

Two Sabbaths ago, on the weekend of the ministerial meetings, I gave a split sermon that was entitled; *Obedient to God's Rest*. Today we're continuing with that same sermon with this being *Part 2*. I thought I'd mention this sermon is covering an area of scripture where Paul was addressing the Hebrews, in other words the Jewish people at that time, concerning the truths covered in the Old Testament regarding the Messiah; and how Jesus Christ was the very fulfillment of all those prophecies that he is referring back to and so many of the other things that Paul is referring back to in order to help the Hebrew people to understand. So again, to record those things and show those things that were being fulfilled and accomplished in and through Jesus Christ.

So we're going to go back to Hebrews 3 and have a quick review today so we can have a little bit of the stage set once again with the context of what's being covered.

And of course, this sermon title; 'Obedient to God's Rest' gives us a great clue anyway, because we've talked about God's rest, what that entails, what that is. We spoke of those things before the Feast of Tabernacles. We focused on things about peace and what that truly means, Jerusalem, and all the things that God desires in His Family, for His Family; and that process of getting from where we are to that point there. And this is very much a part of that, as the context is.

Hebrews 3:6 – But Christ as a Son over His own House; whose House we are, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. And that's the way it is, isn't it; always in God's Church. I've been in the Church over 40 years now and I think of all the things I've seen; but one of the things that has distressed me the most through time is as I've seen from year to year to year... people who haven't endured to the end, who haven't held firm to the hope that God has placed before us of what is coming.

Mr. Armstrong understood; God gave to him the understanding that we were living at an end-time. And we always looked forward planning five and ten years in advance, basically ten years when I came into the Church, as time went along down to 5 years, knowing that things could happen quickly on the earth. And yet it wasn't for that period of time because an apostasy had to take place first.

Every year and this year has been no different. Since the Feast of Tabernacles there have been some people who have gone by the wayside; and that's always distressing. I can't comprehend how anyone can stay around and not be of the same mind. In some cases, some individuals have been of a different mind ever since the ordination of women – they haven't agreed with that. *Well, if you don't agree with it why are you here?* Auf wiedersehen, dos vedanya... what are some of those words, sayonara, good-bye! What are you doing? Why torment yourself if you're not in agreement, if you're not of the same mind... Why be here? It doesn't make sense. I don't understand people who will do that; but it's a spiritual thing. And I hate to see people go by the wayside, but everyone has choices to make.

God's Church is a Church where we strive to be of the same mind! What a blessing to be of the same mind. And I hope since the Feast of Tabernacles we grasp that in a greater way! *The need to be of the same mind with God, to be in agreement with God!* As Wayne Matthews talked about last Sabbath, talking about this dark part in our mind and this light part that comes from God; and the distinction is there, the differences; and drawing the analogy that we learn in so many different ways. God gives us

truth and ability to put it together in so many different ways, so we can get it, so we can understand what He's doing in our life!

What an incredible blessing to be of the same mind; the harmony, the unity, the oneness that has the potential of coming out of that, because candidly, there is no other way happiness, joy, *peace*, *God's rest*, can come out of anything else...but unity and oneness of spirit with God. Getting rid of *our* ways and receiving God's into our life.

So, we are able to be a part of that House, a part of that construction and a part of that Building, **IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.** You have to fight for it! Day by day, week by week, month by month, and year by year! Blows my mind... because I made the comments, to the very end that there will be those who will depart, there will be those who let down, there will be those who will not keep in the fight. I *hate* to see that! But we're all responsible for our own relationship between us and God.

Wherefore (as the holy spirit says, Today if you will hear His voice...) and again, pointing out on that particular Sabbath, this is very much about the Sabbath day, and it involves even in the context here even what is covered about the Sabbath day, about a time of rest. Just like I was talking last night, as I said earlier, what an exciting thing when you finally get to Friday, because you're worn out and you're so thankful that that seventh day rotation has come back around, that time of *rest* that God has given to us, a time to be *refreshed*. And what an awesome thing when you understand what that means for the future, to be a part of God's rest, continual peace, everlasting peace. Not the way it is today where you go back out in the world, or as soon as you leave services...and sometimes we're right back out in the world, we're right back into giving into our own human nature. As I've mentioned before, sometimes we can be driving home and say the wrong thing to our mate, say the wrong thing to our children, say the wrong thing to our parents. Or before we leave Sabbath services to have offended someone in God's Church! *Horrible! Evil!* And we need to see evil for what evil is; because that's the only way we'll stop doing it!

I'm so thankful before the Feast God has helped us more and more to focus on this thing of evil! *We've got to conquer and fight against evil because that prevents us from having peace and happiness and joy!* What a *horrible* thing in God's Church *to hurt other people* by things we say! I *loathe* that with all my being! *I don't want it to be a part of my life! I don't want to hurt people!* And I *hate* it when I see people be hurt, when people are hurt by things that others say – foolishly, loosely, whatever it is. And yet it happens *every week! EVERY WEEK!!* And I mourn and hurt inside when those things happen; and I hope you do too and come to where you loathe and hate evil. We don't want evil in our life! It's the opposite of peace, it's the opposite of God's rest, it's the opposite of joy, it's the opposite of harmony, it *is* the *same mind* as Satan! And *I hope you hate that kind of mind of pride* that is very soon going to be gotten rid of...that influence on the earth gone for a thousand years. And then at the end of that time period, thank God, over with forever, never around again.

So you've got to hate evil! You've got to loathe that kind of a mind! And if you understand what that being has done, and you understand that every time something foul comes out of your mouth, or out of your actions towards someone else and you *hurt* someone else by things that are said...that you are responding in *kind* to that being, the very thing God wants us to conquer! Sermon in itself... I can't even go into it! It's a sermon in itself to understand, to grasp what it means to *loathe that kind of thinking*.

Look at what that being has done! Do you want to be like him? Do you want any part of that in your being? *I don't!* I have learned to loathe that kind of thinking that comes from pride more and more and more; and the more you loathe those things, and the more you hate evil... You know you won't quit doing it until you loathe it, until you *hate* it.

It's like a long time ago... matter of fact it was in this area...when I talked to some people about something as small and puny as smoking! Because I don't know for what reason, but this area here was loaded with smokers. This area compared to some areas of the country, seriously, at that time there, maybe it's still that way... loaded with people who smoke! And I'd tell them, "You do it because you love it!"

"Oh no, no, I don't love it."

"Yes, you do. You don't understand your mind yet. You don't *hate* it, you don't *loathe* it, you don't *see* it as *hurting your health*. You don't see it like I saw it in a hospital bed in Sydney, Australia a few weeks ago when I shared a room with three other individuals. They wanted to put me in a private room and I said, "No thanks, I want to stay here, because I'm learning something, I'm seeing something in three individuals who are sharing with me." There was a bond that was developing. You know when you're around people and you can open up to them and talk to them (I don't care who it is in the world), and especially when they're in that situation there, they're of a humble mind. People tend to be more of a humble mind and relationships can be drawn.

All three of them – throat operations! All three of them – tracheas because of smoking in the past. One was like 83, one was 72 (I believe it was), and one was 49. And every one of them had *chunks* taken out of their tongue and out of their throat. All three of them able to keep their voice box area, barely one of them, because of smoking! And we wonder, "*Why* would God's Church say that isn't good? *Why* is it bad?" And please understand when I'm telling you here something small. It's small, it's puny in the scheme of things, it truly is. There are things far greater!

