

We're going through a sermon series that's leading up to Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, and after giving one of the longest introductions I think I've ever given... Well, I know it's the longest I've ever given because it basically took up most of *Part 1*, we are now moving forward through a topic that hasn't necessarily been that well understood as to how we're to glorify God, which is what this series is entitled. Today is *Part 3*.

Last Sabbath I had to end rather abruptly. Sinuses, my throat, whatever, allergies had flared up pretty bad so I came to a conclusion rather quickly there because I couldn't talk very well.

Anyway, let's review some of those last few verses that we were covering in Matthew 5 last week which is an area of scripture that many refer to as the "sermon on the mount." So, we've been covering parts of that, Matthew 5. They help to drive home the point that how we live determines the degree to which we glorify God or can glorify God. And hopefully, we'll come to a better understanding of that as we continue through this series.

Let's pick this up again in Matthew 5:10. Again, these were the things that Christ was teaching in the sermon on the mount.

Matthew 5:10—Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. So again, making it very clear here this is not to the world, this is not to mankind in general, it's something that Christ was giving to the Church that would begin in 31 AD after he was resurrected.

So, this is all in preparation for those things, of those things we need to grasp and understand in the Church of how we're to live our lives, that this is how we're to think, this is how we're to live, these are the things we're to pray about and ask God for, obviously, that we have this mentality of a willingness to go through the things that have been laid before us.

And so, "being persecuted for righteousness' sake" which means as a matter of what you believe, of what you live because that's what determines righteousness. God attributes righteousness to us because we believe Him and then we live, seek to live by the things He's told us. That's attributed to us for righteousness.

Oftentimes then we find in the world, whether it's in the job, whether it's by relatives, whether it's by others around us, because it's different from what they think, from what they have taught, and being very large as it were around the world, tends to, to them, give credibility that they are right. Something that comes along that's very small, which God's Church has always been very small by God's design, by God's purpose, nevertheless, His Church because of what we believe, because of what we live isn't

received very well. Because the reality is they can't understand it, they can't receive it anyway. They really, they just can't.

And so, much of what Christ lived toward others was a matter of giving us an understanding just as he said toward the end there, "Father, forgive them, they don't know what they're doing." We should understand that, deeply understand that. They don't comprehend what they're doing toward us or to us or whatever it might be when it's a matter of how they treat us perhaps in a very wrong way, which happens from time to time wherever it might be. Like I said, on the job, by relatives or whatever.

"For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." So, the only ones that are being given that opportunity to receive that are God's people, those who are baptized with God's spirit who have the impregnation of God's spirit working in them with the spirit that's already in mankind to help transform our thinking. We can think differently. We don't have to stay the way we are. It's a matter of repentance and change and learning to think differently, which I think is a beautiful thing every time I think about it. That's what repentance in the Greek language means; it simply means "to think differently." That is what God has called us to do.

Blessed are you when you are highly criticized (reviled), persecuted, and have all manner of evil spoken against you falsely for my sake. Those kinds of things happen, again, by people who don't understand and don't comprehend and read things into it, again that are wrong because they have to look at it from a physical perspective. They don't have God's spirit to understand those things.

So again, it's our willingness to endure such things that actually glorify God because living this way is a part of the process of glorifying God. Because we have to have His holy spirit in us to be able to live this way, to think this way, to think differently, to live through things like this the right way. Because living through these things, when they confront you, is not an easy thing to do as far as the human mind is concerned. That's why we have to have God's spirit and have to cry out for God's spirit to be in us. We want His help. We need His help. We can't do it on our own.

Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Now, it's not just because of a reward that we're doing it, that we're motivated to live this way of life, because of what we're going to get because then that would be totally wrong, but it's a matter of an understanding that we understand that we're called to inherit all things with Christ as it says in scripture. To understand what that means on a grand scale, we can't comprehend that fully.

All things that were created throughout the universe, of things that God has planned, it's out there for a reason! There used to be a kind of thinking that there would come a time when everything would be burned up with firmament of fire, or whatever it is, the earth itself would disappear. That's not what it's about, those scriptures that are distorted and misunderstood. It has nothing to do with that. God put it all here for a reason, to last for a long, long, long time. We're going to be a part of doing things out there

we don't comprehend yet, and it's going to be exciting. Everything that God does is exciting and inspiring.

"Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven." So, it's just an affirmation here. That's what you rejoice in. You're thankful because God's called you, opened up your mind, said these things are before you, and this is what we can look forward to. We're to rejoice in those things, be thankful for those things.

...for in the same manner, they persecuted the prophets which were before you.

And so, we ended in this area here where it says, **You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its taste, how can it be salty again?** I marvel at what we were given at the Feast of Tabernacles. We were given areas of judgment because God's giving us something special in that regard, an ability to judge and learn how to judge because of all the insight and knowledge, and truth He's given to us that we're being prepared for things in His Family. To me, that's exciting. It's moving. It's motivating.

To understand that this is something unique to this group, to this Body right now that is being given in a — How can I say it? — again, in a unique way that others haven't experienced through time. Because we all fit in the Temple in a different manner. This is a unique thing that's being given and so we're learning how to do these things.

And so, thinking about that at the Feast of Tabernacles, what was given, this way of life isn't owed to us. We have to fight for it. And if we don't fight for God's way of life and seek His holy spirit to live and dwell within us day by day by day, which means we're repenting of sin as well and seeking Him and His Son to dwell within us and we in them, then what?

That's what makes us the salt of the earth; it's by the power of God's spirit. Because you can't wake up and say, "I'm going to be the salt of the earth today. I'm going to do 'this,' I'm going to do 'that.'" It doesn't mean a thing. You have to have God's spirit that's changing the way we think and how we deal with matters. It's a constant matter of growth and change that's taking place in our minds through time.

But if we lose that? Again, "How can it be salty again?" That's why I think of people who have turned their back and become antichrist. I think of how much that is spoken of in scripture, especially by John. At the end there, obviously, that's where it's primarily focused upon. They had been focusing upon it for a long time because Paul spoke first of someone who would come along, who would instigate, as it were, a great falling away within the Church, who would sit in a place of power and authority, which wasn't fully understood until afterward. Then we could see as God opened our minds what those words were about and what it meant because we experienced it.

Yet John was teaching later on that there are many antichrists. They were looking for that time to come and where there would be a great antichrist as it were who would create or promote or work toward this great falling away, instigate it. But he said there are already many antichrists in the Church. This is around

eighty, ninety (or a little bit later, right in there somewhere) AD. Sixty-some years after the Church began, seventy-some years after the Church began when John was writing about these things, and he said already in the Church of God there are many antichrists!

Which means there are many people who were given the truth, who were baptized, who received the impregnation of God's spirit and turned against everything that Christ died for! The ability for them to be forgiven of sin, the ability for them to have the Father, God Almighty dwell in them and Christ to dwell in them through the power of the holy spirit and we in them, and then to turn their back on that for something generally very physical in the world, whatever it might have been. The pulls of human nature, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," all those areas and categories that fit together to do what happens when people choose to leave.

