

This will be *Part 5* of the series entitled, *The Existence of Evil*.

Last Sabbath we ended while covering what Christ had been given for the era of Sardis, and of course, the one just before Herbert Armstrong being called or at that particular time period toward the end of Sardis beginning of Philadelphia. So, we're going to continue on now into the next period which is Philadelphia when God began to work through Herbert Armstrong.

And if you've never read the *Autobiography*, it's excellent to go back and see how God worked with him to begin molding and fashioning certain things in him, how he came across the truth, his wife and then him, and some of the things he had to begin addressing in his life.

Anyway, incredible story of a period of time that they went through there. I think one of the most awesome ones is that first seven years when he and his wife began to understand and observe things about the Feast but didn't begin to give it to the Church yet until he understood it more fully and grasped that this is what he was supposed to be doing as far as teaching it to the Church.

So, to understand that the Sardis era of the Church of God had not been keeping the Feasts for a long, long time, it's an awesome thing to know that finally, Herbert Armstrong came along, God raised him up to start observing it, all the Feast days.

Anyway, **Revelation 3:7—Even to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write, These are the things said by he who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.** So, all the way through here, through all these eras, it's continuously talking about Christ. It's about what he is giving to the Church. He is the one who is over the Church in that respect and working with different ones through time and making it very clear here there are things he gives and then things he takes away depending on the work that's being done.

This is one thing that was very clear by the end of Philadelphia, that when the era of Laodicea came along and the things that transpired during Laodicea, there were things that they couldn't continue to do during Laodicea because it wasn't for the Church to carry out certain functions. That became especially true after the Apostasy. But anyway, I'll get to that as we go along.

But again, speaking about Christ. Again, to understand that what is said here by Christ as he gave it to the Church, to the different eras, there were certain aspects of a work that had to be done at different times. There were specific moldings that had to take place by different ones who were called.

That's why even during different periods different numbers have been called during different stages because they are different parts of the Temple that have to be filled, that have to be constructed if you

will. That doesn't mean the exact same numbers in every era by any measure or the exact same number of years. God had a purpose for everything lasting as long as it did or as short as it did, and for different ones to be molded and fashioned during those periods for specific functions and jobs that they were going to have later on.

So again, incredible what God is building because it's far beyond something we see in a physical universe, far beyond what we see God created on the earth, and to understand something on a spiritual plane, a spiritual family, Elohim, is far, far, far beyond anything ever created physically or spiritually to that point too of spirit, if you will. Not spiritually but of spirit.

I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it. Incredible! The power that was given for a particular purpose at the end of an age as God's Church was being, in essence, restored, built back up again for a great purpose during that period of Philadelphia when technology would come along to be an incredible asset. Radio being the first. So, it was called the Radio Church of God because it was such an incredible thing for mankind to experience something like this, that you could tune into something far, far away and hear a voice.

That was given as an open door for Herbert Armstrong to do an incredible work and the Church began to be raised up by that. People heard it and they began to be moved by it and they began to believe it because God was opening their minds.

So again here, "I have set before you an open door and no one can shut it." It's going to get done. A specific work is going to be accomplished.

...for you have a little strength. It wasn't a lot. It was for a small purpose, in that respect, in the sense of size because... I was going to say 144,000, see, going back to that old time when we thought the Church had to be a certain point. Anyway, whatever amount was being worked with at a particular time, finally up to around ninety-seven thousand they guesstimated in Worldwide at it's highest point. But a long, long way from what we thought had to be there, because at that time the thinking was there would have to be 144,000 that come out of Philadelphia and more. But that's another story we'll get to.

But he says, "I have given you a little strength." So again here, it's not about size, it's about what they were to accomplish, what God was doing because He's all-powerful and He was doing incredible things in their lives, of things that were hard to grasp and comprehend that we didn't really grasp and comprehend fully.

...and have kept my word. So, everyone is to do that. It doesn't matter what era it is, what period of time when God calls us, we're to keep God's word, we're to keep the word that Christ has given to the Church.

...and have not denied my name. So, those who come through it are to be a witness to live the truth. Others, well, that's another story that we've been going through. They choose not to continue on, they choose not to live it at some point and deny his name, become antichrist. But those who come through

it, those who truly carry the name of that period of time, if you will, in the sense of what they're having molded and fashioned within them, well, they're not to deny his name at any time, whether it was Ephesus or on. We're not to, obviously, but the majority have who have been called.

Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan... So again, this has always as a whole been looked upon as the world and how they treated the work of the Radio Church of God and Worldwide Church of God. And in part, some of these things apply as a type, but it goes far beyond that.

Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews... Now, this is spiritual. This is about something spiritual. It is not about the world, as a whole, and yet that's a kind of a type because that's what we see first. We can begin learning from that, but that's not what it's all about. It's about something far, far greater than that.

...who are of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Now, we're going through this series and we're addressing this in the context of the Church and not the world – because that's really what God is addressing. That's what He's showing us, that this wasn't a matter of the different churches that stood up against Herbert Armstrong.

I think of different organizations. I think it was the Baptists who wrote the most against him in the sense of pamphlets and booklets and hated him, in that respect, and what he was teaching. Church of Christ in the South especially were very vocal and active for smashing *Plain Truth* stands and throwing away *Plain Truths*. They would have groups come in and that was their mission, to go out and destroy it, as much as they could of those things because they hated it. They hated his message. They hated what he was saying.

So, we could say, look at physical things and say, "Well, they're of the synagogue..." That's not what this is about. It's beyond that. This is about God's Church, those who have worked against God's Church, those who began to work against God's apostle, those who became antichrist. Because Philadelphia had plenty who became antichrist. We didn't understand that at the time. We didn't understand that during Laodicea. We haven't understood it for a long time, candidly, within the Church, of what antichrist means and who it's about.

It's about us, the Church if you will, or the environment of the Church. It's not about the world.

"Who say they are Jews," this is spiritual, "...and are not, but do lie." So again, there comes a point in time people are baptized, and receive God's holy spirit. Sometimes, perhaps haven't received it but they stay within the environment of the Church for whatever reasons. Maybe family members or others or from something else they thought they could get from it, became a part, satisfied them on a physical plane like other churches in the world but not something that was in the mind. Not through conviction

and true belief of what is true in that respect, but just by a carnal choice. Not because they saw it spiritually, not because their minds were open.

Others receiving God's holy spirit did receive God's spirit, in that respect, within the environment of the Church, and in time began to work against God. Again, I think of the evangelists. I've mentioned one over and over again. Dr. Hoeh is a prime example because he's the earliest one in that respect that I know of that began very early on to teach 14/15th Passover at Ambassador College.

That was just outright sick. Evil. Evil. That's the greatest evil. Because we're not talking about the angelic realm. That was evil, what Lucifer did, the choices he made. He led a third of the angels away. But Elohim is far greater, far greater of what God is creating because it's a creation, an ongoing creation. It's been an ongoing creation for six thousand years, Elohim. Far greater than any physical creation in the universe by far. Far greater than the angelic creation.