What I mentioned a while ago is far, far *worse* than smoking: when a bad thing comes out of your mouth and you hurt someone else in God's Church, or outside the Church. *That is far more damaging, does far more harm, is condemned far more mightily, if you will, by God, because it's murder! Murder! Murder! Murder – spiritually!* And we have a hard time sometimes seeing that and understanding that.

So something I desire with all my being, something I believe God desires for His Church today *in the time we have remaining in front of us is that we fight this in a greater way!* ...this thing of *how we treat each other and talk to each other* in God's Church. *WE ARE A FAMILY!* And you *need* each other, you truly do; and if you don't *love* one another... *love one another* with no *barriers*, with no *judgement* of the past, with no *harshness*, with no *condemning*...then you are in deep, deep doo-doo spiritually. Just calling it what it is – okay? Because God is putting more upon us now, He expects more from us from what He has given to us. He has given us greater understanding now than we have ever had and with greater understanding, with greater revelation of truth comes greater responsibility. And His desire is for us is that we draw closer together as a Family; and that we conquer this thing in a far greater way.

Just as I brought out in the ministerial meetings... things to help them to be able to do their job in a better way, to grow in the responsibilities God has given to them in a better way.

And one of the things I brought out in the meetings is this thing about how we have heard sermons about what God has given to us in understanding a *curse* that is being broken, a *curse* that has been upon mankind since the beginning with Adam and Eve because of what they did; a *curse* upon the

family, a *curse* upon women, and a *curse* upon men as well because it's been a two way street. And because that is being addressed and God is letting us know that is being addressed, changed, lifted; it doesn't mean it's like waving this magic wand and all of a sudden all of us are different. It doesn't mean that all of a sudden men think differently toward women; that all of a sudden their minds are healed of the *prejudices* of the past, of how they grew up and what they were taught by *their* parents and by the society around them. You are not free yourself yet – men! There's still *much* prejudice in God's Church in a wrong way toward women. You don't conquer something like that overnight.

God is teaching us because that is being lifted more and more and He's showing us that things are changing and going to be changed a lot more – things about family and husband and wife relationships. Where the world is changing and we're getting into a Millennial period; and when that time comes, when men who *think that they have the final say in a home, that everything they say is like 'written in stone'*, like Babylonian law; that your head comes off if you don't do it; *is going down the toilet!* Okay?! That's *atrocious* and *sick* and *perverted for men to think that way*; that you think things are *owed to you because of your place, of what you think you have in the family as the head of a home!*

*JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH...*and you know what? *He loves* the Church! He loves it powerfully and mightily, to the point of giving His life for it. That's what He did. And sometimes because of that curse and because of that perverted, sick, distorted mind of that being who has hurt mankind since the day of Adam and Eve...that serpent who did what he did, that sick being who did what he did - we've eaten it up in society. We have misused for 6,000 years what God gave to us, that men by nature were made stronger *physically, not mentally*, than women. But sometimes we think we are mentally. You need a brain check if that's the case because things are not snapping like they should properly in your mind.

There's much to do to make this change and it can't be made without God's spirit. It can't be made without God's spirit; and that's the blessing, that God has brought us to a time where those things are going to be addressed.

We're running into some unique situations in God's Church now...and I'm getting into some subject matter that I'm going to be covering in some sermons in the future here. But I'm just striving to help you to understand something here about what's being said about what God is giving to us and the truths that God gives to us and understanding that God gives to us, that to me is awesomely exciting! I look forward to that *freedom*, and that *peace*, and that joy that's going to come when we can begin to really deal with the prejudices of mankind. *I hate prejudice – of any kind!* And you have to as well in order to conquer and overcome it! And you have to ask God to help you to *see* the prejudice that's in your being; if it's men towards women, or women toward men... because it's a two way street.

Because of society in the world sometimes women have become imprisoned as well to thinking that is not healthy and good, to where you expect things to be a certain way and don't even know how to be free in some things. And yet God is bringing us to that point; and I thank God for it. What a beautiful world we're getting ready to enter into when marriage can be what it's supposed to be, when husbands and wives can love each other in the way they're supposed to love each other, when husbands can love wives with that attitude of Jesus Christ – to sacrifice, to *sacrifice* to love; because that's what it's about. And for the two to be able to draw closer together through time, to be *richly blessed* because God says, 'So that two can become one.'

Your mind isn't fully sound and good until you have certain experiences in life. And sometimes for men, it's to understand the mind of your wife. And for women, to understand more the mind of the man. And for the two to learn from each other and to grow. And when you learn in that relationship you learn to work *together*! Some of the strongest leadership we have in God's Church are those who work together. A lot said there if you can learn from some of those things; and we're ever learning about those things in God's Church. That's what God desires; the ability to work together in unity and harmony; and that's the way it should be in the entire Body within the Church. And the more we learn how to do that... what a beautiful thing!

So again, we are at a unique place in time. I hope you're seeing that more and more. I hope you're excited by that more and more; to understand where we are in time. God's immensely excited and He wants to share that excitement with us. God is immensely excited about the changes that are taking place because He's bringing us closer and closer to this thing of *His rest! His peace!* But there's much to be learned during the Millennium as well. What an awesome thing that so much of that *is* going to be able to be learned.

I hope you hate prejudice. Ask God to help you to see that which is in you that's a matter of prejudice; if it just be a matter of gender, male and female, whatever, if it be a matter of race. I *loathe* how people can't get along.

I'm amazed sometimes by some of the conversations that people are starting to see more and more of and what they desire and what they want. I think of places like Sydney, Australia where so many people have come in from so many different nations and learning to live together in peace. It used to be many years ago (I haven't been up there in that area as much in times past), but it used to be when we lived in this area here, we'd go up to Toronto. I was always impressed by that area compared to some cities in the United States where different peoples of different backgrounds *don't* get along. They move to their own area (and I know it is a little bit in that way in Toronto as well; but people seem to mix better up there as far as different cultures. But in many cities it's just areas of battle and hardship and crime that come out of differences in culture.

So I see a place like Sydney, Australia where people come together from different cultures, I don't care what culture it is, and they're working to get along, they're working to tolerate the differences. And you know what? When you learn how to do that you learn from each other. You learn that just because you're of a particular culture or a different background, nationality, or race, or whatever... that that's not what it's all about. You don't have the corner market! Just like husbands don't have the corner market in the family! ...like there's some superiority there! Anybody that has that kind of a mind is *sick!* Sick! Sick! Sick! Sick! Sick and it needs healing! And anybody that has different ideas towards different cultures... if you don't learn from them and want to appreciate and glean what you can from them...

I've had the blessing of traveling to different parts of the world where there are incredibly different cultures and I have learned a lot by experiencing that. You broaden your thinking; especially if you learn to *appreciate* the differences instead of finding offense in them. Do you understand what I'm saying? It's a beautiful thing!

We're going into a Millennial period where we're going to be *one Family*; one Family around the earth. What an incredible thing God is doing to bring us through a period of time because of great hardship on the earth, and all of a sudden people who seek to get along, people who seek to learn from each other, people who begin to appreciate the differences that God has given even in cultures, different peoples.