Because they want something else. They don't want this because it's too hard. Well, if you want things that are in this world it's kind of hard because you can't have both. You can't have the way of this world and God's way. Instead, we have to stand firm and stand up tall and be willing to go through whatever we have to. This is God's way of life and we're going to live it until this is over with for ourselves or whatever. Simple. Very simple.

That's something that I'll never forget when it was toward the beginning of my calling, and being in Hays, Kansas area, and a family asking me, in essence (several families that had come in all related), and they were asking me one night, "How can you be so sure," because it was the vein I talked in, "that you're going to be in God's Kingdom?" It's because that's what God says. He says that's what we're here for, that's what we're called for, to be a part of His Family. And so, it's like it's a given. How do you answer that except that way? And they all left. It didn't take long either – Incredible! – because they weren't convicted of those things. How do you turn back then if you turn away to something else?

I think of one time visiting this one family and going out through their garage one time to help one of the individuals there with some work outside, and I saw this big box there. This was a few years into all this, two or three at least, and there's this big box. They came from a Catholic background, and they had all these statues and crosses and things in there they were saving. What's that for? Still holding on to a little bit of their past rather than shedding the things God tells us we have to shed and get rid of in order to live His way of life. Sad.

And so you think of all the people who have left. What did they get? Sex with someone else who is not their mate? Or illicit sex? Drugs? Getting on drugs because that is more exciting and inspiring than God's truth and God's way of life? Being drunk on a regular basis? Whatever it might be in life that pulls that we have to fight against as human beings. Stealing from God because we want something else, we want our finances to be used somewhere else so we don't tithe and give Holy Day offerings or save second tithe faithfully like we should as God's people. I'll come to that later on because that's not being done very well in God's Church. I already know that. Shame on us. God tells us to keep that, not to use it

however we want, but to use it in a very specific way. We're commanded to do that. If we're faithful servants and faithful to what God has given us to use, we'll use it properly. It's not all just for selfishness.

So, if we turn and do something different from what God shows us and grab a hold of something we want to have because we don't want everything that God gives us, we want something else, how can you be resalted? How can you have that added back into your life if you turn against it, turn away from it?

It is no longer good for anything but to be cast out and to be trampled underfoot by mankind. You are the light of the world. It's amazing. It's just a little bit of light in this world. It doesn't have to be a lot of people.

I think back to the time of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses. A little bit of light becoming a little bit stronger. But even during the time of Moses there weren't that many who were called, being worked with by God. We can see Joshua was worked with in a very powerful way by God. Likely Aaron, Miriam. We don't know fully. Moses most definitely. But there was just a little bit more light.

So in the four thousand years, started out pretty dim, if you would, in that respect. Very few that were called by God to be able to see and understand various things in His purpose or whatever it might be just as how we're supposed to live. Then God gave more and more. Moses came along and more and more was given while they were forty years in the wilderness. But it was given to a physical people, it wasn't given to a Church, to a spiritual people of God. There were a few during that time period then, they made up the light of the world.

Because the light of the world is about what God is doing with individuals. Because if the light wasn't there, there would be no purpose for God continuing on. If people wouldn't yield to what God is giving to them and able to be worked with by God in the purpose of molding and fashioning 144,000, then what's the purpose if it can't be done, if it can't be achieved? Then it's of no value. But to God, we are the light of the world because of His spirit that can dwell in us. That's the light. It's John 1, the light, the Word that was given to us. Awesome! It's what it's talking about.

As the Church began, light got stronger because there were more being worked with in the world, and it's going to get brighter and brighter. During the Millennium? Powerful. There are still going to be a lot who don't want it. Great White Throne, same thing. A lot who are going to receive it but a lot who aren't. How many on each side we don't know yet.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Because of being God's people. Can't be hid. It's there. God sees it. God knows it. Whether anybody else does or not is immaterial.

Neither does anyone light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick so that it gives light to all of those who are in the house. So, to those who are in a particular area, to those who are in the

house. In the Church, we should see it amongst ourselves. You don't see it in the world, but we see it amongst ourselves. We're able to experience it amongst ourselves. It's a beautiful thing.

Let your light so shine. And so, it's up to us whether it's going to shine in each one of us, which requires God's spirit. That's what John 1 is about as it starts out there, that light is to be in our lives, it's to live in and through us, but it's a matter of God's spirit and God's power that accomplishes that, to see God's way being lived by others.

Let your light so shine before others. Primarily, here. Others in the world as well, but they're not going to be able to respond to that until they're called. When God says in the day of visitation they're going to be able to glorify God when they all of a sudden understand why you did what you did, why you were different, why you took the Sabbath off, why you took Holy Days off, why you took the Feast of Tabernacles off from school or whatever it might have been, to be with God's people, to be at one with God, to experience what the Feast of Tabernacles has to offer.

So that they might see your good works. Even amongst ourselves because that's encouraging. When people live God's way of life there is nothing more, and I need that, my wife needs that. When we visit various areas we are seeing more closeness and unity and oneness that's a result of God's spirit than we've ever seen in God's Church. That's exciting! That lifts us up and inspires us.

We're blessed to go into different areas and visit with people – not for a long time – but to be there long enough that everyone can especially come together on the Sabbath and have that fellowship and that uniqueness that generally more come in at that moment in time, obviously, make sure that they can even travel a little farther if need be so they can all be together, which is a good thing. Then to see that in our action amongst them, it's inspiring. I need it. We need it. They need it. That's what this was about.

...and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Because you're living this. Because you're doing it.

So again, by better understanding how the term "glorify" is used in the example we're covering it should help us to see more clearly our part, the things we must do that work to glorify God because it's a matter of what we do and how we do it. It's a matter of utilizing God's spirit because He made it available. The sacrifice of Christ is so that we could repent of our sins so that we can change. That's what glorifies God – because we're changing.

John 14:9. Now, we're going to be reading this again on Passover. Every Passover we go into John 14 and 15 and cover some of these because these are the things Christ taught on the last night of his life on this earth as a physical human being. They are some of the most important things ever given in scripture. To me, they are the most exciting and most important things that God has ever given to mankind, to understand that God wants to dwell in us! That wasn't given until some of those things began at that particular time. How much some of them understood in the beginning, we don't know. But they're written about in various places, so they had a definite basic understanding of all of it.

Then it was lost for a long, long time, and in large part as to how this process works, that Christ is coming in the flesh. It's supposed to be continual. That's why I love it in the Greek language. It's like a continual, ongoing process. That's what it's supposed to be, God's spirit coming into our lives and through us constantly. That's how the word is used. He is coming into our lives, like present progressive. We're blessed to understand those things, that process. As we yield to that process it glorifies God.

John 14:9—Joshua said unto him, Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father; so how can you say, Show us the Father? Now, this is a marvelous thing, an inspiring thing. Again, Christ gave these at this particular time. There could be nothing greater that's ever been given in that respect of the importance of what God is doing through this process, of Christ and God the Father living in us and we are able to live within them, the Body of Christ, the Church of God on a spiritual plane.