And so, we have the evidence of those things that have transpired, that have taken place in the environs of the church, and the majority over time have left. They've turned against the truth.

Behold, I will make them come and worship before your feet. So, who's feet? Well, in part even about the apostle of that age because there are going to be 144,000. He's one of them. There are going to be others that are going to be a part of Elohim. All these eras are very much talking about those who are able to become a part of Elohim. That's what it's about, what God is creating. The majority of Elohim has come out of the Church over the past two thousand years.

So, there's going to come a time. What an incredible thing, that individuals in the Great White Throne are going to be resurrected and they're going to see what God has created, whom God has created in the sense of a body of people, beings now who are spirit, who are in the God Family. Incredible! They're going to know, indeed, that they were loved. Look where they are, they've come through all this, they've become a part of that incredible Family, of that incredible Kingdom.

Because you have kept the word of my patience, I will also keep you from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world. Now, this is something that is very unique to the age of Philadelphia and so the primary one being worked with during this period of time, Herbert Armstrong, over all this period of time, there is that which is going to come upon the world but even for Herbert Armstrong told that there is a period of time you're not going to have to go through.

And I think, what an awesome thing that he never had to see what happened to the Church as far as an apostasy during the period of Laodicea and of the kinds of things that are going to happen at the end of this age.

...which shall come upon all the world to try those who dwell upon the earth. So, what is this about? Is it just about the world? I mean, look what it says, "Which shall come upon all the world, to try those

who dwell upon all the earth.” Mankind has gone through hard things from the beginning. Mankind has lived and died, had wars, so none of that is new. That’s not what this is fully about.

If we understand the messages are to the Church it’s talking to and addressing things in the Church. So, “which shall come upon all the world.” Well, in this case, Philadelphia, the Worldwide Church of God – in all the world where God’s people are located, where God’s people have been called. So, there is coming that time when there is going to be a trying of people on a level that is unprecedented, candidly, the next era and what happens toward the end of that.

So, it’s not about something physical and things that are happening in the world, in that respect, temptation, time of trial, a time of nuclear war. It’s not about any of that. We have to see the message is about us, about the Church through this long period of time of two thousand years.

Behold, I come quickly! And sometimes we don’t feel like it’s quick enough. So, we’re tried in that. There are things we are to learn. There are things that have to be molded and fashioned in us and there are things we have to experience. And candidly, God can’t just give us everything. He can’t give everything in us that we need to have in order to be changed and become a part of Elohim. It has to be in here. There are things we have to experience in life.

So, we’ve experienced a lot since the Apostasy. All the way up to 2012, all the way right next to that period of time, and ever since then until now we’ve had to go through these things. Because it’s through the experiences that we learn. We’re tried, where are we, what do we look to, what do we hold on to, do we persevere? Persevering is not an easy thing. Carrying the name of Israel is not an easy thing. To persevere until you’re done, until it’s completed is not a simple thing.

It’s a battle. It’s a war. It takes a lot. It takes deep dedication, determination, and an understanding of things that this has to have God in it to succeed in the first place. And so, you have to cry out to God on a continuing basis in your life.

So, there is so much we learn that it’s not a matter of knowledge. I think about a time in my life when I was younger that, thought, “Well, I’ve graduated. I’ve learned all I need to learn.” So, a lot of times people get to that age of eighteen, seventeen, nineteen and it’s like that’s the know-it-all all age. And sadly, sometimes, that doesn’t stop as far as human nature is concerned.

But learning through books, I have to give this to you. Because I think of one Feast site, and I can’t help it. I think of one time up in Niagara Falls we were sitting there, and this man got up to give a sermon about rearing children. So, I’m not sure what all that has to do with the Feast of Tabernacles, but anyway, that’s what he was giving, meaning that everything should fit into something having to do with the Feast even more so.

But this individual had two boys that were, I don’t know what the word is to even use, passive, there you go. Pretty passive. So, he’s hitting certain things and you realize you’ve never had anything but two

passive boys and you don't know what it's like to have the experience of having two that if you can keep them in a chair you're doing good. They sit in a chair willingly by their very nature and because of that, it's been pretty easy on you. Other things will be hard in your life as you continue on, and you learn more.

It's like different ones would come out of college and they would start teaching things that they had learned in the different classes about family and childrearing and so forth, and they'd give these sermons, and you realize, "You're not only not married, you don't have children yet. It's very obvious by what you're saying." But people would shut off right away because they knew he didn't really have experience yet.

So, there are things you just can't know by knowledge, and it can show in how we feedback or give back information or how we speak sometimes in life. It takes experience. The more experience we have, especially when it comes to Elohim and what God is preparing us for, the more that's molded and fashioned in our minds. That's why God can't just pump the knowledge in our mind and somehow we can be resurrected.

That's one of the primary things God revealed to me very early on in the sense of this young man I've mentioned many times who had only been baptized for two weeks and people were going around and saying how great it is he's going to be in the resurrection. It's like, I knew him. He had a long way to go. He hadn't had things molded and fashioned in him yet. You can't grow and be able to become part of Elohim by your experiences of two weeks. It's impossible! A creation can't take place in your mind, a transforming of your mind.

So, we've had to learn a lot over time, but it comes through experience. So, we've had to experience a lot of things like it's talking about here.

For us, we're being molded for something different from those in Philadelphia as a whole or Sardis, or whatever period, Smyrna, Thyatira, it doesn't matter. Those eras were used to mold something specific within individuals. Otherwise, we could have been just one long era. Thyatira was over a thousand years, but that's not the purpose of the different eras and what people had to go through and what had to be molded and fashioned in them.

Hold that fast which you have. And so, candidly, that's for all people, whoever it is. Whoever God calls, "Hold that fast." If people could have just learned that during Philadelphia there wouldn't have been as many problems during Laodicea.

"Hold that fast which you have." Where did you get it? How did you have it? Instead of these ministers getting up later on and saying, "Well, he was a great teacher." I'll tell you, I don't care how many times I say it, it riles me up when I think about that. It stirs me up, powerfully so. Because, again, the stupidity,

the foolishness of not grasping that everything they knew came through him, everything! Everything! Every truth. That's how God worked.

And because people couldn't latch on to that and hold on to that and hold to the truths that were given to them, like that minister, that evangelist that I mentioned that began to teach 14/15th at Ambassador College, and yet God allowed it to slip by, that Herbert Armstrong didn't know about it, that others didn't know about it. It wasn't reported to Herbert Armstrong what he's doing in his classes. He got by with it.

A lot of people have gotten by with a lot of things because God has allowed it because it's part of our training. It's part of what we have to go through.

So, a person can listen to that, and with God's spirit, they're going to reject it. They're going to know that he's wrong. And that's going to help them later on in life to be able to address other things in life. But to know that something is wrong and to know that God is allowing it for a purpose or whatever reason it might be, in God's time He reveals everything. Everything! Just as He has with things that have happened during Philadelphia that we have learned later in many cases.

