

Today is *Part 5* I believe of the sermon series, *Part 5 of Our Journey of Faith* and it's going to be a rather long series. I don't know how long, but it's good that we go back and review where we've been, what happened to us – especially as God was working to re-establish the Church. I think of the history of going back and looking at things that Mr. Armstrong went through and what God took him through, especially as he came on the scene because he came on the scene at a time when the Church needed to be re-established. That's when God called him; that's why God called him – to re-establish the Church and truth within the Church because the Church came to a point in the era of Sardis where they were losing the doctrine of the Church and the people were becoming incredibly weak to a point where God said they weren't just weak, they were spiritually dead. And so God had to revive the Church again and He gave Mr. Armstrong and his wife Loma a calling, began to work with them and began to re-establish truth within the Church. An awesome thing that *they* lived through and over a 50 plus year period of what God gave to him, above and beyond what the apostles had: he had understanding, insight, and God added to the story of a progressive revelation of truth that God gave to the Church of bringing things together in a way through time that they didn't have back then. And that's the way it's always been. I can't help but think of when I go through things like this, of Abraham and how little Abraham had, and candidly how little Moses had in his time. God gave so much through Moses...things about the law and things about the Levitical system that there are so many lessons in and all of the things that were added in the statutes and so forth through time. And it's an awesome thing of what God gave then through him, but he had very little in comparison to what was going to be given later on through the prophets, through David: through David alone who was a prophet.

And so as time has gone on...it's just like the Bible - you can look at the Bible and you can look at the first 5 books of what was compiled and brought together that was given to Moses, through Moses, through that period of time and up to that period of time and then you start looking at all the other books that were added: more and more understanding, more and more knowledge, but to put it all together has been something else because so much of what was written was for our time, for the end-time, and that's an awesome thing to understand.

And then we come to the time of Jesus Christ and He gave much to the disciples who were following Him who didn't understand what He was saying fully: who believed who He was, who believed what He was saying was the truth and they followed Him. And then on Pentecost, 31 A.D. when the Church began, all of a sudden, because of the spirit God had given to them they were able to see and understand spiritually what Jesus Christ was saying. And then in time God worked with them to write books, some of them, not all of them, but to write books of scripture. And as time went along more and more was given and so we have the story of the Acts and then the story of things given through even the apostle Paul as he went out to the Gentiles, and then we come toward the end of the book of things that were given to John as he was the last of the original apostles, he lived the longest going right up to a new time period that was going to begin for the Church, but he was the last and God gave to him *more* than what the other disciples had in understanding God's plan and purpose – things about the spirit and the spirit of the law that the other disciples and Paul didn't even grasp and understand. God was continually adding more understanding for the Church to grow by.

And then an incredible lapse of time before we come to the time of Mr. Armstrong and what God began to reveal then to the Church above and beyond what was even given to the original apostles. And that's

an awesome thing if we understand that. That's why we live in an exciting time that we, in the very beginning when we talk about the apostasy and what happened afterwards – we talked about the necessity and the importance of getting a hold again of the trunk of the tree, of the 18 truths that God had given to Mr. Armstrong above and beyond the three that Sardis had. And we had to become re-established, we had to grab a hold of those things again and we had to go through much in order to be reawakened and be re-established. And then God started adding more – things that Mr. Armstrong didn't have. Not because of who we are; not because of how good we are. God didn't give Mr. Armstrong things because he was better than Paul or better than John or better than anyone else. It's because of a job and what had to take place as far as a time was concerned. And so it is now. And we're approaching a time now, the return of Jesus Christ, when so much more is going to be given. But I think of just the last few years of what God is giving and it's an awesome thing to understand where we are.

And so I want to again pick up where we left off last week. It's important to understand some of our history, what the Church went through, how it went off base through an apostasy and how God, as the scriptures talk about, spewed the Church out of His mouth, vomiting it out of His mouth. We went through a time where *everyone* within the body was fully cut off from the flow of God's spirit and when you don't have the flow of God's spirit in your life, when that begins to happen because you're beginning to become weak... even that process, the process of becoming weak doesn't happen overnight. The Church wasn't spewed out of God's mouth as a result of something that happened overnight. We were becoming weak for a long time through the latter part of the 80's and into the 90's and people were letting down more and more, becoming weaker and weaker. The ministry was becoming weaker; sermons were not filled with God's spirit because they were becoming weaker and because of sins that were taking place and so as time went along what we had was being lost. The strength and the confidence and the boldness we had was being lost until we came to a point in time where there was the potential for, and it did take place then, an apostasy. And it's an awesome thing to understand what God allowed to take place that began to destroy – Satan having great power over the Church. And it was at that time then that God spewed the Church out of His mouth, meaning it was cut off, we were all cut off. And He brought some of us to repentance very quickly. Very quickly after that point in time we started making changes and started getting strength back.

And so that's where we come in on the story again here. There was a period of time, indeed it was for 3½ years except now we understand the importance of the timing more, that it was a period of time when we look at the period of judgement that was given to Mr. Tkach to understand that he was the man of sin. If you go back and read things written or hear some of the sermons that were given, this was a sign to the Church of the return of Jesus Christ because it was the last thing that was given to the Church through Paul in II Thessalonians: that the very thing that would reveal the coming of the Christ, of the Messiah, would be exactly what would happen to the Church at the end-time and that is the apostasy, a great falling away that took place.

So again, after the 40 weeks of judgment for Mr. Tkach, another 980 days of protection was given from God to the Church so that He could re-establish the Church to make us stronger so that we could stand firm, in faith, because that's how you stand firm. You stand strong through faith, but we weren't strong yet and it took that period of time of the remaining 980 days then to become stronger and then by Pentecost of 1998 God had re-established the Church. It's awesome how some things work out like that because you can't make up; you can't work out such things in life – the timing of events in God's plan. And that's why as you look back in the Old Testament and see God does things to the very day, to the very hour in His plan; He works with, He has that power to do so.

Last week we left off where we came to a point in this publication called 'News Watch For the Church of God' that began to be written in January of 1998. We hadn't been re-established yet, not until Pentecost, not until May/June and so we hadn't been fully re-established yet but God was making us stronger and helping others to be brought into the body, or to this organization if you will, so that when we got to that point in time we were fully re-established as one Church again, in the sense of one Body, not divided, not scattered all over the place as we were in the beginning of all this.

And we came up to the period of time of Passover, and that was again there in 1998, and one of the most important things that God re-established in our lives was Passover. Think about how God works – that's why it's good to go back and look at our history. If you understand how God works, this is the most important thing to begin with; this is the most important thing to become re-established in because if you're not established firmly and deeply in the most basic part of God's plan then how can you build upon it? And Passover is that beginning, our Passover Jesus Christ and to understand fully what He did and when He did it and how He did it, that it glorified Him, it glorified God the Father for what He did in and through His Son for all of mankind, and it all happened in a day's period of time...nothing in the 15<sup>th</sup>, nothing in the 13<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, of the 1<sup>st</sup> month there, but all on the 14<sup>th</sup>. We went through a lot, the Church to that point in time understood primarily the things that had happened in the evening time and didn't understand the things of the daytime of why Jesus Christ died in the afternoon; of why this fulfilled a part of the Passover, what it meant. We didn't understand those things fully and God gave that to us then. It was a beginning of establishing us, but even making us stronger in that doctrine and in that truth than what we were before because by this time, as I mentioned last Sabbath, there were many ministers in the Church, because of specifically one evangelist that was a teacher at Ambassador College – Dr. Hoeh. He taught 14/15<sup>th</sup> Passover and he was always a part of, behind the scenes and sometimes very much in the forefront, trying to push this concept. And a lot of students then, because that was the training ground for the ministry of God's Church, they picked up on it and they went out and started teaching those things in congregations, and what did that do? It caused the Church to become weaker yet because when you start taking away the truth, especially in something so basic, you begin to work to destroy the Church and the foundation that God's people have, so that they began to be cut off from the flow of God's spirit. So it's a horrible thing that took place.

The organization I was in at that point in time before I'd resigned the year before on Pentecost 1997, they had most of the ministers with them out of the scattered Body and because of different things that different ones had said it was guesstimated that close to half of them believed in a 14/15<sup>th</sup> Passover and that's a sick thing when you think about God's Church.

And so God continued to reveal things to us. We came to a point in time in May then of 1998, the next issue that went out and the subject line was...

### **DO YOU LOVE ME?**

...Do you love me? I'm going to continue going through some of these articles because these articles are pertinent for today, not just for back then; but back then we were experiencing something that had never happened in God's Church. There'd never been a time, where in such a massive way from the top down, that people had abandoned the truth, had betrayed Jesus Christ, had gone against those things that God had given to us; the truth, His way of life, and began to teach something totally opposite going along with the Protestant world and so the question. Again...

## DO YOU LOVE ME?

In this article it says...

Do you know the difference between love and hate?

What's amazing is...

Most people think they do.

And most people even within God's Church or the scattered Body at that time would say that they understood the difference. But I have found over many, many years in God's Church that when it comes to what God says about love and hate that people haven't understood; that the Church has been very weak in understanding this truth about what love and hate is. We have to go by what God says and not by our concept of what it is. In 1985 when we were at a peak of being put back on the right track, because Mr. Armstrong was there and he'd worked for several years before that of trying to put the Church back on the right track, that was his focus, that's what he was striving to do before his death. He knew he was going to die, in time, in whatever time that would be. Not thinking it was going to happen the way it did but it did happen in a different way.

But again, if you'd asked people back then, "do you hate anyone?"

"Oh no, I don't hate anyone. It's horrible to..."

Who out here, even in the world would say they hate anyone, who would acknowledge they hate anyone? And the reality is it's very difficult for a human mind to acknowledge often times in their life that yes, they do. Not by their definition, but by God's – see? We think we're better than that by nature. We think we don't have those problems and yet every human being has those kinds of problems to deal with because that's where repentance comes in. So again, the question is...

Do you know the difference between love and hate? Most people think they do. But scripturally, you may be surprised!

It's high time we all asked ourselves the same question Jesus Christ asked Peter. After His death and on His third appearance to His disciples, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him. He asks the same question of us.