Show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? So, he starts out very basic with them, "This is how it works. You're looking for something physical." That's what they wanted, "If you'll just show us the Father that'll satisfy us, that will answer everything."

It wasn't a matter of seeing God because no one can see God unless they're spirit in composition. God is spirit and no human being can see spirit. God has never shown that to anyone because you can't see it! He's manifested some physical things like Melchizedek and whatever that people could see, but He can't manifest himself because He's spirit (in a sense physically). So, all that human beings can see are physical things. He says here, "You've seen the Father because He's in me and I'm in him." It's a spiritual thing. It's not a physical thing.

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak from myself. That's what the word really means. Not "of myself" but "from myself." "They're not from the way I think apart from God. They're not my own workings up here." Which too often has happened in God's Church; as people grow, they begin to think without God's spirit and begin to think about different things that they haven't been taught, things that they think that they see.

Unless God gives it to you, who are you? And yet we've had so many go through the Church like that. They begin to see something. They begin to feel that everybody else needs to see it too, and it's different from anything that's been given. It's like you're smoking something and it's not healthy for you.

The words that I speak to you I do not speak from myself but the Father who dwells in me, He does the works. It's about the work that comes from God that's accomplished through the power of His holy spirit. God does the work. He gives us the ability to see things, that work, in other words, that He's doing through the power of the spirit that enables us to see things, truth on a spiritual plane, truths, period, His way of life spiritually that we can see. It's because God is working in us to be able to do that.

Then it depends upon us, how we respond to that, how we react to that, how we live according to that. All the glory and the honor goes to God, doesn't it? It all belongs to God. We don't do diddly-squat on our own by ourselves that's valuable and meaningful and lasting. What is lasting has to come from God. That's what is lasting. Because it's truth. Because it's power. Because it's spirit that emanates from God Almighty.

Verse 11—Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me, but if not... It says "or else" in King James but the words literally mean, **but if not believe me because of**, which is what this word means, **because of the works themselves**. Because that which is spiritual, that which is true, which he was teaching them, can only come from God. They came first through Joshua to the disciples as he was teaching them. This was all from God. Everything he was teaching that night, and he taught a lot that night, came all from God the Father. He didn't say it came from him.

Yes, he believed it and he taught it. By God's spirit, he saw it, he knew it, and he gave it, he delivered it, but it's God's spirit. Anyone that was able to receive it, which they couldn't yet – you know why? They didn't have God's spirit yet. They could see a little bit here and there, but they couldn't really "see" it until the day of Pentecost. Then all of a sudden. Can you imagine all the things that Christ had been teaching them for that three and a half years all of a sudden came flooding into their minds because of the holy spirit they were receiving on the day of Pentecost, and then all of a sudden, everything he taught came alive powerfully in their minds. Beautiful.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me, the works that I do will they do also; and greater works than these shall they do, because I go unto my Father. So, it's going to get bigger. There is more that's going to be accomplished. In the last two thousand years, a lot has been accomplished. The majority of those who are going to be a part of 144,000 have been called during the last two thousand years. Great work. Powerful. Greater works. That was just the beginning in the sense of getting ready to begin with the Church. Awesome!

Verse 13—Whatever you will ask in my name, that I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Well, what does all that mean? If we believe what God says. If we believe what Christ said that night, which comes from God, and we strive to live by it and yield to it, we're being told that we need to ask. We need to go before God and make our petitions to Him. It's a matter of prayer life. See, how human beings think is you can ask for anything. It's not what this is about.

The whole context of John 14 especially, and John 15, is about God's holy spirit that can live and dwell within us. That's what God wants us to have. He wants us to be filled with that life, with His spirit, with the light, with the truth. That comes from God, and we can have that in us, and where we're lacking and where we want to hold on and do various things concerning our knowing that we need His spirit in our life each day, we ask! We go before God because you need God every day. If you're trying to do this on your own, well, prayerfully you grow to the point where you begin to learn that doesn't work. When we

rely on our own human reasoning, our own human ways of doing various things, it doesn't work. The more we grasp, "I need God every day," the more you will ask. He wants us to have His spirit every day of our life.

That's why fasting is a good tool. It teaches something. Without physical food how do you feel in a day, by the end of a day? If that doesn't teach you, how about the end of two days? Do we begin to get it? We're weak! We're weak as human beings! And without physical food and water, we just get weaker, and you get to where you hurt, your joints can begin to hurt and to ache. And if you don't believe that...! Well, I won't go on. But it gets harder as human beings. We're to learn from that. You go a day without prayer, what does that do? You're relying on yourself! Because it doesn't go with what God says we're to do. "Give us this day," as the outline of prayer is, "our daily food." That's what it's about, bread. "Our daily food."

Well, what does that mean? It means you have to have something coming into you daily on a spiritual plane because of a relationship with God, and if it's not coming into you, you're going to start getting weaker and weaker and weaker. In time some will become the seventh era in spirit, Laodicean, lukewarm. And if not careful, because that doesn't work, you begin to drift off to sleep. And before long, gone in the world. The majority of people I've known in God's Church, that's what's happened.

Whatever you will ask in my name, that I will do. If we ask for God's spirit and we're doing it, He will give us help. He'll give us that spirit. But you have to ask. You have to know you need it. You have to be convicted of the fact, "I need God." That's what motivates us to do what we know is right. We can't have the salt spiritually in our life that we need unless that life is in us day by day, recharged spiritually day by day. We are weak physical human beings. We're to learn that by food and water. We should learn that spiritually from God.

...ask in my name, that I will do. So that the Father may be glorified in the Son. We want the Father to be glorified, and in the Son because that's what makes it possible, which is a lot about being able to be forgiven of sin, which glorifies God that we can come through this process. We know we need that help of our Passover and we can ask for repentance and be forgiven, and we can then pray that God continue to give us His holy spirit. We need it. I need it and cry out to God accordingly day by day. It glorifies God because we do it, because we obey, because we see the importance of what He's saying.

If you will ask anything – in the context of what he's saying. Not that you're going to go down and put twenty bucks on the lottery that's up over a billion, or it was. I don't know if it is now. It's like, "What could I do with that?" You don't want to know. What God offers is so much greater, but we don't tend to think that way as human beings. So, in context, it's about what God is offering us — **I will do.** This is not a separate thought then from what is said next, so let's continue on.

Verse 15—If you love me, keep my commandments. God shows us there is a right way to live, and it's about relationships. We strive to live by those things, we ask God for help. Where we're falling short in any fashion on a spiritual plane, we're to cry out to God for help to correct that.

Even I will pray the Father, and He will give you another comforter. This is the Greek word "paracletes" that's used once concerning the holy spirit. It's used later on concerning Christ – paracletes, the comforter. Christ is our comforter, very powerfully so because he's our Passover and he's our High Priest, and then the power of the holy spirit that we're able to receive because of knowing those things and looking to him accordingly.

