

This is *Part 4* of the sermon series entitled *The Love of God*.

Last Sabbath we were in the middle of covering verses in Romans 8, and we're going to continue there in that chapter. This chapter is one that reveals much of the need and purpose of God giving us a Passover, and these things, obviously, go hand in hand with this subject matter because it's a process of whereby God has used that, told us in essence, this helps to reveal the kind of love He has for us. So, when we begin to grasp that more and more our relationship with God can become stronger and stronger.

So, as we go through these verses we should be ever more thankful for the process God has given us in order that we're able to become a part of His Family because that's what it's all about. But it starts in Joshua the Christ, in our Passover, and I love the way some of these things tie in together with that particular part of the year because we're getting very close to it.

Let's pick this up again in Romans 8 and go through some of this because we can go through sermons and we can go over scriptures that we're familiar with, and if we're not careful sometimes the tendency is because we're, in essence, rather familiar with them, we can kind of tune out or not tune in as much as we really need to in the sense of striving to grasp more of what God's giving to us. That's just a natural human proclivity. As long as many have been in the Church that can become even more natural. But it's something to fight against because we should really strive to understand what God is showing and why He's showing it.

So, we're going to pick this up in Romans 8:5. Very basic scriptures, but everything is in a nutshell here of things that Paul covered, but so incredibly important.

**Romans 8:5—For those who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.** That includes people who begin to let down in God's Church because that's who He's talking to. He's not talking to the world and these things are not written for the world, in that respect, because they don't grasp, they don't comprehend what they're reading anyway unless God begin to draw them and give them understanding of what He's saying. Otherwise, it just becomes a mixture of everything we see out here in society and traditional Christianity.

So again, that's what happens when people begin to turn away from things that God has given and begin to be more physically oriented, whatever it is in their own lives, turning inward. That's what it's saying here. **Those that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh. But those who are after the spirit the things of the spirit.** So, it's that mindset of being concerned about the changes, the transforming we're to be doing in our thinking in our minds, the repenting process, everything else that has to do with how we think.

Going on then, it says, **For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God.** What an incredible thing to understand, that the natural, our natural mind, fights against God, it resists God. It resists what is true. What has been difficult for God's Church to understand too often is that people have been engaged in that and haven't recognized it that they're actually resisting God, beginning to rely on self more, their own understanding, their own thinking, and in time go by the wayside. The majority of people have.

Every time I go through a subject like this I can't help but think of those things, especially even visiting in different areas like the area here that we've known for a long time, the area we're from in Cincinnati, areas up around Toledo and Detroit, visiting those areas and knowing so many people who have gone by the wayside.

Speaking of the human mind, the carnal mind, **It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.** So, people can try to live by God's law on a physical plane, like those of Judaism have tried to do. But that's all it is. It's by their own ability. It has nothing to do with God's spirit. It has nothing to do with the spiritual understanding of the purpose of the things that they're striving to keep physically.

**So then those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** So, we need to read this in the context of understanding, again, this is talking to the Church. It's a warning, in essence, to the Church never to let that happen, never to get to that point where we've turned inward and we're more concerned about physical things around us in the world, our own lives, than we are with what God has called us to.

**But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the spirit of God dwell in you.** A lot said there. "If," that big "if." If. So, how does someone know that? How concerned are they that that's true? Well, obviously, we should be exceedingly concerned and desire that ever so much because it's the only way to change, it's the only way to grow, it's the only way to continue to see God's way of life, His truth, and so forth. Not only does He give it to us, but He sustains it in our minds. By turning away, by going to other things, we can lose it, we begin to lose it.

**Now, if everyone does not have the spirit of Christ they are none of his.** So, it's always been that which has happened in God's Church since I've been here. Since 1969 people have gone by the wayside because this takes place. There are those who let down, begin to be physically oriented, relying on self, not trusting in God, and this begins to happen. They are none of God's after a time. He has a lot of patience, gives us a lot of time to change, but if we continue to resist and become set in that He has to deal with that whether through the Church or Himself.

**Now, if Christ is in you the Body is dead because of sin.** In this particular case, again, reminding everyone this word "because of" is correct here. They sometimes translate it as the word "by" but this time here they translate it correctly. You think, why do they do things like this, use something that leads away from what is good and right and gives understanding? Then

every once in a while they'll throw in what is actual, which gives a little bit better ability then, obviously, to understand.

**But the spirit is life because of righteousness**, in other words, the ability to live God's way of life, to be forgiven of sins, and so forth.

**Now, if the spirit of Him who raised up Joshua from the dead dwell in you, He who raised up Christ from the dead shall also make alive your mortal bodies.** It's showing here that our bodies are mortal. We're dying. From the moment we're born, the next thing is death as far as our life is concerned. Whatever point that is, we don't know. It can be at a young age. It can be middle-aged. It can be old age. Whatever it might be.

But the point here is about sin and where it leads and he's showing here that can change, something can change in that and make us alive. It's alive, we're alive with God's spirit living and dwelling within us to a life that will come to a point when it'll change into that which is forever in the sense of everlasting life.

**Because of**, again, that same word "by" they use here. It's "because of." That gives it more of a punch. Just reading through it and saying, okay, "make alive your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwells in you." No, because of. The reality is without it, you're not going to have it. So, it's because of His spirit, not anything that we do, in that respect. We require God's spirit to accomplish this, to have this in us.

**Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh.**

Then going on in **verse 13—For if you live after the flesh you will die.** It's a matter of judgment. It's a matter individuals who get cut off from God and this can take place. Something to fight against, obviously.

**But if you through the spirit do mortify**, in other words, **put to death the deeds of the body you will live.** That's a lifelong battle. That's something we have to constantly do, fight against self, fight against human nature, our carnal nature.

**For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God/the children of God.** That's what it's talking about. It's not a matter of male and female. But those terms are used in scripture, but it's a matter of being God's children.

**For you have not received the spirit of bondage again...** Again, that word, "to," here is **for the purpose of fear.** This becomes important later on in this series because we're going to look at aspects of fear and why the mind thinks the way it does and what this is talking about.

**But you have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father.** What an awesome thing that we can begin to feel that as we continue to grow spiritually. We begin to have this relationship with God and the term "Father" takes on a much deeper and more meaningful understanding than we've ever had because we see God in a very unique way. God lets us see Him more and more, come to understand Him more and more, and it's not like

physical life of fathers and mothers and so forth. He's so far above that and we learn that, and there is an endearment there then in us that can grow.

**The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (Verse 17)**  
**And if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together.** So again, always a reminder here that it's hard, it's not easy, it wasn't meant to be easy. It takes suffering in this human life to fight against self, to fight against the pulls of this world, to fight against things that come at us unjustly so. That's life.

**For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** That's something you have to grow in over time, to grow in greater conviction of, to understand that it doesn't matter what we go through, no matter how hard it gets none of that suffering can be compared with what is ahead for us. Awesome to understand that and be at peace with those things.

**For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.**

Jumping on down now going on, **verse 28.** That's why Paul builds this up to this point in time and he says, **Now we know that all things work together for good to those who love God.** Now, this word here is not "agape," it's "agapaó." It just means "in this manner." So, you have to know by context what is being said. It's showing by context this is the kind of love, after this manner, that we are to strive to live and ask God for that ability and help to do so.

