory was that? Wow. It's of God. The glory is a matter of that which is God's. The word, the glory of that because it's God, it's the mind of God, it's the being of God; the thinking of God became flesh. The holy spirit that he had, that power to be able to see those things on a spiritual plane, that glory because it's God and God dwelling in him as he said over and over again from chapter 14 on.

**So the glory which You gave me, I have given them so that they may be one, see, one mind, one thinking, unity together because there is no other way to have this, to be at one. ... even as we are one; I in them, and You in me, that they may be made perfect in one.** We have to have that. We have to fight for that. We have to strive for that. We have to work for that. We have to cry out for that, that God help us in that to become more at one with Him, in unity with Him.

**...so that the world may know that You have sent me, and have loved them, as You have loved me.** Sometimes it's hard for us to grasp we have a glory in our lives, and we don't esteem it for what it is. And that's God! How many people on earth today have that in their life? That glory? Do we grasp it? It's hard for us to grasp it for the power, the beauty, the magnificence, the greatness that it is, a glory that others in the world they don't have. They've never had; they've never been offered that. But we have it living in us.

Our minds are able to perceive, to know and see the truth. Not because we figured it out or that we could study it and work it out or come to understand it that way, God just puts it in our mind and we hear it through our ears and we read it in words that have been written that He gave to us so that we have that. We can read books; we can read whatever it might be, or we could hear the sermons and we see something.

And the only way you see it is because of that life that's in you, that glory that's from God. Otherwise, you wouldn't be able to have this. You couldn't continue in this. You wouldn't be able to be in agreement with it, to be at one with it. Then God molds and fashions us and in that process He works with us to get rid of the dross. And we all have it. We all have things in us that have to be gotten rid of.

As long as we're in this physical life there are things in us that aren't right. Because by nature the easiest part for us is to be selfish. That's the way we are. That's our first thinking in the mind, as a whole. As we grow we're able to work on fighting those things, and some things are just with us forever because of what we are, and if we recognize that then we know what we have to do. When it pops its ugly head up, we repent, we ask God for forgiveness. We keep trying to fight against that and be observant to it so that we don't give into the selfishness and on and on it goes. But we have to acknowledge those things in us.

Let's go on over to 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy. So, we've had many lessons we've been focusing on throughout this series that's related to the similarity of things that have to do with what happened with Gideon on a physical plane. We have this, and it parallels the lessons and so forth. I think of, again, one of the greatest lessons of the 300 who stayed alert as they were drinking water. What an example!

What do we drink that's spiritual in analogy to that? The water of life. That's what Christ was telling them. You know, the woman who wanted to go down to the well and "I'm going to give

you living water.” We have that to drink, but sometimes if we’re negligent we’re not drinking in of it like we should because we’re not being alert.

Now, that’s a spiritual thing. Because they did it on a physical plane because they recognize there could be danger. Well, they knew they were out there, but you never know when some are going to come in at you at some point in an attack, a sneak attack, and so they were by nature, in that regard, because of what they believed, on guard, so they drink a certain way. Not with their heads down in the water, but as they were able to see around them, so they weren’t caught off guard if something happened.

That’s what we have to be like on a spiritual plane with the living waters of life, God’s spirit, to understand that’s how we’re able to stay on guard and to fight these battles that we have. So again, over and over again different things to hold on to because of a story like this, a simple story of staying alert, of being alert, of being watchful, on guard spiritually, fully ready.

**2 Timothy 1:9**, breaking in here in part of what it’s saying, **who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling.** We’ve just been talking about that. It’s a holy calling because it comes from God. What we’re able to see is because of God’s spirit, that glory that He lets us experience. Even when we’re first called we’re experiencing a glory of God because He’s communicating to us here as to what we hear. Now, we have to make decisions along the way what we’re going to do - to begin tithing, to begin doing certain things. Not working on the Sabbath, not working on the Holy Days.

As we’re making those decisions and then we come to the one that we realize this is it and if I am going to change I need God’s spirit, I need to repent of my sins, I need to be baptized and dedicate my life because I give it to God to do with it whatever He desires. He’s called me, He’s given me this understanding.

So, those are the kinds of decisions that are made along the way. Even then in the beginning what a thing of glory, power, to just have the beginning of that calling that leads us to, if we make the choice, of baptism. Incredible.

“Who has saved us.” In other words, as far as when God starts calling us, that’s it. He’s going to give us everything we need. If He does that it’s because of His love, His desire, He wants to offer us His love, to love us, to be able to come into a relationship with Him, to give us the opportunity to pray to Him and always be heard by Him and to have this in our lives. What an awesome thing to be able to repent at any time all the time, of sin, to be able to have that kind of relationship with God as He helps to transform our thinking, our mind, to come into unity and oneness with Him.

“Who has saved us.” So, as far as God is concerned as soon as He started that it’s done. But it isn’t because it all depends on us, the choices we make along the way. But that’s why it says it this way, “who has saved us.” This is the way and if we hold on to it and fight for it it’s there, absolutely.

**...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works.** That’s why I mentioned what I did before. Those who called Herbert Armstrong a good teacher, to be honest with you, I’d like to slap them up the side of the head. Friends. I love them. Poom! “Did that help? Do you see the stupidity of what you just said? If you don’t see it there is no help for you, but I’d like to slap some sense into you because I love you. So what do you think? Did you learn this on your own or you know something better than what he gave to you, somehow God is working with you in some secret, special way that’s different from Herbert Armstrong and all of a sudden...? Boy, you are special then because you’re going to teach something different in God’s Church.”

That’s what happened, they started teaching things that were different. I think of one that I was riding to Cincinnati with from Toledo. Invited him up (regretted it afterwards), to talk, from Big Sandy. He starts talking about tithing. I kind of already knew a few things but I had to hear it from him. And so, you have to be a little cunning in some ways sometimes to pull things out of people because they talk around, and you have to be very careful. Some became very good at that, of kind of telling you what you want to hear but not telling you what they really think. So you have to get very specific.

Basically, it came out he believed in one tithe. One tithe. First tithe, one tithe. Well, it’s not really first tithe, it’s just one tithe because part of it you can give to God, to the Church, and the other part of that one tithe you can use for the Feast of Tabernacles or Holy Days and you can help other people in the world, whatever you want to do, and count that as a part of that one tithe. I thought, “Man, you’re gone. You have so lost it. How did you lose that?”