And so, he's saying here that he looks to the Father to give us then of the holy spirit. That's what it's all about, so that we can receive the holy spirit. Because the point is if we don't do it this way and we try to do certain things on our own then he can't give it to us. Because God has given Christ charge of all things concerning the Church, concerning the world, candidly. Everything has been put under his hands, his feet if you will, until everything is brought in subjection to him. Then I love those verses, and then at the end, it says all is given back to the Father. Because it's the Father's anyway, but the point being is that it has to go through this process of coming under Christ, and then when it's all finished, meaning Elohim is complete, it's the Father's. Beautiful!

I love this word too because it literally means "called to one's side." Paracletes – called to one's side. God calls us to His side. We're called to Christ's side, to be beside them, to be with them, to receive of that life within us, that they dwell in us, and we are blessed then to dwell in them. Awesome!

...that it may abide with you forever. The holy spirit. So that it can be with us forever. Not having times when it begins to be quenched. That's why we're told don't let it get to a point where it's quenched or that we begin to be cut off because of sin.

...even the spirit of truth. Because that's what it gives. God's spirit reveals His way, His truth. We become more convicted of it through that power. We can see it more clearly because of that power. Because when people begin to get weak and so forth they lose these things. They lose it. They lose it! Then they pick and choose what they might want to keep.

That's why I've always been dumbfounded by how so many, "Yeah, I did this, and I've done that, but I will never eat pork again." Well, whoop-tee-do for you. It's not even a spiritual thing. It's a physical thing of something we should honor God by realizing He made our bodies, He knows what's supposed to be in our bodies and what isn't and so we follow that and believe that and obey that, obviously, because of what He's given to us. We believe He made us; He created us, and we need Him, and we need everything He said, not just abstaining from pork and somehow we're really good because of that. We feel better about ourselves.

Because that's all they can do. Once you leave God's Church and don't have His holy spirit again, that's all people can do, hold on to something physical. Maybe even keep physically a seventh-day Sabbath, whatever that means. But it doesn't mean the same as it does for God's Church because you keep it with God's holy spirit!

...even the spirit of truth which the world cannot receive because it does not see it. The world doesn't see what God has yet. Their time hasn't come yet. Most of that will be in the Great White Throne when they're resurrected to a second life.

What an incredible thing to find in scripture, that the Bible talks about a second death. And yet they don't want to talk about that because they don't grasp it. Because they can't. "What does that mean? How can you have two deaths physically?" Well, maybe it's because you're going to have two lives physically that enables you to have a second death if you don't live it right.

But again, even on a physical plane, when it's explained that should have some ability to grasp a few things there to a limited way to cause some curiosity, but spiritually it can't be seen.

...even the spirit of truth which the world cannot receive because it does not see it, neither knows it. Because God hasn't given it to them to see it because it's spiritual. That's why I've mentioned so much here recently what we have from God, the truths we have, it's astounding. More than any human beings throughout time, except for Christ. But I'm talking about mother and father being human. And to understand far, far more because of the time we're blessed to live in, because of being just before Christ is going to return. Awesome!

...neither knows it (the world), but you know it, for it dwells with you and shall be in you. If—IF!—we ask because this is all a part of the context. If we're asking for that in our lives because we want it, we want the truth, we want His spirit, we need it so we can continue to see. Because the world can't see because it doesn't have His spirit. And if we begin to quench the spirit or begin to go whatever, asleep or whatever it might be, then we begin to lose it because it's spiritual. So again, how do we go about glorifying God?

Recently, an older gentleman who had been around the Church for over forty years... I might mention in here, too, because I didn't put it in my notes, but had come to us probably just a few years ago here, maybe three years ago, and had been around the Church of God for forty years, and he chose to no longer be associated with the Church of God—PKG recently. I thought it would be good to go over a few of the things that have come out concerning his reasoning for leaving as some of it fits into what we're covering here. It's just food for thought.

Now, one of the first things was that he was leaving because of Paul saying in 1st Corinthians that women are not to speak in the Church. Sad. Sad. But what does that reveal? It reveals a lack of God's spirit. His

own fault. If he was given the ability to see it, which I don't know that he was at any point, but maybe he was, and if he was then he rejected that truth because it comes from God. It's a matter of God's spirit.

Sometimes people come in with their own ideas and things they want things to be a certain way. Especially, it's getting harder. That's why it's getting harder and harder for people to come out of this world when they're in the scattered Body for so long. Because these things are so deeply set—Set!—in their minds. So long without God's holy spirit. It becomes a horrible thing. How can you put salt back? That's in God's hands depending on what stage they are and how far they've gone with things. It's a horrible thing.

So anyway, women aren't to speak in the Church. Yes, very true. That lasted for nearly two thousand years in God's Church until God made it clear that now it's time to address this again. It's a matter of what God gives in His timing. So, this isn't written for all time. Everything that was given through time in some of these matters of judgments and the like and things that were stated by Paul or Peter or others, there are some things that God can reveal more about at a different time that we're to embrace.

It wasn't time because the world had to go through two thousand years yet almost until where God would begin to work with the world first – not the Church – but with the world first to begin changing something. It's because of, really, two wars in essence that helped to change a lot of this, especially World War II, and that women had to come in and work in factories, that some of the attitudes began to change toward women working.

There was a time even in God's Church where it was almost like it was wrong for a woman to work in the world. Well, that's because we didn't grasp and understand. Well, at that time the present truth. So, you know what, as a whole, that's the way it was done. There was a time too when it was like the man had to do all the finances because if the woman does it she rules. Well, it shows a lack of understanding again, but that's where we were.

Now, I have to tell a story about myself. When I first got married, when we first got married, I could write checks, but I was really poor about recording anything. This isn't smart, especially when you're struggling in the beginning, and you don't have that much in there. You've got to kind of keep on top of things as far as budgeting is concerned. So, it didn't take me very long to very candidly get to the point where I said, "Please, please do it. I'm so happy that you know how to do it, that you want to do it." I was at peace even though some of these things had been taught.

So, here we are, women aren't to speak in the Church...until they are. And if God comes along through an apostle and says that they are then that's the way it is. That's a matter of a conviction, again. Do we believe? It's a matter of going back and looking at all the truths we've been given, to understand everything that can't be there unless God's spirit is in it. You can't see things about Melchizedek, you can't see things about Christ, you can't see that he wasn't Yahweh. You can't see those things unless it's God's time to see it. Awesome!

And when it's God's time then He gives it through an apostle, if you will, and then those who are able to see those things, they know how it came to them. Then they become more convicted—that's how it works—that this is how God is working. Those who have that conviction, that's one thing. Those who don't?

Because I know that we still have some who are still resisting this in parts. Women who are in the ministry and even women who speak in the Church...or a woman. It's not women yet. But we're going to be there one day. Awesome! Because it's God's purpose for what's going to happen through the Millennium because things in family have to change. Thinking of men toward women has to change. God has been doing that for a long time with helping different people, different groups.