This is one of those expressions: "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God." So, there's a process here. We have to go through that, and Paul is talking about that, and if we follow these things that are given to us and seek that relationship with God, "after this manner" then, it's a matter of loving God, our response to God because He loves us.

**...to them who are the called according to His purpose.** That's an awesome thing to think about, to understand each one of us that has been baptized received the impregnation of God's spirit. God has called us, He's drawn us, He's called us to work with us in this age. Not because of anything we did that was special or that makes us better than anyone else. Just His plan and purpose - mercy, grace.

**Verse 29—For whom He did foreknow He also,** it's not "**predestinate**" it's the word meaning "**determined beforehand**" or "determined before." So, we understand, we've been given a great deal of understanding of those kinds of things that God has a plan, He has a purpose, and it's all about Elohim and how we're able to be brought in as human beings to have a relationship with God and can be forgiven of sin so that God can transform our thinking in our mind and have this special relationship, fellowship with Him and His Son and with one another in the Church.

And so, having planned all that there are those He's also planned at different times to be drawn into His Church. It was determined that in Philadelphia there would be a large Church in

comparison to other periods of time if you go back to the very beginning, Ephesus, and so forth, going forward. The Church as a whole has always been small and scattered in the world wherever it's been throughout the areas of Asia and Europe and so forth.

Yet God planned it so perfectly, just to think about the different time periods, like when Herbert Armstrong was raised up to begin the Philadelphia era and all the things that were accomplished then. God purposed all that. That numbers, the growth, the three campuses; those didn't just happen. They weren't things that just came into his mind that he decided this is what he was going to do. He was moved and inspired to do those things for a purpose.

All of that process, of what was going to take place and what God was going to inspire during that time, the fact that toward the end of his life he would be given special favor by world leaders—incredible what took place—but none of them called into the Church. But they were called into a relationship on a plane that was unique because they thought of him in a very special way. Where did that come from?

I think of those Japanese (like senators), eight of them I believe that there were that became prime ministers, different ones in time who referred to him and they spoke fondly of him as being like his sons. What an incredible thing that leaders like that would have that kind of a relationship and that kind of a feeling toward him and yet not pursue what he believed. Where does that come from?

God gives favor. If there's a reason for something being done God will move individuals. It's all throughout the Old Testament, things that have happened at different times where different ones have been given special favor in a very unique way. We went through a series not too long ago about those who did that very thing when you talk about Persia and some of the things that happened during that time period. Incredible!

But God works with human beings to mold and fashion, but it's all about His Church and those that He calls out, the few, the few in the Old Testament that He called, and the few through the past two thousand years whom He's called to be worked with. He didn't know us, who we were. It wasn't a matter of "I know Herbert Armstrong..." you know, ten thousand years in advance, a hundred thousand years, a million years in advance. But there was someone that was going to be an apostle that would fulfill that. In time, He fills it in, His purpose, and His plan.

Just like any construction that has blueprints and when that time comes He begins to fill it in. We're blessed at this time to fill it in, to be the remnant in PKG. Awesome! Awesome that we're here. Awesome that we're so blessed to see the things we do, to know the things that we know.

All those that He called, talking here about this process, "for whom He did foreknow." In other words, He's going to accomplish certain things at certain times. The 144,000 had to be called at different times. That was all planned in how He was going to accomplish it and do it.

...He also predetermined beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son. So, that's the process we go through through the transforming of our minds, that we be conformed to that same kind of image that's a change for us in our carnal human minds that takes place to become more like Christ.

...that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He determined beforehand those He also called, even whom He called, those He also justified. We have to go through it or He can't, He won't, dwell in us.

...and whom He justified, and knowing that's through Christ our Passover and then other things that follow that, those He also glorified. Now, that word means "to esteem glorious." Sometimes we don't recognize what God has given to us. How deeply do we really understand that, to have a portion of the being of God Almighty in our mind?

The angelic realm never had that. The overwhelming vast majority of mankind has never had that. Only a few through time, almost 144,000. A few more now because we're past some of that, because of others who are going to be alive and live into a new age. So, we're past that. Not much, just a little past 144,000. That's awesome! To be a part of something like that?

And so, what God has given us to esteem our lives, sometimes we don't look at our lives like that. Because of that sometimes we don't grasp the kind of love that God has for us. He wants every one of us to succeed. He wants every one of us to yield to Him. He wants every one of us to change and become more like Christ, in that respect— Awesome! —in mind, in thinking, which means to be in greater unity and oneness and agreement with God Almighty.

We have that blessing because of God's love. The more we grasp that the more we'll actually love God in return, the more we'll respond to that kind of love that He showers down upon us in massive ways that sometimes we just don't grasp to the depth we should strive to.

**Verse 31—What shall we then say of these things? If God is for us...** He's for us! He's called us to succeed. He's called us to be in His Family at this time. Not in the Great White Throne. That in itself should put us in awe. We don't have to wait until that hundred-year period where almost all of humanity does.

**What shall we say of these things? If God be for us, who against us?** That's what it's saying. Who can be, if you will, against us? What can be against us? God is on our side. He's there to intervene. He's there to help us. All we have to do is respond and cry out and ask God when we are in need, to trust in God that He's going to do it. Simple. Not simple to do as human beings sometimes, but it really is simple.

**He who did not spare His own Son but delivered him up for us all.** God lets us go through trials. It has to be that way. His own Son had to go through what He did. Because God loves His plan and purpose and because it's the only way for us to be saved, for us to be able to go through this carnal life and then become a part of a spiritual family, spirit in composition, spirit in mind and being with God always dwelling within us. It's hard to grasp that because we're not

there yet, we haven't experienced that. We just experience a little bit of it in our lives in comparison.

So, He didn't spare His own Son. Sometimes we can go through hardships and trials and if we're not careful we think, "Woe is me!" Christ didn't do that, and we're not to do that either if we grasp what this means. It means that sometimes He has to let us go in those things, go through those things, obviously. Not only that, but use those things to help change the mind, to mold and fashion it. It's an awesome process.

**...but delivered him up for us all. How shall He not also with him freely give us all things?** I can't grasp that. You can't grasp that. What does it mean to be given all things in the Family of God, in Elohim? I don't understand that fully. You think about the universe and everything that's there, what are we going to do, what are we going to do with it? We don't know yet. God hasn't revealed.

**Who shall**, the word means, it's "accuse" here, "lay anything to someone's charge?" **Who shall accuse**, in essence, **against God's elect?** So, people can. The world does. But what does it mean? It doesn't mean a thing. Because if we're in God's hands, part of God's purpose, those things there actually work to our benefit because we're able to change through that process, we're able to become more deeply convicted because of experiencing things of God in our life by going through this.

**It is God who declares as righteous.** It's God who does that, not the world. **Who is it that gives judgment against** (is what the word means here)? Who is it that gives judgment against? So, why should we be concerned? The world can't help it. Sure, whether it be family, on the job, it's going to be against us. They can't help it. They can't grasp what we're going through. Then we receive the repercussions of that and it's not always fun. Sometimes it's very painful, especially when it's in family, in the mind.