Do *you really* love Jesus Christ and God the Father?

I guess because of what happened in the announcement I had to make earlier it always boils down to that: is God first? *Is God first, always first, in my life?* Even above and beyond anything else in life, even above and beyond my own physical family. *Is God first?* That's a tough one.

I think I'll take the time to go over to some scriptures here because again, these are things of our history and nothing changes in this regard; what God expects of us, what God desires of us, what God wants us to learn and embrace is always the same. What God desires for us to live is always the same, except that we, during this period of time, had to go through some gut-wrenching times. They were horrifying times to live through. I look back at those times and there were times that I felt like, in a sense...not physically, but I felt like someone had taken my innards, ripped me apart with knives, and pulled my insides out. There were times when I felt that bad inside because of what was taking place in the mind, because of what I saw taking place in God's Church. That's what it felt like in a spiritual sense of those things that were taken away from us and seeing what condition the Church was in. A horrifying thing of

what we had to experience and those lessons should never be lost on anyone – of what people are capable of doing *with* God's spirit, how easy it is to turn against God, how easy it is to turn against the foundational things that God has given to us to live by. It's not a hard thing, it's a very *natural* thing, and that's why God says to be watchful, to be spiritually alert, to be on guard, to never let down, because when we begin to let down and we allow certain sins into our life, we begin losing – and how long we're able to hold on until maybe something can shake us to the core of our being so that we can repent... God takes us through many things to shake us but sometimes, because of pride, people can't be shaken. I think of this world and where we are now and why it has to go through what it does.

But again, something that is so often mentioned around baptism time, when you read various articles about baptism and come up to a point of baptism in your life – there is a scripture in **Luke 14** where Jesus Christ said in **verse 26 - If anyone come to me, and hate not his father,** now, it's not the word hate like we think of the word hate in the way it's used in the English language. It's a word that really means to 'love less by comparison'. 'To love less by comparison', it doesn't mean 'hate' at all in the sense of murder and hatred and thinking evil of someone, but it has to do with order, the order of how you think, the order of where you place things in your life in importance when it comes to love.

And it says, **if anyone come to me and 'love less' not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple,** that is the covenant relationship that every person enters into when they are baptized. When you go down under the watery grave, you are burying the old self and it pictures you coming back up out of that watery grave and you're to live in newness of life, to walk in newness of life as we're taught. And that's a process of change that takes place and a part of that is a commitment we then make to God. The next part of the ceremony is to have hands laid upon us, the begetting of God's spirit; but the covenant we've entered into with God is that God is first, His Son first in our life. They are first in our life above and beyond anything else – even to the point if need be to our own life. And so often we can read things like that and say, "Yes, that's..." but sometimes there are things that try us to see whether that's true and it helps us to come to address things in our own life that we can repent of, to acknowledge that no, we're not there yet, and it's a struggle and it's a matter of something you grow in. It's not automatically there, but it's a commitment that one has to make that this is what I'm saying to God, this is where my heart is, this is where my desire is no matter how weak I am, this is my commitment, this is my desire first and foremost before God. It doesn't matter who it is, and what they do; it doesn't matter what happens to me, God has to be first because if you love anything else, or anyone else above and beyond what God has given you in this life, you can't receive what He has for you – you just can't receive it – at least not now. It'd have to be later on – see? Maybe in the Great White Throne.

We go through many trials and many difficulties in life and so it goes on to say...just as a part of the story here. The reason I mention some of this is because I think of... oh my... going so far back, of so many people who've left God's Church through time; so many people that I have had the horrifying, horrible experience of having to tell them, "You are disfellowshipped." I *loathe* that part of my job in one respect, but I do it because it must be done, because it's right before God, but I don't like the experience because it hurts, because it's like a knife being stuck into your heart. Because when you know people well and you've known them for a long time, you don't want them to throw everything away, you don't want them to give up, you want to see people succeed, you want to see everyone make it because look at what happens within the body – we get to know each other quite well.

We have a bond and a relationship within the Church of God that is above and beyond what human beings can ever experience in physical life – in marriage, in family – wherever. You can't experience

what God gives us within the Church; that binding, that closeness, that which is a matter of God's spirit that works in people's lives and that's what binds us in a way above and beyond that which is physical family. And so when someone begins to let down in that part of their life and begins to leave it's a horrible thing, but *so often*, and especially when the apostasy took place, people made decisions right and left because of family. They did what their father was going to do, or they did what their mother was going to do, what decision and choice they made – whether it was to leave and they became disgruntled and began to talk bad about all the things that Mr. Armstrong had given to the Church and that “well, we were just duped, you know, and we just didn't understand and the Protestant world was right after all!” Anyway... that's how far the mind can go and a third of the body quickly went that direction; “the Protestant world, the Catholic church was right after all!” That's what they were saying. It's almost hard to digest. It's almost hard to grasp when you're sitting here like this to think that people could think that way, that that could actually happen.

Those of us who've been around, because we were there at that time – we know that it happened, we saw it happen with friend, after friend, after friend, after friend – that their minds went in that direction: in some cases (snap, snap) overnight. Talked to a lot of minister friends through this period of time because we were trying to grasp a hold of, trying to hold onto, trying to see what could be done to help the Church and some would call out to headquarters and talk to Joe Jr. and talk to him for an hour, two hours, or three hours and after the conversation was over they were different people – their minds were different because he talked them into, they listened to the foolishness, the nonsense and they swallowed it. There was a spirit at work there – a powerful spirit. Those things can happen in people's lives.

We saw people leave go to another organization because a father chose to do so, or a mother chose to do so, or a husband chose to do so, or a wife chose to do so and if the wife made that choice, then the husband in some cases followed; if the husband made that choice, in many cases then obviously the wife followed. We all have to make our own minds up as to what we do. We, individually, have to hold true to what God gave here – to love God more, to love God the Father and Jesus Christ *more than* father, mother, sister, brother... that's what this is talking about. It's up to us to choose to stand before God and to sometimes give up... *everything*. If need be, whatever that means to us physically sometimes, to give up everything to follow what is true and what is right.

And that can be so traumatic in life for us sometimes. Why? ...Because we live here and now. What we see is here and now and it's so difficult...that's why we have to be close to God and strong spiritually because the focus we need to have is in the entire part of God's plan and what is the future as well. So what we might think we give up now we don't. God has a plan in the thousand years and in the Great White Throne and His plan in time is to bring everything together – finally – at the end – everything together. There's a lot of trauma, there's a lot of hardship, there's a lot of heartache before you get there, but each individual has to choose for themselves – God is right, God is first, and this is my walk, this is the way I live, regardless of what anyone else chooses to do, this is what I'm going to do. All the context when you say that, when you pray those things to God – with His help and His favour because we know we can't do it on our own, but always with that conviction and that mindset that that's my will, *my* will is to do His will. Easier said than done often times in life because things come along to try us; and so people do make choices often times, knowing that they are making the wrong choice, but they'll follow husband...or wife...or sister...or brother...or father...or mother before following God; and we can't do that. God has to be first always, always, always.

And He goes on to say, **And whosoever does not bear his stake**, just going to call it what it is. In times past I would read these as they are here, but again always explaining that He did not die on a cross, He

died on a stake straight up and down, His hands above His head. I like to show this when I'm in congregations wherever I go so that people understand why they came around and broke the legs of those that were with Him and when they came to Him He was already dead. Because it says in John that a soldier had come up and *pierced Him* in the side with a spear and out came blood and water and He died. He died because He had to fulfill a scripture. He had to fulfill God's plan and purpose as our Passover. He couldn't strangle to death on the stake, or as some want to call it 'a cross'. He couldn't strangle to death and be gasping for air. His blood had to drop to the earth because He is our Passover. It's His blood, through His blood, that's why it's so important to understand why He died in that manner. And the other two who were beside Him, the reason the soldiers come along and break the legs so that you'll die faster is because your hands are up like this and you can't breathe because what they were doing when their hands were like that is that they would push themselves up from the nails, the way they were done on the ankles, or through the bottom part of the feet there and putting the two together and drive it in there – they would push themselves up to breathe because their hands were like this. You ought to put your hands up here above your head and see how well you can even... just hold them up as far as you can and can you imagine then your whole body's suspended by your hands like that. If they're like this it's not the same here in your breathing, but up here it is and you won't live very long if you can't push yourself up. So He died on a stake. Isn't that amazing the things that the world teaches because the use of a cross was being used in paganism and religious beliefs *long* before Jesus Christ ever came along. Catholic Church again, but anyway...

**Whosoever does not bear his stake and come after Me cannot be My disciple.** What we're going told is, here, just as the example of Jesus Christ...He was willing to carry this on His back for a while; He was willing to bear the weight of this for a while until He couldn't bear it any longer, until He just collapsed underneath it, but He was willing to pull it for a while because they put this upon Him to do – that which He was going to die on. And so as He was pulling this and finally couldn't do it any longer – that's what's told to us: you can't bargain with God and say, "I'll do this much but don't, you know, if too much is required, too much... I can't do that!" It's not a matter of something you bargain with God. Do you understand what I'm saying? It's a matter that if this is your weight to carry in life, you carry it until there's no way to carry it anymore, you know, but you do what you have to do. You're willing to carry whatever it is, because again, I've seen so many people get to a point in time where it was like, "this is too much, I didn't know that this much would be required of me, I didn't know that it would be this difficult and I just can't do this anymore." A lot of people come to that point in time: "I just can't do it anymore." And that's a choice. It's a free choice that God gives and then they'll be resurrected in another time when things are going to be easier for them – indeed – because the Great White Throne is going to be easier for people. That's why so few, and God has a plan of working with so few through a period of time, but I don't need to go in there, I don't want to get sidetracked too much from this.

But again here, lesson after lesson after lesson – it's an incredible thing what God gives to us and the importance of holding fast to what God gives and always putting God first and so this question again...

*Do you really love Jesus Christ and God the Father? Are you doing...*

Going back and reading 'News Watch'...

*Are you doing as He commanded? What are you doing to feed the flock?*

This is being written to anyone that's scattered out there and... I'll just read the rest...