You have to fight for it. You can’t let down. It can happen to anyone. It’s happened to all kinds of people in the past 2,000 years.

It’s “not according to our works.” It’s not how smart we are. It’s not how intellectual we are. It’s not how great we are with our Strong’s Concordance. It’s not if we know Hebrew or not. Because one man knew Hebrew really well so some thought that surely he understood what the scriptures were saying about Passover. I turned a family to him one time when they were having trouble with 14/15 Passover. The wife wasn’t but the husband was, and he believed in a 14/15 Passover, and I knew this one man because he was an instructor at college, you know, and he knew Hebrew. People looked up to him because surely he knows.

And so, did that and he started preaching this 14/15<sup>th</sup> Passover to them. You think, man, I hurt them rather than helped them, and I didn’t know that, because he was so intellectual in

Hebrew and so people were “Ooo” and “Ahh.” He didn’t know... You know what I’m going to say. He didn’t know. Really didn’t. Sad.

...not according to our works. It’s what God gives. We have to work, but it’s not because of how intellectual, how good, how much we work at something. Incredible.

...but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in (through) Joshua the Christ before the world began. To me, things like this are so awesome to understand, because even within the Church so many have never understood this, that it wasn’t that he existed eternally but a matter that God had a plan and a purpose before He created anything else that His Son would be the pinnacle, the cornerstone of what He was creating. Because what He created was all about His Family, the Family of God.

We don’t know how long that’s been in the planning, how long He’s been working that out. Billions of years? We don’t know. Multiple billions in earth’s time? Because that’s the only way we know what a year, a period of time is, or concept of time is for us. But if it were by that time, how long has it been? Think, well, maybe it was only a few thousand years before... No, it was a long, long, long time.

God is incredibly patient for His Family. Just to understand that should help us to understand His love that He has for each and every one of us. Just to understand that. Because this is exciting to Him, to see His children. Sometimes we just don’t grasp what that means to Him, that we are the children of God, and because we are He has incredible love for us.

But we carry a lot of baggage with us. Every one of us in this room, everyone listening out there as a whole who’s live in this world has a lot of baggage. I have a lot of baggage. You probably have a lot of baggage. Some maybe less baggage than others. Some who maybe don’t think they have as much maybe really have a lot more. But anyway.

But the point being is we have screwed up lives, dysfunctional lives and God has called a lot of people out of very dysfunctional lives in many cases. In some cases not as dysfunctional, not so dysfunctional, but still, because of human life it’s dysfunctional. We carry things with us all of our life. But slowly but surely God teaches us what family is, what family is to become, because the world doesn’t understand that.

People think they have close family lives and so forth, and the reality is it doesn’t come close to God and His Family and His love. It doesn’t come close. Slowly but surely our minds begin to be healed. I love those scriptures in the Old Testament that talk about in Isaiah and different places because it’s about the healing of the human mind. Being transformed is getting rid of the false concepts out there.

That’s why I’ve told people before and I’ll tell you again, it’s the truth. It wasn’t until I was ordained that I was able to tell God “I love you.” I wouldn’t before that because it had to be

exceedingly true, though I believe everything I was given there was still that portion in me because of my past that was difficult.

And so we go through different things. But when I could say it, I could say it, and ever since, obviously. But we have to go through various things sometimes because what comes out of us needs to be, should be in spirit and in truth. And so, if I said it before when there were battles I was having because of comparisons in the world (which are wrong), it takes us times sometimes to be healed, doesn't it? It really does.

I've known of so many people in God's Church, I could go through different kinds of example of horrible things they've come out of in their lives in families and they've had such a struggle because it's hard for them to grasp the kind of love that God has and what He offers us and to be healed of those things of the past.

Because there are certain things that are kind of inherent within us as human beings. Mother, father, sister, brother, family, and certain desires that people have toward parents as a whole. Then God comes along and reveals to us He is a parent, He is our Father. But to put that in a perspective that's far beyond human life and human families is the thing we have to grow in.

I hope that makes good sense to you. It's a beautiful thing, the love God has for us. And so, just to grasp these things here that we just talked about, if we can grasp God's patience and God's plan that should help us to understand even more so how special we are.

This world waits, the end-time waits on us. It's true. 144,000. God's made that abundantly clear. Then when that's finished then it's ready and His Son begins His return. Incredible to understand that. He allows certain things to begin happening fast around the earth. Because now, candidly, if that was what was allowed, every one of the 144,000 who are alive right now could die. It's okay because it's all sealed.

Now, it's not going to happen that way because there are some who are going to be alive, because it talks about that, who are changed in the moment, in the twinkling of an eye. But the reality is that's what it's about. It's about becoming sealed, and once it's all sealed that's the first phase of His Family. And we long for that. But that's how important God's Church is, God's people are. Awesome!

**...which was given to us in (through) Joshua the Christ before the world began.** It was all a plan, God's plan. That's what it's about.

**...but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Joshua the Christ.** That's why I think about how profound it was how God worked with the first wave loaf in the first 4,000 years, and Christ hadn't come yet. The Messiah hadn't come yet, hadn't been made manifest, but has for the past 2,000 years for the Church, the next wave loaf. Awesome!

**...who has abolished death, and has brought life.** Now, this has to do with life is to be lived, how it's to be lived. Because human beings by nature live it selfishly and God comes along and reveals to us through His Son and especially within the Church even more so than that life that is to be lived, how it's to be lived. Which is a matter of God's mind and relationships and what family is to be, what family must be to come into one with Him to be in that Family, Elohim.

**...and has brought life and immortality to light through the good news.** When God calls someone He opens the mind to see those things, and just like this thing of immortality, we all probably have thought about it, what it's going to be like to live forever. I can't grasp that. I'm excited about it. I know it'll be exciting. But I can't grasp that. You don't sleep anymore at night. You're awake all the time. No need for rest, no need for the body to be rejuvenated, able to do things all the time! What is it we're going to do? Well, God will show us.

That's why you know, you learn in time that it's not going to be up there fishing, "I love to fish!" By the way, we went fishing and I caught nothing. So that's definitely not something I want to do forever out there, just trolling forever.