But we come to grasp that family, what family really is, is in God's Family. You don't really have any family, in that respect, that's lasting and truly at peace and truly loving one another the way we learn we can have except in God's Family. It doesn't exist in human life. It's very shallow.

I'll just be candid with you. In human life, it's very shallow. It can be rewarding and good if people strive to live right and treat one another right, but in reality, it's very shallow compared to what God is offering us. It really is.

**It is Christ who died, yes rather**, or as the Greek means, **and moreover who has risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession or intercedes for us.** As our High Priest, things that we don't grasp and comprehend, but we believe it and we get to experience it in our lives, the results.

**Who shall separate us from the love of God?** Agape. It says "love of Christ" here, but that is the love of God. He has that mind. Same mind. Same thinking. Same unity and oneness of

spirit. We're being asked who can separate us from that. The reality is no one can except us. That's amazing. We're the only ones when it comes right down to it. If we truly trust in God and are looking to God to go through this process, loving God, then there is nothing that can keep you from it except one's own wrong choices. That's what it always comes down to within the Church.

**...tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword...** Doesn't matter what it is in the world that people have gone through in God's Church or even before in the first four thousand years.

**As it is written, For your sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.** It's how we need to see ourselves and what we go through. **...but rather in all these things we are more than conquerors.** Here we go again. It's that word that sometimes is translated "by." This says, "through." But again, it has more of a punch. It's **because of him**, speaking of Christ, **because of him who**, as it says here, **agapaó**, "in this manner," he's loved us in this manner because this is how God has loved us. This is how Christ has loved us. He gave his life for us. We're blessed to be a part of that process then.

**Indeed, I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities...** We're going to need this more and more as we go forward. Things are not good out there and they're getting worse and worse and worse. What's amazing to me is how it's like Thunders, it's like the woman in travail, the woman in labor, it's just getting more intense and more of these things coming together in the sense of happening at the same time, whereas in times past, a couple years ago, three years, and before that, it was a long time between some of these things that were taking place and they weren't happening very close at all. Now it's just a constant barrage, overwhelming almost.

**Indeed, I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come, nor height or depth, nor any other thing in creation,** which is what this is, nothing in creation, in other words, that's out there **shall be able to separate us from the love, agape of God.** God loves us. That's what it's saying.

Look at the depth of that kind of love that God has for us. We're in His hands. Where else would we want to be no matter how difficult a time is in front of you or what you're experiencing? We're going to experience some very difficult times in front of us. It's going to require a type of faith, a trust that we've never yet exercised in our lives.

**...which is in Joshua the Christ our Lord.**

I wasn't going to read any more news, but every week other things come along. Really, I got halfway through the week and I thought, things are happening out here and it's intense but I'm not going to go through this again this week, and then decided yes, we are. There is a purpose in this and a lot of this has to do with where we are and understanding that. Because that



should be sobering to us and motivating to us as well to want to draw closer to God, to be more alert, more on guard.

So, before I read this I want to give another warning again because sometimes I feel and, well, I know there are situations that happen sometimes. If we're not careful, if we're not alert, we may start looking at news in the wrong way. You have to be careful of some of the sources. Sometimes we can get to a point where we're sharing all kinds of stuff.

Be careful of that. To understand it's good to a point because everybody has their bias out there. I don't care where it is in the world, and I think we're learning that more and more that no matter who it is out here, I don't care what TV station it is, what blog it is, whatever is out here, whoever is putting news out there on the internet, everyone has a bias, a prejudice, and you have to be ever so careful not to take any sides, period.

That happens in politics sometimes in God's Church. People begin to feel that someone else is better than the other. Well, what does that mean? What is God's purpose? So, we don't get involved in that kind of thing. We watch and we see where it's going, what God is doing. We learn from that process. But we have to be careful ourselves because there is nothing right in this world. There is nothing worth saving as far as any economic system, any political system, any government system. It's all wrong! It's all corrupt from top to bottom and it always has been.

Even in the beginning of this country, it wasn't right. It was the best mankind could do. Judicial systems? It's pathetic when you see things that happen in this world and realize this really is the best that man has been able to achieve. But just to be real candid with you, it sucks. It's not just. It's not righteous. How can it be? Because truth can only come from God. Only God knows exactly what happens in all situations in life. Mankind can try their best and they can have twelve people try to decide whether something is right or wrong or if it's true or whatever.

It's sad. It really is. So, no matter what it is, whether it be any facet of government... Look at what we have today. When they talk about a swamp, it's worse than a swamp. They're so dug in it's not even funny. Nothing, nothing, no one out here has the ability to change it. It's entrenched. Just the way the world is.

God is starting to expose a lot of those things in the world in different countries and different areas of the world, showing what you're doing doesn't work. It doesn't work. I am so thankful to know that these things are being brought out in the light more and more because it's going to help some people who are ready, able to receive some of that, to realize we can't govern ourselves. That's the whole point of the end of six thousand years, mankind cannot govern himself. We're incapable of it. Only God can.

Anyway, I'm going to go through some articles, read them to you. But again, be cautious, be careful. Don't take sides. Try to understand the slant from different ones, where they're coming from.

I said from the beginning the reason we're going through a lot of these things is to realize this is what people are talking about now and they weren't a year ago or two years ago or three years ago. Not like this. Now it's coming out of people, and it shows there is a change taking place in the world in a very powerful way because these things are being spoken of and they know we're getting close, if you will, to a world war three.

A lot of people, they know that's where we're headed. A lot of people know we're headed for an economic collapse, but they're trying like mad to stop it. But when it's time God is going to allow it. It's just like all these things happening closer and closer together and after a while when it's time it just all happens all at once like a giant explosion.

Here is one entitled, "**Save The Dollar Or The Financial System - Not Both.**"<sup>1</sup> Breaking into part of the article it says, "Holter, who is also a precious metals broker from Miles Franklin, **says the bankruptcy of SVB**" (Silicon Valley area, that bank) "**is just the tip of the default iceberg.** *'The problem is a global bankruptcy.'*"

Now, sometimes people pick up certain things and people can see there is a lot more to this than just what's out there. It is just the tip of the iceberg. There are some people panicking right now.

*"In order to avoid the bankruptcy, you don't go from bank A to bank B or some sovereign treasury. You don't go to paper because paper can bankrupt. **It's going to dawn on people all of a sudden that gold and silver are the safe havens.**"* See where they go? No, not even that. That's what's in their minds. This is what they really believe. "This is the only thing that when it's all said and done and everything else blows up and you have a lot of gold and silver you're going to come through this okay." But they don't know where we are. You do. What an incredible thing that we have that piece of mind to know what's going to happen soon. These things are just happening at the same time. But they can't help it. This is how they think. They see the problem.

*"That's going to create a 'failure to deliver' event, and when you get failure to deliver, all confidence is gone."* I hope you're picking up on an understanding here that this system requires a confidence in it, a trust in it, and it's not well-founded. That's all it is.