I think of some, if you've ever seen some of the movies that are based on things that are true about suffrage and so forth, did they do it all right? No. But in their time, it's about the only thing they could do. And so, in many cases, you see this struggle went on and you think that's incredible, that slowly but surely the world began to change in these things to where finally – I think of going through some of that not too long ago and talking about different ones who became leaders of their nations. Those things were unheard of at different times as a whole.

There is one group I really look forward to being able to see the truth in this area, who think, and men think they have to be fully covered up. To me, that is the most perverted, distorted, sick thing that could exist in a family. Sad.

So, when it comes to God's law it cannot be changed. Okay? What Paul was talking about in 1st Corinthians is not one of the ten commandments. It is not a law and a statute if you will, in that respect, as to how to live life. It was to go to a certain time in God's time and then it changed. We believe it or we don't. And if we don't, we need to leave. If you don't believe it, if you're not convicted of it, if you're still having problems with that, it's better just to go find someplace else where you believe the Church might be, wherever you think God's truth is being taught.

Because God made it very clear His Church is going to exist to the very end. So, where is it? You've got over six hundred you can look into out there.

God's law doesn't change. It cannot be changed. What Paul gave was not a matter of God's law, it was direction for the Church at that time because this is the way the world was, and you had to live according to that way.

Just like dressing in moderation. That changes through time. There are some people in certain areas, even in this country, who still think it's wrong to wear zippers. Different clothing that they think they have to wear because they think that's a certain period of time and they have to be in tune with that and somehow that's religious.

I think of a certain religion that has these things hanging down from their waist and long locks, and things on the side of their head. I think, blindness, blindness, blindness, what people make religious.

So, it's no different from, again, God's apostle, Herbert Armstrong, giving direction for the Church concerning make-up for women. There are certain things at times that have to be given direction in the Church. Paul gave some direction at that time. Why did he make that decision and choice? Because that's the way the world was structured. That's the way all the world was structured. To do something different in that is to bring far more oppression upon the Church that wasn't necessary. Because it's not a matter of law in that respect, but it was what was healthy and good for the Church at that particular time.

So again, either a person can receive this, or they cannot. And if they cannot then it's exactly like what is written in **John 14:15-17** here. I'm going to read it again here. **If you love me, keep my commandments. Even I will pray the Father and He will give you another comforter that may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth which the world cannot receive because it does not see it, neither knows it, but you know it.**

So again, the things that you're able to see, the truth that you're able to grasp and comprehend is fully a matter of God's spirit, not a matter of our intellect, a matter of conviction through the power of God's spirit.

So, as a minister and for all of you to see and understand, if a person cannot see a truth it is because either God's spirit is not in them, or they have rejected what God was offering them to see. This should be an easy thing to discern. Because sometimes within the Church we feel that everyone who comes along or is in the Body, that these kinds of things can't happen, that it could have been prevented. It's a choice. This was his choice. And either he had God's spirit in him, or he didn't. And if he didn't, he's not able to see certain things. And if he rejected it, then that was his choice to reject it. So, it's just that simple. If truth is rejected, then such a person is not IN God's Church.

Also, this individual did not accept what I gave to the Church concerning Christ's name being Joshua. Well, again, you can't give that to anyone. Either it's because of conviction of what they've gone through and seen because of following through what was given as far as sermons were concerned and to come to understand a final great separation in the world, with God's Church in this matter. To me, it was a final area. Free. Free from any connection with any of that. No more. Thank God.

So, it was concluded that I then did not have respect to God's word. Because in some people's minds the King James version, it's holy. You think, no, it isn't. It's a book and it's been translated and retranslated and translated again and people have put their own ideas into some of those expressions and so forth that are given. There's so much damage that's been done to God's work over time, but as a basic area of scripture, even God helps us to come to understand the areas where it's lacking, where it's missing, where it's been misrepresented or misquoted or whatever, mistranslated. And we've gone through this.

Herbert Armstrong went through much of this with the Church over time. God has blessed us to go through with adding more to that then. Awesome! Because we're ever growing in the Church.

So, it was concluded then that I didn't have respect for God's word. Hopefully, for each and every one of us we can see that truth has been rejected and that reveals that such a person is not a part of the Body of Christ. That's just, again, how simple something like this is. In other words, for us, this shouldn't be a hard thing to see. Because it has been.

Going on in the next one here. Next, was disagreement with the fact that we do not have opening prayers or a song service before any message or sermons are given. Again, either an apostle can change such practices or not, the structure of the church and how we do things or not. It's as simple as that. So, it takes us back to some very basic things. What do we believe that we have? How did we receive it? Where did it come from? How did we get it?

Now we come to another matter that reflected a wrong light to this gentleman, and it has much to do with what we're covering in this sermon series. He explained that at the Feast this past year someone was wearing blue jeans and a t-shirt to services. It was evidently told to him on that occasion that he didn't have to wear a suit or a tie.

Now, I have gone through and explained a balance in many of these things and some of the changes we were making in some of these areas. Some have gotten too lax in some of it, and I've made comments about that through time. This matter of seeking moderation and finding out what is balanced and sound is something that each one of us has to go through on our own as a matter of a conviction before God and learning through the process as well.

We are to learn through that process. Even though it's very physical, makeup was very physical, but it turned out to be a big spiritual thing in the sense of how people reacted to it because of their spirit. What we're being told and how we're being led and guided and directed, those are the things that become far more important than the physical thing itself.

Anyway, I thought if someone was told that I could see someone saying, "Yeah, we don't have to wear a tie and a suit, per se." Again, we should strive for a good balance in some of these things. If someone was wearing blue jeans and a t-shirt to services shame on you. Shame on you! Honor God. Does that glorify God by the parameters I have given to God's Church to honor God, to come before His presence?

Because that's what we do on the Sabbath, we come before God's presence in a very profound way more than any other time during the week because this is the time God has chosen to feed us spiritually in a very powerful way Sabbath by Sabbath by Sabbath to give us things that are needed in a timely fashion. That's why it's so awesome! God gives us what we need in a timely fashion when we need it, as we need it for a process of growth as a Body, as a Church. We receive certain things. But if we don't, then we don't glorify God. If someone did this they weren't glorifying God.

Now, I don't know if it happened or not and I'm not going to go digging into it. But I'm hoping that if someone did that and they're hearing me today that they're receiving some adjustments to their thinking. Because the next time, I will follow through and find out what's going on because that shouldn't be in God's presence, in God's Church, that we just come as we are.

That's the attitude. Come as we are. That's how the world is. You can just come as you are with the different sins that you have. It doesn't matter how you lived your life this week. I think of this one religion I remember as a young person, a teenager talking to a friend about this, and he was with this group. It's a big group. Every week he talked about how he could just go there and have everything dissolved, whatever you call it, dissolved, resolved. Anyway, it's like it just disappears when you go to church and maybe go and sit in a booth and tell everybody or tell someone about all you've done and you can go back out and count a few beads, whatever it is, and go back out and you're okay, you can just do whatever you want to do.