Hold that fast which you have that no one take your crown. So again, this wasn't for Philadelphia. It's knowledge that anyone since the time it was written could read it and learn from it in God's Church, in other words, "that no one take your crown."

So, we've had to address this because of things that happened in 2012 and 2013 with some who had been a part of Worldwide. Some who were in the ministry. Some who then turned against the things that had been revealed to them and given to them and they made choices. Now, they made choices before that period of time, that's why we go back to 2008 oftentimes, of what happened there and the attitudes of some that reeked at that particular time.

Sometimes there are those things that God doesn't let people get by with. There are some times people are cut off at that point and if they don't repent of what their attitude was and what they began to think afterward about some of those things, God keeps them cut off. He will not give His holy spirit to them. So, some just coast until it finally is brought to light, and they make a choice then upon what they made a choice a long time ago, to turn against Christ because that's what happens.

I hope all this makes good sense to everyone because of things we need to know and understand.

And so, if something like that happens the reality is there are some back here that God can raise up to take your place. There's always been someone back here that God can raise up to take that crown. Because not everyone is promised, just because you've been baptized and received God's holy spirit, that you're going to receive specific things because of it.

Depends on the purpose of one's calling. Might be for later on. It's not owed to anybody. We have to fight for it, we have to want it with all of our being and cry out to God for it. And then, depending upon how we go through the various things we go through depends upon where we end up.

Now, to be in God's Family is the most important of all, regardless of when it will be. Awesome beyond our grasp and ability to even understand that. But what has been offered in the first six thousand years is, in a respect, greater because of what people have to go through, what people have to experience in order to be molded and fashioned, and what can be molded and fashioned in them because of those experiences.

That's why in the Millennium people aren't going to have to go through nearly as hard of times to become a part of Elohim as what everyone has in the last six thousand years. Because it's been hard. It wasn't meant to be easy. Because of those experiences everyone has had, something unique and special is being molded, has been molded and fashioned in the mind to prepare them for specific functions and jobs.

Whoever overcomes, "conquers" as the word is. It's a battle. "Whoever conquers." We can't do it on our own and we learn that, and we know that. That's why we cry out to God for help. I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.

Now, I'm going to stop on that one there because I have to tell a little bit of a story here. Laura's dad, after the Apostasy had taken place, they would talk back and forth every once in a while. He was with a couple of different groups in the beginning, and he saw something in things I was writing, things that were being said, and I think of one time when he made the comment to Laura that, "He needs to keep writing..." He thought a second book should be written before he died. He died just at that time it was starting.

So anyway, he made the comment that he thought I had a work to the Laodiceans. But he didn't grasp, he didn't know at that time, because he said, basically, he's a Philadelphian, but I have a work to the Laodiceans. It was true but he didn't know because of what we were coming through we didn't understand some of the things about some of the Church eras at this time because there was a time where the thinking was, "Well, Philadelphia and Laodicea are going to continue on together." That's not the case. When Herbert Armstrong died, Philadelphia, God showed us, it ended.

So anyway, we get a charge. I was thinking about some of that, so that's why I talk about how God judges. He judges by what you know and what He's given at any specific time, and he lived faithfully to those things. But there was the other thing here about this where he was talking to Laura one time about he was a Philadelphian and was going to be, basically, this was what he was holding on to, right, this thing, he's going to be a pillar in the Temple of God. That's what his calling was about. That's what people felt during Philadelphia because we didn't see.

And so, Laura would talk to him about, “Well, you mean that others in the last nearly two thousand years, they’re not going to have that blessing?” Basically, the thinking is, no. So, it shows where we are sometimes in our growth and development because that’s where we were at that time as far as Philadelphia was concerned and the Church was concerned. When we went on into Laodicea, people had this feeling they’re Philadelphian.

That’s why it was so hard for people... That’s why it was so hard for me to be able to say, “I became lukewarm. I came to a point where I fell asleep.” Because that’s admitting, that’s acknowledging the fact you’re Laodicean. Now, that was a hard thing because of what we had during the period of Philadelphia in the Worldwide Church of God. That’s why it was hard for many, that they couldn’t do that. They couldn’t acknowledge what had happened in the Church.

So anyway, I hope we grasp this process of how we grow, and we can only know what we have to that moment. That’s why we use the present truth – to that moment in time.

So anyway, the point being is here that he didn’t, he couldn’t see the things about Laodicea. Because God had given it to us to grasp some of that, obviously, at that point, and we knew we were and that he was living in that period of time as well. But you can’t give this to anyone no matter what period of time it is. But especially when there’s a transition, that was even harder.

Whoever overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out. And I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God. Now, it’s fascinating, too, as you go through this. It’s not only about Christ and what he was giving to the different eras, but it’s building up more and more to the end of the age here and showing it’s about the Temple. The Church is about the Temple. We are the temple. And yet something that was very difficult for people to have the ability to receive into their minds.

We are the Temple. The stones of the Temple, when they fell down, that gives ability to admit certain things and acknowledge certain things. “Yes, that happened because of the Apostasy.”

But anyway, **new Jerusalem.** It’s about the Temple. It’s about God’s people. It’s about God’s people in His Family. This is the name they’re given.

...the city of my God, new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven from my God. And with my new name. So, what’s coming down is that which goes up. When the 144,000 are resurrected they go up just as Christ went up. Not into heaven but into the heavens and then comes back down to the earth. The wedding feast, it’s about that process we have to go through. Not that there is some giant banquet out here and somebody is out here serving us in the cloud somewhere or whatever it might be that gets into people’s minds.

So, in this one here, we went through it and talked about the “synagogue of Satan.” Again, to understand this is about the environment of the Church during Philadelphia and those who turned against the truth

at that time, those who “said they were Jews,” as we read that scripture, I believe it was last Sabbath, about a Jew is one who is one inwardly. Circumcision is not that which is of the flesh but of the heart. Those kinds of expressions are spiritual to understand God’s people.

Verse 14—Even unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write, These are the things said by the... Some of these things are so poorly, if you will, translated. ...**the True** or **the Truly** is even what the word means, but they put in the “**Amen.**” That doesn’t get the significance or the context of what’s being said in here.

Most often it’s translated in King James as “*verily,*” and in the New King James as “*assuredly,*” but it’s not this word here.

...said by the Truly, and the Faithful and True Witness. In other words, it’s about God. It’s about Christ, but it’s about the Word of God that’s in Christ and he was born of that in his being, and that which God has given to us. ...**the faithful and true witness,** again, speaking of Christ, the one who was our Passover, the one who became High Priest, **the Beginning of God’s creation,** in the sense of understanding it’s about Elohim. That’s the purpose of the Church. That’s the purpose of the eras of the Church, for molding and fashioning Elohim. This is God’s creation.