Green money says, "In God We Trust." That's a joke. That's not true. They trust in the green money in the treasury, to print more or to come in and save your bank, or to come in and put money in there and even go beyond the \$250,000 guaranteed. And why was that done? Well, a lot of shenanigans going on there, but you know, hopefully, we can see through some of those things.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/save-dollar-or-financial-system-not-both>

"This," he says, "*is all about confidence.*" See, the problem is that if people lose confidence, they run scared. That's where we are. Some are starting to run a little scared right now. They think they can control it. Governments think they can control it.

*"Failure to deliver is coming soon because you are talking about big, big money, and there is not big, big supply..."* I love what he says next. **"There are cockroaches everywhere. The whole system is rotten to the core."** Someone to stand up and say something like that and to acknowledge that, to admit that? Because it is. That's the truth. Everything about it is rotten to the core. The entire banking system is absolutely rotten to the core and used for the wrong purposes in the world.

**"The whole system is over-levered. The whole system is fraudulent. The entire system is a Ponzi scheme..."** That's reality, but people trust in it, and as long as they trust in it they have to make it work.

When you listen to people on some of these different business channels and they're talking every once in a while things they say or the look even that they have, there is this kind of not real sure, but having to support it. They have to come up with things to say to encourage people, "Don't worry. Your banks aren't going to fail. Don't worry." We got a thing from accountants letting us know, "Don't worry, the banks aren't going to fail. They're going to work this out," and whatever. And you think, "Oh yeah? You don't know. You don't understand what's taking place." But that's what they think. Because it has to, for them, or it fails. They can't believe that. Confidence. Trust. Faith.

Another one. Just all kinds of crazy things. **"Giant blob of seaweed twice the width of US taking aim at Florida, scientists say."**<sup>2</sup> "A giant seaweed bloom – so large it can be seen from outer space – may be headed towards Florida's Gulf Coast. The sargassum bloom, at around 5,000 miles wide, is twice the width of the United States and is believed to be the largest in history." This goofy thing's crazy. Crazy things. Weather is crazy out here. Cyclones crazy.

Another one here: **"Customers at First Republic bank queue outside California branch."**<sup>3</sup> Now, you've heard some of these things.

Another one: **"After Silicon Valley Bank collapse US and UK work to prevent crisis."**<sup>4</sup> Well, why are they working? Because it has a leg over there as well. Part of it was over there, the system.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/us/giant-blob-seaweed-twice-width-us-taking-aim-florida-scientists-say>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/companies/customers-of-first-republic-bank-queue-outside-california-branch/vi-AA18vR17>

<sup>4</sup> <https://apnews.com/article/silicon-valley-bank-uk-bailout-hsbc-sale-4d2da0e9c6f39c0fd8faf321a2b295cf>

Another one here: **“HSBC,” banking system, “Buys failed US Bank SVB’s UK arm.”**<sup>5</sup> So, they bailed them out. The treasury here bailed out that. So, they’re working madly to shore up everything, to make everything survive.

Another one here: **“Canada Takes Temporary Control Over Canadian Branch of Silicon Valley Bank.”**<sup>6</sup>

So, these things have ripple effects around the world, and that’s a lot of the problem. This isn’t just happening here, it’s getting close to happening to a whole bunch of others.

Another one: **“Signature Bank becomes next casualty of banking turmoil after SVB.”**<sup>7</sup> This is from *Reuters*. “State regulators closed New York-based Signature Bank (SBNY.O) on Sunday, the third largest failure in U.S. banking history, two days after authorities shuttered Silicon Valley Bank (SIVB.O) in a collapse that stranded billions in deposits. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) took control of Signature, which had \$110.36 billion in assets and \$88.59 billion in deposits at the end of last year, according to New York state's Department of Financial Services.” And you think, where does all this go?

Another one here. This is a big one here. **“Credit Swiss,”** huge banking system out of Europe and Switzerland. It says, **“Credit Suisse shares fall to new record low after collapse of SVB and Signature Bank.”**<sup>8</sup> So anyway, it has a ripple effect. It’s going worldwide. That’s what’s taking place.

Another one here: **“North Korea fires 2 submarine missiles as U.S., South Korea start joint drills.”**<sup>9</sup> Now, you don’t hear much about some of these things because they have that capacity out of subs. They didn’t several years back when we talked about some of these things about North Korea. They have the ability to fire these things now out of their own submarines. And where can submarines go?

**“SVB collapse shares 'bloodcurdling' similarity to Lehman collapse: Expert.”**<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> [https://uk.news.yahoo.com/hsbc-buys-failed-us-bank-092344481.html?guccounter=1&guce\\_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce\\_referrer\\_sig=AQAAAHNmaAGJYwGOC6-xLCZHgfagiemsU0l6d1cR-Ufkr9p\\_657PkY\\_DzciAc8H1wRlm0jGOYY-HLLMyKRjqQWijnz2GflvfEjWnkJKpVBPq8JXpcb4Ew9mUm0bn1DdgygeN1rX\\_6Uoq6tI4ZybmJ\\_Zhy0wdGsT1h8PbFgX5QsJGy-eL](https://uk.news.yahoo.com/hsbc-buys-failed-us-bank-092344481.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAHNmaAGJYwGOC6-xLCZHgfagiemsU0l6d1cR-Ufkr9p_657PkY_DzciAc8H1wRlm0jGOYY-HLLMyKRjqQWijnz2GflvfEjWnkJKpVBPq8JXpcb4Ew9mUm0bn1DdgygeN1rX_6Uoq6tI4ZybmJ_Zhy0wdGsT1h8PbFgX5QsJGy-eL)

<sup>6</sup> <https://sputniknews.com/20230313/canada-takes-temporary-control-over-canadian-branch-of-silicon-valley-bank-1108322571.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/new-york-state-regulators-close-signature-bank-2023-03-12/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/credit-suisse-shares-fall-to-new-record-low-after-collapse-of-svb-and-signature-bank-3919ffc7#:~:text=Credit%20Suisse%20shares%20on%20Monday%20reached%20a%20new,after%20the%20collapse%20of%20banks%20in%20the%20U.S.>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2023/03/13/North-Korea-submarine-missile-launch-joint-drills/2711678691910/#:~:text=SEOUL%2C%20March%2013%20%28UPI%29%20--%20North%20Korea%20launched,their%20largest%20joint%20military%20drills%20in%20five%20years.](https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2023/03/13/North-Korea-submarine-missile-launch-joint-drills/2711678691910/#:~:text=SEOUL%2C%20March%2013%20%28UPI%29%20--%20North%20Korea%20launched,their%20largest%20joint%20military%20drills%20in%20five%20years.)

<sup>10</sup> <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/svb-collapse-shares-bloodcurdling-similarity-133855829.html>

**“SVB executive was Lehman Brothers CFO prior to 2008 collapse.”**<sup>11</sup> Sometimes you just have to shake your head at some of these things. It’s like...?