You can just come as you are every Sabbath... or to them every Sunday. Just come as you are once a week and live ever how you want to live and then on that day though we better be a little more careful, and asking, and yes, I did this, and I did that. "Didn't you do that the week before?" "Yes. I did it again." "Isn't that what you've done every week for the past year?" "Yes, but I've done it again." "Well, just go and say so and so or whatever and it's okay." "Oh, good." He tried to explain all this to me. I thought that's just weird. That's just really weird. What does that mean?

I'm going to have some more things to say about some of this as we go along here but maybe I should just interject a part of it right now. No, I think I have it in my notes later. I'm going to hold off. I feel pretty good that I have it in my notes later so I'm going to come back to it.

Also, he said that he could not believe as some were playing a game of cards that one individual was cheating at cards in order to win, as he saw him with a card or cards that had been placed in his clothing to conceal them until needed. If that happened the person does need help. Ever who it was.

I mean, if someone is so into playing a game that they can't lose that they're going to cheat and lie and steal, I don't see them being in God's Church. I mean, who's kidding themselves? Seriously! If we can do that and want to cheat, do something that just doesn't reflect God, doesn't glorify God, "I'm putting some aces in here. I'm going to cheat other brethren around the table and I'm going to win this game!" Think, no, you're going to cheat to get it?

I don't understand that if that happened. I'm hoping it didn't happen. I'm hoping he saw something that wasn't real or something, I don't know. Or whatever. I just don't know. But I think, why would anyone...? I don't even understand wanting to play a game and in order to win it you cheat? Where is the fun in that? I mean, to me, that mind is gone! I'm sorry, I just don't grasp that kind of thinking, which is good, I guess.

Because I've known of some people in the environment of God's Church right here in Cincinnati who played certain games, and some would get so mad and upset at times when someone else is winning. Didn't take long and they were gone. Well, it took some time. I think, to get that way over a game where it really in God's Church it should be a matter of spending time together with each other?

I like to spar when I'm playing cards with someone. I like to throw a little smack here and there depending on the person able to receive it. Some people can't so I try to be a little cautious in this. But I like to do that. I enjoy it, and they like to do it back, generally. And when you're ahead you can throw a little bit of that, but after you get behind now it's like now it's their turn. But to me, I enjoy doing that because it's a friendship-type thing. But it's not winning at all costs no matter what. Anyway, I don't need to go through that.

But I think, what do we reflect in our lives? Does it glorify God in little things even?

And so, to hurt someone, if we hadn't looked at the other things, and yet something like this did happen, maybe there were some other people at the table or someone else that saw someone else wearing something like that, how does that affect their thinking? Do people maybe look at others sometimes and then maybe begin to let down a little bit on their own because "so-and-so" has done it and nothing has been said to them? Sadly, that's oftentimes what happens.

A little leaven starts to spread. That's why God says it can spread very quickly. So, we have to be careful. We have to fight against it. We have to strive to uphold a standard of life that is in unity and harmony with what God teaches in order to honor God, in order to glorify God. We should do what we do because we're trying to glorify God, honor God with our lives, not live ever how we want to to get our own way in whatever it might be.

Now, one more thing needs to be addressed in this example. This gentleman expressed his concerns with someone else in God's Church over a period of time since last Feast. Now, all can learn from this and need to learn from this as well. So, in other words, someone else shared this with at least one other person in God's Church, some of these things that had happened at last year's Feast. It was after the announcement of disfellowshipment went out about the individual that someone in the Church contacted me to let me know that they knew all these things and that they had tried to encourage the individual to go to the ministry about this.

I want to make it real clear. Your job didn't stop there. If it was a matter of something that was hurting someone, and they'd been hurt by things they saw. We still have some of this old concept that you can't say something about someone else to the ministry because then that's tattling. If you love someone, if you don't want someone to be hurt, if you want someone to be aware that might be able to help them, which the ministry has the ability to do if they will listen. Because if they won't listen to the ministry then they're not going to listen anyway.

So, I would have loved to have heard this right after the Feast last year when it was given so that I could have contacted the individual who had a discussion and shown him where some of these things were wrong and perhaps even discussed some of these other things, and maybe, maybe he would have been able to repent at that point.

That's why sometimes we don't recognize the responsibility each one of us carries of loving our brother and to know what love is. Love is care and concern for someone else's spiritual welfare especially, and their spiritual well-being. And if we're aware of certain things? That's why God says to go to our brother alone or there is the occasion then to go to the ministry as well depending on the seriousness and the magnitude of it.

I would say the magnitude of this in my mind is very high because we're talking about their life spiritually at this point. Whether they may be able to yet be helped. But as time went on it obviously became it went too far.

So again, sometimes we have to follow through with what we've given to someone or expressed to someone. If they haven't gone after that encouragement was given to go, then that individual had a responsibility to let someone in the ministry know.

And so again, was there sin in what had happened that this gentleman saw? Clearly. There was if some were wearing the blue jeans at services during the Feast because it goes against the guidelines and directions I've given on a very physical plane. Not any different from makeup. You know there was that time that it was felt that it shouldn't be worn and other times, yes, but in moderation.

It's like alcohol. There are religious groups that say that alcohol is bad, you should never have it, because they twist and distort some of the scriptures. The reality is that no, it was clearly in the Old Testament, it was clearly in the New Testament, and it's clearly something we can have. The wine taken on Passover wasn't grape juice, it was fermented. It was wine, had alcohol content in it.

But the whole point is one of moderation. That's how we're to live our lives. Just like those people I talked about that think they have to dress a certain way, can't wear zippers because that's a sin, can't have a bright, shiny car but they can go out and paint it matte black. Well, now that's popular so I don't know if that's such a good idea now. Anyway, I'm just kidding.

When it becomes popular in the world, it's like, well, you're just going to have to go down and sand it, let it just be rusty as all get out, then you might be okay. I think of one that, story of one individual who came into the Church for a time. They didn't think it through. But they joined this one group that didn't believe in having automobiles period, or any kind of motorized vehicle, and they had a motorcycle and so they just hid it under a tarp in their barn while they lived in this community. It's kind of like all those things in that box I saw. It's like, they're not really convicted of what they're teaching so why are you with them?

So, we have to be careful that our actions and so forth don't offend others and cause them to stumble. A lot said in scripture about that. Which is "causing to stumble" means spiritually to sin. To turn away from what God has given, it's sin.

So again, just to be clear, I wear what I do for Sabbath services because, candidly, my first desire is to honor and glorify God. If that isn't a part of your thinking in how you dress when you come before God then you need to address that with God, you truly do. Because that's what should be in our mind. Our mind should be in that vein that we seek to do what we do to honor and glorify God. We're coming into God's presence on the Sabbath, on a Holy Day. So, especially Holy Days, they're special, annual Holy Days. Very special.

Sometimes by how we react to that, the why of what we do, and how we prepare our lives can say a lot about what's going on up here in our thinking toward God Almighty. It is a reality. That's a reality.