And so, we know that God's going to give us whatever it is. Because, candidly, within the Church our lives aren't boring. If we see it it's exciting. Everything that God has brought, ever since I've been in the Church since 1969 it has been an incredible journey. What makes it the most exciting and the best is God, His truth, His way of life, the things He leads us through as we go through the various things we experience in life in a relationship that we're able to grow in. They can't be taken away from us. It's something between us and God; each one of us have had that, and we hold on to that. Then what we receive then is going to be so much beyond that. But I can't grasp that yet. A little bit of it.

That's why I love the way Paul talks when it says, basically, "Like looking through a glass darkly," because it's all smudged up and you're looking through there and it's like cars when you tint them and you're trying to look into it. It's not looking out; it's looking into it. It's hard. It's "Who is that in there?" We can see a little bit, but you can't tell. But we believe it.

**...but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Joshua the Christ, who has abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.**

**Therefore I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the gentiles.** That's who he was. God called him for a specific purpose. Not to the Jews. Not as Peter and the other eleven. But this was unique. Wrote more books, was inspired to write more books. God reveals so much to him to give. Awesome! "Appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher."

**Verse 12—Which is the reason why I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed for I know of whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep**

**that which I have committed unto him unto that day.** So, he knew that God was first, that his savior was Joshua, that Joshua was working with him because he is the head of the Church leading and guiding and directing him in what was to be accomplished, and he knew that all with whom he was able to work was because God had called them, and they were Christ's and what that meant in the plan and the scheme of things and how his ministry worked.

And so, he's talking about some of these things, and just going back to this one, "Nevertheless, I am not ashamed..." It's because of what he was going through right there. We all have to go through different things where we're tried and tested as to what are we willing to go through? Are we more concerned with how we look? Because I've known a lot of people who have quit because of this, or given up because of this, or have become ashamed because of how we're looked upon, of how we're seen. There are certain things that will try us in that, and to keep pushing forward requires being on guard and ready, being alert, spiritually able to deal with things, able to handle and address anything that comes along regardless of what it is. This becomes more meaningful in time here.

So it says, **Hold fast.** It's like standing as one; hold fast. To stand as one we have to **hold fast that form of sound words.** What is that? That's what God gives to us, His word. That's what's sound. The world isn't sound. The world is just chaotic and crazy. It's getting crazier. But what comes from God, that's our peace, that's where we rest. Awesome!

**Hold fast that form of sound words which you heard from me, in faith and love.** So, it requires both to work together. Faith is a matter of the truth that God has given you to believe, the things that God has given you to believe, and your choice to live by them, your choice to fight to live by them. Because that's what faith is. Faith is a matter of making the choices to live by what God has given you the ability to believe, the truth, to see. But we have to make the choices to live by those things, and so that's faith.

"And love." It has to be done with this understanding that God gives about His love and how we're to work together and how we're to think about one another. The more we're able to see one another in the light of God's Family the less problems there will ever be in the Body of Christ. We are one.

**...in faith and love which is in Joshua the Christ. That good thing which was committed unto you...** "That good thing." What was committed unto us? The thinking of God. Every truth. Everything we understand about His plan, His purpose through the Holy Days, His plan for mankind; everything was committed unto us. "That good thing." That which is good comes from God, even more so in this context.

"Which was committed unto you." So it's committed to us. That means what are we going to do with it? Are we going to keep it? Are we going to preserve it? Are we going to seek to watch



over it in our lives, that it be strong in our lives, that we make sure that we're in unity and harmony with it?

**...committed unto you, keep...** Greek word here literally means, the word "keep," "on guard; to watch," **by (through) the holy spirit which dwells in us.** Can't do it on our own. Got to stay close to God and cry out to God for His holy spirit to live in us day by day, to be able to hold on to what He's given to us. Awesome!

**1 Thessalonians 5:1** he says, **But of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.** So different things were taught. They understood various things that had been given to them. But no concept of anything like what we have today. Because we know this is the end-time. We know that we're getting exceedingly close now to that period.

Let's go on. **For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them.** It's amazing how human beings can be in thinking everything is okay around them in the world, and they can handle things. But right now it's not that way anymore. Things have already started to change in this area.

"When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them." So for the past seventy years that's basically how the world has lived, thinking that we can handle this, we can deal with this, technology is coming along, it's getting greater and greater and well, yeah, there's a war there and a war there and a skirmish here, but nothing of major magnitude in the sense of what WWII was like.

"Then sudden destruction comes upon them." So you say, "Well, what does that mean?" Well, our definition sometimes of "sudden" or "quick" or whatever is definitely not within God's plan, in the sense that for us sudden is like right now, you know, and everything has to be wrapped up right now. It doesn't work that way.

**...and sudden destruction comes upon them as travails upon a woman with child.** That one there ought to ring loud in our ears because chapter 7 was very much about that. It's about these Thunders that just get louder and louder, closer together, louder, different ones at different times, and this is the analogy of what we're living through right now. It's very powerful right now, very strong in the sense of if you've ever been around someone who's been at this point in life where labor pains start, there's a big difference from the beginning to the end, and it's not a pleasant experience. Not for the woman and most of the time not for the man either if he's close by.

**...as travails upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.** So, it's coming. The handwriting is on the wall. People are talking about it in ways and are a little stirred up, but they have no concept yet of what's really happening. They just don't have any concept.

They're really very much asleep. You watch things on the news, like this morning we were sitting out here watching and you see this - you can't hear it, but you see it on the screen and here the commentators are coming on and they have these different places showing on a map.

To me, it's like people who get together when they talk about a football game (which I don't listen to), but when they start talking about a football game or a baseball game and what they are doing or what they could have done, or even before the game starts it's like they're having all these things and they're talking about the coach and the different players and the different strengths.

It's just like that map there, where they're coming in at this point and what they're accomplishing and what they're going to do and they're going to come down. In this area of Chernobyl they're going to be able to go around it and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. You think, it's like watching, getting ready to watch a football game, and now the football game has kind of started and so now they're giving comments about that and what needs to be done and what the coach needs to be doing and what the referee did wrong and on and on you go.

It's like, you've got to be kidding me! This is the world and it's going down the tubes and you don't even grasp we're right at the edge of world war three! That's where it is. But they don't see it.

"And they shall not escape." It's where we are in time. We're not going to escape either. We're not going to go off to a place of up there in the area of Jordan in a kind of a high hill country type of thing and rock area that's drier than dry. Drier than drier. And you have this short little area. I don't know if you've ever seen some of the walls of Petra and how you get back in there. You can't ride a vehicle back there. Maybe a dune buggy or one of those little things smaller than that. You can take a motorcycle.