Here is one that says, **“Simon Black: The Unraveling Can Happen In An Instant.”**<sup>12</sup> “Now there’s one bank in particular I want to highlight that is incredibly exposed to major losses in its bond portfolio. In fact, last year this bank reported ‘unrealized losses’ of more than **\$330 billion...**” How do you have unrealized losses of \$330 billion? “...against just \$42 billion in capital... making this bank completely and totally insolvent. I’m talking, of course, about the Federal Reserve... THE most important central bank in the world. It’s hopelessly insolvent, and FAR more broke than Silicon Valley Bank.” Isn’t that amazing? Staggering, some of these things. Really are.

This is a great one: **“Moody’s cuts outlook on U.S. banking system to negative, citing ‘rapidly deteriorating operating environment.’”**<sup>13</sup>

Everyone has heard about the **“Russian jet collides with US drone in international airspace over Black Sea, official says.”**<sup>14</sup> Just little things like that, because we have to realize it can only take one little thing when it’s time. That’s all it takes, one little thing to start a war. Insane.

Another one here: **“Kremlin Blames US For Crashed Drone: ‘Flying With Transponders Off Towards Russian Border.’”**<sup>15</sup> Well, that’s pretty much an international thing and I can understand why they might say that if that’s true. It’s probably true.

I hope you know what transponders are. You know where air traffic is, you know where it is in the skies and you can avert problems and so forth because you know where they are because of international type of things you have them on, and that way air traffic runs more smoothly. They can control it in their own countries and everything else.

Another one here: **“Citadel’s Griffin Slams SVB Bailout: American Capitalism Is ‘Breaking Down Before Our Eyes.’”**<sup>16</sup> “As a reminder, the FDIC’s Deposit Insurance Fund normally guarantees up to \$250,000 in deposits, which protects small retail customers including mom-and-pop businesses. Banks pay for this guarantee with insurance premiums, but the insurance fund **isn’t intended to backstop deposits of bigger customers** with more capacity to weather losses if a bank goes under.” Yet that’s exactly what the government has done.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/business/svb-executive-was-lehman-brothers-cfo-prior-to-2008-collapse/articleshow/98588385.cms>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/simon-black-unraveling-can-happen-instant>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/03/14/moodys-cuts-outlook-on-us-banking-system-to-negative-citing-rapidly-deteriorating-operating-environment.html>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/us-video-shows-moment-russian-fighter-jet-collides-us-drone>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/us-reaper-drone-downed-over-black-sea-incident-russian-jet>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/citadels-griffin-slams-svb-bailout-american-capitalism-breaking-down-our-eyes>

**“Yet, as The Wall Street Journal's Editorial Board remarks, after venture capitalists (Democratic donors) and Silicon Valley politicians howled, the FDIC on Sunday announced it would cover uninsured deposits at SVB and Signature Bank under its ‘systemic risk’ exception.”**

I don't know if everyone understands what these things mean, but these are not small things that are taking place out there, and they're playing all kinds of games, juggling. It doesn't last long. So, another, a few more like this happen and there is not enough money in the world to take care of everything when it goes to pot, kaput, whatever, down the pot.

Another one here: **“Is It 2008 All Over Again?”**<sup>17</sup> **“...because the issues the financial system faces today are far greater and systemic than the ones it faced in 2008.** The 2008 crisis was triggered by a crisis in housing... which became a banking crisis courtesy of Wall Street's toxic derivatives trades ... This crisis (2023) is a crisis in Treasuries... which are the bedrock of our current financial system, the senior-most asset class in existence. And once again Wall Street has gone bananas with derivatives based on an asset class.”

“In 2008, the derivatives were ‘credit default swaps’ and the market for them was roughly \$50-\$60 trillion in size. Today, the derivatives are based on ‘interest rates/ bond yields’ and the market for them is \$500+ trillion.” I hope that's shocking. Maybe you can go back and listen to it, read it, try to find the articles, find out what they're talking about. But this is insane. It's absolute insanity, what's going on.

Another one here: **“Russia Should Unleash Nuclear Torpedo on the U.S., State TV Says.”**<sup>18</sup> This is from *Newsweek Magazine*. It says, “A discussion on Russian state television raised the prospect of Moscow deploying missiles to target countries that are supporting Ukraine. On the Russia 1 channel...” This is just to bring up, yes, this is coming out of Russia. Yes, they're talking about this. But more and more they're talking about it and it's in their minds. When you see that many people in a country that's been on some of the things they are supporting a leader in the manner that they are its really scary stuff.

“On the Russia 1 channel, retired Russian general Yevgeny Buzhinsky suggested that weapons such as the Poseidon and Burevestnik missiles should be used against the West even if the latter would not be ready for service until ‘the next year or two.’ ‘However, Poseidon has already been tested,’ he said, which prompted anchor Vladimir Solovyov to say that he would like to see it in action.”

“‘We would like to of course,’ Buzhinsky responded.” I mean, they're on TV talking about they would really like to see this thing used and so they're backing up Putin even more and it's like you've got the support from these people.

“Russian state agencies reported in January that the first set of Poseidon nuclear-capable super torpedoes was being developed for deployment on the Belgorod nuclear submarine. First announced by Vladimir

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2023-03-14/it-2008-all-over-again>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.newsweek.com/russia-ukraine-sarmat-missile-1787646>

Putin in 2018, United States and Russian officials have both described Poseidon as being capable of triggering radioactive ocean swells to render coastal cities uninhabitable.”

You know, you read some of the things in Revelation and you think of some of the things that are coming? Anyway.

“Solovyov said that he'd like to ‘see Sarmat in action too,’ referring to the hypersonic nuclear-capable missile code-named ‘Satan 2’ which Putin has also boasted about. ‘If they are impudent,’ he said, describing the actions of western countries, ‘we’ll see it in action.’ Buzhinsky warned viewers that further involvement of western countries in Ukraine could mean that it will ‘all end with Poseidon and a tsunami, a 300 or 500-meter wave.’” In other words, that’s the power that they believe that this could generate, a thousand feet, over a thousand feet high that could go into coastal cities. Crazy!

Another one here: **“Too Big To Fail” Credit Suisse Domino Effect Far More Potent Than SVB.**<sup>19</sup> This is something you’d want to watch this coming week on TV because this Credit Suisse thing is really getting much larger right now.

“Should the markets’ worst fears on Credit Suisse come true, the euro-area economy will fall off a cliff, upend the global financial system and bring policy tightening by major central banks to a screaming halt. Unlike Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank, the Swiss lender is classified as systemically important by the US Financial Stability Board” whatever that means, “— meaning it’s too big to fail as a collapse has the potential to trigger a financial crisis.”

“For policymakers in Europe and the US, though, what is at stake here is an entity that has a far greater domino effect in its ability to damage sentiment than Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank combined.” That’s much larger.

Another one here: **“Slovakia sends MIG-29 fighter jets to Ukraine – PM.”**<sup>20</sup> I’m not going to read the article, but it goes on to show that they’re joining Poland now in sending their jets down there. So, they’re already en route I think from Poland, from what I understand. So, if they’ve already started that and then they’re talking more and more here (I’m not going to read all these articles), but there are different ones talking about the Danes, they’re talking about a desire to send aircraft now, F-16 jets and so forth. Senators, congress starting to talk about some of this, or in the Senate.