Perhaps your answer is, “Yes, but I am not a pastor.” Is this a job reserved only for pastors? We are not all pastors and we do not all have the same functions within the church, but we have all been called to be servants, especially in service toward one another in His Body. Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” This is *my* job and this is *your* job.

Sometimes we don’t think about things like that, that we all have a part of a job within the Body, a responsibility toward one another, a responsibility to love one another, a responsibility to be there for one another as much as we possibly can. These things were being brought up at that time because people didn’t understand what God’s love was all about, didn’t understand the difference between love and hate although they thought they did.

Going on here in a section called...

### **TEST YOURSELF!**

Some embrace the false concept that addressing negative matters like those in this article is ungodly.

Because in this article it addresses some things that some ministers were saying that happened to be wrong and making it very clear, and we have to be able to do those things if there’s ever a need when things come along that happen.

But what determines Godly behavior. **God in us!**

Isn’t that amazing? Always, always, always the only thing that can determine Godly behavior in anyone’s life is if God is in us. We can’t do these things on our own. God must dwell within us. That’s an awesome thing to understand. Even the ability to experience and to express agape is not something we can physically do. We don’t have the ability to work up agape. Agape is the word for God’s love. The best that a human being can do is termed as ‘philia’, brotherly love; love toward one another, love because of family, whatever it might be, various kinds of fraternal love – whatever it is. ...but God’s love? The world thinks they can work it up. The world thinks they can read a scripture and go out and do it – spiritually. No you can’t, not without God’s spirit because it requires God, it requires God’s spirit in a person to have, to experience and to live that kind of love because no one can even keep God’s way of life and God’s love – which the commandments are all about: and even the breakdown of the commandments are a matter of God’s love - and a person can’t do that without God’s help, God’s spirit. It’s an awesome thing to understand. And if one doesn’t understand the most basic there of God’s love then we’ve got much growing to do. So it is again about God in us. Going on...

If the source of motivation is the result of God living in us and through us, then there will be matters in life we must address. Ignoring God’s Word and God’s way of dealing with difficult circumstances in life (especially within the church) is to deny Jesus Christ. If we love Him, we will follow His admonition to *feed His sheep*.

Keeping silent with secret love and failing to obey or yield to God’s spirit in us is just as sinful as speaking out from anger, jealousy, or hurt.

See, that’s generally what human beings do, that’s how we’re motivated, we’re motivated by that which is physical, carnal in our nature; but to react and respond because of God’s spirit is another matter.



Today, there is too much of these reactions within the Church of God! Both extremes are wrong!!! We must exercise righteous judgment based on yielding to the life of Jesus Christ in us. A neglected area of love which needs to be exercised more than ever within God's scattered church today is the need to *warn!*

You know, we're not living in that like we were back then, but back then it was the need to warn, a need to warn about what was taking place within the scattered body and especially when someone was coming along with a false doctrine or a false idea. And we still have to exercise that principle within the Church today. If someone comes along who is new, who maybe has good intentions and maybe says the wrong thing, maybe brings something from their past and they bring it along as something that is a matter of doctrine or belief that doesn't agree with the Church, then you as an individual have a responsibility to say, "Oh, no, no, no, we don't believe that. That's not what the Church teaches." And not just let it go by. There are times when a person has to make that kind of a stand when it's something that could hurt other people's lives, and it's not to hurt them, it's not to hurt someone and sometimes it's good if that be done alone or in private, you know it depends on the situation there. We've had sermons about that. Those principles are still true today: that if someone were to bring in something that's false or wrong... if you love the Body, if you love the Church and you don't want to see anyone hurt then you don't want them to grab a hold of a false idea or a false doctrine, a false belief of any kind. And so again, thankfully we don't have that kind of thing taking place as a whole within the body, but on occasion, something happens in an area, someone new who is zealous and a little misguided, and they bring something along and once they're told, you know what happens as a whole? They repent. That's what we do. People repent and get their minds right and in unity with the Church.

Going on...

Parents grasp the need in today's world to warn their children.

It's a simple thing to warn your child about dangers. What parent, well, in today's world sadly doesn't happen as much as it needs to happen, but you know, educating, teaching children from youth on up. Sometimes it gets to a point though where the youth won't listen anymore because of society and the way things are, but there is the desire of a parent to warn their children of dangers. You don't want your child to be hurt by things that are out there in the world. There are things that you know will hurt them if they continue in a certain path, on a certain course and so you warn them, you try to help them. The same is true in the Church of God and if we don't do that, or if a parent doesn't do that, do they really love their child? If a parent just lets them have the experience without care and concern, without warning them, what would that say about a parent? Where is the love? Same thing in the truth; in the Church of God. If we fail to warn someone, or help someone when they're in a dangerous place, or a dangerous spot, whatever it might be, where is the love? And that's the point of all this. We have a responsibility; if we don't do that, then we're not feeding the sheep, we're not doing our part to help the Body, to serve the Body, to give to the Body.

Going on...

The world is worse than ever and the church is no safer than our children are. We live in tumultuous times. It's hard to believe the betrayal and sins which weaken the sheep are coming from within.

Amazing what happened. It all happened within the Church. What's amazing now is to understand that some of these same things are beginning to happen within government; some of the same things the Church went through – that same spirit is now working within government, especially because it's just a matter of a result of something of the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal, and because of the 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet there are things taking place in governments around the world – especially within the nations of Israel – that are undermining everything about the government. And every decision that is made... you just watch the news, listen to the news, read the newspapers and sometimes if you're keeping up on certain things you think – "How could anyone make such a decision? How could anyone do such a thing?" There are certain things being done out here now that are so backward; but the point is that this is what they're being allowed to do. They're no longer being blessed. Government is no longer being blessed as it has been in times past to continue on – on the contrary, it has all been taken away. I'll get into some of that as we go along here. Here is a section called:

### **BALANCE FROM GOD**

Herbert W. Armstrong was able to simplify complex ideas. He reduced the motivations of life to a simple 'give' or 'get' way. We will seek to live one or the other.

There is no middle ground; and that's what I went on to say...

There is no middle ground. We either exercise love toward a brother or we don't. If we are not loving, we are hating.

That's what God shows in scripture. If we're not loving someone, the reality is, even if we choose silence, its failure to love. If, by our silence sometimes we take that to mean that someone else can do it, someone else would do the job or whatever and we don't act or respond then we're just as guilty and we're not loving and helping one another.

If we're not loving, we are hating. God's Word makes this plain. There is no such thing as secret love, because inactive love is only pseudo-love, even though people deceive themselves into believing otherwise.

And then it's quoting **1 John 3**...

*"In this the children of God and the children of the devil are made manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God..."*

It's a simple thing. If we're not practicing what has been given to us through scripture, then we're not of God. It's a simple thing.

*... nor is he who does not love his brother. [fails in other words]... his brother.*

If we fail to love our brother then where is God's spirit, where is God's love and where have we let down? Because all of us are given the capacity and the ability through the power of God's spirit... after baptism and laying on of hands, to love our brother. We truly are. Going on in **1 John** it says...

*"For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." (1 John 3:10-11, NKJ).*

And that has much to do with what Jesus Christ said. “Do you love me?...then feed my sheep.” And so sometimes in life it’s very easy to palm this off on someone else’s responsibility, but we all carry it, we truly do.

Let’s turn over to **I John 3:14** where it says...

*“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.*

What an awesome thing. That’s what God is saying, **you have passed from death to life**. What does that mean? It means that no longer is the death penalty over us because of being baptized, because of all of our sins being forgiven us – that’s what it means when one is baptized. All of our sins are forgiven. And then the covenant that God makes with us, the new covenant that people refer to as the New Testament, the new covenant that is made; not an old covenant in the Old Testament, but the new covenant that God has made with us is that: once we’re baptized and have the impregnation of God’s spirit the promise from God is from that point forward in our life that not only at that moment are we forgiven of all of our past sins through our Passover, but every time we repent of every sin in the future God promises to forgive us. That’s His covenant. And ours with Him is: He’s first. He’s number one in our life – God the Father and His Son and we’re going to follow exactly what we read earlier in Luke – that no one else, nothing else is going to sway us from that course. We’re going to put God first, love God first, in our life because everything else, anything else that comes in between is idolatry. Anything else that comes in between is a matter of pride and idolatry if you understand it spiritually. Putting something else, raising something else above and beyond what God tells us to do – someone else, someone close to us, or something higher than God and if we do that then we can’t grow and God can’t use us, God can’t bless us, God can’t give us His way of life. We cease to grow from that point.

So it goes on to say here, again...

*“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren...”*

That is the evidence. We love the brethren. There is something special about individuals coming into the Body and even as people are being drawn they recognize something different in the Church, as small as we are; wherever people are drawn to it. And sometimes there are different expectations or wonders and people might ask “what am I walking into?” Because if you’ve ever done that in times past in the world, when you go to an organization or a church in the world you don’t know what to expect when you walk through the door. There’s so much difference in the world. And the same thing is true in God’s Church. People don’t fully know what to expect, what is there, what are they going to be like and yet as time goes along, as people get to know one another they see something different, they see something unique, they see something genuine that they haven’t experienced before and then as we become a part of the Body there is that closeness that you experience. How do you describe it? ...except that you have the ability to live it. And we have that bond then. We still have human nature. We still have differences in personalities and the more that continues on the more you have to start working then at your relationship, but then you have God’s spirit to help you in that to deal with different ideas and thoughts that come into the mind and how to treat each other.

Sermon after sermon has come out from all of this and we’ve had them in times past. But again, going through our history of things you can never let down in. Going on here, I’ll read it again...

*“We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love [in other words, fails to love, that’s what it’s saying] his brother abides in death” (1 John 3: 14, NKJ).*

God is telling us if we know how to love someone, if we know that there are things we should be doing, that we can be doing and we refuse to do it – God says you abide in death. Why does He say that? Why would God say something like that to us? That if you fail to love your brother you abide in death? Because there’s sin involved. Sin means the death penalty. It means we haven’t repented of something because as soon as you repent, if you’re under that covenant that God made with you at baptism, if you’re under that covenant and you haven’t repented of any sin toward someone else, of not loving someone, or have done something wrong or whatever that is... as soon as you’ve repented, you’ve been forgiven and you don’t abide in death, but if you’re abiding in death God is making the distinction, the point here that something is wrong that needs to be repented of...some behavior, something that has been said – whatever it is that needs to be repented of and changed. And so that’s what it’s talking about here. If we know how to do something... I’ll simplify it.