There are incredible talents different people have in life; and if we don't appreciate those things and learn from those things we hold ourselves back and we imprison ourselves and we remain kind of stupid too. We just willingly sowed... kind of like wanting to be dumb! Why? We're going to learn to cooperate and share; and things aren't going to be competitive like they are now, we're going to *learn* from one another because we learn to appreciate the differences in one another as well.

The point being is we have changes to make and we still have a long way to go. Just because we have knowledge does not mean we have repentance, doesn't mean we have change yet. So families... I know God's taking me into some sermons in the future here in families – husbands and wives and family's, because it extends to the Church! If we can understand it in the family environment, then we can understand it in the Church! Jesus Christ being the Head of the Church and how God works in our lives. And God is offering to give us more ability to see those things than we ever have – truly! Because of where we are in time and because of what's coming in the future and the changes that must be made once Jesus Christ returns. And so we're being given an opportunity for a head start, we're being given the opportunity to get it up here [head] a little bit more than what we do right now.

Those of you who've been called in the last few years – what an *awesome opportunity!* *You don't even begin to GRASP what God has given you yet, you truly don't!* But after Jesus Christ has returned, you'll begin to see it more, to learn what you're learning now, to be trained in what you're being trained in now is *so absolutely incredible!* It truly is!

I think of the time during Philadelphia, the time after Mr. Armstrong died then and we went into Laodicea, I think of all we've been through and I think of all the knowledge we had – incredibly blessed. I think of when Mr. Armstrong came back and worked for around six years to put the Church back on the right track, as he said, because we were derailed in a great way and he knew that Laodicea, the spirit, was coming upon the Church more and more. And he cried out with all of his being, *"I wonder if 50% of you GET IT!* That's what he would say because he knew that spirit already existed. And then toward the end he'd asked, *"I wonder if 10% of you even get it?* And he was right, because we were falling asleep before he died! And it didn't take long then for us to enter into what we entered into.

And so we've gone through some incredible things in God's Church and people have been called during that period of time back then; some are sealed. Some have died and some are sealed, they're going to be in that resurrection when Jesus Christ returns. Some are being awakened who lived in some of those periods of time and brought back to be a part, to share in what God has for us. But those of you who are new, *you cannot begin to grasp the magnitude of your calling yet*, especially at this time. It is awesome beyond understanding.

We can believe that Jesus Christ is returning, we can believe that a new age is going to be established, we can believe and understand there'll be 144,000 on this earth, we can believe and understand many things about one Family that's going to exist around the earth... because there's only going to be one Church around the earth, because there's only going to be one Government – thank God, around the earth. I'm so sick of the world's governments! They've caused so many problems, so much heartache through time; all the politics, all the lying, all the conniving, all the wars – everything that have taken place because man can't govern himself. And for *you* to be called now, to have opportunity to learn these things because of what you're going to be able to do in the future? It's awesome, truly awesome.

It's like telling you about the eight day Feast of Tabernacles; you *really* don't get it until you're there. You *really* can't understand it and *appreciate* it to the *depth* until you've experienced it. Now all of you

who experienced it and say, "I understand now. I heard all this talk and people talking and so forth – now I see." It's a spiritual thing. So it will be once Jesus Christ returns.

Verse 8 - Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

God doesn't want ... He wants us to receive what He has today on the Sabbath, because that's the time God *teaches* His people. That's the 'today'. Every time that seventh day comes around, that's the day He teaches us, moulds and fashions us to receive what He has for us. And so we're to *drink in* of what God has, to try to drink in of all that we can that He's given to us. And so He says, don't harden, don't resist, don't harden your hearts. You know what 'hardening your hearts' is? It's not about your *head!* I was thinking about this the other day. Sometimes I think people get the two confused. Hard-headedness... *those HARD-HEADED Israelites!* I used to think about that when I first came into the Church. I thought... when I'd hear ministers give sermons about those 'hard-headed' Israelites, I think, "Yeah! I can't believe how hard-headed they were! Here the Red Sea opens up, they get through the other side and it's not too long after they get to the other side they're already murmuring. How can you be that hard-headed?!" And then it wasn't but a few years later... took me a few years...before I began to realize, "Oh, that's me! We're hard-headed!" Hard-headed... and we would have done the same thing if we were back there in that time period too; we're all the same, human nature is the same. But in the beginning it was kind of hard for me to understand how they could be so hard-headed. And I didn't grasp at that time there the difference was they didn't have God's spirit; I do. I was called, drawn by God's spirit, baptized in the Church, received the impregnation of God's spirit, have the ability to see things on a spiritual plane...and still have this hard-headedness.

But hard-hearted? There's a difference between hard-headedness and hard-heartedness. To be hard-hearted is a resistance to God in a very powerful way. The heart is used in a different way. The head is one thing about receiving the truth and knowledge and so forth, but the heart has more to do with how you live toward people, how you feel, how you think. There's hard-headedness too, and they go together; there's that which laps over. But this has more to do with that which we feel toward others and think toward others and respond toward others. And sometimes we just don't act toward others the way we should; just like I mentioned earlier, husbands and wives and children and parents and brethren to brethren – how we respond to one another, how we love them, whether we *refuse* to love them. *Hard-hearted! Because sometimes we won't put into practice the things that God says we should do – so we're hard-hearted!* See, because we *just can't love*, because we're so *selfish!* That's what it's about.

See, hard-headed isn't about being selfish necessarily; hard-hearted is. There's a bit of a distinction there and how they're used in scripture as well. *Hard-hearted!* God tells us how to love each other; He tells us how to get along. I think of *all those sermons before the Feast about peace! All the sermons about entering into God's rest! Jerusalem!* And it's so frustrating, because ever since that time every week... *every week* I hear of brethren who don't get along and I ache inside, and I hurt inside, and I mourn inside because of those things that I hear; because we are so *hard-hearted...*and hard-headed!

But if we don't receive into our being, because of selfishness, how to treat others, how to love others, how hard-hearted are we that we can't love and refuse to love and won't love the way God says to put it into practice. And so much of it has to do with what comes out of our *mouth!* I am *astonished* sometimes by what people will say to each other! Why do we do it? Why do we cut? Why do we hurt? You've got to hate it before you'll quit. You've got to see it in yourself. You've got to see the selfishness first before you can start to do it.

Harden not your hearts; because everything God gives to us has to do with what? Relationships. The law, the 10 Commandments - 100% about relationships. The first four commandments are about a relationship with God; that's why the Protestant world just can't get it. "Oh, God doesn't care what day you worship Him as long as you worship Him. You should worship Him on every day, 7 days a week... isn't that right? You should worship God 7 days a week."

"Yes, but God says on this day is the day you set aside to be taught by Him, to honour Him and to make that day holy and sanctify it...that's what God says."

"Oh, but... God wouldn't care if you do it on another day too, as long as you do it on a particular day..."

"Yes He does. It's about your relationship with God. He made you, He created you and He told you to do it on this day! And if you don't do it on that day you don't love God." Relationships! "You refuse to love God – you're hard-hearted and selfish..." on and on it goes... "You're selfish inside; you don't see your selfishness and your *hate* toward God. You think its okay because you made a different god." On and on it goes.

Same thing about the last six commandments – our relationships with one another; it's what it's about. Are we hard-hearted and won't live it? It's one thing to have the knowledge, it's one thing to know the truth, but it's another thing to live it toward each other, to love each other the way God says to love each other.

Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works forty years. They *saw* the love of God, the *favour* of God, the *mercy* of God, the *kindness* of God over and over again, but they refused to love God, they refused to obey. They kept the Sabbath... but as soon as they got off on their own, in their own nations and so forth even that went by the wayside with tribes that separated finally. They still refused. How often, over and over again, they wouldn't listen to God, wouldn't receive what God had for them, wouldn't love God. Hard-hearted! Just wouldn't live it because they were so selfish and wanted something different.

Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; they're deceived, they deceive themselves not understanding their own nature. That's what the word means, as we talked about. **...and they have not known My ways.** To do things God's way! That's where the peace is, the happiness, the joy. It comes in only one way to mankind; God's way! It's amazing! **So I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest. Take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart;** an *evil heart*! Focused on that on that Sabbath – talking about that evil heart. If we don't do things the way God says, if we don't *love* the way God says to do – God says it's just an evil heart because you won't change, because you won't practice and live toward one another what I've told you, what I've given to you because it's not in your heart to do so.

...an evil heart of faithlessness, not being faithful. That's what it's about, being unfaithful, a different ways of expressing this. Unbelief has to do with faith, it has to do with believing God. If you believe God you live it, if you *believe* that Jesus Christ is returning May 27, 2012 with all of your being then you live differently, you think differently. *Everything you do* is going to be different from everyone else around you in the world, truly. And so we tend to think differently. You remortgage your home to get a lower interest rate and to knock off a few hundred dollars maybe off or whatever off of the amount you're just giving away like that, and they tell you, "Oh, you've already got so many years paid off, don't you want to do this as a 15 year note, or a 20 year note at least?"

"No, put everything in a 30 year note; just pile it on."

And they think you're nuts. They think you're crazy because they don't understand. They don't know where we're coming from.

So, **take heed brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief**, not believing what God says; because then that affects obviously what you live – which is a matter of faith. Believing God translates into faith. If you believe what God says and you do it, you're living by faith. *Faith* is practicing what you believe. That's what faith is; living by faith. We *practice* what we believe. We are geared towards 2012. Just like the Feast; we don't know whether we're going to get to observe it or not. But by faith we're planning ahead because we don't know the exact time, because we realize God's not giving that to us. And I know *deeply* why He's not giving it to us... because as soon as He gives something to us, you know what? The rest of the world knows it – the demonic realm knows it, Satan knows it.

So there are things we live by faith. We just follow God and when it's time He'll give us what we need.

There are wars being fought; *always* being fought. I was thinking about that the other day again, it just blows my mind; how do they fight? What do they do? They're spirit beings. How do they fight each other? What force? What power? I don't understand that...and you can't; but they fight, there are wars. Incredible!

So, **take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief and departing from the living God**. I hate to see people depart; and yet it's a choice. Pulls of the world, pulls of family, pulls of wanting something else that you shouldn't have and cutting yourself off from the truth and after a while becoming so weak that after a time people just leave. And that's what happens.

But exhort one another daily, encourage, help, **while it's called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin**. Not doing what God says. If we don't do what God says, it's sin. If we see and understand what that is; if we refuse to love one another the way God says then it's sin. If we talk wrong to somebody else, if we say something wrong to somebody else then it is sin – so much so that God says you're a murderer spiritually. Powerful! Powerful words, but we sometimes just don't get it spiritually and understand how that's far, far worse than most things we tend to judge people in. So and so, they didn't do this right, or they didn't do that right, and they're weak in this area, or they didn't... and here we talk about them or say something about them or condemn them, or judge them and don't realize that the very words coming out of our mouth are far, far worse than what they've done. And it's hard for us to grasp and understand those things because it's a spiritual matter.

For we are made partakers of Christ; a part of the Building, a part of that structure, **if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end**; fight, fight, fight! Continue to fight self, our own human nature, the pulls of this world, the weaknesses we have. We all have different weaknesses, we all have different backgrounds; and you've got to *fight* against those things! It wasn't meant to be easy. You've got to fight! **While it is said, Today if you will hear His voice harden not your hearts as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses**. Now why is he talking to them in this light, in this regard? Because *they're the Hebrews!* They have certain ideas about scripture and about the Bible and there are things they just don't get! So there's certain things here he's talking about relating back to how *they* interpret scripture, *showing* that their thinking is wrong, that they don't even have that right! He's getting ready to show them what this is all about *because it's not about the children of Israel coming out of Egypt and going into the Promised Land. IT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH entering into God's rest!* But that's how they took it, a part of it.

They didn't get it; they didn't understand what God was giving, what God was saying. And so Paul is going through in a nice way, telling them basically (whether they understood it or not), some of their thinking, some of their teaching, and then he explained to them what the truth is.

They could relate to what Paul was doing. They could understand this *in part*. So you relate to certain situations to people, in part, by what they understand and then teach them so they can begin to receive the truth.

For some when they had heard, it did provoke: howbeit not all came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved 40 years. And so he's using this analogy of what happened back then because this is how they thought, this is how they, at that time, were thinking. **Was it not with them who had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?** So indeed, this example here, yes He was grieved with what they did for that period of time. And he's using that analogy to help them to understand something because of what they relate to, to grasp and comprehend – don't be hard-hearted, don't resist God, don't fight against God, listen to what God has to say; don't live in disobedience.

And so it goes on to say then in **verse 18 – And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to them who believe not?** This is a type of something that he was using here to show but this isn't what this is about. He was relating to them something they could understand. Where do we start? Always on a physical plane. We start on a physical plane first. We don't understand things that are spiritual. It takes time for us to begin to grasp things that are spiritual; and so we always start physically.

That's why I think about the time during Philadelphia with the subject of healing. We thought so *physically* about it. So many things that we were unbalanced in because we hadn't come to a point where God began to give us more, so we went through *decades* of things about healing, about anointing, about looking to God, of things that were misused; and the matter of faith was misunderstood when it came to healing. It was at a point in time where if you went to a doctor and received any kind of medical help you didn't have faith, you lacked faith. And that isn't what it was about. And people were *tormented* by some of those things.

I remember one time there was a minister going to visit a woman who was in the hospital. I think it was her bladder... it was so messed up. She was torn! She didn't know what to do! An elder's wife didn't know what to do! Because with the minister there and everything, it's like if I go ahead and tell them to work on me then I don't have faith. And she was *tormented* because she had misconceptions about faith and about healing – physical healing. And not understanding that the Bible, when it talks about healing, there are times that God will intervene and there are times that He doesn't in certain things of that nature. There are things we can learn by what we go through in life – we always do. It doesn't matter what you experience, you learn; "My body's physical; as I get older it gets worse!" I'm so *thankful* that we're going to have new bodies in time. I'm so *thankful* we'll never have pain. I look forward to that time with no pain. The more you experience old age, the more you're thankful God has a plan that we don't have to be like this...and so thankful you don't have to be in it twice! What an incredible thing! *I am so thankful – truly – that I don't have to live in this body twice!* What a *horrible* thing! To me it's horrible; it'd be like a nightmare really. And yet that's God's plan for the vast majority of mankind because that's the process they have to go through in order to be saved, in order to be *healed* up here in the mind. Healing in the Bible has to do with the *mind*; and the things that were misunderstood about faith and healing had to do with the *mind* and God's spirit changing, converting

this mind, transforming this mind – the *awesome* miracle involved there! But we got hung up on everything physical and we made these little things here of what you could and couldn't do.