But to have large groups going back and forth and so forth, and 144,000 people are going to get in there and live in there? And they found out later on no, there's not enough room and not enough places even if you spread out, and then what do you do with all the waste?

I got to tell you this one though. Used to work in a petro-chemical industry with control devices and so forth, with engineering companies and how you control refineries and so forth. Anyway, I had a good friend that also worked in that industry, and he was older and one that I looked up to, who was very grounded. Anyway, he did a lot of different things that were used in the Church.

Anyway, he had these plans he wanted me to see then so we sat down and talked about them. Back in that time it was kind of exciting because he worked with various things of waste

management as well in some of these plants, because it takes a lot to control all that and so forth. And so, he had devised for that area and that size of people a waste management system. Now, I'm not sure where we're getting all the water. We hadn't crossed that bridge yet. There better be somebody or someone that's going to be used to hit a rock or do something because it's not there to deal with all that.

But anyway, it might seem kind of goofy to think about but that's what we believed in the Church at one time. We're going to be taken to a place. We don't know how we're going to get there, but God's going to take us there. For 3½ years we're not going to have to worry because we're going to be there.

And then we learned later on, no, Petra is about God. That's our strength, that's our fortress, that's our protection. He'll take care of us wherever we are around the world. We're definitely not 144,000 anymore so we probably all could get back in there if we have enough water. But we don't even have water then. But anyway, that's not what God's doing.

So, we go through a lot of things to get where we are now. What an incredible process. So what's coming upon the world we're not going to escape. We're going to experience it with the world. God is our Petra. Christ is there. He is our Rock that God has given to us. Incredible. That's a matter of faith and trust and confidence.

God loves us and you don't have to worry, though there is going to be worry. You don't have to fear, though there's going to be fear. But hopefully we catch those things early on and let God know as you have to let God know in the big battles you go through anyway, "This is Yours. It's far beyond me. I can't do a thing about it. Whether I live or whether I die, obviously, it's in Your hands," and you have confidence in that.

**For when they shall say, Peace and safety; sudden destruction comes upon them, as travails upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you.** We're living right here right now. Incredible! The world is in darkness. They don't see what's coming.

They're starting to talk about it a little bit, of what could happen, of what could ignite a third world war, that if you have this no-fly zone over Ukraine what would that end up being? Third world war. You try to enforce that, you start taking some things down because it's not Ukraine doing it, what do you think that means? You're engaged in a war. And where is that going to go? Especially with someone now that shows the kind of thinking they are, and he'll use everything if he has to. That's what's going to happen toward the end.

And you think, why would the world keep fighting and keep going on to where they'd come to a point of annihilation, except that they think that they could live through it and somehow survive it, and have all out nuclear war at the very end to where God has got to intervene

because a third of mankind has already been destroyed? You think, such insanity! So, we're in God's hands.

**Brethren, you are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. You are all the children of light, and the children of the day.** What does that mean, "children of the light," "children of the day?" It's kind of a two-pronged thing. The light, that which we're able to see and have comes from God to us into our lives. How we live it is a matter of whether we're in the day or the night. It's our choice then to live by that life and that light that God lets us see. Those are the choices we make.

So, we're "children of the light" because God's called us into a relationship as His children, and we're to be of the day in how we live, in that which is reflected in our lives and our relationships with others in the world around us or between one another have to be of a certain standard, a certain way.

**We are not of the night.** We're not like the world is, of the night, **nor of the darkness.** So what is that about? Well, it's about Satan and it's about those who live in the night then. That's their choice. But that's all the world knows. They're living in the night, and they don't see what's coming because of that being. He's done an incredible job on human beings, technology that we have. There you go, and so people are blind by it.

You know, I've seen so many things about World War II and it's just like you just have to shake your head. It's like it's happening all over again the way nations are acting toward each other. So how does Europe feel now?

All this is about Europe in many ways, what's happening over there right now, because it's putting them into a certain frame of mind. You watch what's happening to Germany and their minds because they're the ones that are going to be at the head of this when it's all said and done. It's their mind that is being molded and fashioned right now. They know they can't depend on this country. They know if it comes down to it they're by themselves, or as a group of people, as a nation. They're being pressured into something very fast.

There are some articles I want to read today, news articles again one last time that are very revealing and very telling because it's about that process and how their thinking is changing quickly. Because if you remember in the news articles, at first they sent a few hundred and a few vehicles, and basically, enough to cover those vehicles, a hundred vehicles or whatever it was. It's like, "You've got to be kidding me. And you think that's helping?" Now they're starting to change in their thinking. But there is a fine line there and they know it. But it's changing their thinking, nevertheless.

That's what this is about, getting them ready to do what they're going to do in the Fifth Trumpet. Awesome to understand that. So, everything you see it's all for a purpose of where it's going.

**Therefore let us not sleep as others.** They're asleep and they can't help it. They just can't help it. They can talk about it as much as they want to and have all these fancy diagrams and talk to different retired generals and different people, and different politicians and what they think. This isn't a football game. If God didn't intervene it'd be the end of life. That's how, that's where it is.

**Therefore, let us not sleep as others but let us watch and be sober.** So as these things are happening this is the effect it should have on us because we're not of the night. We've been prepared for this. What an awesome name to live by - PKG. God has blessed us with that because this is a state we're to be in, it's a state we will be in as we go through this.

**But let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep in the night; and those who are drunk are drunken in the night.** They're intoxicated with this world and the way of this world, and they can't see then. We are blessed with a spirit of God to grasp, to comprehend His plan and where we are in it. What an awesome thing to have that kind of peace.

The world is getting ready to have no peace at all. And the fear, the horror? But we'll be able to understand it though we're going to suffer in many ways with the world. You know when the trucks stop running, when the electricity quits, when various things happen your life is going to change dramatically. It's just it is. You're going to suffer because of it. We all are.

We're used to being able to go down to the grocery store and get what we want when we want it, as a whole. When that ends what do you do, how do you survive? Well, you look to God. You do what you can do (and you have prepared for that as much as you can to a point), because that's all you can do. God will take care of you. He will.

**But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith.** Our strength, our armor. What an awesome thing to understand. What we have been given to believe, the truths that God has given to us, that's your breastplate. It protects everything in us, what you hold dear, of God's way of life. Powerful.