It’s not talking about the physical universe. But even that, everything was established out there for the purpose of Elohim; the earth and mankind upon it was for the purpose of Elohim. So, everything is about that. And so, here is the one who is over God’s Church. Here is the one that everything has been built upon, the chief cornerstone, and so it’s in that context. “The beginning,” in other words, the first in God’s creation, the first of the firstfruits if you will.

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. What an incredible thing that happened to the Church! After Herbert Armstrong died nothing new was coming along, nothing new was being revealed, there wasn’t an apostle. And so, it shouldn’t surprise us in one respect what took place.

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would or I wish that you were cold or hot. What an awesome thing. I have always desired that in God’s Church. I wish it was very clear all the time who is hot and who is not, who is cold. But through time God reveals those things.

So, we are to be on fire for God’s way of life. We should be zealous about it. It should be something that stirs us in our being. And yet it hasn’t happened in all people because all people haven’t made those choices, and so God doesn’t work in all people all the time.

And so, here is an entire era of the Church, “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot.” So, this is really bad in that respect. Lukewarm is really bad. Laodicea was really bad for God’s people. It wasn’t a time to really grow. It wasn’t a time to truly mature although those who came through that and able to look back and learn from that, priceless. Priceless what was molded and fashioned in here

because of the experience of going through it. Something that others cannot have who didn't go through that in the same way.

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot, I wish that you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. What an incredible thing to come to understand, what took place to us then with us as a Body when God revealed that's the Apostasy. That's when God spewed us out of His mouth. He wasn't going to have that anymore.

So, how many are going to go? How many are going to choose? What choices are they going to make with what they were given back in Philadelphia, "Hold fast that which you have." Well, even during Laodicea couldn't hold it like we should have.

"So then, because you are lukewarm..." And so, there are going to be people through time who are not going to grasp this. It's going to be hard for people in Philadelphia to understand how this could have ever happened in God's Church, how individuals could become lukewarm. Well, it's because their experience is going to be totally different and it's going to be hard for them to grasp that on a spiritual plane, what really happened. As it may be for some who have been called since that time, I don't know. Well, I do.

"So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth." So again, what does that mean when this happens, when you're separated from God? It's sin. Being lukewarm is a matter of sin. Everybody was guilty of it, of letting down, of not fighting like we should have, and coasting, getting to the point where you're coasting in an environment that is coasting and beginning to let down and it pulls you down. That's why those kinds of things are so dangerous within a Body.

Because you say, I am rich. So, it's the thinking that was there, "I am rich. I have all that I need." There wasn't the ability to see Herbert Armstrong is not here, no more new truth is being given to the Church, and candidly, we're starting to lose grip of what was given. Slowly but surely it began to be whittled down by different ones that were teaching out there and what they were teaching because their aim and them being over it was to take and destroy the entirety of the Church.

Because you say, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. Do you understand? Do you grasp that for all of us, this is one of your battles that you have to address and realize don't let this happen? Because you are richer now than what we were then. All the truths since that time that have been given to God's Church, that wealth that has come with that which God has continued to give for a purpose because He's preparing for the return of His Son and working with the Church and the remaining part that's going to be a part of the 144,000, and those then who are going to continue on to be, if you will, a type of foundation and example of that which existed at that time but continuing on faithful with what they have been given?

So, if anyone coasts because they feel like “This is all I need,” there is so much to build upon, there is so much to grow in. There is never a time when you can’t build upon and grow in what has already been given. That’s why I appreciate when I hear some things about truths and what we have been given and what they mean for the Church. Things that we’re not to lose.

Because our weakness as human beings is that after a time is to think “I’ve always known this.” “I’ve always known this. I’ve always had this.” No, you haven’t. There are so many things you’ve never known until God gave it to you. Those who were as a part that came out of Worldwide never had any of this before, of truths that were given afterward. Those who were called in since that time, well, we can begin to think we’ve always had this. The reality is it can help us to understand, no, we’ve only had this for a few years.

Women to serve in the ministry of God’s Church? Hasn’t even been a year yet, speaking is what I’m referring to. Because I was impressed thinking about this the other day. I thought, what an incredible thing, preaching. It’s one thing to be in the ministry. I’m sorry, I didn’t go on with that. But to think that it seems like it’s been a lot longer to me. It’s like, this is the way, in a sense, it’s always been or should have been. It feels that way, in one respect, because we’ve so accepted it.

It’s like Joshua, the name Joshua. Now, it took me a while just to get out of the habit, and every once in a while, it’d slip out, and sometimes I can be reading something if it’s straight out of the scripture or whatever and that word will come out. But I’ll quickly catch it now compared to what I did in the beginning because it’s such an abrupt change of something in the mind that it takes time sometimes just to break the habits even though we know better.

But to think we’ve always had it; it feels like we’ve had this forever. I see the other word and I don’t even like to say it, I really don’t. Jesus. Because to me, it’s foul because of what it represents. It represents everything that is wrong with what started in 325 A.D., and that was the last great one in that respect, of something to be changed, to be addressed.

The other things about women and so forth added on in that respect because of something that hadn’t been there from the beginning that God was restoring and giving. Awesome. But we have to be careful and understand we haven’t had this very long and it’s precious. It’s wealth. It’s riches. We’re exceedingly blessed to be those who begin to bear it, carry it, have it. Blessed with it.

I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire. What’s this about? It’s about the process we have to go through. It’s how we’re refined. We have to go through fire. This way of life was not made easy, and for an entire group of people, speaking of Laodicea, which this is talking about here, is going to have to go through a lot of fire to become refined, to be able to fully repent and God to restore the things that needed to be there.

The other day I was going, I was cleaning out some stuff and going through some files and, you know, if I don't look at them for three or four or five years I know where I can go to find them, so why do I have the copies down here and just building up? So, went through and started cleaning out some things and I came through some letters that I had written very early on toward the end of being with another group of people or organization when we were trying to get started. Being reminded of all those things that had to be addressed. And you know what? Those were some of the hardest times of my life. Hard. Because... Well, I can't explain it.

But I learned through it. What an incredible thing. Sometimes to go through fire like that is an awesome blessing. I think of the Church right now. The Church is going through some difficult things. There are some people out here suffering a lot in God's Church. I hope people understand there are a lot of attacks going on. It said it would happen toward the end. I haven't preached on that, as a whole, because there is no point to focus too much upon that until it's at our doorstep. It's on our doorstep and it's going to get worse. It's not going to get easier.

There is a spirit being out there who is stirred up and he's going to be allowed to do certain things, and a spirit world that's doing things in the world around us. And eventually, because of that, there is going to be some suffering we go through. But please understand, we can grow from that. We can go through hard times and fire and difficult things and God will be there. He'll be there with us, and we are going to be able to experience a relationship in a way that we haven't to this point in time of God's care and God's love, God's intervention in our lives, God's help in our lives.

That doesn't mean you're not going to suffer and go through some difficult things. So we need to grasp some of that as we go through the things that are out there. Because we're still being tried. It's a part of being refined. All decisions have not been made until they're made as to who is being placed where. That's why it's so, so dangerous to get pulled away by other things around us, by things that are going on around us and it begins to hurt us spiritually because we begin to let down or because we don't act upon the things we need to in a way that is pleasing to God.