One simple thing is an example of fellowship. Today the Church is very scattered. There were times in this region here... I think of Bricketwood area. Because of headquarters for the United Kingdom being there, if I’m not mistaken, it seems like there were about 1500 people in the area. Do you remember what might have been in times past in this... because of all of Great Britain. 2-3000 in the whole area there but I remember while going to college up here that I think we had to have two different services because they couldn’t all be contained in the same building. We’d take turns at times going and visiting and getting to know different people and ‘am’ and ‘pm’ services type of thing. And anyway, I think of the numbers of people and yet today, we’re incredibly small and we have to travel farther, I mean, some of you have come from Scotland, some of you have to come from Ireland in order to have a *small* congregation and it’s difficult for people to understand – God’s Church is that small – and yet we look at a time period when it was its largest around the world and still under 100,000 people that were ever baptized at any one time during the period of Philadelphia because people have a concept of churches in the world of being into the millions or hundreds of thousands in different areas.

And yet God reveals in His plan for the past 6000 years that He’s only been working with, molding and fashioning 144,000. And only now at the very end are a few beginning to be drawn and as we go through the different things that are going to take place in the next two years plus here a little bit – as we go through that then God’s going to begin adding hundreds of thousands who are going to be able to be a part of the Church to live into a new age. It’s because of what God is doing, because we’re entering a different phase of God’s plan and so it’s an incredible thing to understand the different phases of what we go through and so I come back to this matter of fellowship... If we have the ability in some areas to come together every Sabbath, what an incredible blessing! Some places have that. Not a lot. Some places throughout the United States, some places, you know, have the ability to come together maybe once a month in a congregation and other places are so scattered the only opportunity people have is just to listen on the internet to a sermon.

Some areas people live closer together and they can travel a little ways in order to be in a home together. My point in all this is... if we *fail* to take advantage of and we refuse fellowship when we have the ability, we fail to love God’s people. Sometimes in the body we don’t understand the importance of our presence: if we’re able to. That’s why in something like this I feel, how do I put this...? Sometimes going into some areas, I feel bad because I know there are people who have sacrificed a lot to be there, when people have hardship in finances to travel very far but I understand there’s that which God still

works within all that. It is a matter of sacrifice and we're blessed by being able to do these things and yet we can only do some things to a point sometimes. Maybe we can't do it every time and that's understandable. But when we do have the ability, when we are close and we have the means, and we won't do it, we rob ourselves.

There is something unique... That's why I've made comments so many times about sermons. You know, sometimes like in Australia and New Zealand, even here in Europe, some of you have listened to the sermons before the following Sabbath; meaning that you... it's sundown... I mean I'm giving it in the States at 2:30 in the afternoon EST – your Sabbath is already over with by that time, so if you listen to it at that time, or later in the week, that's one thing...but to listen to it again, which we must do, on the Sabbath day, to hear the sermon – it's amazing how many people have commented to me how much more they receive on the Sabbath, of hearing that sermon on the Sabbath – even the second time – and how much more they're able to be inspired, moved and motivated by what they hear. And so it's an incredible process of what we're able to have. That's the most important part of God's Sabbath... that's why He gave a commanded assembly to His people.

In the very beginning if you go back and you look at some of the words that are used and in Leviticus 23 where it gives the Holy Days and talks about the Sabbath and it speaks of 'these are My holy convocations...' 'commanded assemblies' is literally what it means. 'these are My commanded assemblies: this is My time, My appointments, My appointed times given to you when you're to come together.' Because the most important part of a Sabbath day, or a High Day is the time we hear what God has prepared for us, and that which is given in sermons is the primary way that God has given then to communicate His will to us whereby He teaches us and moulds us and fashions us, and there is a power in that through His spirit that opens up our minds to receive it. Just as much as when you were first called: you can't give this to anyone out there unless God's in it. You can't give this way to a family member. You can't give it to a coworker. You just can't do it no matter how much you want to sometimes – a close friend... On the contrary, what generally happens if they're not being drawn, or happens oftentimes is they begin to think you've gone over the deep end, that something's happened to you, your mind. That you have this crazy religion, a Sabbath, the Holy Days – what is this? What are you? Jewish? Whatever...

In one country, can't remember if it was Indonesia or wherever this individual who now lives in Australia but when he goes back to visit or talks to his parents, they have treated him very badly. I can't remember what religion they had in that particular country, but anyway... it's like, the things you're doing – you won't eat pork, you have to have a certain diet... what are you, a Muslim? Because in their minds that's all they know in that part of the world is that people who are different from them, the ones they know that don't eat pork are Muslims and that's a slam. It's like throwing an insult at him and talking about how he has totally hurt the entire family in their eyes. He's brought them a bad name, brought a bad name to the family for what he's doing. Because they don't understand. So sometimes people react in that way because they don't understand, they don't... because you see it. How? By God's spirit.

What an awesome thing – when God begins to draw someone and opens up the mind and you just know it's true...sometimes just by hearing it. You didn't even have to read anything. It's interesting because that's the way God worked with the early Church as a whole. They didn't have Bibles that they could read; they couldn't pick up and look through the scriptures like you're able to do today. It was by what they heard on the Sabbath and they were (snap), they were able to hear it (snap), they were able to see it (snap) because of God's spirit. But you take another person on the street or a relative or a friend

who's not being drawn and they can hear the same words and they just don't get it – they can't see it – you can't give it to them. So that's an awesome power on the Sabbath day that God gives to be able to see things, like He does.

Fellowship is another one. You don't always have that opportunity but when you have the opportunity and the means and the ability - use it. Take advantage of it. We *need* each other. There's something unique, just as in the ability to hear a sermon on the Sabbath and be moved and inspired and motivated by it – there's something about fellowship that God gives. It's why when we get into a period of time as we get closer to Passover, there is that which Paul goes through in I Corinthians 10 and chapter 11 when he begins to explain that we are going to keep Passover in exactly the same way that Jesus Christ gave it to the Church. And he goes on to explain then the taking of the bread and the drinking of the wine and even the washing of feet...all those things that are a part of a ceremony that God, that Jesus Christ instituted on Passover night and Paul is getting ready to explain all that and he talks about the word in the King James... it says... it's communion, but it's the word... and I hate that one because of how the world uses it. Because they think it's something you do every week – they don't understand – no, it's once a year on Passover – that's the command. Not to do it more and not to do it less and to do it on that exact day of the 14<sup>th</sup>. And so he talks about this... the actual translation of the word should be 'fellowship'. A fellowship in the Body of Christ, it talks about a communion of the Body. There is a fellowship that we have within the Church that is unique with God that's spiritual, with Jesus Christ that's spiritual. We're able to pray to God about things and know that God hears us. We don't see Him – He communicates to us: things we read, things we hear and we see – we learn about Him and His Son... of things that you can't go out here and tell others in the world unless God is doing the communicating. So He communicates to the mind. An awesome thing – a spiritual thing.

And there is that then that we have with one another that is unique – as I mentioned, even when you come together there is something that – there's a bond and a binding there that you can't explain except by experiencing it. And yet in time, if people aren't careful, they begin to deny fellowship when they have the ability for fellowship. You know what that does? Cuts you off from God's spirit because God says, if you have the ability to love others and you won't do it... because fellowship is a time of love, of expressing love – friendship toward one another. It is a time of being together – an important time of sharing. I don't care what it is. Sharing of your life together, sharing of what you've experienced, what you're going through – it doesn't matter what it is. I don't care if it's about the weather, you're sharing something – some experience just in your talk and there is a binding that's taking place there that is closer than that which you could have with anyone in the world. It's an awesome thing. But if you fail to do what you have the ability to do then it's exactly what we're reading through here as we're going through I John.

*“He who does not love his brother abides in death” (I John 3: 14, NKJ).*

Fellowship is just one example of many where we have an opportunity to love our brother and if we fail or refuse to do that we 'abide in death'. We have sin, and if you have sin in your life you know what happens? You become weaker and weaker and weaker spiritually to where after a time you don't even recognize the magnitude of certain sins that come into your life and you begin to justify your life, of what you're doing, and why you're doing it. It's a horrible thing. The reason I'm mentioning these things is because this never changes in the Church. It didn't change during this period of time of what we were experiencing during 1998 as God was reestablishing the Church, and all the things we'd experienced in the previous nearly 3½ years by this point in time, by the time this article was written...and all the things that had happened to us and why. Because it talks about in scripture –

Matthew 24, the things that came upon the Church – because the ‘love of many waxed cold.’ That’s sin and the word that is used there is agape meaning that God’s spirit began to wane in people’s lives because it wasn’t present anymore, therefore if God’s spirit isn’t strong and present anymore neither is God’s love and that love that was once there begins to wax cold because it drains out, it goes away and so people can’t even love each other as they should within the Church, within the Body and that’s what happened to us. I lived it. A few of you lived through some of that, and those who are listening today – a few. Going on here...

*He ... abides in death” (I John 3: 14, NKJ). [question is asked] Why? Because, [as it goes on to say in **verse 15 -16]**”Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer,*

How strong can it be? How strong can it be when God talks about the difference between, like Mr. Armstrong did, give and get. There are only 2 ways to live. Either you’re going in the way of ‘give’ or you’re going in the way of ‘get’ – self, selfishness, what benefits self, or isn’t giving. There is no in between. In between is still on the other side – get. And so it says here...

*“Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer,*

And people say, “I don’t hate my brother.” Oh, if you have the opportunity, the ability, the financial means to get together, to be together and you refuse it over and over and over again, yes, you hate your brother; you just don’t understand it. You don’t get it anymore because you’re so spiritually weak.