I had an individual one time when I first came in the ministry come up to me and didn't know if when he went in to have a tooth worked on... he said, "Is it okay if I have a shot of novocaine?" and I said, that time there, there was this old western that had been out not too long, maybe been out a few years, but he knew what I was talking about. I said, "Well, it's either that or bite the bullet." You remember the time when they stuck this bullet and the guy had to bite down on this bullet, they had to work on the other tooth... whatever it was there, but anyway, it's either that or bite the bullet! But he was serious. But I tried to use a little humour in it to help him to understand it's a *choice*. You're not sinning by taking novocaine! Anyway, I don't want to get off on that. But we didn't have balance in those things. We didn't understand because we tend to take things physically first in human life; and then we learn later on as we grow that there is so much that's spiritual that God uses to teach and to help us to learn.

And so it was with how Paul was addressing the Hebrews and using an analogy here, an example of something that happened so that we can all understand. Because those entering into God's rest has to do with all humanity, not those Israelites out there in the wilderness during that forty years. But if you can understand *that*, see, it's just like when I was talking about understanding... if you can understand the family and how husbands and wives and children are to function as a family and how husband and wife are to *function as one!* *ONE!* *ONE* God says; to become ONE; and what that means... and the *joy* and the *richness* and the *beauty* of that. And the more you learn that, what that's all about; then as we understand that we can understand the relationship more and more of the Church with Jesus Christ and God the Father. It's a *spiritual* thing; and we can learn to live our lives differently within the Body. And then even in the world; the more you see it spiritually, the more you'll grasp it in how you *judge* matters and how you judge people; because you judge people. You are responsible for *how* you judge though...not to condemn. That's where people go astray and that's the judgement that's condemned throughout the Bible: but how we judge situations in people's lives and how we deal with that judgement then not to condemn.

So, **to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not?** We showed how that this word here specifically 'to believe not' is the Greek word – it means that but it also means 'to disobey'. They go together; you can't separate them in the meaning of the Greek language here. So *belief* has to do with obedience. Believing God has to do with obedience. Disbelieving God has to do with *disobedience* to God; it's simple, isn't it? But when you understand that sometimes by words it happens to drive a point home even more so, has a greater impact upon it.

So that's why we went over to Romans 2. We'll come back here in a moment, but let's go over to Romans 2. It's been good to review this because I brought out things that we didn't cover in the first sermon. I really intended to review quickly and get into the flow of the sermon more quickly but there are things here that we needed to go back and look at and add to so that we can see it in a better way.

Romans 2:8 – But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey, it's the same word we read back here of 'believe not' in Hebrews, same Greek word; they go hand in hand in what they mean here. **But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,** it shows a judgement here that God has given, about how we live; and this matter of the importance of obeying what God has given us to see and to understand, and what we live by. And if we don't live by that then we're judged.

Verse 9 – Tribulation and anguish unto every soul of man who does evil. It just pops out at me more. Isn't it amazing? You go through sermons and certain things we read we read over, but now that we've addressed this, as we did before the Feast of Tabernacles this year, this matter of evil – it just *pops* out in a very powerful way, stronger, and it should.

Tribulation and anguish, mentally, spiritually, **upon every soul of man that does evil.** And that's what happens; you're not at peace, you're not happy, *not at peace; can't receive the rest of God, the comfort of God*, the love of God, if we live this way toward others, if we don't obey what God has told us to do in our relationships (as an example), with one another. And so if we don't do those things then we put our own selves in *turmoil*. I have seen it over and over again where people are in great mental turmoil in their relationships. And they're *torturing* themselves and they don't realize that *it's because of their disobedience! YOU aren't living what God says... it's not the OTHER person who isn't living what God says. It's YOU who refuse to obey God! And then when YOU learn to obey God and bring your own nature into subjection to what God has said* you'll begin to receive a peace even if the other person or everyone around you isn't living it. But that seems to escape us because it's so much easier to excuse our bad behaviour sometimes in life, or justify *self* so we can find fault with someone else and hold to our *own* righteousness. Sick! Sick, sick sick! I hope you understand and see that – how *sick* such thinking is; how *perverted* the mind is when it thinks that way.

Whenever you give excuse and justification for something you have done, understand the power of your nature that's at work. It's a powerful thing! It's far better to be humble and receive whatever you can in correction and changing of life, whatever it takes, and do it! And even if some of it isn't justified – take it. That's what Jesus Christ did. He didn't revile, He didn't strike back, He took it and He said we're supposed to do the same thing. There's much to be learned in that.

So, **tribulation and anguish**, you don't get along in your relationships, then you *curse your own mind!* That's another way of saying it! You curse yourself! You're going to be in torment and anguish and turmoil about your relationship; you're not going to be happy, you're not going to be fulfilled! You're going to be tormented. And what's amazing is we do it to ourselves.

Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that does evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; so it's something that Paul was addressing here specifically about the people. **But glory and honour and peace;** Glory. What is that glory? You know, when you are close to God, when you have God's spirit working in you there is that glory. That's from God; it's not of us. We have no glory in us! Our human nature is sick, it's just sick! Anything that's good, that's worthy of glory, comes from God. And the more we drink in of God and have God in our life the more of this we can experience. And that's what He's saying. You can receive more of My spirit, you can have more of My peace, you can have more of My rest, more of My love, that's what God is saying to us – you can have more of that in your life! **But glory, honour and peace, to every man who works good,** What is good? Whatever comes from God; the truth, the way of life that He shows us. But you have to work at it!

If there's one thing I would *love* to give to families when they become a family, when husbands and wives come together – is to understand and receive this: that you have to *work at your marriage to make it work...and you know what you're working on? YOURSELF! And in the Church of God to get along with everybody, to love everybody, you know what you've got to work on? YOURSELF! It's not a matter of making everybody else change and working to get everybody else to change to make your life happier, "Because if everybody else changes I'll be happy..." It doesn't work that way!* It's you in your mind that has to change. What an awesome thing if we can understand those things. What a blessing if

we can receive those things from God. And He wants to give them to us – blessings, happiness, fullness of life.

I wish I could give this to everyone, but I can't. God can't! That's why we have to go through so many years of change. That's why it's so *hard* to work with this human mind. That's why a Feast sermon discussed the miracle that takes place with the transformation of our minds and how long it takes to get it transformed! To get rid of more selfishness and to receive more of the thinking, the mind of God. What an awesome process we go through! What an awesome blessing! A physical mind, grey matter that has a spirit essence in it that comes from God; but not the holy spirit that gives us the ability to think and reason; and the *miracle* to change *that mind* because of the way it's made. What an awesome thing God has done so that we can become, in a *short* length of time, part of the God Family. Because your seventy years on this earth, or some who've lived a few hundred (before the flood), that lived righteously before God... to have that mind changed, the process they have gone through for that to take place? A short length of time in the scheme of things.

I don't know if we can grasp some of the things given at the Feast this year about the angelic realm and spirit life, angelic beings, and how long it may have been until sin came along. But for us, the miracle of having the kind of mind we have, that God can work with, to change, to become more at one with Him until a time when He can give us that life permanently, always; no more human nature, no more pulls of the human flesh because now we've come to a point in time that God measures this mind of being transformed to where He can seal a person and say, "I *know* you! I know what you will do under every circumstance." When He told Abraham, "Now I know you." ...and what that meant because of his mind. Powerful! Powerful, powerful.