Here is one I thought was interesting. I’m going to go ahead and read it: **“China Simulates Ballistic Missile Attack On US.”**<sup>21</sup> Now, what he’s going to talk about here is not the fact that this is coming from China but from North Korea. But it’s what they’ve come up with in their studies, and they’re putting it out there: “This is what North Korea can do.” You’ve got to think, why are they doing this? What is the thinking behind this?

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/too-big-fail-credit-suisse-domino-effect-far-more-potent-svb>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/slovak-government-send-mig-29-fighter-jets-ukraine-pm-2023-03-17/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://eurasiatimes.com/china-simulates-ballistic-missile-attack-on-us-predicts-hwasong/>

“Beijing-based defense scientists claim to have simulated a North Korean intercontinental ballistic missile attack on the continental United States. The team opined that if the American missile defense network failed to intercept it, the North Korean missile could strike the center US in 1,997 seconds, or almost 33 minutes, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.”

“Similar studies by Chinese researchers had typically avoided mentioning specific nations or regions, especially when the results were publicized.”

Someday, which they’re already starting to do. Russia’s done it. China’s doing it. China’s next door pushing at North Korea, playing with their minds as well, throwing stuff out there to cause them to become far more paranoid and now saying, “This is what they have the capability of doing” so that when something does happen, well, it can be blamed in time on them no matter what. It may very well come from them because they’re being pushed to do something, to start all this happening.

Another article, one last one: “UBS,” this is the largest banking system in Switzerland, one of the largest in the world, obviously, “**UBS examining takeover of Credit Suisse to stem banking turmoil.**”<sup>22</sup> They’ve been pushed by the government of Switzerland to do this right now. Amazing what’s going on.

“(Reuters) - UBS AG was examining on Saturday a takeover of embattled lender Credit Suisse that could see the Swiss government offer a guarantee against the risks involved, two people with knowledge of the matter said. The 167-year-old Credit Suisse is the biggest name ensnared in the market turmoil unleashed by the collapse of U.S. lenders Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank over the past week, and its slide has fanned fears of broader banking problems.”

So the point is, is that they are saying these are all tied in together and they can’t handle it either and that they’re going under to the point that the government understands someone has to come in and take over this and they’re trying to get UBS to do this.

“To get the crisis under control, UBS was coming under pressure from the Swiss authorities to carry out a takeover, Reuters' sources said. Under the plan, Credit Suisse's Swiss business could be spun off, they added.”

I hope you’re getting sick of this world and everything in it; look forward to the day that it begins to be cleaned up because we are in an absolute nightmarish mess. You want to look at anything in society, education, young people, everything that’s going out there whether it be on all the kinds of electronic gadgets that people have, the minds that are being destroyed because of it.

I really feel, especially for young people. Their minds are being programmed to think in a certain way through all this stuff and it’s nasty. It’s really bad. It’s getting worse and worse and worse. I’d rather see them saved now than this continue to grow in them to where their

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/finance/credit-suisse-meets-weigh-options-under-pressure-merge-with-ubs-2023-03-18/>



chances and their ability to one day perhaps in the Great White Throne or in the Millennium be able to begin making changes because huge changes need to be made.

As we began this series we went through much that was in the book of Zephaniah. I want to go back there to some of that today. Hopefully, we've had enough time in talking about some of these things that more of that is really settling in for us.

Again here, just as a reminder of a particular portion of what was said, because this is all going to tie in together as we continue through this series and get into some other scriptures in the latter part of the Bible, as we go into probably the next series here, the next...not the next series, but the next part of this sermon.

**Zephaniah 3:11—In that day you will not be ashamed for all you have done wherein you have transgressed against me.** All of this is talking about a particular time when God brings judgment on the earth and what's getting ready to take place, and refers to it as that day. There are things He's going to do that's going to be for a longer period of time, ever how long that is, thirty days, forty days, a year, we really don't know. But whatever it is God refers to.

That's why I love the one place here where it talks about this appointed time. Same thing that's used for Holy Days. It's the same word. It's an appointed time. It has been from the beginning of creation, before creation that there was a time that God was going to address all this in the world, to make a transition from six thousand years to a final one thousand, one hundred years, and the things He's going to do and bring to pass.

**For then I will take away out of the midst of you all that rejoice in their pride, and you will no more be haughty toward My holy mountain.** So, it's really talking to God's people in that respect, and to the world as well, because God's going to address the haughtiness of the world. That's first and foremost when you read through Isaiah and some of those places. But when you read through Isaiah more closely as we have recently most of that is really geared toward the thinking in the Church and what took place within the Church.

**I will also leave in the midst of you an afflicted,** in other words, **a humble and a poor people who will trust in the name of the Eternal.** That's what we have to be. We have to be at a point where we know what our nature is like. We want it to change, we're convicted of change, we're of a humble spirit. We're not raised up with pride or trying to raise ourselves up in importance with even sometimes one another in the Church.

I loathe those things. They're a disgusting thing that takes place sometimes in human nature. Sometimes people get caught up in this even within the Church, that someone is more important than someone else, or feels more important than someone else. And you think, that is so sick! So sick spiritually! Yet it's happened ever since I've been in the Church, and it's still out there in part.

All that has to be gone in our thinking, in our minds, to truly be of a humble spirit and to realize what we are. Of ourselves, we are absolutely nothing. It's God that raises us up. It's

God that glorifies us. When we're in God and He's in us there is nothing greater. But if we get in the way and we're lifted up with self-importance and we want others to look up to us or think we're important, it's a stench in my nostrils, it really is. I'll tell you, it's a lot more in God's.

**The remnant of Israel...** What a beautiful expression. **The remnant of Israel will do no iniquity nor speak lies.** Those who continue on, that's not going to be our lifestyle, to speak lies, to be false in how we live and how we think and how we act toward one another.

**...neither will a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth, for they shall feed and lie down.** It's talking about that which is spiritual. It's not something physical. God will continue to feed them and give them what they need, and they'll be at peace and rest.

That's what we're striving for right now. P-K-G, Preparing for the Kingdom of God. We're right there! We have to be a cleansed Body, a unified Body, and a Body that loves one another.

I heard this weekend of some who don't want to meet together. I'm not going to go more into it right now, but if it doesn't change and get taken care of you're going to hear more about it eventually, the aftermath of it. Because I think, what is more sick and hideous, that some in God's Church who have the ability to get together on the Sabbath day, who are close enough to do so, and they don't do it. They don't want to do it.

I'm having to hold myself back a lot right now because I've just heard about this. That is sick, sick, sick. We love each other, we're for one another, we want to see one another succeed. We look forward to fellowship with one another, but some don't want to be together? Where does that come from? It's not of God, I can tell you right now. It's of some misguided wrong thoughts in your mind.

**Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O daughter of Israel! The Eternal has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy.** We're blessed to live in that. That's what we're living. That's what God has done with us in our lives.

**The King of Israel, even the Eternal, is in the midst of you.** He loves every one of us that wants to hold on to what He has blessed us to receive in our calling, who desires to trust in Him, who want to love Him more.

**The King of Israel, even the Eternal, is in the midst of you. You will not see evil any more. In that day it will be said to Jerusalem, Do not fear.** It's that thing of being afraid. And what does this mean? What is it talking about, "Don't be afraid? Do not fear."