**...and of love.** How we think about each other, to get rid of all the prejudices and so forth, to see each other as family. I mean to really see each other as family, God's Family, and love that and be thankful for that. What an awesome thing.

**...and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.** Whether we live or whether we die we're in God's hands and salvation is His to give.

So, before we go on into the book of Ephesians I thought it'd be good to first consider some things written about the apostle, Paul, some of his writings, as a matter of fact, and then some of the things that others have written about him that history has recorded to that point of their knowledge and so forth.

I think it's good to think about some of the life of Paul as an apostle as we think about different scriptures and things he said because it draws us into the time, and if we're drawn into that time how much more the things he said that are about this time now even more so, truly. Then it helps us to have a greater impact in our life and our thinking about what he wrote.

So anyway, I'm just going to go through a little bit. This is a very condensed thing here. While staying in Ephesus Paul wrote to the Church of Corinth. It was around 53 to 54 AD. Then around 57 AD he wrote the book of Romans while he was at Corinth. So, from Ephesus there he wrote to them, as it says here, it was around 53 to 54. Then in 57 actually went, in his travels went on down to Corinth and wrote the book of Romans.

It was also in this period of time that it's believed that he planned on traveling through Spain. So, it was in this period of time after this at some point, and this is where some things are a little more difficult as far as history is concerned and what Paul wrote, to know whether he did or didn't, but it seems that he might have even been able to go in different areas of Spain. But again, we don't know.

There are different stories of things of even Peter going up into Great Britain. There are stories that are a matter of history in that region of the world and very possibly. They had the Romans up there, they had that great Roman wall north of where the college was, actually, just right there, a hop, skip, and a jump to one of the huge walls that they had built.

Anyway, it wasn't until around 60 to 61 AD that Ephesians was written, and it's commonly believed that at the same period of time he wrote or authored, if you will, because he had different ones who wrote for him. They would write, he would dictate various things and they would write some of the things he had given. There is even some confusion amongst so called scholars because the writing was a little different.

Well, if you're telling a story to someone, just like in anything else, they're writing not necessarily like word for word, but what they're able to do as fast as they can or whatever, and even at different times still writing about some of the things he said to them but more from their authorship in a sense of writing, of how they wrote. This is a common thing in scripture, even especially in the Old Testament too.

Anyway, so at this time here, besides Ephesians then, wrote Colossians, then Philemon, and then Philippians, as it even talks about how he sent those first three letters by the hand of

“Ti-ku-kus,” but it’s Tychicus who also accompanied, was accompanied by Onesimus. So, if you remember some of those scriptures that have their names, they’re the ones who went and visited Paul in Rome and they were given this and then they brought these back at different times as well on some of these.

It is believed that during the writing of these four letters that Paul was in Rome during the first Roman imprisonment, and that’s why a lot of scholars refer to this as “the prison epistles” because they knew where it was written from. It was in that two-year period. So, Paul’s first imprisonment lasted right at two years, and this is where we read of Paul being in his own rented home, as it were. Some words are rather difficult to know whether it’s saying specifically that he was in chains or that at times in chains, but he was definitely bound there regardless, couldn’t go anywhere and there were soldiers there who were watching him as well. “Under Roman guard,” as it talks about.

That was a continual thing that happened during that two-year period, but at least he had the benefit of being able to be there, have the different ones that came in, and then he dictated various things to them and they took the letters back to those regions.

So anyway, the reality is that not much is known about his second imprisonment, but he was imprisoned again in Rome, and it was at the end of that, around 67 AD that he was actually executed. So, that’s what history has recorded about him, and it seems to be very close as far as timing of things and things that agree with scripture.

So this is when, in that second imprisonment, when he authored the letters to Timothy. It is this is likely why he stated what he did in 2 Timothy. I’m going to read the verse to you here. It’s **2 Timothy 4:6-8**. And when you read things like this understanding where he was, what he was going through it’s easier to understand some of these things. It says, **The time for my departure is near. I have fought a good fight.** You know, that’s the kind of mind we all have to have regardless of where we are in life. But we realize, especially as we get older (that’s a different thing), but he knew because of other things that were happening there and he knew what was coming.

**I have finished the race.** Confidence. He’s going to die, and he knows it. **I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.** Awesome to send that out to people. They read it; they knew what happened to him in those different churches and so forth because they had the different ones who travelled back and forth where Paul was. And so this is a part of that story.

**Now there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.** What an incredible confidence to have to know that your mind is set, that nothing is going to change you from doing what you’re doing. That’s the kind of mind that we need to hold on to. Because if you know the truth and you know that you’re not going to let it slip, you’re going to fight whatever you

have to fight to hang on to this - and we have to fight against self day in and day out - and you are so determined to do it that you know you're going to do it no matter what happens.

I mean anything, anything that comes your way you're going to stand fast in God's way of life because this is it. What else is there? When you've been given this what else is there? Maybe the hundred years? Who wants that when you have this? I've said it many a time for me that's a nightmare. To have to live in this body twice, no thank you. I'm holding on to this the once. Especially the older I get the more I'm determined and convicted I am of that. This is it.

God is first. God's way of life, the truth He's given to us, this is our fight regardless of what comes our way. That's why you know that your life is in God's hands. You don't have to worry. What an awesome thing. You look at the kind of confidence and the boldness that Paul had, all I can say is beautiful. "I have fought a good fight."

Now, I've fought a long fight since 1969. Different ones in here have fought for different periods of time. It's an awesome thing to realize what God allows us to go through to be molded and fashioned, to be changed, not knowing exactly what's in front of us but knowing it's exciting.

**I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, will reward me on that day.** What awesome confidence! I mean, this is awesome. What other words can you use to describe this?

**...and not only to me, but also to all who love his appearing.** What's that about? Well, we love that. We love the fact that he's about to return. We grasp that we live in that age. And once we go into horrific times we have that hope and we know what's on the other side of it. We know that God's about to change the world with great power. The world has never experienced that kind of power that Joshua the Christ and the 144,000 bring with them as they put down man's government once and for all. Thank God! Truly, thank God for where we are, for what's coming, for what we have.

Ephesians 6, one last set of scriptures here before we go into some news items. **Ephesians 6:10—Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.** Over and over again you look at where he was and what he was saying and his desire for the Church, and really a desire that we should all have toward one another, to see each other fight and succeed and get through this. Because we're a family, called to be a family.

**Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the strategies, the wiles of Satan, the devil.** He's powerful and we're the ones he wants to fail. Above everyone else! Especially now. One thing about him, he may continue to fight against God, but he also knows, for a long, long time, thousands and thousands and millions of years, when God says



something He does it and it comes to pass. He knows what God has said about him and where he's headed, and his time is short and he's going to be separated from mankind for nearly 1,100 years, and then let loose for a little season and then it's over with for him.

Think he wouldn't work hard, harder as much as he could, perhaps more than any other time in history to give himself some time?

**For we do not wrestle (fight) against flesh and blood.** It's not a physical war but it's war. It is a battle and should not be minimized in our thinking, in our minds whatsoever, but to realize it's that serious and more, more serious than a physical war.

**...but with principalities, with the authorities, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, with a spiritual wickedness of heaven.** In other words, they had their part at one time but they're a spirit world now that's perverted and distorted. But at one time they had so much.

**Therefore, take unto you the whole armor of God so that you may be able to withstand.** The word means "to be set against," **to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.** Well, we're there more than ever before because there is an evil coming upon this world that he is going to be given power and able to have because of mankind and the technology given to mankind, an ability to destroy. That's what he likes. He likes destroying human beings. He wants to destroy life, and so to have that, for him it's his last kind of big hurrah. What a sick, distorted, perverted thing, but that's the way he is.

**Verse 18—praying always with all prayer and supplication.** Always means always. We don't quit. You don't let up. You keep fighting yourself, to look to God day-by-day-by-day. **With all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.** Meaning we care for one another mightily so. We know of certain things in various areas, about something that someone may be going through. We pray about that. We don't send it out to everybody in a big email and tell the whole Church to pray about it. We don't do that kind of thing as a whole. But everyone who knows someone else, it's their responsibility then to be praying to God for them because we're family.

**...and for me, that utterance may be given me, so that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.** If we do have some of these things that come up with interviews and so forth, I need those prayers as well. I want those prayers. I desire those prayers. And you know what? God hears those things, and He will give more because of that, because we're a Body, because we're a family.

**...for which I am an ambassador in chains, so that while in them I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.** We don't know what's coming, what's going to happen. But we need each other.

**Verse 21—But that you also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you.** Because he was sent back to them with the letter, to give them those things that were needed, that Paul was able to give them while he was in prison there in Rome.

**Of whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that you might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. Peace be to the brethren.**

You know, they lived through some really hard times, but God's people have for 2,000 years as a whole. Probably the greatest era or timing of peace per se that God granted for an incredible purpose toward the end, was Philadelphia. An era of brotherly love. As individuals grew they grew in God's love as well. But there was that closeness in that sense, as a whole, that reflected that name in the Church.

The other eras, they didn't have that. They went through some really, really hard things. When you start talking about physical life and persecution we've had it relatively easy, in that respect, even in PKG. Relatively easy.

So again, what an incredible thing to grasp and comprehend some of the things they went through because that should give us courage and strength and boldness as well in realizing we have it so much easier, we should fight harder. We should put everything into it, we truly should, with what God has given to us and the ease with which we have it, truly.

Now, we're getting ready to go in some difficult things, but we'll be made stronger because of it. We'll learn things that we were never able to learn up till this point in time. You will! You'll become stronger. Those who become a part of the 144,000, God's preparing that, but for those who live on into a new age, the pillars, the strength of God's Church beginning for the world. Awesome the opportunities you have that you can't comprehend right now, truly.

**Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith.** They go together. Over and over again he says this, "love with faith." ...**from God the Father**; it's where it comes from. He gives us that that we can have, we can have in our lives and experience. It's a beautiful thing. ...**and the Lord Joshua the Christ.**

So, going to quickly go through - well, I don't know how quick it's going to be, but this is the end of the series so I'm going to read some more news. I go through these things and think about them and think "How incredible that we're at this point, whereas a year ago, two years ago, it would take a long time to come to certain articles that would be as powerful as these in the sense of where we are and where the world is.

So, one of them says: **“Russia says Finland, Sweden could face consequences if countries move to join NATO.”**<sup>2</sup> Well, that’s what he didn’t want for Ukraine, so he’s really been rattling some sabres toward them as well. How far will he go with some of these things? What he says is what’s changing the mentality of Europe in ways that it never has, pushing it faster and farther than it ever has, because that’s what this is all about. It’s about the Europeans and preparing them to do what they’re going to do later on.

Another one: **“NATO Response Force activated for first time.”**<sup>3</sup> Well, what does that mean? In the scheme of things, not a whole lot. It’s a bit of a show, supposedly of unity and so forth. They know there is no unity in that.

**“In ‘Unacceptable Escalation’, Putin Orders ‘Nuclear Deterrence’ Forces On Alert.”**<sup>4</sup> You talk about, you know, this thing of rattling sabres, waving them? He’s doing it very powerfully so in ways that haven’t been done for a long, long time because he has it, he has some big sabres.

It says, “Putin is now essentially threatening the use of nuclear weapons in response to the announcement that the Russian central bank will be targeted with economic restrictions.” Well, they have their plans, but again, remember that this is about something else. It’s about Europe. It’s about their mentality and what they’re being pressed into doing. It’s already there in many of the minds but to push for it more, to be pressed into it. Iron and clay. Right now they want a little more of the iron.

Another one here: **“Germany to Boost Military Spending in Latest Historic Shift.”**<sup>5</sup> That’s a big shift compared to what just read last week.

**“Chernobyl Is Now A War Zone: What Could Go Wrong?”**<sup>6</sup> And there are some other nuclear power plants in the region as well, but Chernobyl is interesting in why this is an article that I’m reading right now.

“Russia’s 38 reactors supply 20.6 percent of the country’s electricity. Ukraine’s 15 power reactors across at four sites generate 51.2 percent of the country’s electricity. The risk of an inadvertent attack on reactors or nuclear waste stores is somewhat higher than a deliberate attack. Russia has just taken control of the Chernobyl nuclear site. The reactors were all closed long ago, but high-level nuclear waste remains on site.”