God is to be number one. God's Church is to be right there, number one, because this is our environment for putting God first. How we think toward and treat one another and keep close to one another. And so, the Church is going to be tried in those things, and choices and decisions will be made according to our going through the fire. That's how it works.

All of us can go through it and come on the other side of this in the sense of living on into the Millennium or those who are to become a part of the 144,000, but it's going to be a fight all the way to the end. This isn't going to let up. It's just a reality.

So, I hurt for people who have to go through trials, but I know that they're necessary because the choices we make as we go through them, those are the things that can make us grow more, become stronger in spirit, or they're the things that we can make wrong choices in, and we not come through it.

That's what hurts the most. If we make the kinds of choices that hurt us spiritually to where we're not as close to God as we're supposed to be, as we should be, we're not striving like we should be and not evaluating everything upon what is God's will. That can't be given to anyone. You have to fight for it. You have to decide. You have to choose.

We all are addressed with those kinds of things in life and at certain points of life more than others. But here at the end I'm just warning this is not going to get easier and we're going to be tested, as a whole, as a Body is concerned. Tried, if you will, to get rid of the dross that's still there that must be gotten rid of before certain decisions are made, if you will, judgments are made before the Millennium is here.

"I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire." We should want to go through whatever it takes to change us. There is nothing we shouldn't be willing to go through though we don't like to go through it or don't want to go through it. There are times I am somewhat conflicted but come to the same answer every time, praying to God about different situations and people going through different trials, and praying that we not have to have those things, but if it means their growth and development then so be it. In essence, "Not my will, but Yours be done, whatever is best for them." Because that's the answer.

So, we might not want certain things for ourselves or for others but if that's the thing that can make us stronger, better, in that respect, we should welcome it. It's hard to see trials in that way. "I welcome whatever it is I need to change, to grow. So be it." Why fight against it? Why lose hope or begin to think that "God's not with me"? Whatever you go through God will be with you if you ask Him! Christ is there if you ask God for that help!

That's absolute – something we don't ever have to be concerned with or worry about. And so, that is a test sometimes. Do we see that? Do we believe that?

I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire. So, that counsel, it's a matter of here is the wisdom, this is what you need to do, this is wisdom from God. **...that you might be rich, in white raiment.**

Whatever it takes to be cleansed, so be it. "Because this is what I want." We all have to say that, "This is what I want, to be in God's Family, that I count that, that I see that as something far, far greater than anything I could ever have in this physical life." So, yes, we're given this physical life as a place to learn these things, as a place to experience different things, but this is not what it's all about.

Yes, to enjoy this in the right way that God has given to us, to enjoy the relationships in the right way. And so often those things are the things that are not done because we're carnal, human beings with incredibly selfish nature. We all have selfish nature, and we have to fight against that constantly. We really do. We have to see it. You have to see it and cry out to God for help to see it, "Help me to see my selfishness." We shouldn't have to, but we so often deceive ourselves so much that it's good to ask, "Help me to see it so that I can repent of it." We should ask God to help us to be drawn to repentance.

...that you might be clothed. I want to be clothed. I think of those who thought they could come to this great wedding feast if you will. How are they clothed?

You know, how do we think? There have been times I've thought about not wearing this jacket when I come up here and speak. I think maybe once or twice in the beginning I did just to show that you can come to Sabbath services with a nice shirt on, whatever it might be, and in that sense your mind, you're seeking to please God. And yet within the Church in scattered areas, I'm hearing different ones talk about how they feel certain things are being let down in this area. This is something very physical.

If we don't see God and we're coming before God on His Sabbath day, we've got to be careful of our mentality. What are we thinking? Are we wearing the best of what we have, what we can afford, in that respect? I mean, we don't have to go out and buy suits and ties and expensive suits and all those kinds of things, but we should strive to wear the best of what we do have and what we have been able to afford, in that respect. I hope you understand what I'm saying. Because in too many cases we have people who are letting down.

If our mind isn't right toward coming before God on the Sabbath, do we understand we're coming before God on His Sabbath and we're to honor Him? That's why in my mind, as a whole, on Holy Days I do more, because they're more than the Sabbath. They're once, seven times, if you will, in the year so they don't happen very often and they reveal more, they give more, there is more power there from God. And so, it's not a physical thing, it's a mental thing and how we think toward God, that I want to be pleasing toward God. I'm coming into God's presence.

Well, we're always in God's presence. Yeah, I understand that. We understand that. We're always in God's presence. But not like the Sabbath. That's far more important. So, anyway.

...that you might be clothed, so this is talking about something spiritual, as we should be spiritually, **in that the shame of your nakedness does not appear.** So again, those analogies that are given. Light and dark. Nakedness, clothed in white, that which is righteousness, that which comes from God. On and on it goes.

...even anoint your eyes with eye salve. These words here about eye salve I always enjoy, in that respect of understanding what it's saying because it's taking it and rubbing it throughout. It means you don't just put a little bit of something here that's needed. It's something that's like it's rubbed in to make sure it's thorough and everywhere. **...even anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.** Be thorough about it, that it's everywhere in what we do and how we strive to please God and honor God.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. That's just a way of life, isn't it, with us? We receive correction. Sometimes it's within sermons. Sometimes it's directly, personally. What do we do with it? Do we strive to hear what's being said? Do we pray about it?

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous, therefore, and repent. Filled with fire for God's way of life. Not lukewarm but zealous for God's way of life, to please God. Because if we don't grasp what it means to come into God's presence and to strive to do it because our mindset is it's about God, because that's what I'm thinking, that's what we should be thinking. It's not how we look to other people or anything; it's about God. That's who I'm striving to honor and please, Christ, my High Priest, striving to honor and please them.

If we can't do that and if that's not our thinking, what are we doing during the rest of the week when it really counts at different times in our life? You see, there's a correlation there that is true. It's an absolute law.

So again, indeed, evil has existed in the environs of all seven Church eras, even as it has existed in this remnant body. To me, that's awesome to understand, knowledge to take into account in a very deep way to realize it can't be that way. It's not God's way. It can't exist. It shouldn't exist but it has, and God's allowed it. But it's not going to be allowed by the time Christ returns. Everything is going to be cleansed. Everything.

So, I hope as we've gone through some of these things like Smyrna when it talks about, **Revelation 2:9. I know your works, in tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich).** We're always to understand that, how rich we are. It's not about the physical things, how much we have or don't have in physical life. It's about what we have in the mind that is far more valuable in this temporary life because of where it's leading.