And again, as God's apostle, I've also given guidelines concerning such things to the Church. It all comes down to that. It's a matter of how we think towards God, because of God, because we want to honor Him and glorify Him in our thinking and action and be thankful to Him.

I think of one time at a Feast site. It was about how someone was dressed, that they were wearing bib overalls without any t-shirt or anything underneath it, opened on the sides. And so, I went up to talk to him to... I didn't know how to do it. Sometimes we feel quite inadequate in that. I said, basically, was talking to him about it that I had concern and for how others might see certain things for his sake as well.

He said to me that he had a certain, I don't know if you call it, illness, but some problems with his health and that he'd been given permission by the ministry that if this was the best he could do as far as in being able to come into God's presence in the sense of fellowship with God's people, that that was fine. That's great. Awesome. You did the right thing, you were given that guidance and direction, that's good.

Now, there are going to be others who are going to judge that and find fault and not have the discussion or whatever, or whatever it might be if it's troubling them. But again, there are some situations maybe in life where there are different reasons why things are done the way they are. The point is we have to be careful of how we judge as well in all these things.

So, it's a very fine line, but God is teaching us how to do that and we need to be alert to that, how we think toward one another, how we actually judge various matters, that we're careful, that we seek to do it with humility and meekness of spirit. Anyway, all these guidelines are throughout scripture.

Let's turn over to John 15, going on. So again, glorifying God is very much about how we think toward God, and we manifest that by how we live our physical lives. It's manifested in how you live your life day in and day out, truly.

John 15:1. Now, we know these scriptures. Again, scriptures we're going to be reading on Passover night. **I am the true vine,** Christ said, **and my Father is the vinedresser.** So, all these parables, all these things that were given that are physical in nature but for us, the truth, we see them on a spiritual plane that is incredible, awesome indeed.

...and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away. That's what happens in time. Every branch that doesn't bear fruit. It's every branch's responsibility as to whether fruit is being produced. If that isn't responding to God and to Christ then Christ is saying here very clearly, God Almighty will take it away. That's where no longer being in fellowship with the Church comes in. Whether it's done voluntarily, at one's own choice and they're letting us know, or whether it's told to them, "You are no longer a part because of what you are doing and what you have done."

Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Beautiful! God's desire, God's will along with the context of chapter 14 (because it doesn't change just because of a chapter change) it's about God's spirit, it's about God the Father dwelling in us and us dwelling in God and Christ and them dwelling in us, again. It's the receiving of God's holy spirit that's a part of all this, and that produces fruit if we have God's spirit in us.

Because God makes it very clear His spirit doesn't go forth unless it produces fruit. Wherever His spirit goes it has to produce. That's up to us yielding to it and wanting it in our life. And so, there are things where God intervenes at times and does various things to prune off. We all have things we need to get rid of in our life even as we approach Passover. My prayers are very much, as we approach Passover for myself, is that I be able to see things that I need to change that I don't yet see, that I be able to comprehend them and see them so that I can repent of whatever I need to repent of, so I can draw closer to God. And that for the Body, that wherever these things exist that need to be gotten rid of, that they be brought to life, that individuals be able to see them so they have the opportunity to repent of them before Passover or during this period of time.

That which does not, I ask that it be removed. I ask that it be removed. And to me, this is a great blessing that God has given this era, this time period of PKG, of His Church, because He's given us that responsibility and that ability in a magnified way, which has to do with judgment and a responsibility that should be followed, that if we could have grasped those things in times past the Church would have been a whole lot different. But we weren't there yet, and it wasn't God's time yet.

I think of different ones in the ministry, every once in a while in conversation, we discuss some of our past and things that have happened and I think of some who were uprooted from one area and put into another because they caused so much damage. Talked about that here not too long ago where a minister was moved out of Kansas over to here and he created even greater problems.

It's like what he did back there or what this individual did over there, the first time they did it they should have been removed from God's ministry immediately. But we didn't see that yet. No one should

be in that position if they're doing various things against God, that someone has to be uprooted and put someplace else so they can go on and do their damage in another area.

That's just like that big church, some of the sick, perverted, disgusting things that some of them did. They just moved them to another area, and they just kept practicing the evil that they did. Well, nothing like that remotely so should be existing in God's Church.

I rejoice in that, that God has shown us it's a blessing to have leaven removed from the Body. If it will not repent, please, please purify and cleanse us. Because I know that's what God is doing anyway. He's been doing it in an intensified way that began around 2012 and 2013 massively so in God's Church. I thank God for that. Every time something comes to light that is removed it's better for the Church because it's very true what Paul said, a little leaven can leaven the whole lump. It's far better to get rid of a little leaven than it hurt the Body or a congregation or a family or whatever it might be. Far, far better!

Those are choices we have to make. Sometimes people feel bad. Yeah, I feel bad for everyone who comes to that point, but they've done it to themselves, and they've done it against God, and they've become antichrist! They don't belong in the Body, around the Body of Christ, I should say, because they're not in the Body of Christ. Those are blessings.

It's like coming to understand the Millennium. It's like coming to understand the Great White Throne, that we become more convicted that individuals who will not choose God's way, I don't care what relationship they are to you, if they don't choose God's way, they do not belong in God's Family and shouldn't be there!

I had to make the choice a long time ago, thankfully, early on in God's Church. If you don't choose God's way, and you choose some other minister who's been put out of God's Church, and you go away from, then you have made a choice. Family is where God's spirit is. And if it was physical family as well it must be filled with God's spirit to have the right relationship with God, and if that isn't there so be it.

Do I like it? No. I feel bad about people's choices. But it's their choice, not mine. I've chosen God Almighty. That's what I've chosen. I don't care who it is that goes against God and doesn't choose God, it's far better that they're gone. Our lives are better, our lives are more at one, our lives are more peaceful, we're able to be blessed far more, we're stronger. God's Family cannot have anything bad in it. He's not going to allow it. The same thing is true in the Church.

As we go on in the Millennium, things are going to change. What we started is going to continue on and be magnified many times more. Will you have part in that? Probably.

"Every branch that bears fruit He prunes." We need pruning. I need pruning. I want pruning. Because sometimes I've learned this with different plants. Sometimes my wife gets a little anxious when I start cutting back certain parts because I go to town sometimes. But sometimes it comes back a whole lot more. In certain things, it's just a part of nature. Some things are meant to be pruned back a lot. If there

are things that are dead, it's better to get back quite a ways and then hope that it will start to grow. So, this is what our lives are like.

...He takes away. Every branch that bears fruit He prunes that it may bear more fruit. In other words, to glorify God we must be bearing fruit. That's what this is all about.

You are – it doesn't say "already". **You are clean because of** (I'm just translating this as it really is) **the word which I have spoken unto you.** That's what makes us clean. It's because of the truth, because of God's word that's able to live within us. That's what makes us clean before God.

Once again, a verse we've already reviewed concerning the word "clean" which was about the 144,000. I'll just read it to you, **Revelation 19:8** where it says, **Even to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.** What else would we want?