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/world/russia-finland-sweden-nato>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/25/politics/nato-ukraine-russia/index.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://ac.news/in-unacceptable-escalation-putin-orders-nuclear-deterrence-forces-on-alert/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://financialpost.com/pm/business-pmn/germany-to-boost-military-spending-in-latest-historic-shift>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/chernobyl-now-war-zone-what-could-go-wrong>

They've actually been storing as well, more in these sites. I mean, after all with the dome they've built, different things they've done to try to help that area, and what a good place to put more stuff. Store more, not just for that area, but hey, where do you put all this stuff? Up there it's, "Let's send it off to Chernobyl."

One individual here, "James Acton from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace notes that Ukraine has constructed a nuclear waste storage facility at Chernobyl for spent fuel from other nuclear plants, but the introduction of spent fuel has probably not yet occurred. Nevertheless, spent fuel from the Chernobyl reactors is still located there. It's conceivable that waste stored at Chernobyl could be hit if and when Ukraine attempts to take back control of the site. The next Chernobyl-scale nuclear disaster could happen in Chernobyl. The containment dome over the infamous Chernobyl #4 reactor protects a huge inventory of radioactive material. The next Chernobyl-scale nuclear disaster could involve the same reactor."

I don't think it's by chance that if you look up the definition of Chernobyl it's the word "wormwood." Look it up. It's the word "wormwood." And you read that in scripture then and it kind of sends some chills up and down your spine, the implications of what that could mean or what it means anyway for this time we live in because of the kind of weapons that are going to be used. But it may still have to do even with that and something that takes place there. We don't know, but it's something else to watch and it's sobering, isn't it?

It goes on to say: "**Russian Navy seize two boats as war goes to the seas – horror over 'counter-terror-op.'**"<sup>7</sup> Some of this is really sobering up people, but not enough. It's making, causing fear to escalate, not even there but even in this country, but it's not enough, not even close to what it should be.

**"EU Provides \$500 Million To Buy Arms For Ukraine; Turkey Readies Closure Of Straits To Russian Navy."**<sup>8</sup> That'll go over like a lead balloon.

**"Belarus' Lukashenko Says West Is Pushing Russia Into 'Third World War.'"**<sup>9</sup> Just the terminology they use.

**"Russian and Chinese EMP Weapons Threaten Critical US Infrastructure."**<sup>10</sup> So, a little late to start waking up to some of this, but you know, it doesn't take a genius if they know just a little bit about EMP's. You think Russia and China don't know these things? You think it's just

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.thewashingtontime.com/russian-navy-seize-two-boats-as-war-goes-to-the-seas-horror-over-counter-terror-op/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://ac.news/eu-provides-500-million-to-buy-arms-for-ukraine-turkey-readies-closure-of-straits-to-russian-navy/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/belarus-lukashenko-says-west-pushing-russia-third-world-war>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.visiontimes.com/2021/02/07/russia-china-emp-weapons.html>

going to be something they do that will be a matter of trying to hack into various things? It'll all be all put together when it comes time.

**“Russian TV Host Threatens Nuclear ‘Destruction’ Of America.”**<sup>11</sup>

**“Analysis: Putin forces Germany to step up to role as global power.”**<sup>12</sup> Interesting. That’s really kind of what’s taking place. That’s what they’re going to do. They’re being pushed into it. They’re being pressured. That’s true. That’s what this is all about. If you understand prophecy all you have to do is look at it and say, “That’s what it’s about. They’re the players.”

**“Lavrov: US Nuclear Weapons in Europe are Unacceptable for Russia, Time to Return Them Home.”**<sup>13</sup> Like that’s going to happen.

Yeah, all this stuff you think, but they’re talking about it now in ways that before they wouldn’t talk about it. Now it’s out there, it’s really out there.

**“French finance minister: EU will wage total economic and financial war against Russia.”**<sup>14</sup>

Anyway, we’ll see what that is. I mean, things that are said, people can say all they want, and they know they’re just words. But they know that if it keeps going like this they have to do something, and that’s what’s happening.

**“Zelensky Urges Biden To Impose No-Fly Zone Over Ukraine; Turkey Shuts Straits To All Warships.”**<sup>15</sup> Incredible. Just pushing things more and more.

**“‘Yes, He Would’: Fiona Hill on Putin and Nukes.”**<sup>16</sup> This is from Politico. Anyway, it doesn’t matter. Some of these, there are different kinds of news sources out there and everyone has to be able to know people’s biases and prejudices and so forth. And they exist. I don’t care where you go, they’re all out there, but if you know those things you know how to sift through and wade through some of these things. I don’t care whether it’s from Germany, whether it’s RT, whether it’s Chinese news, whether it’s France 24, whether it’s BBC, everyone has prejudice. But we should understand what they are.

So sometimes I hear of people taking a side with different ones or thinking that some in the Church are listening too much to certain ones, and no, I would say there are a lot of people in

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/russian-tv-host-threatens-nuclear-destruction-america>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/putin-forces-germany-step-up-role-global-power-2022-02-27/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://sputniknews.com/20220301/lavrov-us-nuclear-weapons-in-europe-are-unacceptable-for-russia-time-to-return-them-home-1093476238.html>

<sup>14</sup> <https://english.almayadeen.net/latestnews/2022/3/1/french-finance-minister:-eu-will-wage-total-economic-and-fin>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.infowars.com/posts/zelensky-urges-biden-to-impose-no-fly-zone-over-ukraine-turkey-shuts-straits-to-all-warships/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/02/28/world-war-iii-already-there-00012340>

the Church who are becoming more aware of what different ones are saying out there and there is a ring of truth in the sense of what's underlying everything, of what's taking place. It's a matter of being alert and on guard.

We can sift through those things. God has given us the ability to sift through some of those things, but you don't take sides and you definitely don't get into the thing that starts getting into conspiracy theories. There's a balance, and with God's spirit we should be able to achieve pretty strong sense of balance. Then it goes too far sometimes it comes up through here and out through here, and I'll let everybody know it's gone too far.

... "Hill spent many years studying history, and in our conversation, she repeatedly traced how long arcs and trends of European history are converging on Ukraine right now. We are already, she said, in the middle of a third World War, whether we've fully grasped it or not." Now that's, in a sense, yeah it's here at our doorstep. Has it really begun? Well, not as we understand the things having to do with the Trumpets, but yes, it's there. In other words, the ball is rolling already.