...and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, so this is where we first addressed this, Jews. It's not about the world and it's not about people coming up from Jerusalem like some have taught in times past. They're coming up from Jerusalem and they're trying to get people to get away from this Christ thing. It's not about that at all. It's about people in God's Church, in the environs of God's Church, **but of the synagogue of Satan.**

I love how it's stated there. To understand there is God's Church and anything that within that environment that is not honoring God, striving to receive everything that God gives, and not divisive in any fashion or form in thinking, is evil. Because if that happens and people begin to go astray, as everyone has who has come into this Body and left, or been put out, whatever it is, is antichrist. Because eventually, it's a matter of all are put out one way or the other. "Of the synagogue of Satan." That's pretty strong words. But that's really what it is. Antichrist, being antichrist is of the synagogue of Satan.

The individual who began teaching students at Ambassador College about a 14/15th Passover, his wasn't the Church of God, his was the synagogue of Satan. That should help people to understand how evil such a thing really is. If we could have understood that after we came through the Apostasy, we'd have been so much better off because people were trying to build bridges in the synagogue of Satan, bringing their false doctrine about a 14/15th or their false teachings about Pentecost. On and on it goes, all merging on

the bridge so we can kind of mix it all together and all have fellowship like we used to have so we can be a larger group of people.

Is that what God wanted, was a larger group of people? I remember telling different people that, different locations getting invited very early on to go speak up in Minneapolis to a group of people, of several groups that had gotten together from different groups. Arizona, being invited out there. Told them the truth. Told them about 14/15th Passover. I knew what was going to happen and I didn't say I let them have it. I unloaded because I knew that either people are going to hear or they're not. I don't think anybody heard of those two groups especially. And I knew. I knew when I went and said what I would say that I'd never be invited back.

Incredible what we went through with the Apostasy.

...fear none of those things which you shall suffer. Behold, the devil will cast some into prison, that you may be tried. So not just for one era but things that have happened at different times. But it was more predominant at this period of time. To understand that there were some in God's Church who betrayed others in God's Church, well, they were supposed to have been in God's Church. I believe that's happened all the way up to the end here in part.

Revelation 2:24, when it talks about Thyatira, **But I say to you, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not hold to this teaching, and who have not known the depths of Satan.** So, what...? Again, to understand that when people begin to go off base that's the direction they've chosen. But they can't see that. But we're supposed to see it. They moved towards that being which is selfishness. They chose the way of selfishness, that they can raise themselves up as God, that they can be as apostles to determine what it is the Church needs to know and understand.

Let's turn over to 1 John 3. Now, all these things are leading up to things that are going to be given at the Feast this year. So, in that context of knowing what's coming and what's going to be given, it's preparing us for those sermons that are going to be given. Because God is going to continue to give more to help us to grasp in a deeper way the incredible seriousness of what He's called us to.

You can't fool around with the truth. You can't mess with the world and have a free pass into God's Kingdom. There is judgment. There are those things we have to address in our lives. There are those things that we have to see in our lives.

So, that's why we've gone through some of the kinds of things we have in this series ever since the beginning of January, and to understand that there has been evil around God's Church. It's always been there. I'm going to tell you that it's still here. It's not gone yet. But the more we see it and understand it for what is being said, hopefully the more that some can be moved to repentance of things that they're not doing right, of striving to grasp how serious this truly is, of where we are in time.

One of the most serious times of all time, in that respect, because we're coming down to a time where for the first seven eras of God's Church... All those seven eras... Not "first" seven, that's all there is. Throughout those seven eras, people have been allowed to get away with things. But that allowance is the allowance to choose Satan's way. The allowance is to make a choice to leave God's Church.

But nobody, as a whole, thinks they're leaving God's Church when they begin to rebel. Dr. Hoeh didn't think he was leaving God's Church when he was teaching against God's apostle about a 14/15th Passover. He thought, he believed in his heart and mind, "This is right." Well, in his heart and mind and where it was, judgmental against Herbert Armstrong.

You know, when those things start to happen you've got to have certain thoughts and thinking toward someone else who has taught something different. He didn't get it because it's spiritual. He lost that a long time before that. Anyway, call a spade a spade.

So, what kind of sins are you fooling around with? Are there any? Do you know your battles? I've often in times past talked about the one, two, three's, the most important ones you have to pray about and focus on the most. Because you might have a dozen... I'm just kidding there in part.

There are refined things in life. There are going to be things that are a part of our nature, but there are always going to be certain things that are at the peak of all that, one, two, and three, that if we can understand those then we can deal with the rest more easily, if we're battling the most serious. Because it's a spirit and it's a way of thinking. If we can understand our thinking and repent of those things that have to do with the one, two's, and three's, then the others will be far easier to deal with and to conquer, to battle against. I hope we understand that.

So, that's why I asked the question, what sins? Because every year...every year... Every year! I get so tired and worn out by some of this, but I know it's a part of a process. Wears me down sometimes inside, inside if you will, of dealing with various things. Because sometimes we don't hear. But that's a part of the territory. But I hope you understand what I'm saying. Because it hurts.

God says flee sin! Flee fornication! That's what Paul talked about. That's on a spiritual plane. Sadly, sometimes people have to do it physically! You can't fool around with sin, whatever that sin is. Pornography?! I know somewhere out there it still exists in God's Church! Misuse of alcohol?! I know it still exists out there in God's Church! Lying to God and stealing from God, I know it still exists out here in God's Church!

But it will not exist in the Millennium! So, I'm crying out with all my being, in that respect, to say, God isn't going to allow those things. All these seven eras that had evil in them, we cannot take evil with us into this new age. God isn't going to allow it. Either that's from God or it isn't! What do we see? What do we believe?

I'm crying out to those who hopefully have ears to hear and will repent. Because we have people who have battles in these areas. Have to counsel with and work with different ones in some of these kinds of things. And gladly, willing to do that if you'll listen to what's being said, and you will fight it and strive to conquer and overcome it.

But if you keep slipping back to it, you know, and you keep going back to certain things then what are you really trying to conquer? Do you really sense the seriousness, the gravity of what you're doing? Do you understand you're coming down to a point in time where God is going to say, "No more."

I don't know where we are in this, but I know we're getting very close where God is going to say, "No more time! The decision has been made." Nothing is owed to any of us, but God has offered us everything. He's offered us everything and all we have to do is grab it with all of our being. Thank God. Cry out to God for His holy spirit to live in our lives fully. Cry out for help to be able to repent of sin and to hate it, to learn to hate it.

You know, you've got to hate the sin, not love it. That's why we sin as human beings. Because we still love it. We've got to learn to hate it.

That's why a long time ago I used to talk about cigarettes and use that because we had so many smoking in God's Church. I think of one area we had; people would forget they had it in their pocket. Go to services, "What's that in your pocket?" Paloma Camel thing or whatever, "What is that, a pyramid?" "Is that a camel I see in your pocket?" Stupid, foolish things because as soon as they leave Sabbath services they're smoking. "Whew, two hours!" Then smoking again.

It's like making like a totem pole, this great big round thing out there, goes up so high and at the top and it's all red and you can have smoke coming out of it. "Ah, Cigarette! Oh, Cigarette, I love you! (Not so much you, God.) I love you!" How can that exist in the environs of God's Church? But it has. I hope there's no one doing something that stupid anymore because that's a simple physical thing to deal with in life. Physical.