And so we may agonize how long we happen to live; ...see, you don't agonize the whole time. You start doing it once you receive a calling and baptism; that's when you begin to agonize, because then you have to fight what's up here, don't you? You begin a battle, you begin to enter into warfare whereas before that life was kind of frivolous and you did what you did. It was a mixture of a combination of things; you grew up, you finally hit a point of maturity where God says, "Okay, here it is." And now you have to make some choices; what's your battle now? Fighting this, fighting what's in your mind, fighting the wrong thinking, fighting the pulls of your human nature, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.' Now your battles have begun and now you enter into a struggle. That's why we're encouraged in Hebrews to keep at the fight.

If... *IF*...and so many times, year by year by year, there's not been a year go by in God's Church since I've been in it that I haven't been hurt in thinking about people that I've seen go by the wayside. Every year. You can *count* on it from *one* Feast of Tabernacles... it's already happened between this Feast of Tabernacles and the next Feast of Tabernacles; there are already some who have gone by the wayside. I don't care if it's just one; it's one too many. But they had choices to make. And sadly, between now and the Feast of Tabernacles... I know it isn't over. See, it's up to you. *IF* you will hold fast to what God has given to you, *if* you'll hold fast to the confidence that God has offered to you. But sometimes we allow human nature, things out here, to cut us off from the flow of God's spirit; and if that happens you are no match for that being who is out there. Only when you can quote John; and it's a part of your life; 'greater is He that's in you than he that's in the world' can you continue forward and hold fast to what God has given.

And I think of all times in human history – so close, just a few months away. To think someone would give up the fight?! It's hard to imagine, and yet it isn't.

Going on here in Romans; **but glory, honour and peace to every man that works good, to the Jew first, and to the Gentiles as well; for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without the law:** whether they knew about it or not, or whether they were a part, or whether they were Gentile or not, whether they were Jew. The point being here – we all come under judgment. **...and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.** So judgement in time comes upon all.

The point being; **(For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers... the doers of the law shall be justified...)** it's in the doing, it's in the *work*. It takes work to fight against self; it takes work for a marriage to grow. You know in the very beginning when you're eyes are kind of fogged over and you say, "I do." I don't mean that you're blind in what you're going into, don't misinterpret this; but because of the excitement of all the hormones of life that flow through human beings, man and woman... which God made us to be that way... and you say, "I do." There is a uniqueness at that moment in time that in a year won't be the same, in two years will not be the same. And how that marriage progresses forward depends upon the work you do. It depends on the work you do; you have to work to give, you have to work to say no to self; you have to work to love the way God says to love - you truly do. *It doesn't come natural! What comes natural and what causes problems in any relationship, including marriage, is selfishness. THAT is what is natural.* And that's a powerful sermon of and by itself if we could receive it.

Let's go back to **Hebrews 3:18 – And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into His rest, but to them who believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.** So anyone who has not obeyed God, regardless of the time period, regardless of what was given, when it was given, is not able to receive what God has for them. We can't receive the kind of life God wants us to experience and have; we can't receive peace, we can't receive rest, we can't receive joy, we can't receive happiness, we can't receive the things that are true and lasting unless God's in it. For those things to be lasting and true they must come from God.

So again, he's talking about those things that people aren't able to receive in life because of not believing God and because of disobedience. Because of disobedience we don't obey what God says and so we can't receive the fruit of what God wants us to have. He wants us to be blessed! He wants us to be happy! He wants us to receive!

It continues on in thought... **Hebrews 4:1 – Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.** Now at this point in time it's the Church, those being drawn into the Church, those of the Jewish background who are being drawn into the Church, those whom Paul worked with who were Gentiles who were being brought into the Church. And he's addressing them and talking to them because now we see something different, now we can begin to understand things on a spiritual plane that God gave and God said a long time ago – that it's not about ancient Israel, it's about *us*, it's about the Church, it's about those whom God calls when He calls them, of what they're able to receive spiritually and whether we truly will obey God and live by faith, the belief that God gives us, the Truths that God gives to us.

Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. But you know what? We don't fear the way we should; it's a spiritual thing. To have a right fear, awe and respect to God... you know what? All the people I've seen over the years who have left, they came to a point in time where they *ceased to fear God*. Right fear comes through obedience.

Right fear comes through a relationship with God and crying out for His spirit and His help *to obey, to live by faith, to receive what we hear and then apply it and do it!* Faith! What God gives us to believe, putting it into practice; the *work* is what faith is all about – living by faith. God desires that so He can bless us and so we can begin to experience His life, rest, peace, because of living what is peace, experiencing peace with others around us, being at peace even if others aren't at peace with us.

I have people out there who would like to see me dead! They would *rejoice* if I died. They would say, "Oh, it's so sad what I heard..." [hand over mouth and a snicker] I'm serious! They would have a hard time keeping a straight face because they would be so happy. "Look! He thought he was.... look at what he said. I can't believe the things he took to himself. Man oh man, he really had a high estimation of himself – the Elijah to come... [snicker]...man did he really go out in left field. A Prophet! Not just any prophet, but one of the two at the end, one of the two witnesses... he died. [snicker] Man, was that guy nuts!" There'd be people who'd be happy about it; it would reverberate through a scattered body because people would be happy. I don't feel badly toward any of them. I don't like what they do; I loathe some of the things they do to people, mainly to others in the Church. I don't take it personally. You can't; because it's not about me.

That's what God told Samuel. It was a hard thing Samuel finally had to come to see; "It's not about you Samuel, it's about Me. It's about them and Me, not them and you." It was their battle with God that they had, and that's what it's about. We understand that in God's Church. And if you understand that about different things in life and those around you and different situations, the ability to have mercy and how you treat people...that's a matter of God's spirit. It's a matter of having the same mind with God, being at one with God and understanding how He's working with us, how He's dealing with us. Being able to experience peace.

Jesus Christ was at peace when He died because of His relationship with His Father and because of what He was doing. He knew what He was doing. It wasn't a fun thing to go through, *excruciatingly* painful, but He never struck back, He never reviled, He didn't speak back at anyone in a harsh way, in a judgemental way at all because He understood it was part of a plan, part of something that had to be accomplished, part of something that had to be fulfilled. And so He went as a lamb to a slaughter. That's how He addressed it, that's our Passover, our Lamb, the Lamb of God – incredible. And we're to be the same way in how we deal with people and how we think and how we work with one another – outside and inside. Sacrifice! Doing things because it's right with God, being at peace with God. When you're at peace with God you can be at peace with those around you even if they hate you and would like to see you under six feet of earth.

Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. Do we have that kind of awe and respect, a fear to disobey God? Because that's what fear is about. The right kind of fear is the fear to do... to listen to what Paul said in the previous verses and to fear to disobey, to *fear* not to do what is right, to *fear* not to respond, to fear not to live by what God has given us to believe, to fear... and you can only *fear* to that degree, to disobey, to the degree you're close to God, to the degree you're spiritually strong before God. Otherwise, you know what? You start to sin, you start to live wrong and you won't respond or you don't change or some Truth comes along and you won't receive it – perhaps the ordination of women and say, "*How can he be so wrong? How can he be God's prophet and ordain women when they shouldn't be ordained?*" I've had that said to me last week. I think, sad. Sad! You don't get it! You don't understand the joy, the beauty of what God is doing. And how long ago did that happen? That wasn't last week, so why'd you stick around as long as you did?