*Whosoever hates his brother is a murderer,*

God calls it what it is. You don’t just hate, God says you’re a murderer. You’re destroying life, you’re destroying what you had the opportunity to add to and build up, but you refuse it, and you’re destroying your own life and you don’t understand it. I’ve seen this happen again and again repeated over and over and over again every year since I have been in God’s Church and it cuts me to the core when I think about things like this and what people choose sometimes, to turn away from God, to not follow God: the hurt and the pain and the suffering that it brings.

*Whosoever hates his brother...*

In other words, refuses to love...

*... is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him .*

In other words, God’s spirit is no longer there – cut off. We all cut ourselves off long before we’re ever out of full fellowship of God’s Church and I’ve seen hundreds, literally hundreds, who I’ve known go by the wayside.

*By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (verses 15-16)*

What is it we’re unwilling to do for someone else? We can’t even fellowship? Not willing to lay down that much; whatever the cost it is to get across town if we have it? Now if we don’t have it, please understand, it’s not expected, but if we have it and we’re able to have it, the ability to do it – God says we should do it. Just in one simple area; I’m just using one simple area of life, let alone so many of the

other things we could talk about. Going on here... in chapter 4...notice this... I'll be reading several different ones here, but going on... 1 John we'll start with the flow here...

*“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar;*

John was writing to the Church. He wasn't writing to the world. This is not for the world, this isn't for the Protestant world – they can't understand this because they've never had God's spirit, they've never had God's love living and dwelling within them. The very names of some of the groups... that's why Sardis, they only had three basic truths, the name of the Church – The Church of God, it bears God's name. It's contained in the prayer Jesus Christ had toward the very end. “Father, keep them in *Your* name.” You could always identify where God's people were. One of the identifying signs was it will bear God's name: not Luther's Church, not some system, not some process. It's The Church of God because it's God's Church – amazing; something so simple and so basic. And the Sabbath, the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Sabbath – so simple, so easy to even prove physically and people aren't willing to look at it. But anyway, going on...

*“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, [it says] he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?”*

And so God says, we can't deceive ourselves. How is it that people can think and how often I hear this; I've heard it through times past that; “I have this relationship with God and God hears me and God has heard my prayers, He hears my prayers,” and I think... there are times in life where He ceases to hear; when sin's involved and we won't repent, God ceases to hear and God ceases to dwell in us. He won't live in us until we repent. And so sometimes it's so easy for us as human beings to begin to think and believe in any fashion or form that God hears us and we have this relationship with Him but we can't have a relationship with others in the body. We can't be right toward anyone else in the body, or we have something against one person in the body and we haven't worked to reconcile it the way God says to reconcile it and because we refuse to go to our brother alone and reconcile it the way God says, you know what He says? He says you're guilty...more than your brother that you find fault in and even if your brother is wrong in what they've done. If you refuse to do what you know to do in order to love them because God says this is how you love, you go to your brother alone and if you refuse to do that, to love... because God tells us how to love. Human beings don't like to do that. If I go to someone alone then they might not speak to me anymore. Well, if you've lost them already, what does that mean? The hard thing is going to someone because you love them, because you don't want them to go astray, because you don't want them to continue in something if it's hurting them, or if they've said something to you that hurts you: to let them know, “this really hurt me and I want to have a right relationship with you and you said this and this is how it affected me.” You know, if something happens like that and you get hurt like that you have a responsibility to go to them because they may not know how they're hurting other people, or you. And so God tells us how to love. It's an awesome thing and if we refuse to do it, we refuse to love – God says you hate them. You not only hate them, but you're a murderer, ‘and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.’ God speaks plainly. It's just having the ability to hear that is spiritual.

*... for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen,*

...will not be reconciled to his brother, how on earth can one think they have a right relationship with God ‘whom they have not seen?’ That's what He's asking. We deceive ourselves in other words. Going on...



*And this commandment we have from Him; that he who loves God must love his brother also. Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born [begotten] of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot [who does the begetting in other words] also loves him who is begotten of Him.*

In other words it's saying here in very clear language that if someone has been begotten... if you've been begotten of God's spirit and someone else is begotten of God's spirit the reality is if God's spirit is in your life you can't help but love the other one who's begotten and if we don't do that... where is God?

*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments" (1 John 4:20-21, 5:1-2, NKJ)*

Because see, God tells us how to love each other – that's what the 10 Commandments are all about. The first 4 are about our relationship with God – how to love God, that's why the Sabbath is there... if people won't keep the Sabbath then they can't love God, they're not loving God, they're not obeying God, they're not doing the thing that their very Creator said, "this is the time you're to come together. This is the time you're to worship me. This is the time you're to learn from me." But the world has rejected that as a whole. People would rather keep Friday, Sunday, or Monday in different religions, but they won't keep the Sabbath, something so basic that never changes through time. But they say, "Oh yeah, it did change." No it didn't. Anyway... over and over again here crying out – things that we failed in as a part of God's Church during the first phase of Laodicea and lessons that we carry with us in time, through time that we need to always remember and understand the importance of loving each other, of caring for each other. God was doing all of this; this part here in other words, showing us the next big step. Passover was the great one and then showing us the importance of a Body, of how we care for each other and how we warn each other and how we must be of the same mind, one mind to believe all the same thing in the sense of being of one mind and if everything isn't in agreement with that then it needs to be addressed and sometimes we as individuals, we as a part of the Body in order to feed God's sheep have a responsibility to follow through and do what we need to do to protect, to help someone within the Body because it's about the Body. We want to protect the Body.

I'm going to drop on down because I feel like these things are important to continue to go through, but later in the article it says...

Jesus told Peter that if he loved Him, he would feed His sheep. This has everything to do with the love of God abiding actively in us. The task before us is urgent. It is not easy. It requires humility of spirit coupled with being actively yielded to God living in and through us.

That's so simple to say, but hard to live unless we're totally of a humble spirit and truly yielding ourselves to God. Going on here under the heading of...

### **GOD'S HELP**

This warning is bold and filled with straight talk, but it's not meant to be audacious. These words are sincerely offered in love for anyone who will hear. Unfortunately the church has become so weak that a spirit of apathy and complacency prevail.

See? And yet I see every once in a while those things creep back in different areas. It's something that the Church must continue to fight against – anything to do with apathy, letting down, letting up. None of you can afford to let up spiritually. You've got to fight! You've got to continue to fight for this way of life. It is a fight! That's why we're told to put on the *whole* armour of God! ...because it is a battle

unlike anything that anyone has ever waged and it's one of asking God then for the strength and the power and the ability to continue to wage it. It isn't meant to be easy. This way of life was not meant to be easy. ...because it's a choice, it's a choice of God's way or every other way that is a matter of pride that the world has chosen. Every government of the world. See, some people have lived in governments, I have lived in a government, where people in the Church have felt like it was the best government in the world, that it was the right government and that some of it was based on God's government because that's how it started. BULL! Bull, bull, bull – it is not God's. It was not based on God's. Are there principles in there? Yes there are – okay? But it's not God's government, it's not God's way. The only time that mankind has ever had any *inkling*, any bit of God's government was toward the beginning under King David, under Solomon for a time, where God was given certain rule. In other words, human beings have to yield, give God that rule in their life; they want God to rule in their life, if you've understood what I've said there. It's a matter of submission on our part, yieldedness on our part – a desire on our part as human beings, but the physical world hasn't wanted it and candidly the peoples in those times didn't understand it nor appreciate it, nor really want it as a whole. But because of the strength of their leader and because of the strength of some of the prophets of that time they were blessed and they were blessed more under Samuel, if you will, but they didn't want that.

They didn't want God to reign over their life fully; they wanted someone that they could see as a leader like all the other nations around them. So God gave them a king and told them what it would be like, the oppression that would come in time, the *taxation* that would come in time above and beyond what man should do and how man should take advantage of man, and how man is corrupt and how man will misuse government; and that's all we see in government. I remember the last time I was here in the United Kingdom and they were going through Parliament finding all the misuse of finances by the people in it and it was like this horrible thing. It's like, you just haven't known about it, it's always existed. It's always there. It's there right now! What's the big surprise? But man is surprised sometimes that mankind could be like that – that government leaders could be like that. It's the way of the world! It's the way of human nature! It's done in corporations. So why is it a surprise when things come to the surface and they're there? ...because it's the way of man, because man doesn't live God's way of life. I marvel sometimes at man. Going on...

There are many who would find these words too strong. Instead of considering with humility, many could only respond with pride and condemnation. God's charge...

...and you have to read the whole article to understand some of what I was just saying there, but...

God's charge is that YOU discern. [It goes on to say here] We are being and will continue to be tried to the depths of our being.

It hasn't changed from that time to this time. You're going to be tried to the depth of your being in choices and decisions you make – expect it. It's not meant to be easy, it's hard because why? Because you've got to fight your human nature in this. When things don't happen the way you want them to, or expect them to, or whatever it might be – that's when you're tried. That's why it's a matter of faith and following in faith, continuing in faith and especially now, they will come; we don't need to rush... especially now...

Don't let the prophetic times we live in conquer you. The warnings being given to us are not to be considered lightly. They must not be ignored!

*“Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, which has eyes to see but does not see, and ears to hear but does not hear;*

It's unique how this is stated because this is the only place it's stated like this as a whole. It was talking about the Church of God. This is about the Church of God. This is not about a physical nation. They don't have the eyes to see, the ability to see, but the Church of God did because it had the impregnation of God's spirit and look what we did.

*...for they are a rebellious house.” (Ezekiel 12:2, NKJ).*

*“But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear” (Zech. 7:11, KJV).*

That's the attitude of people...don't tell me! It's like... you know, you put on your defence, that's what it means, pull back the shoulder. It's like you're taking a stance, like you're getting ready to fight – “You tell me this is what I'm supposed to do?! I'm not going to do that, I know what's right!” Because people have pride and they're not going to yield themselves to God – see? It's what happens when people won't receive correction too. They become filled with pride and they're ready to fight. Going on... It's happened over and over again every year in God's Church.

Each of us can only control ourselves to insure we don't turn away nor close our eyes or ears to God's warnings.