You say, "Oh no, it's got a hold of me! I can't give it up!" What a horrible thing! Something so stupid and minor in life. Anyway, it's amazing what we do as human beings, what we'll latch on to and not honor God. Number one, God is first.

So, I used to tell people, you have to learn to hate the cigarettes. You've got to quit loving them. You've got to see it for what it is. It's like getting that carton and just hugging it. You don't want to squeeze it too much because you'll make it where they're not going to be able to be smoked like they should be. Squeeze! That's how stupid it is, you know.

To rush out there to have fornication, adultery with someone in the world or in the church, supposedly in the Church. Think, hmm, how long are you going to have that before you start having problems? You know, this always blows my mind. People think that in the world as a whole, they get married, someone

betrays them, they go out and sin against them and they think that might not happen ever again. Then they go and do, repeat the same patterns again and again and again. It's like, you think you can trust them now? Do you think they're going to be faithful because they weren't faithful before in the world?

I hope you understand what I'm saying. Sick. Sick. Sick. Evil that turns anyone away from God. What word can you use but just to have a sick feeling inside your being as you use the word, "That's evil." Things that have done in the environment of God's church, that have turned away from God, turned away from Christ, turned toward the synagogue of Satan? I mean, there is no greater evil. Sick.

1 John 3:8—Whoever commits (lives, practices) **sin is of the devil.** Hopefully, we've grown to where this rings in our ears stronger than it did when we first addressed it earlier on in the year. Powerful words.

Whoever sins—turns away from God, holds on to something else, certain idolatry that is there that doesn't put God first. Because as soon as sin was committed God isn't in the picture, God is not being put there first—it's of the devil, not of God. You know, when God is not being honored, worshiped, loved, and something else is that God says we shouldn't participate in, be a part of because it'll hurt our relationship with Him and we choose the other, sin is of the devil. That's the choice that's been made.

...for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. To destroy evil. That's what it's about.

Whoever is born of God does not, as it, again, **does not sin, for His seed remains** (continue, abides) **in him.** So, if we're striving to stay close to God we're not going to sin though we understand we have sin in our life. But it's not going to be something we are practicing in the sense of fooling around with something that we know we should give up, like the simple example of cigarette smoking.

Other sins, they might not seem as bad. We think in our minds we're comparing something. "Well, smoking isn't nearly as bad as going out and committing adultery, or going out and getting drunk and partying," or whatever it might be. You know, that's blown my mind in times past, how people could, supposedly in God's Church, going out to parties and being in the lifestyle of some of the kinds of dances and drinking and drug taking that's going on in that environment.

Think, what's that all about? Why do you like that so much? What's wrong in your mind that you want to keep going to these clubs over and over again? Do we have people in God's Church going to clubs? You know, being in an environment where drugs are because that's the environment that's there? Because that's there are certain kinds of environment that's what it's about.

There are places that you can go nowadays, and they've got signs up about marijuana usage now. It's going to cost you some certain amount of money because it stinks so much it ruins everything in the room. It gets in the curtains. And so, recently we just had a place we were in, I think it was Bowling Green where it was on the elevators.

Anyway, wherever it was, you're going to be charged something extra for your room, an extra hundred, two hundred fifty dollars, whatever it might be if you're doing all that. And we were somewhere not too long ago and it started coming—well, that was just cigarette smoking there—that was coming in through the vents. You think, you know, I have to watch myself sometimes.

I'm sorry I'm straying away a little bit from some of this, but I hate cigarette smoke. Now, I don't, I can't distinguish that from marijuana. My wife can. To me, it's just if I smell smoke, it's smoke, and I don't know if it's marijuana. Now, sometimes on occasion I might if it's really, really strong. We've been in some environments where it's been really, really strong. You'll walk through a street area and it's like, ugh, these people are crazy out here. And now it's getting legal about everywhere you go.

I'm sorry I'm straying off course on some of this, but I hate it when people are standing by a certain area. They have to go outside. Just like here, there might be when you leave somebody that's obeying the law, they're going outside, but they're right by the door and the smoke is getting on to you and so you've got to walk a little faster to get through it. I can't stand the smell of it!

Can't stand the smell of sin, whatever sin it is. But the more we can have a distaste for those things, the healthier it is, the better it is you'll never do it. Are there things you will never do? Well, we have some in the Church still doing them. A lot of things have already been cleaned up in the last few years and we have a few more to be cleaned up. We either repent or we get cleaned out.

...and they cannot sin, because they are born or begotten of God. In other words, if we're living as we should and we have God's spirit truly dwelling in us and God is dwelling in us, now, as soon as you sin you know what happens? He's not dwelling there anymore. We're cut off. That's the whole point. And so, we want to repent quickly because we want God to continue in us always.

So, that's the way our minds should be. Not to tolerate or practice sin but to fight it, to conquer it, to not let it conquer us. We're to rule our lives by our choices. That's a choice to look to God and God's spirit and not let other things rule us.

In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil. That's not about the world! It's not about the world! What's an amazing thing is this is about God's Church, and yet this has always existed in God's church, in the environment of God's... I have to be careful how I say that because it's not in God's Church because they're not in God's Church. But it's always existed in the environment of God's church.

So, we can go to church, we can go to the Feast of Tabernacles together but is God in us? I hope He is in everyone this year, but my experience is not going to happen.

"In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." In other words, you may not see it right away, you may not know it right away, but God makes it known. God reveals everything.

Whoever does not live or practice, if you will, **righteousness...** It's a choice whether we practice and live, respond to God. **...is not of God, neither anyone who does not love their brethren.** Now, here is the height of it all and this is where we're really tested, in how we think toward one another in the Body, in the Church, if we want to see people be able to conquer and overcome and not to put down or hurt or hamper someone else's development or growth within the Church. We want to see each other succeed and be a part of God's Family.

Verse 11—For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. It's not a suggestion. It's either a reality in our life or it isn't. And if we've got a problem in any of this in how we think toward one another...?

That's why I think at every Feast we've had conflict between people who are in the environment of God's church. Because I don't know that they're always in God's Church. When people can fight with each other, get upset with each other, get angry with each other, have words with each other at a Feast of Tabernacles, do you know what I know? I know something is deeply, deeply, *deeply* wrong spiritually in their life. Where is God? That's the question.

So, if anything happens this year at any Feast site where anyone gets angry with someone else I would be looking over my shoulder. I might be standing there. Anyway, I'm coming.

...not as Cain who was of that wicked one... See, his mind, his thinking. **...and slayed his brother.** Because sometimes we don't grasp by not loving our brother this is where we're moving toward. This is what we're a part of, taking the life of someone. Either we're giving life to someone else and working toward that and wanting to see that or we're taking it away. Which one are we? Killing or giving life?