See what I'm saying? They didn't fear to disobey God, didn't receive the truth that God gave, didn't grasp who was teaching them; not because of who, but because of what God says; of where it's coming from. It's coming from Him and if we understand how then we'll receive it differently, receive it because this is of God. That's how we live our lives; that's how the majority of the Church, obviously, lives their life. But see, if you start to sin, if you start to do something that's wrong, if you start to give into something, if you start to listen to something that's divisive, if you start to weaken and you *can't see* spiritually anymore, and you cease to *fear* to disobey God; because, in the meantime, you've started to justify yourself in your own thinking, in your own reasoning. Does that make sense? Do you understand?

So everyone who has ever left ceased to fear God. They justified themselves along the way.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: through time, wherever God's truth has been. Like the 10 Commandments and what God gave when they were in the wilderness. It was there, but they couldn't hear it, they couldn't *receive* it. **For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them,** we should understand why. Took me a little while in the beginning to understand why they were acting the way they were when they came through the Red Sea. They didn't have God's spirit; they didn't grasp what was going on. We do! *We have God's spirit* available to us. What an *awesome* thing to understand! And so it's more than words to us, we have the ability to receive it in the mind, to understand it, to see it spiritually, to grasp what God is doing – and to live it; if we'll work at it.

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. And what does it mean to be 'mixed with faith'? Faith is the ability to live by what God has given you to believe is true! And that comes through the power of the holy spirit because you can't believe it unless God's spirit is in it. You can't believe the Truths of God. That's one way you can know where you are. That's one way you can know the *boldness* and the strength you have in God's Church.

At the very beginning when we were scattered, to say, "Do I see and do I *agree* with those 18 Truths that God gave Mr. Armstrong?" And even that becomes a little fuzzy, because you know what the first one of the 18 is? *Government*. And different people at that time had different ideas about government including yours truly. I had let down. I became so distrustful of it because of what had happened in the Church; and I had to learn a hard lesson. There's only one way it works; from God, through Jesus Christ, through one individual on earth. Different in the time of the early apostles because one was sent to the Gentiles and the other was over the Jews – Peter and Paul; because communication wasn't established like it is today. Today, in the time of Mr. Armstrong, it worked in one way; and that's the way it works. Otherwise, you know what you have? Division, confusion, disagreement. God's spirit can't work that way. It's amazing.

So the ability to believe is about having access to God's spirit. And if you're able to believe the Truths of God, if you're able to believe that we had an apostasy... How much of the scattered church cannot *acknowledge* that we had an apostasy? They can't acknowledge it! There are some who believe that they're still going to become larger than the Worldwide Church of God ever was; they're going to become much larger in time...and in the future there will be an apostasy. It blows my mind! Even *physically* that somewhat blows my mind that they could think that way. To refuse that, to not acknowledge that...and on and on it goes if you want to go through every one of the Truths that are out

there that God has given to us over time. That Jesus Christ *is* coming in the flesh – no one understands that, period! If they have, I can tell you where they got it.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, it's when you believe God and are doers of the word, you live it, you live by faith. Because that's what faith is, it's doing what you believe, what God has given you to believe, you *do* the Truth. And the problem comes when we don't do the Truth. When we're told how to live; when we're *told how to have peace*; when we're *told how to enter into the rest of God*; when we're *TOLD that it starts first of all in your home, in your family's*; when you're *told it's in your relationships within the Church and you REFUSE to do it, you REFUSE to obey God!!* I'll tell you what! That's something to fear! That's something to fear *mightily!* How much fear is there right now in people's lives? Where are you spiritually? Are you *sure* about where you are spiritually? Because I know *far too many* who need to address this in a far greater way, what we covered before the Feast. Because *any time* you have a *disagreement* within the Body...and if you're husband and wife and you're in the Church then you need to examine that. If it's with children, you need to examine that; with parents, you need to examine that. And you need to make *sure* that you're responding to what God has said about how you can have peace in the Church of God. And if we don't fear, what is capable of coming out of our mouths that we would sin and disobey God; we don't recognize the damage that can cause to us spiritually – that we can lose all this! We can lose it all, [snap], just like that!

And so by the time the Feast rolls around it's going to be judgement in God's Church as to how we respond to *exactly what I'm talking about today*, because the more that is given, the greater we're judged – truly. As to how we respond to what God gives to us, by what we live by; and if we *refuse to obey* – previous verses we've already gone through. Powerful, powerful, it truly is.

For we which have believed do enter into rest, as He said, As I have sworn in My wrath, IF they shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. I realized the other day going through this that we've not understood those words very well in times past because it has to do with God's plan, it has to do with that which is already established, it's just a matter of our yielding to it through time. Everything that was established, predetermined before time, before anything was ever created.

For He spoke in a certain place on the seventh day, when is the seventh day? The Sabbath day! **...on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works.** It's a powerful thing that is being revealed here; instruction, guidance, direction, correction, Truth that God is giving at this point in time about the Sabbath and about His plan; and it's awesome! And when we receive the Truth of God, when we're able to hear in a greater way than we do during the rest of the week; it's 'today if you will hear His voice', if we have ears to hear, to receive spiritually.

And so again here, it's quoting certain scriptures here talking about what God did. We understand that; that began from the very beginning of the remoulding, refashioning of the earth, putting mankind upon it; and then God resting on the seventh day. And he draws a point from that a little bit later here; but notice... **And in this place again, If they shall enter into My rest.** It's God's desire that we enter into His rest, which has to do with obedience. It's like the title of the sermon, 'Obedient to God's Rest'. It has everything to do with what we talked about before the Feast about peace, about Jerusalem and on and on it goes.

And in this place again, If they shall enter into My rest. Seeing therefore it remains that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief: they didn't

believe. They didn't have God's spirit. They weren't able to believe, candidly. And so drawing that point again of what the Jews tended to hold onto is their past, is seeing only themselves and not accepting, they had a difficult time receiving who the Messiah was and what He'd fulfilled in scripture, in prophecy and all the things in the Old Testament. And again, these examples being given here that indeed when you start with the law as far as a people is concerned, when you talk about the Hebrews; it was preached first to them in a great way as far as a nation is concerned and they weren't able to receive it. That's a part of the context that's being discussed here over and over again.

And so he's coming to the point here and he says, **Again, He limits a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.** Now, let's go back and look at the timeline and look at when this was said. Psalms 95: let's go back there and then we'll come back to here. These things were spoken by David *loooooong* after, long after the Israelites had been made a nation and given a king; talking about the order of things here, the timing of things. And so David was inspired by the holy spirit and this is what Paul has been quoting from out of what David said, King David who was a prophet, who was a king of Israel when they were united as one people.