You can only do it yourself. You can't make anyone else see it, you can't give this to anyone else, you can't give it to your mate, you can't give it to your child, you can't give it to your parent, you can't give it to your grandparent, you can't give it to your grandchild, you can't give it to the one you love, the closest of friends – you can't give it to anyone, but you can live it – see? And perhaps by your example, in time, especially *this* time... There are going to be people who are going to be drawn and called because of your example of standing firm even though they do not agree with you. When they begin to see certain things come to pass in a very powerful way, they are going to be drawn to you – you're going to be dumbfounded and shocked and surprised.

We need to respond as Peter admonishes. [going on here] *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

You know, God loves us. When He calls us, He loves us, that's why He called us *to* love us. He can't love the world right now because the world has rejected Him and He has to let it go through a particular phase of time. He's getting ready now to love more of the world, to give His love. He wants to give His love, but there's a way He has to do it, the perfect way that God has given through 6000 years to bring mankind through what He is, and then the next 1000, the next big phase of His plan to bring more into that process, and then a great resurrection where people are going to be given a second life again. It is *awesome* when you understand, and begin to understand and see more of the mind of God and why and what He's doing. There isn't a better way of salvation and sometimes it's very difficult for us though to grasp and understand God's power to save and bring everyone into unity and oneness with Him. Not everyone will chose to do that. There are going to be many who refuse.

Going on it says... again,

*...[because] he careth for you.*

More than cares, He loves! He loves you; He loves you mightily; He wants you to succeed. That's why it hurts so much when someone stops listening and stops receiving what God gives and decides to go off in some other direction or do something different – totally away from God's Church. And it hurts... how much more God than us, you know, as human beings?

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

That still goes on today. That's why we have to be strong. That's what this story is about that I'm going through right now, about this journey of faith because we weren't re-established yet as God's Church when this was written. We were still scattered. We were being protected prophetically as it talks about in Revelation 12 when it talks about the 'time, times and a half a time' from the face of the serpent – that God gave us that protection for 980 days so that God could re-establish us, helping us to be strong. That's why these certain articles came out about Passover and now about God's love – to understand what it is toward one another, toward the Body, and the importance of sacrifice toward one another and if we're not willing to do that then of how we then can't have that relationship with God or one another and on and on it goes here as God's re-establishing the Church. And these things we cannot forget in our lives because we tend to as human beings – see? It's a part of what we let down in. We can't let down. You've got to fight! You've got to pray to God! You've got to develop a relationship with God and ask God to help you to see your sins and your weaknesses and your pride and then seek to repent of those things – because we all have it! It's just a part of human life. It's what Paul said, the ability to see, 'oh wretched man that I am, who will save me from the body of this death?' Then he goes on to say, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ,' that's how. It's through the forgiveness of sin, Passover, being able to be forgiven of sin and then being able to *have* the strength and the relationship with God because that's why Jesus Christ died – so you could be forgiven of your sin, that's the beginning, and the purpose of it all? So God could dwell in you. God will not dwell in sin. That's why Jesus Christ had to die, so that God could dwell in us and we in God. It's a spiritual relationship. It's an awesome thing to understand. The protestant world can only come to the point of seeing His physical death and some of those things and they don't grasp the rest, they don't understand the importance of what it all means. Going on, again...

*Whom resist steadfast in the faith,*

Again, whom, speaking of Satan –we resist by being steadfast. It's a matter of faith, being steadfast in the faith and the belief that God has given to us – whatever He has given. Not just His laws and His way of life. Not just the Sabbath and the Holy Days and the other things that God gives to us – which we must do because if we fail to do those then we can't grow. But it goes beyond that even. It goes beyond that to what God gives us, to what He's leading us in, whatever stage of life we're in, whether it'd been Philadelphia, or Thyatira, or Pergamos, or Ephesus – whatever time period you're looking at, it's a matter of following. Abraham didn't have near the knowledge any of you have of God's plan. He had the basics about the Sabbath and tithing and some of the other things concerning Holy Days, very basic understanding, not very much there. He was justified because He believed God. He was willing to do whatever God gave him. He was willing to offer up his own son, which we can't comprehend the time period and those things that people lived through at that time, but he knew – he believed what God said about being able to resurrect from the dead. He was willing to do whatever God said of him – see? And then God didn't require that of him obviously, because he already believed the promise of what God was going to give through his lineage, and already had the miraculous occurrence of a son

that was born and so He did it with boldness. He believed that God was going to provide; whatever that meant. Amazing! He walked forward in faith.

It's an awesome thing to understand that what we're doing right now is walking in faith – not just about the law, not just about the way of life we live, which is a given – the Sabbath, week to week, that's just a given. That's why we draw close to God, that's how we're trained, that's how we're taught, that's how we learn about God and we go through these things. These are basic things; but the thing that tries us is walking in faith, about where we are. We're in the end-time. We're unique. There have been *prophets* who have yearned, who have cried out to God to *understand*, to know what you know. That's what the scriptures say. And yet we live in that time. What an awesome thing to realize the time we have... we are blessed to live in this time, and not only that, but thank God for the blessings of being able to, and tied in with the fast that we had nearly a year ago...that we're not suffering right now and that we have some time to not suffer. Because we are going to suffer with the world – there's no place of safety. There's no place that people are taken away from all this, as we even at one time believed during the time period of Philadelphia; there was that belief of Petra, place of safety. It wasn't understood for what it is fully because God hadn't given it yet. But Petra's all about God. God is our rock. God is our foundation. God is our high tower. Yahweh Elohim, God Almighty, is our place of safety – always...always, always in life and so we had to learn that through time. And I think of the Protestant world, that some of them think they're going to be taken away and for 7 years they're going to look down here on all the suffering of mankind... and I think what a horrible, heinous thing to think. To me that is so perverted. To think you're going to be up there, you know, if you're flying a jet and all of a sudden you're whisked away and the plane's going to crash and everyone on it die because you're one of those that's going to be in this place for 7 years looking down upon all the suffering of human beings; the rest of the world, because they didn't believe what you believed. Horrible, horrible, horrible! No, we're going to suffer with the world but God will deliver us – God will bring us through. He's called you to bring you through, to live into a new age and it's a matter of yielding ourselves to that process.

And again, going back here... we live by faith then, we live by what we've been told – above and beyond the law, and God accounts that to you as righteousness. Isn't that amazing? That's what keeps me going a lot because I know how unrighteous I am. I know how my mind is. I know the mind I have is selfish by nature. I know what's inside of me... like Paul said, 'Oh wretched man that I am.' I hate human nature. I hate the way of get, the way of selfishness. We as human beings are very selfish and the more you grow, the more you learn that about your mind and it's not a pleasant thing, it's not a picnic to be able to see your mind. That's why God says we don't see ourselves; on the contrary, our minds are incredibly deceitful. We deceive ourselves into thinking better about ourselves than what we really are. And God says, "I'm the only one. I try the heart. I'll try the reins, I reveal," in other words, God does know what's in our heart. God has to show us what's inside of us and it's through the power of His spirit that He begins to show us our motivations and where our motivations are wrong, whether they come from God or whether they come from self and so often they just come from self. We drive down a road... that's why I give some simple basic examples. Some people must think, "Man, he has a terrible time driving, he always uses that example." You know, and being in traffic and how other people are, because that brings out human nature. You crowd people together, oh, you see human nature. The more you put people together, it's like rats in a cage – you put more in there, you're going to see a certain base nature come out. The same way with human beings: you cram us together, we're going to respond, we're going to react. What's happening today in this world, what's happening right here in London. You're not just cramming people together; you're cramming cultures together that cannot live with each other!

In Switzerland! Look what's happening in Switzerland. Have you read in the paper what's happening with the Muslim world? Oooh, they're ready to kick them out. It's really bad. There's going to be a big backlash, you just watch it – what's happening with the Muslim world because of what's happening in Europe as well, what happened in the United States alone within our military... afraid. Afraid! The reality is people are *afraid* to say anything about them – see? Of a religion that does not mix with their religion – so called Traditional Christianity does not mix with Islam and Islam does not mix with it. It doesn't mix. It's the cause of, as I've written in the book, of the wars that are coming, of the things that are going to escalate here very soon now, to get much worse than what they are. Keep an eye on Switzerland – what's happening there, because even a better one than that is that the Catholic Church is behind it. What an awesome thing to understand something of that magnitude – that a church can stand back and play one game with the world and the Islamic world and use other pawns, other places out here to do something different, to really reflect what they really are. It's incredible what's taking place.

And so even in our own military, because of a fear to speak out against certain ideas and beliefs that someone had – look what took place because no one would address it. And so the problems of the world are just getting worse and worse and getting ready to explode and we're sitting on a powder keg and that's what God shows us and as far as the economy is concerned...

I want to go on, I don't want to get ahead of myself, there's so much here, but we walk by faith. We believe what God has given to us, as I mentioned last Sabbath – *EVERYTHING* in '2008 – God's Final Witness'... *EVERYTHING* written there is going to happen *exactly* as it's stated – okay? Some things are still prophetic and you will understand in time what some things are being said – truly. And the timing... right on target. Nothing has changed, not one iota. Oh, one thing has changed with *us* but nothing has changed in the scheme of things as far as when it's going to take place and that is the 50<sup>th</sup> Truth, and that was a short period of time of nearly 8 months, which have been referenced to as well, which was qualified in the book... but anyway... Sometimes people listen to other things and other ideas or maybe we begin to think that something should begin to take place in a specific way and we fail to understand what God is saying because we're not listening to what God is saying. And in time we will understand fully – indeed.

Anyway, it goes on to say...

*Whom resist steadfast in the faith,*

That's how you resist what is out there, it's by living what God gives you to live, by following, by doing what God has given us to do to prepare, to do all the things that are associated with where we're living, with the time period we're living in and Satan can't stand that. Satan cannot stand when people listen to God, when they do what God says. Anyway... that's how we resist...