John 15:4—Abide in me, and I in you. It's a choice. It's up to us. It isn't automatic just because we've been baptized. It's a choice. We have to ask, ask for God's spirit, ask for His life, ask for this day by day, that I want Christ and God the Father dwelling in me, that I can dwell in them on a spiritual plane, to be at one, to become more convicted, to be able to produce more fruit. That's what you have to ask for.

Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself. Powerful things that haven't been really well understood sometimes in the sense of really being lived by conviction that people really believe it fully within the Body in time past. Thankfully, we're growing far beyond that in many ways. We're very blessed in that, being more at one than ever before.

...as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless/except it abides in the vine. It's a reality. It's how it works. It's a matter of something that has to come from God, abiding in the vine. That's up to us. We have to pray about it. We have to cry out for it.

...neither can you, unless you abide in me. Choices. Choices. Choices. It takes work. It takes effort in order to accomplish such a thing. It takes forethought, planning. Doesn't just happen.

It's that kind of work that determines whether or not we glorify God. Whether we pray. Whether we ask for the things that God wants us to ask for. Whether we seek to grow. Whether we seek to be pruned and whatever it might be. Those are the things that glorify God and His Son too because it's a matter of the process God has given to us to become part of His Family. As we respond to it, it glorifies God because we are being made the children of God in a greater way until the time of birth. That's what God wants. That's what God desires, a great Family.

Verse 5—I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in them bears much fruit. It has to be that way. If there is not fruit being produced in our life something is wrong.

For without me, you can do nothing. Our history attests to that in a very powerful way.

If anyone does not abide in me, they are cast out as a branch—serious stuff—and is withered. See, “cast out as a branch,” that’s separated from the rest, no longer a part with the rest, and then it becomes withered. Might continue to live for a little bit, but it’s going to be withered until finally **then gathered them and are thrown into the fire and they are burned.** It means exactly what it says. On a spiritual plane, we’re all responsible for our choices. It’s what it comes down to.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you – dwell in you, live in you, remain in you, continue in you. All those words that fulfill what this Greek word means. ...**and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.** So again, we have to know what is it we desire. To be in God’s Family. To accomplish that, to produce fruit, we know we need it, we have to cry out to God to help to produce fruit, to change, to repent, to become better, to become more at one. All the things that are needed that God wants to give to us.

By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit. Because it glorifies His plan and His purpose because we’re yielding to it. We’re changing. We’re being transformed. This all glorifies God. God is grateful and thankful for those who want Him and respond, and He gives the help then to accomplish what He’s made possible. It glorifies Him and all that He’s doing. Choices. Choices Choices.

By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so will you be my disciples. As the Father loved me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love. Now, it gets very specific. Agape. It comes from God. The source is God. Abide in that love.

So, we have that ability by receiving more of God’s spirit, that we can have more of that in our life. Awesome!

Verse 10—If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love. So, this reflects how we think and how we’re living because we’re seeking to do what is right before God and this is how we dwell in. The more we’re able to put into practice in our lives of what God gives us in instruction and guidance and direction we’re able to abide in agape, as it says.

...just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you that my joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full. To have this way of life, to know how blessed we are, to be ever so thankful for what God has given to us.

This is my commandment, that you love one another—Awesome!—as I have loved you. This is where we’ve come to a greater understanding, in that respect, that it requires sacrifice on our part, sacrifice of this, self. That’s when real love, God’s love, is able to live through us toward others. It’s when we’re able to say no to what we want, the way we think it should be, and yield ourselves to God.

Greater love, greater agape, has no man than this, than to lay down one’s life for their friends. That doesn’t necessarily mean as Christ did, that it may require your physical life. But if it does, so be it. But

the point being is here it's a matter of how we live, that we lay down our life, what we want, how we want to live it. It's not a matter of how we want to live it.

Everybody who's ever left God's Church, they've done it because they want to live it a different way, how ever they wanted to do it. They weren't willing to sacrifice for the sake of the Church, for the sake of one another, to love one another. They're totally selfish! They wanted something totally different. Horrible. It doesn't belong in God's Family. And if it can't repent, it never belongs in God's Family. That's the way it is and thank God for that.

You are my friends if you do whatever I command you. There is only one way to live, and that's God's. We choose it wholeheartedly, everything in it, or not. Thankfully, we're doing that more and more as far as the Body is concerned.

I hope you're all keeping up on various things that are going on in the world. I had just a week and a half of stuff here. It is amazing! I'll save this, maybe if there is time next Sabbath. But it is amazing how the minds of Europeans are changing fast right now. They really are. They're pushed into a corner and it's all because of what started in Ukraine between Ukraine and Russia. And because of elections that are taking place and because of concern about different countries and a certain big country and how they respond to various things regardless of which one were to be in office, it's causing them to think in a different way about this. It really is. And to me, it's an astounding thing to be – like Johnny has talked about – having a front-row seat. Now, personally, I prefer to be way up in the bleachers and looking, but we do have a front-row seat, like it or not, and we see these things coming about.

But to me, that's encouraging and awesome to watch this unfold because this is something that has dumbfounded me over time to think in reality, it just didn't seem possible that Europe would begin to think differently toward this country. Now they are because they're being pushed into a corner. What do they do?

And more and more you see them wanting to push troops into NATO, and they already have acknowledged that several of these countries already have troops helping the Ukrainians. Well, they're also pushing a closer relationship with NATO in the process there and Putin keeps warning "You keep doing it..." and some of his cohorts are saying, "If you don't stop..." Just like one article says, one says, basically nuclear war is inevitable, nuclear strikes, it's going to happen. What an incredible time.

I think of when we walked through the holocaust museum when we were in Jerusalem. I was a little taken aback. There was one section with glass and then behind it all these newspapers in a long corridor that you could go through and read different headlines and different things that were going on from news reports from all over the world.

I was dumbfounded how much they knew was already going on, different countries. But it's like they put it from them and don't take it as serious and it's not going to touch them, and as long as it's just over

there. As long as it's just the Jew they're putting over there. Then it's like, then it doesn't touch me, and I can have my own little life.

I was appalled at what I saw. Things that were known. Things that were understood. But because of politics, different ones wouldn't intervene and act. This country wouldn't intervene and act for a long, long time until they were kind of pressured into it.

There was a point in time, because of one stupid treaty, that they couldn't transport various weapons and so forth. They pushed them up to Canada and supposedly pushed them across the line rather than hauling them because it was in the treaty not to be able to do so. So, if you get some horses and pull them across that's okay. You think, the games people play. War is war and if you're going to support and you're going to put all this weaponry into it...?

Anyway, some of our history, it's shameful what happens between nations when they start indulging in war. The very same things, except far, far worse, are happening right now. How much time? I don't know. We watch and we wait. But for us to understand this is a time to be more on guard spiritually, to be more, striving to be more at one with God, getting our lives cleansed, seeking to be close as a family, learning to appreciate each other more deeply, and drawing closer to God. We need this more than ever before because it's knocking on the door.

It's knocking on the door, and when it starts...?