**And to Zion, Do not let your hands hang down.** So, you don't have strength and help, and hope. We should be strong; easy for our hands to be held up high toward God, truly.

**Verse 17—The Eternal your God in the midst of you is mighty. He will save. He will rejoice over you with joy. He will work in, as the word means, His love.** He's working in His love

toward us. He wants us to receive it. He wants to bring us through all this with great favor and great help. Very unique in this world, small as we are, we're His primary focus because we're His spiritual children. We're begotten of His holy spirit. We're begotten in life. The world isn't yet. They're going to come to that in their time, but we're here now.

**He will joy over you with singing.** I can't fully comprehend that but that's how pleased and joyous God is in those who respond and hold on. I love that when I see that, people who have held on, going through some of the most difficult times, gone through the Apostasy, whatever it might be, things we've gone through in our lives. Maybe since 2006, 2008, gone through 2012 and you held on. Because God had to give us something in our minds to be able to see what was true to go on past it, to see we had truth. We didn't understand that one. But all the rest that was there spoke more powerfully. Awesome! Because God has to do that.

To see that, it's a beautiful thing to see that in one another. Because we need each other. We are a family and we need to see that more and more, desiring opportunities to be together, desiring to have fellowship, maybe to pick up and ramp up some of the fellowship out there in some areas. Either you do or I will.

**I will gather My afflicted from the appointed time.** In other words, those who are of a humble spirit, those who have been going through things that the world makes it difficult for doing. That time is just about over. Everything is just about to be put on our side, not against us anymore. Awesome!

**Who are of you, who have been bearing the reproach. Behold, I will deal with all who have been afflicting you at that time.** God's going to set things right in the world. That's why I love what follows here, **and I will save those who are lame and gather those driven out, and I will set them up for praise,** to be praised. That's something we just haven't grasped and need to grasp more deeply.

This is where we are in time. This is what God is setting us up for, to be praised. Not just those who are to be a part of the 144,000 but those who are going to continue on. You have no concept, no idea of the magnitude of that once you've gone through it all and people receive the truth and all of a sudden they can understand it and they understand an Apostasy, they understand 2008, 2012 and what happened beyond, and you stuck to it and you fought.

Because they're going to see those things. It's going to be as clear to them as any other truth that God puts in your mind. When they find out that you were a part of that? Incredible! That's why I've tried to forewarn, don't take it to self, be of a humble spirit.

**...and famous,** as it says, **in every land where they have been put to shame.** Wherever that is, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, throughout Europe, wherever.

**At that time I will bring you, even in the day I gather you, for I will make you famous and a praise, or to be praised among all people on the earth whom I turn back, or when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, says the Eternal.**

I think it was worth going through that again because that really needs to be drilled into our thinking. We've already gone through it and gone through it again. These things really need to be in our minds because it helps us to understand more deeply if we can see it, the love of God for us, each one of us.

Let's turn over to 2 Thessalonians. I'm going on to something that ties in so closely with what Zephaniah focused upon, something that we're very familiar with, obviously, that took place in God's Church at the end-time. Everyone should know, I would think, 2 Thessalonians 2, what that's all about. It's about the end. It's about the Apostasy. It's about what follows.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3—Let no one deceive you by any means; for that day will not come...**

What day? Well, it's the same day Zephaniah is talking about; it's the time God's going to make the transition in this world. It's the time He sends His Son in a very powerful way to reveal that He is God Almighty.

What an incredible thing when that takes place. God hasn't done that on the earth. He's only worked with a few through time. You think of the Old Testament, only a few in different places. He's done some incredible things in some of the wars that were fought, and incredible victories. But how long did that last in people's minds? Not very long. But to do something all over the earth that everyone can see, that everyone will see, that everyone is going to experience?

This is more than huge. It's everything when God reveals Himself to all of mankind. It doesn't mean all are going to receive what He has to give to them, but they're going to know there is a power here and a might here and things here that defy anything in science, obviously.

**For that day will not come unless the falling away...** which is the word "apostasy." It's about apostasy. **...come first.** Now, we look at time, and so much different than God, time. How long is it? Been a while now since the Apostasy. Quite a while.

We went and looked at a couple of houses we lived in in this area just before the Apostasy. Because we left the last one, moved over toward Perrysburg, Toledo area, and as soon as we got there it didn't take too long and the Apostasy took place. What it's talking about here. That was a long time ago.

We met a man out front. Stopped to talk to him. Some wanted us to take a picture of the place for memory. So, we asked him, is it okay to take a picture of the place? He's out there with two dogs. We told him we had the house built. Anyway, he was going on about various things and had this conversation back and forth. He'd been there since late 1990s, so he's lived there longer than we did. His children are already grown and gone. Incredible here, how time... I can look back at that and it was so long ago. But it wasn't long ago.

The Apostasy was a long time ago, but it really wasn't a long time ago. But we tend to think those things were so long ago, and we're going through all this and we still have some time - and we don't know how much time. Looking at the world and the Thunders, don't know. We

still have to plan ahead. We still have to have a plan for a Feast of Tabernacles. Still have to plan for Pentecost and what we're doing and so forth. You don't stop.

**...who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped so that he as God...** What an incredible thing to think what took place, that a leader in the Church did this. Not just a leader but one who was leading it all or looked to in that regard. It's not that these things haven't happened in times past because there have been ripples in times past in God's Church. In the very beginning, Paul talks about some things that took place. John talks about some things that took place. They've happened all through time because the vast majority have left the Church through time in the past two thousand years. That causes problems.

And people don't realize it. As soon as someone starts turning from what God gave to them and they forget how they learned it and from where they learned it, from whom they learned it, like from Herbert Armstrong and they just refer to him then later on as "He was a good teacher..." Slap them. That's what I feel inside. I know that's not right, but I really would like to. That's what my carnal nature says, just slap the tar out of them when those things happened, knock some sense into them, wake them up, whatever.

Because where does it go? Where does truth go? What do people do? Well, they do this, sit in the temple of God. In other words, acting in the Church of God like they're in the Church of God, but they know better than others. They know better than Herbert Armstrong, those other ministers did, so they raise themselves up like God. That's what they're doing - above God. Exactly what they're doing!

So, this individual did it. **...sits in the temple of God**, that's with authority. That's how he sat, it's a matter of authority. **...showing/declaring himself that he is God**. Now, we don't tend to think that way, that someone when they start going aside and doing their own thing in the Church that they really are acting like God. But spiritually, that's exactly what they're doing.

**Do you not remember that when I was yet with you I told you these things? So, now you know what withholds...** I love this word. It's an amazing word that people have talked about in Church in times past and what it is, and it's this same word over and over again here, but it means just "what's holding it back." What's the context? The first few verses of Thessalonians, over and over again it's talking about Christ's coming, that time period and what has to take place first before he'll come back, before he'll return.