*...steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus,[ or in through Christ Jesus] after that ye have suffered a while,*

You have to suffer a while, that's the way it is. It may seem like a long time sometimes. I've been in the Church since I was right at 19 years old. I'm 60. It's been a lot of suffering because of my human nature and because of the human nature of others and what we experience and because of the time period we lived in and because of what we had to go through in Laodicea and there has been so much hurt over

and over and over again that has made me what I am today, who I am today by going through those things. Others have been made who they are. The strength they have is because of what they have gone through. That we wouldn't be who we are, that we wouldn't have the strength we have if we hadn't of gone through all of that. I wouldn't trade *any* of those experiences...as horrifying, as horrible sometimes as they have been – of people I've been so close to that have stabbed me in the back over and over and over again because of their choices of what they have done. You know, people make choices and those things hurt to the core of their being, but it made me stronger. It made me stronger and God lets us experience some of that, doesn't He, what Jesus Christ experienced, what God has experienced for 6000 years working with mankind, of how man responds to God and God's ways. Sometimes the mockery and all those things that go along with it – it's like water off a duck's back now, truly is. You get to a point where it's water off a duck's back because you understand they can't understand, they just can't see and one day they will and they'll glorify God.

So it goes on to say...

*But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by [through] Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:6-10, KJV).*

That's how we become strong in God's way of life. It's by continuing to go forward in faith... 'A Journey of Faith'. It's an awesome thing. It's a beautiful thing, it truly is. Going on in the last sentence of this article here... last paragraph...

There are prophetic warnings in the midst of all this we would be wise to remember. America appears to ride high in the midst of worsening world conditions. As she does, her pride, apathy and complacency increase.

That was 1998. Today that is so much more true, so much more powerful, so much stronger. I marvel when I look at it. Going on...

The attitudes and warnings are the same for the church. But under the surface of it all, both are in deep trouble.

And so again, speaking about things concerning the Church. We have some more time here, I want to go into the next one because this is the transition now, this is the point in time because this next section here is from June, 1998. Again...finally *this* is the time that we came through the period of 980 days. This is the time that it was going to end – God's special protection of protecting certain ones to bring the Church together again, to re-establish us as a Body... One Body, not being scattered any longer but coming to a point in time where we would not any longer be under a protection in the sense of Satan not being able to attack us. But because God had brought us to a point of the strength we had, that's what the purpose of all this was – to strengthen us to the point where we could stand. You have to be sound and grounded in what you believe. We had lost a lot of that. I had lost a lot concerning matters of government that I thought I understood well, and I had to have my nose rubbed in it deeply to learn the most basic truth - there's only one way that God works: from the top down. I lost that somewhere in the midst of all that. I became so weak that I began to accept something that maybe God could work like in Acts 15 and we could have a consensus and all be of the same mind and we had that desire when we first came together but it never happened. We didn't experience it, so it was very clear that God wasn't going to work that way, so how is it going to happen? And through time then God re-established

us and this is a marvellous time because now we've gone through this period of time. God has re-established us so that we could stand against the strategies. Amazing... what I just read! The last part here that was quoted just before this all ended – so that we could stand. That's what... amazing, I didn't even notice that. You know, the admonition, the very scriptures of how we're able to stand...

*Whom resist steadfast in the faith,*

God had brought us to that point of being strong in faith, re-established in faith to where we didn't fully know where we were going, but we knew what we had to do. We knew by this time we were going to have the Feast of Tabernacles and it wasn't going to be presumptuous before God. It was going to be a matter of obeying God. So that first Feast of Tabernacles was coming up that year... had already been planned by this point that we were going to do it. We weren't going to go around to any other scattered groups anymore because God wasn't there! God showed us that and so we knew we had to continue to follow God wherever God would lead us. It's an awesome thing.

And so in this article here, the title of it is...

### **HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?**

Incredible to understand this is now the time period that God has re-established His Church and the message then that God gave to the Church that was scattered.

Have you forgotten who you are? Do you know where the Church of God is?

Now, as you listen to some of this you might think, "How... Why would you write...?" Because look at where we were. We were scattered all over the place. The Church had been scattered all over the place. A third had quit, a third just quit totally – they didn't believe in anything anymore as a whole. A third of the whole body- around the world – basically just quit because they didn't have answers for questions like "If this is God's Church, how could this have happened to God's Church?" But where do you go when you know the Sabbath is the truth. You know! You've proven to yourself the Holy Days are true. Where do you go? And you don't see the evidence then in some of the scattered groups that God is there – you know? Where do you go? What do you do? You don't have any answers for why this happened. Another third went right away back to Protestantism, back to the Catholic Church, back to Protestant ideas and so forth. And another third was just scattered all over the place into different organizations. And so the question is asked...

Have you forgotten who you are?

Because God was bringing us back to the time we knew who we were. We were given boldness and confidence again of who we were. It's God's Church.

Do you know where the Church of God is? Do you know *what* the Church is? These may sound like easy questions to answer, but don't be so sure. The fact is, large numbers of God's people have forgotten!

A real cause for lamentation within the church is the loss of our unique identity as God's chosen people. What follows such loss of identity is a loss of vision.

It's amazing. If you don't know who you are you're not going to have vision, you're not going to be able to see what God is doing and you're not going to be able to see where God is leading. Going on...



With loss of vision, our very purpose becomes unclear.

Are you unclear about your purpose and your vision? You shouldn't be in any fashion or form. It's been mapped out for you more than any other people in God's Church through time. Truly.

Is there any wonder there is such confusion of purpose and direction within God's scattered Church today?

Dropping on down farther in the article...

Is God's will directed toward His church, the whole church, wherever His people are? God the Father draws us by the power of His spirit and calls us by His name. We are the Church of God, the called out ones of God.

The reason some of this is mentioned is because some groups were beginning to pick up other names. They were calling themselves by certain kinds of ministry... and God's name wasn't in it anymore. Think, how could you lose something so basic that Sardis still had? Sardis still understood that it had to have God's name in it, 'The Church of God', not somebody's ministry, or some kind of a ministry. Going on...

Is God's will directed to those He has called and chosen to bear His name? Ministers who lose the true sense of our unique calling lead brethren away from God's will for His church.

Going on down...

What are you hearing? What is your minister's vision of doing God's will? Is the most important effort of the organization to reach out to scattered brethren or is it to bring new members into the organization?

You know, amazing the time period we were in. It wasn't to go out and help people who were sick and wounded and dying, people who had lost hope and quit, or people who had gone back to the Protestant world and were deceived by some of those things. Why not try to help them? Why not try to reach them, to talk to them? That wasn't the desire of the Church as a whole, and the scattered Church. Where do you think God's desire was? For His people. But He had a purpose, He had a remnant He was going to call back into the Body and into one Body and God was doing that. We just didn't fully see or understand that at that moment in time, but that's what had happened. Going on...

It is one thing to warn the church and world about the times in which we live, but it is entirely another matter to try to 'get' new people into the church.

See, by that time some of the different scattered groups out here, that was their focus, that was their motivation – to try to reach out to the world to bring new people into the church. And it didn't happen. People weren't being called. People that joined, what few there were are times, there was nothing there – amazing. Going on...

Do you truly believe our loving God, the supreme parent of this universe, would bring new babes into a dysfunctional family?

The way we were as God's Church?

He would not! His focus and concern is toward His scattered people. That is first in importance.

That's why I have longed for and I look forward to the fulfillment of nearly another 2500 – 3000 people who were scattered, who were baptized before 1995, who are still coming back because I believe what God said in Ezekiel. They're still coming, but I understand now when they will come as a whole and it will not be until the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet – which God gave that understanding a long time ago. But I so look forward, because I'm going to know some of them, people that I walked to God's house with side by side and council blended sweet in the past. It's going to be a joyous time. I can't tell you how much and those of you who've been around and know what I'm talking about – you know what that'll mean. What a beautiful thing when someone comes back, when God awakens them and they're able to see once again and share once again with you what is true. And for all the others, I resolve myself to the truth of what I know – they have to wait a thousand years, but I'll see them again. They'll have the opportunity of being resurrected and awakened spiritually at that time. Going on talking about the importance of reaching out to scattered people...

Anyone without such a vision should be questioned as to whether they are truly serving God, themselves, someone or something else. Ask your minister...

The problem was with what was being taught in so many different bodies here, different groups because people were being so misled by this point. Only 3½ years into it and all kinds of false ideas and false doctrines were coming into the scattered body out there; and just as a matter of reality, not as a matter of pride or haughtiness; God was re-establishing us and doctrine in a very powerful way...just as He had to do with Mr. Armstrong of those truths that were lost and not only that but God was beginning to give us more because with Passover God gave us more. He was strengthening us and giving us boldness and confidence to do a job that was in front of us. Truly is awesome when you go back and read some of these things and study some of these things.

I want to read this one section here where it says...

A common lie of many ministers today is their proclamation of how good things are getting for the Church and that the Church is finding peace.

There are a lot of people in the scattered Church today who see a parallel, who lived through that period of time, who understand this is exactly what's happening now in the physical part of Israel. This was about spiritual Israel, the Church of God, and we see now a spirit that's at work now in physical Israel, speaking of the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, western part of Western Europe and there is a spirit that's working as well.

A common lie of many ministers today is their proclamation of how good things are getting for the Church and that the Church is finding peace. Some within the Church are repenting and finding peace, but overall the Church itself is not at peace and most seem to be going back to sleep; this time by choice!

It's exactly what's happened in the world. It's exactly what's happened in the United States because at a point in time when we came on the scene, when the 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet was sounded and we know that it has to do with the economy and what's going to happen, isn't it amazing what happens when all of a sudden, because of a kind of preaching that takes place, a kind of teaching that takes place, a kind of false confidence is taught by government that everything is okay, don't worry. People get up and give a speech... I am so sick and appalled when I see some in government get up and give a speech to try to

calm the markets and they lie; they lie through their teeth. It's a sick thing, it's a perverted thing that takes place because I saw it within the Church where people got up and they lied talking about how good things are or how much better it's getting and why it's getting better and the Church is getting reorganized again and so forth. And yet that's what we see... the same spirit and I hope you recognize some of that. I say it for a reason because if you can see what's taking place exactly what we've been looking at and why we've been looking to it, of building up a confidence, a false confidence that's out there and so what happens when that takes place? People are lulled to sleep. After a while people don't even want to hear the bad news anymore and they're ready to reinvest monies or ready to step out and begin spending again or whatever it might be and it just gets them into a bigger trap when it takes place and that's exactly why these things are happening the way they are, because it's going to be a greater fall when it occurs and when it takes place and we're getting really, really close to a big fall financially.