"'Sadly, we are treading back through old historical patterns that we said that we would never permit to happen again,' Hill told me." That's exact. That's why I hear some of these things and it's like it's in history, of what happened before WWII. It's just the same. Because why? Human nature is the same, countries are the same and how they respond, and it's always selfish.

"There's lots of danger ahead, she warned. Putin is increasingly operating emotionally and likely to use all the weapons at his disposal, including nuclear ones. It's important not to have any illusions —" And that's true, it's going to happen, just not maybe like the world thinks it might. But it's going to happen in time. "It's important not to have any illusions — but equally important not to lose hope." What an incredible thing. We have hope that's real. We know what's coming. They don't.

"'Every time you think, 'No, he wouldn't, would he?' Well, yes, he would,' Hill said. 'And he wants us to know that, of course. It's not that we should be intimidated and scared....'" Oh yeah, we should be. "... We have to prepare for those contingencies and figure out what is it that we're going to do to head them off.'" So much easier said than done. You can sit back and be a quarterback watching things on a TV after it's all been said and done, and what should have been done or even looking forward.

"'Breadbasket Of World' Choked Off By Russian Invasion As Wheat Prices Soar."<sup>17</sup> ... "Activity at Ukrainian ports has been halted since Russia invaded its neighbor last week, and grains trade from Russia is also effectively on pause. Sanctions have been ratcheted up to further isolate commodity-rich Russia from global finance by sanctioning its central bank and cutting off various leaders from the critical SWIFT financial messaging system.'" So, that's what this nation has set in motion and pretty much controls. It's the banking system, SWIFT, how money moves around the world. Awesome.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://davidicke.com/2022/03/02/breadbasket-of-world-choked-off-by-russian-invasion-as-wheat-prices-soar/>

“Restricting grain supplies from the Black Sea region threatens to further boost global food prices that are near a record high, at a time when supplies are already strained with adverse weather in many growing regions. – Bloomberg’ ‘If the conflict is prolonged — three months, four months from now — I feel the consequences could be really serious,’ Andree Defois, president of consultant Strategie Grains, told Bloomberg. ‘Wheat will need to be rationed.’”

The point is they grow huge amounts of supplies for the world in those two parts of the world. Huge! So what happens? People all over the world suffer, don’t have food, can’t get certain things that they want or need. And so, it’s just going to be a growing thing, another Thunder.

“**German warplanes patrolling skies over Poland, air force says.**”<sup>18</sup> Anyway, you read some of these things and it’s like, not much of a comfort, but anyway, I guess they feel like it is. But if something were to happen that brings NATO into it and...anyway.

“**Tens of Thousands of Australians Evacuated, Hundreds Missing as ‘Unprecedented’ Flooding Hits East Coast.**”<sup>19</sup>

“**Russia’s space agency chief warns hackers could start war.**”<sup>20</sup> Yeah.

“**Russia's Lavrov says a third World War would be nuclear and destructive -RIA.**”<sup>21</sup> Yeah, duh, you know.

“**Oil prices hit highest level since 2008...**” I marvel how often they keep using 2008 as this area here having to do with the balance. “**...As Ukraine War Drives Supply Fears.**”<sup>22</sup> This is MarketWatch.

Another article: “**‘A Kind Of January 2008 Feel’: Retail Traders Take Cover As Ultra Wealthy Investors Plow Into Stocks In Record Numbers.**”<sup>23</sup>

Another one here: “**Germany Sends 2,700 Anti-Aircraft Missiles To Ukraine Despite Moscow’s Warning.**”<sup>24</sup> So, this is a big change for them. This is not a small thing. The fact that he’s stepping up and reacting and responding in a way that others are wondering if Merkle would

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.tbsnews.net/world/german-warplanes-patrolling-skies-over-poland-air-force-says-378202>

<sup>19</sup> [https://www.theepochtimes.com/thousands-of-aussies-evacuated-hundreds-missing-as-unprecedented-flooding-hits-east-coast\\_4308279.html](https://www.theepochtimes.com/thousands-of-aussies-evacuated-hundreds-missing-as-unprecedented-flooding-hits-east-coast_4308279.html)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.awunews.com/blog/2022/russias-space-agency-chief-warns-hackers-could-start-war/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/russias-lavrov-says-third-world-war-would-be-nuclear-destructive-ria-2022-03-02/>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.marketwatch.com/story/oil-prices-continue-to-tear-higher-with-wti-crude-nearing-116-a-barrel-the-highest-since-mid-2008-11646295229?mod=newsviewer\\_click](https://www.marketwatch.com/story/oil-prices-continue-to-tear-higher-with-wti-crude-nearing-116-a-barrel-the-highest-since-mid-2008-11646295229?mod=newsviewer_click)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/kind-january-2008-feel-retail-traders-take-cover-ultra-wealthy-investors-plow-stocks-record>

<sup>24</sup> <https://tradeforprofit.net/2022/03/germany-sends-2700-anti-aircraft-missiles-to-ukraine-despite-moscows-warning/>

have even done that. So, this is changing their mentality and people are being molded into what they're going to be doing here.

Going on: "This poses a huge problem for those in the West not wishing for direct Russia-NATO confrontation. Moscow this week warned that if its forces come under fire by foreign-supplied weapons, then those external countries behind the shipments will 'bear the responsibility.'"

Another article: "**NATO's meeting on 'biggest day of diplomacy' to counter Russia aggression.**"<sup>25</sup>  
"European security has changed more in seven days than it has in 33 years..."

That says a lot. They're being pushed fast. That's what this is about. In some ways I find that encouraging because I know what's on the other side. We know what's on the other side of this, and so if now all of a sudden things are speeding up you know what I think? 144,000, we're almost there. We're almost there. To me, that's beautiful. Greater unity, greater oneness. We have a little bit more to go but God knows where we are, and He knows exactly what it takes to get us where we have to be. Beautiful.

So, this is encouraging, seeing something like this, because of what we see. We're getting closer. We're really, really close to the 144,000 being completed.

"European Security has changed more in seven days than it has in 33 years." Awesome!

Well stop with that. Be on guard. Be ready. Things are moving fast.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.msn.com/en-ae/news/world/natos-meeting-on-biggest-day-of-diplomacy-to-counter-russia-aggression/ar-AAUFkxR#:text=Nato%20leaders%20are%20to%20hold%20an%20extraordinary%20meeting,discuss%20its%20response%20to%20Russia%E2%80%99s%20invasion%20of%20Ukraine>.