And so, what detains, as the Greek word means, or restrains or holds back that time? Well, it's the Apostasy that has to take place first in God's Church. **So now you know what holds back so that when, that he**, in other words referring to the man of sin, **might be revealed**. In other words, to make known. That's what it is, "to make known; to disclose" is what the word means. **...in his time. For the mystery of iniquity is already at work, but for now it only really withholds/holds back until he is taken out of the way.**

Something is holding back and it's talking about the things that took place that we went through with Joe Tkach and how it had to be manifest, made manifest to God's Church, and then he had to be taken out of the way. That in itself revealed to God's Church now, forty Sabbaths later, Christ is coming. It's done. The Apostasy has taken place. That's exactly what happened. That's how God showed us. That's how He revealed it to us. No small thing.

**Then shall that wicked be revealed**, in other words, "illuminated, made known" **whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming**. Again, so some looked at that and talked about how well, then, he has to be there at the time Christ returns and so it can't be him, it has to be his son, or whatever that one group did.

Anyway, no, that's not what this is talking about. This is on a spiritual plane. It's something that He did. Yes, He did destroy him. He's the one who put him to death at exactly the time that He did.

**Verse 9—Who's coming is after the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders**. I remember going through this sermon and the first time talking about this in Georgia, talking about this power, signs, and lying wonders that he exhibited, things that took place. He didn't do it on his own. He did it by a power and an influence. Congregations, that same power was there.

In Toledo when we were there, when it happened there, it went through the audience. It was eerie. (No pun intended because we're here in Erie.) But it was just a weird feeling. The things that people said, some pentecostal things that were coming out of people's mouths. And you think, where is this...? Well, we knew where it was coming from. There was a spirit power there.

**...and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who perish**. You know, when somebody turns away from the truth that God gives and goes in a different direction when people begin to lie and cheat against God, it's the same thing. Sin is sin. Death is death, the penalty.

**...because they did not receive the agape, the love of the truth**. It's a beautiful thing. Truth, to love it, that's how we're able to love God. Because that's how we come to know God, is through the truth. I hope you understand that. It reveals the very mind and being of God. All the truths we have, all the things that God gave through Herbert Armstrong, all those things that were the three that were still there before he began his ministry, and then all that's been added to it. It just reveals more and more about the being of God. And through that process of loving it, of loving how beautiful, how it all fits together, what a marvel it is in seeing that God is doing it, orchestrating it all, it helps us to love God more and more because it gives us an insight, an understanding of God.

Just like this sermon series *The Love of God*, that we're able to see these things and others can't.

**Because they did not receive the agape of the truth that they might be saved.** So, even here, to love the truth, it's about God's love, and because His love is in us because He loves us, and He gives that to us, and we begin to love it, because it shows it's a matter of the holy spirit that works in us to accomplish these things, which is about God's love, His mind, His being.

**And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion,** the word really means "wandering." It's just like what happens. They begin to wander more and more from the truth until a point in time they've lost it all. **...that they will believe a lie.** So, this is what happens when people begin to go off course. It's easier to begin more, to begin believing more and more lies.

**...so that they all,** it's not "might be damned" but **be judged.** (That's what the word means.) **...so that they all be judged who do not believe the truth.** We either do or we don't. We either love it or we don't. If we do it's because we're receiving of God's love in our life and He's receiving it back from us. Incredible.

**But are well pleased in unrighteousness.** That's what happens with people. They become more pleased in living what they want to live. I think of some of those out there that did some of the stuff. They didn't want to be like Herbert Armstrong and believe the thing that Herbert Armstrong believed, and they wanted to be more like some of the other churches around them. They openly said these things. "We want to be more like them." It's kind of like the kings and Israel and what they wanted in the very beginning. They didn't want God to rule over them. They wanted to be, have more like what the other nations had. That's why we are where we are today.

**Verse 13—But we are bound.** In other words, we owe it, is what the Greek word means. This is what we owe - **to give thanks always to God for you.** So, they owed that, in that respect, understanding their ministry. But to understand this is what we owe to one another as well, to love one another.

**...to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, the loved of the Lord.** God loves us. Again, over and over again. **Because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.** What an awesome process.

I'm sorry, but I can't help it every time I read this, and I think of all those who quit, who quit believing it and aren't with us anymore. There are large numbers.

**Whereunto He called you,** again, that word, **because of our gospel.** Just the reality. That's how people come into the Church. They have to hear the truth from whomever God has sent to give the truth. It's how it happened with Paul and John and Matthew. Doesn't matter who it is, all those who spoke or wrote.

**...to the/for the purpose of obtaining the glory of our Lord Joshua the Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and be strong in...** That's what it means, to "hold on," **be strong in the traditions that have been given.** Well, what's that all about? Well, it is what has been given, in other words. That's what I mean to say. The truths, the way of life, what we've heard, what we receive Sabbath after Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day. It's what it's saying to hold on to. Sometimes people read something different into the word there because of the English word "traditions."

**...which you have been taught.** Sabbaths. Holy Days. Literature. As it says here, **whether by word or our epistle,** in other words by writing, our writing. So, that's how you learn. Somehow at that point God, that's how God draws us. He lets us see the truth or hear the truth and then, all of a sudden, our minds are open to it. That's the beginning process. There's a way that He works in delivering that and these are things we're never to forget.

**Now, our lord, Joshua the Christ himself and God, even our Father who has,** and I love this way it says it. It doesn't say "agape." It says, "agapaó," "in this manner." Because this is the manner in which He has loved us. We've gone through these things, we've had these experiences, we're able to have this ability to see things, and whether it be by hearing or by writing and we're able to believe it and see it.

**...and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.**

Then it goes on in the next chapter, **2 Thessalonians 3:1—Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified.** In other words, things we hear Sabbath by Sabbath, to pray about those things so that our hearts and minds are in it and we understand this is what we need. God blesses us in that by doing that, He truly does, to be able to receive more and that more be given to us. That helps all of us. We all need one another. That's how God works.

**Finally, brethren, pray for us that the Lord may have free course and be glorified or esteemed glorious even as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from harmful and evil people.** Again, praying for one another, all of us, whether it be for the ministry or for others.

**For everyone does not have faith.** What is that about? This isn't talking about the world. This is talking about the Church because the Church has always been like that. Not everyone believes.

Now, we are at a point in time where I believe with all my being we're more, as far as a percentage, stronger in this than ever before in the Church because of what God's taken us through, the refining process and all that we've been going through.

But going back in the history that I have and the things you can read in scripture, these things have gone on and on for so long where there are individuals that came in the church, Paul talks



about things that took place, John talks about it where he talks about “now there are many antichrists, and that right now there are many antichrists in the Church.” He was explaining that and talking about that and what that was.

It hasn't been until recent times that the Church has really understood those things. Incredible.

**But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and keep you from evil. Now, we have confidence in the Lord toward (concerning) you, that you will also do the things which we charge you.** In other words, admonish or encourage within the Church or individually, whatever it might be within the Church.

...so that the Lord direct your hearts into agape, the love of God. So, God loves us, He does all kinds of things to draw us, to nurture us, to strengthen us, and then we have to respond with that same kind of love, which is a matter of His holy spirit in us and how we think toward Him, toward one another and so forth.

...so that the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ. That's where we are right now, the patient waiting, knowing it's getting closer. But until it's here we keep waiting and keep moving forward preparing for God's Kingdom.