Look at places like Dubai...isn't that amazing? They think that that's the epitome of peace, peace. That's the epitome of luxury and what man can do and it's been impressive some of the things that have taken place but look at the shape they're in because it's a testament of what's truly out there and a lot of governments, like a lot of ministers, like a lot of churches in the past, can hide a lot of things that they don't want the people to know or to see or to understand. And so there are things, please understand, there are things that people know in government that are out there, that they can't tell it all, they can't be what they think is the cause of the creating of a panic that might take place, but they don't know that what they're doing is just the opposite and what they're allowing to come is going to be far more devastating.

Continuing on in this article here. This is going to **Ezekiel 13**. Understand that there are things in prophecy that had to do with spiritual Israel that we've been going through that have already started now in physical Israel; that are already taking place and in God's time they will be manifest as to what the cause and the underlying things that have brought to pass will be.

*“Have you not seen a vain vision, and have you not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The Lord saith it; albeit I have not spoken? Therefore thus saith the Lord God, 'Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord God.*

So again here, what has taken place in the church in time and literally even what takes place in physical Israel at times; in other words, it's a vision of what people have and what they want others to see and that's why it was mentioned at this time because there were different churches that were trying to build up, as one example of one church that had different kinds of programs they wanted people to begin focusing upon and being involved in different activities that take people's minds away from what is needful and what is important and those things are happening even in government. Again...

*And mine hand shall be upon that prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: They shall not be in the assembly of My people, neither shall they be written the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel;*

That's why God has given so boldly that within the Church and we're picking up and we're going to come to some sermons close to the time of the fast that are going to have a big change for some of the things taking place in the Church. But more of that will come as we get a little closer...but for right now, some of the things having to do with Israel it says here...

*...neither shall they enter into the land of Israel;*

And so God is showing here that even for the Church that there are those who are not going to enter into the promised land. I think about Israel when they came out of Egypt, that God kept a whole generation of people 40 years in the wilderness because they didn't obey God, because they didn't believe God. Every one of them died in the wilderness and only the younger generation of people that were born to a certain age were allowed then to come into the promised land and God had the power to accomplish that – He did it. Amazing! And God has the power today to see to it that only a certain amount, a remnant, a tenth of one third comes back into the fold and is able to enjoy, receive again the Church in this age, of the benefits, not the first resurrection, but the blessings of being able to be a part of the Church again. All the rest have to wait until the 1000 years are ended, and that's what this is talking about.

*neither shall they enter into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord God. Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace;...”(Ezekiel 13:7-10,KJV)*

God's words are strong against ministers who lose the vision that comes from Him. One of the main reasons ministers have lost such vision is because they have forgotten who we are. They have forgotten how God works in our lives and for what purpose.

The reason for going through a lot of these things is again, to show where God was leading us, what God was giving the Church at that time and it brought it down to the article here finally...

Does everyone see our special calling?

Do you know who you are? ...and why? Going on here...

We are asked that very question in I Corinthians 1:26. And because He has called us at this time we are able to be a part of a plan He ordained before man was ever put on this earth. We are firstfruits in that plan, called to be part of the first resurrection.

Speaking of those who will be a part; and certainly what's being added now is not a part of the first resurrection, but... going on...

Because of His calling, we can understand His purpose for our lives. We can know things others cannot possibly know without themselves being called.

*“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:” (I Corinthians 2:7, KJV).*

Making it clear here that there is that which God has given to the Church that is clear to those who are called, to those that God draws to the Church and He refers to it as a mystery that the world can't see. That's why we talked about earlier; you can talk to your mate, if they're not being called; you can talk to your parents, if they're not being called; or your children if they're not being called at that moment in time...and because you're acting upon it there is something you can see but they can't and that's what God is saying here. And so we have to wait. Everything in God's time because when He starts calling you, it's about *you* changing, it's about you responding. In time that will spread. In time God will give that to others, but when you're called *you* have to respond, you have to choose to respond at that time,

or you just give it up and you have to wait a lot longer – to another time. Why? The best way you can help other people... Do you know the best way you can really help others is by yielding to the process now when you're called. Your ability to help others who maybe have turned against you right now in family, or friends who no longer want to call you their friend because they hate what you believe, they hate the change they see take place in you? The best way you're going to be able to help them is in the future. It may be the immediate future; it may be at some point here before this is all over with, or sometime at the beginning of the Millennial period, or at some point in the Great White Throne. But at some point, what an awesome thing... that you'll be able to help them because you can't right now. You can't until their minds are open.

Going on here in **verse 12**...

*“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.*

So if God freely gives you something, you didn't earn it - you don't deserve it; God just freely gives it to you. He opens up your mind, not because you're better than anyone else, it's because of His calling. I don't know why I'm called! I don't know why my brother wasn't called, or my sister... one of my sisters; one sister was, you know, but my older sister, or my two other brothers – I don't know why they weren't called to this! I don't know why some of my other friends weren't called. I didn't live a very good life. Even as young as I was I lived a pretty bad life and I know I didn't deserve to be called. None of us do. All we have to do is look at our life. But for whatever reason, for whatever purpose God draws us, God calls us and works with us and then it's up to us to respond and we just have to be thankful for that calling and make the most of that calling.

*...we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches,*

Every one of you is able to speak things that the world doesn't grasp, things that when God begins to open up the world's mind, or the mind of others around – that you're able to speak to them very clearly – that they're going to be in awe of when they start seeing, when they start understanding. It's an awesome thing because it's a matter of God's spirit. And so you're able to talk about things that are... I think of all the people we've seen in downtown London going to and fro. We were right there at the Paddington Station area... busy, busy, busy... I don't ever want to go back there again personally. It's too busy. Trains coming in, trains going out, subway system, you know, it's an area of mass confusion and I don't like that kind of closeness; I don't prefer it. But you look at all these people and you multiply that many times over and you see all the people in travelling and you think: “How few of us see what we see! How few of us can really hear what God has planned for mankind! How incredible that is.” It's really kind of unbelievable and that's why your friends, family and others truly believe it's unbelievable. “Who do you think you are? You're that small and you're not a great church in the world... that should show right there that it's a cult! You know?! It can't be God's Church: God's Church can't be small like that, you know...” Anyway, on and on it goes with human thinking.

*Which things also we speak,*

You can repeat everything you've heard, everything you believe, everything you've heard in sermons, everything you've read about... you have it. You can talk about it. It's a miracle! It's an awesome thing

that you can speak the truth. You can share it with others within the Church. We can share our experiences and how we learn certain things and how they come to us or whatever happens in life where changes come about and the changes we're making...but you can't share it with the world. The Church lost this! You can lose this! You may not understand why we're taking the time to go through all these things, but the point is that this is our history of something that wasn't too long ago that we failed miserably in. We had the impregnation of God's spirit and we lost it! And people still lose it within the Church. I don't like seeing people go by the wayside! I'm cut to the core when I see people go by the wayside because of their decision, because I know what it means for them and for their family. What a horrifying thing that you're given an opportunity to live into a new age and you give it up?! I have a hard time comprehending that, but I comprehend it. I just hate it! ...because I understand in ways they cannot of what it means for them now – see? And some of you listening to me today, as hard as it is, will not be there when this is all said and done. Somewhere along the way some of you are going to let up and give up – some sin, somebody, someone, you're going to allow to pull you away from what God has given to you. Don't let it happen! Fight the fight! We didn't fight like we should. We began to let down. We became complacent. Don't become complacent! Because you see it's always on the Church to let down, to become complacent, to begin to take for granted all that God has placed into your mind. Don't allow that to happen! Be on guard! Be alert! Cry out to God for help to come through this! We don't have much time left. We're down to the wire! Amazing! Do you believe that there are going to be people after the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet are sounded that will still leave God's Church? ...after they have the physical evidence smacking them in the face all around them? Because I'm here to tell you some will quit! ...even after all that! Don't let it be you! Only you have the power over that...only you have the power over that.

*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

You have the ability, the God given ability of a miracle that's working in your life; of something that's not working in the rest of the world, where you see God's word. You understand the Sabbath. You understand a 7000 year plan; it's as clear to you as the sun that comes up in the morning but you can't explain it to anyone else. You can't give that to anyone else. The fact we're at the end of 6000 years is so clear to you, but people in the world can't see it. The fact that people don't go to heaven and *hell* is so clear to you, and others can't see it. The fact that people just die and have to be resurrected by God and given life again, whether it be Eternal life or life again a second time is something that's clear to you, but not others. What a miracle! What an incredible thing, and yet we underestimate that, we truly do because it becomes the norm with us; it becomes common place with us.

I say these things to you because this is what *WE EXPERIENCED IN GOD'S CHURCH!* That's what it says about Laodicea, we 'became rich and increased with goods,' because of everything we had – *we became complacent with the riches that God gave to us! WE DIDN'T GRASP THE MAGNITUDE OF WHAT WE HAD!* Don't let that happen to you because it's already happened to some! Still happens doesn't it? And it will still happen.

*But the natural man receiveth not the things of God;*

Carnal, natural person out here that doesn't have any help from God's spirit cannot receive these words...what I've said in radio interviews, what I've said in *ideaCity* – not a person out there can receive a bit of it unless God opens their mind to hear it, to see it. They can't help it until it's God's time; then it's going to be done through a humbling process.

*But the natural man receiveth not the things of God; for they are foolishness unto him:*

That's why we get the reactions we have. It's foolishness, not only foolishness – you have gone over the deep end, you are loony as loony can be, you know, you are in a cult. That's a cult. They're off base, they're off target – blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, you know, because they have to throw everything they can at you because it's so strange to them.

*...they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Corinthians 2:12-14, KJV).*

We'll stop there, continue on here next Sabbath. Again, things about 'Our Journey of Faith' because brethren, they are lessons and I hope you understand today why they're even compounded in magnitude and meaning. That's the very reason we're going through this... is because these things continue on to this day. They're not something that was just for us back at a certain time, they're things that are still taking place within the Church – fewer and fewer, yes. But don't let it happen to you!

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