...not as Cain who was of that wicked one and slayed his brother. And why did he slay him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Very basic. Very simple. Just like Herbert Armstrong talked about the two trees. There are two ways of life, and we have to choose which one we want, and you have to fight for it with all of your being.

Let's turn over to Romans 8:5 because Paul wrote to the Church about the nature we're to constantly battle.

And before I forget it I wanted to mention here I think of different things we've gone through and I think of how different people were tested, and I was going to introduce it at that point in time, but in the sense of how we've been tried and tested. I think of how we were tried and tested as a Church concerning something as stupid as a jab: Covid shots.

Now, I want to use that opportunity to sneak something in. Covid is on the move. It's rampant out here right now. There are places all over the country here in the U.S. where people have Covid, in God's church.

So, since it's making its way around again it doesn't seem to be as serious as the first batch that went through in the sense of hospitals being full and all the panic, although there are some who are wanting to talk about schools want to have masks again and stuff like that. You think, ugh, give me a break. Some of the things that some want to bring online again.

Please, please, please love your brethren. Do not go to services, do not be in an environment with others in God's Church if you have certain things happening to you. Be careful. It doesn't have to be Covid. It can be the flu. It can be something else that might be catchy. So, you have to be careful to protect and love others, and sometimes things are going to happen to you anyway.

I think of one sitting back there in the back, sure enough, missed so much of the Feast last year. I don't want to see him miss a Feast again. Waved at him across the way. But that's horrible. You know, we catch certain things, and it can easily happen again where some are going to catch certain things. But be very careful to practice what we teach, separation. To be careful of not being in an environment with others that something might be passed along.

So, if you have any kind of a temperature, if you aren't feeling well, if you're not feeling really good in that respect, if you have a cough, if anything along those lines, please be careful. Don't bring it around God's people.

Now watch me, I'll get over there and have allergies, but anyway, if you have to take a thermometer, take it with you to the Feast, or whatever else you might have weaknesses in, be careful. But the main reason I'm saying some of these things is we want to have a great Feast and we don't want to spread anything through.

I think of the time up here in Cincinnati, I think it was, some stuff went through the Church. It was like, man, it was horrible. Heard about some of that and thought, man, that's awful. But if we'll all be very, very careful to try to not let anything be passed from us? That doesn't mean you can do that a hundred percent, but you can strive to do the best you can. So, please don't cough in my face. Just kidding.

Ask for God's blessings. Ask for God's protection. You know, I think of all the traveling we do, all the airplanes, all the airports and places we are, and how blessed we've been. Doesn't mean God won't allow us to catch something at a certain point in time, and I hope it doesn't happen that way... I better be careful. If I have to do something within my room to give a sermon, I'll do it within my room, because otherwise, you're not going to get the full sermons at the Feast. So, hopefully, that doesn't happen. So, I appreciate your prayers, too, for protection. But we need to pray for one another and for the Church and for the Feast coming up.

Anyway, I want to get back to this, finish this. **Romans 8:5—For those who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but those who are after the spirit, the things...** It's talking about something so

basic. It's like the give and get way. It's how do we think? How do our minds work? Do we get pulled away by the physical world?

That's why sometimes in things that are going on out here, battles that are coming our way, and battles that are out there right now, don't let those things pull you down. Don't let those things pull you away. Ask God for help to be strengthened in your mind, in your being. We should be drawing closer to God at a time when we're going through trials. Do we understand that? That's the time we should be on our knees more and praying to God more when we're going through a trial, whatever that might be, and ask for God's deliverance.

Doesn't mean He's going to give it instantly. There are choices you have to make, and you have to make them according to how you think, is in agreement with God's will. What is God's will? What should you be doing that's pleasing to God, that's right?

For those who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but those who are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death. So, if we move away from God, if we hold on to something else, if we're doing something we shouldn't be doing God knows. He knows everything in your heart and your mind, how you think.

What are we doing? Carnally minded, which means selfish, we're being selfish. We're giving in to our selfishness and letting it rule us rather than us ruling it. Because that's what God tells us to do through the power of His holy spirit, we're to control.

That's why certain things like marijuana usage, drug usage, which we've had in God's church, too much of in some people's lives because they've come out of some of that culture, and they go back into it. There are those who become a part of PKG, and they went back to it and they're not with us anymore.

The mind is a precious thing, and if you don't have the ability to control it? That's why alcoholism is so bad. That's why marijuana is so bad. That's why drugs are so bad. Those kinds of things. Because it affects the way we think, how we think, and as to whether or not we have the ability to be in control. If you don't have the ability to do that you can't blame it on those things. It was because of your wrong choices. That's why those things are so dangerous. Because they mess up thinking that otherwise should be there. Not just talking about other sins that in life where we just flat get cut off from God's spirit anyway.

...but to be spiritually minded is life, and when it says that I hope you understand what it's talking about. Because it's not just talking about physical life. No, it's talking about the life that God's offering us; to be spiritually minded is the life that God wants to give to us, and it's His life that we can have living in us.

...and peace. Because that's the product of His spirit living within us. Not drama. Not people getting upset and mad at each other or mad at the clerk or mad at someone else because something didn't go

right, or going out and chewing out the people because something wasn't right in your room that you didn't like. Strive to be pleasant and realize that there are others here and you're representing something.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God. It's just the way our minds are by nature. Don't give in to that, fight against it. ...**for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.** So, that's our battle. That's what selfishness is. This is the mind of selfishness. It's against God. It wants you to do your own thing, to make your own choices, to go your own way, for you to judge what is right and wrong, what you can allow and not allow in your life.

Now, you should know what to allow or not allow in your life. You should know the difference between sin and what is sin and what is not sin. If you're honest, you do.

But you are not of the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwells in you. So, this is a tell-tale sign in our lives that should shake the tar out of some people sometimes when they can't see certain things and they read something like this, to realize, is God in you? Have you cut yourself off from God's spirit? You need His help every day. I need His help every day.

Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, they are none of his. What a horrible state. That's why we should be so sobered by sin and not want any of it to be in our life but to be repenting constantly. Because if God's spirit isn't in us and we're none of Christ's, we're not able to battle what is out there, I'll tell you. We just can't do it. We're going to lose.

Now, if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life. God's spirit, that life that we need in us. So, we're to put to death the deeds of the body. That's what this is talking about in essence. ...**is life because of righteousness.**

Now, if the spirit of Him who raised up Joshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised up Christ from the dead will also make alive your mortal bodies because of His spirit which dwells in you. So, it's something future, yes, but it's even now. Make us alive. God's spirit makes us alive. There's a life in us that is beyond that which is physical. It's not just our heart beating and blood going through there and circulating and us breathing and so forth; it's about a life that's inside of us, inside here that we're able to have that's transforming our thinking and making us something new.

Anyway, we'll stop there. We should cry out for that and yield to that.

So, I was going to read a bunch of news but we're not going to. It's all bad news anyway. But it's amazing where we are, brethren. If you see what's happening in the world, some of the evil that's in the world, it should be crying out to us we're getting closer and closer, and things have speeded up more and more.