Psalms 95:1 - O come and let us sing unto the Eternal: let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. I was so thankful this year at the Feast that we had the opportunity to sing some of these Psalms, of going back here again and having 7 songs during the Feast of Tabernacles to be able to make a joyful noise before God, to be thankful to God, to rejoice before God for what He's given to us; and to do it in that spirit of unity and oneness of spirit and mind and a thankfulness toward God. And this ability is basically what it's talking about here in Psalms; **O come and let us sing unto the Eternal; let's make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.** So the Eternal God is the Rock when you talk about a Rock; something we somehow messed up on even in times past and we'd begin to misconstrue and look more at the location of a rock, of a place of safety, of Petra. We just didn't understand, we didn't grasp what God was telling us. We took it physically. *I'm dumbfounded, even with God's spirit, how it takes time to go from physical to spiritual.* It's taken us a lot of *time* to go through all this – truly does.

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, I think of sermons given before the Feast, I think of sermons that we've talked about, the *mindset* we must have to come before God – *always* one with being thankful for what He has given to us and continues to give to us and what He's placed before us.

So much of our prayer life to God should be about thanking Him. I hope your prayer life isn't a matter of just pleading your problems and your woes and your difficulties before God; but one of *thanking* God for what you have. That will help you *mightily* in dealing with your problems. When you come to understand more deeply and are *truly thankful* for what you have, for what God has given to you; it's an amazing thing with God's spirit what that does with the mind – it puts your problems in perspective. And as you begin to go through that type of prayer and you're thanking God and you think about the things that God has given to you and what you have before you and you see the value, and you start putting value in the proper place because of that prayer before God and petition before God. Whereas when you first go to Him perhaps you're filled with the woes and the hardships and being down and discouraged and disgruntled, and all of a sudden you start focusing on those other things...and you begin to see how it lifts you up, how it strengthens you. Incredible!

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms. To be able to thank God and to really rejoice before God because that thankfulness is so deep inside of you that it comes out as though it were even in song? ...in spirit before God? It's not just a matter of singing

to God, I'm not talking about that, I'm talking about your spirit and your mind and your response to God; that the thankfulness is so deep that this is what comes out of you, you can't help it, you're lifted up by it. That is what it's talking about.

For the Eternal is a great God, and a great King... I think back in those sermons that were given some time back talking about scripture shows He is the King of Kings; and He's given it unto His Son on the earth to become King of kings. He is the Lord of Lords first and foremost. He's given that title to Jesus Christ upon the earth in working with mankind. Incredible! **For the Eternal/Yahweh is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is His also. The sea is His and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land.** I don't know about you but because of what God gave at the Feast this year and because of being able to see things in a plan from the very beginning of time, and going through all that... *AWESOME! Dumbfounding!* It just *magnifies* your mind toward the greatness of God and it shows us how puny and small we are and yet God wants us to have all this. And then the response we have, the *excitement*... how can you put those things in words? So our minds are broadened mightily, spiritually; not just with knowledge, but spiritually.

I am in *awe* of being able to see things in a way this year *that I couldn't see them a year ago*, about God and about how... I don't care if you go back to the very beginning, which is where we started, and that's where you start. And you realize *nothing existed* until He brought something into existence, a realm, a place, a location, something of spirit that we can't begin to comprehend, that we refer to as 'heaven'. Didn't exist in the very beginning – only God. And then He put created things of spirit that we don't comprehend, things that can be seen by spirit beings. I don't understand that because I've never seen it; won't be too long and I'll get to see it, I'll understand it... and on and on it goes. How incredibly awesome the power and might of Almighty God! We can understand things that David cried about in Psalm 8 in ways that mankind has never been able to see to the magnitude that we do because of something as simple as a Hubble Telescope and because of technology and science that we have today; and so then, an appreciation of our minds is so broadened compared to what it was at one time. Incredible!

The sea is His... that's why this is all so beautiful but very physical; because this is all they had to look at. But that's *all they needed!* **The sea is His and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land. Oh come and let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Eternal our Maker. For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture.** And how blessed are we? *...and the sheep of His hand. Today if you will hear His voice*, beautiful, said by King David, recorded by King David, **harden not your heart as in the provocation**, giving that analogy of something they could comprehend and understand. But the problem is so often with the Jewish mind is that it's held onto certain things and in a *stronger* physical way make it even stronger physically and couldn't grasp the spiritual. And so Paul is giving them things to understand the spiritual. Beautiful!

...harden nor your hearts as in the provocation, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted Me, and proved Me, and saw My work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, pretty tough; even with us when we have His spirit. I think of His patience, His mercy, His kindness, His love – because once He's given us the impregnation of His spirit then there's a plan to bring us all the way through to the end into His Family. And sometimes for some we see that it's a matter of going asleep until another time when they can be awakened both physically and spiritually at the same time. It's going to come for thousands – thousands upon thousands, tens of thousands.

Forty years long was I grieved with *this* generation and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, selfish, selfish, selfish by nature. This is where we become deceived and err, because of the resistance we have toward what God gives us and we won't do some of the most basic of things in relationships; like trying to control *every word that comes out of our mouth*, to where we would *hurt* to say something that would *hurt* anyone else. I hope you loathe that kind of thing and repent deeply and bitterly whenever such a thing comes out of you toward *anyone* in the Church or out of the Church; it doesn't matter, whenever you're rude to anyone in the world or around you – and repent when anything comes out that's rude, that's not caring, that's impatient, that's selfish; because that's where it comes from.

...and they have not known **My ways**: because of that, because of our not living what God says and doing what God says and disobeying what God says and failing to love the way God says we should love each other, then we're not able to experience His rest, His peace, His ways that are full of happiness and joy; and on and on it goes. But that's where it comes from.

Unto whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest. So anyone who disobeys God will not enter into His rest; it's about a future rest. It wasn't about the Promised Land at all; it's about a rest that God has intended for all mankind in time.

Going back here, **Hebrews 4:7 – Again, He limits a certain day**, (back up in verse 4, the Sabbath day, the seventh day is what it's about), **saying in David, Today after so long a time; as it is said, Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.** Don't resist what God places out there, don't be hard-hearted; desire to change your heart and how you live toward others and how you think about others and fight against the selfishness that's there. It takes work to fight against selfishness.

For if Joshua, it's not Jesus, it's about Joshua, **If Joshua had given them rest**, so that isn't what it was about, that wasn't the 'rest' being spoken of; **then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remains therefore a rest**, it's a beautiful word; it's the word 'Sabbatismos', 'a Sabbath keeping'. It's different from the other words. Those who try to say the Sabbath has been done away with, they don't understand. "You don't understand what God has given to mankind and how that it is this particular day where we're able to learn from God, where God teaches us, where God nourishes us and feeds us on a spiritual plane." And everyone must go through the same process. We have the opportunity of beginning it first in the Church of God. We have the opportunity of Sabbath by Sabbath by Sabbath of entering into God's rest. This is a time of rest, a time of unique peace in a relationship with God where we humbly come before God and we desire to be *nurtured* and *fed* by God; and we're strengthened by God in ways that you can't do... you can't listen to the sermon later in the week and receive... you can grow in it, build upon it; but there's something *unique* at the time we hear it on the Sabbath day that God gives to us *more*; that He opens up our mind *more*; that He strengthens us *more*! And it's a powerful thing, it's an awesome thing!

And you may go through it for twenty years, you may go through it for thirty years or forty, or fifty, or sixty, or seventy, or eighty, or a hundred...whatever it is for mankind to change, to become at one with God, in order to enter into His rest. And so we picture something that we do Sabbath by Sabbath as part of a journey to eventually be able to enter into it for good, permanently, forever; a unique relationship with God into eternity, into endless time. Can't understand that; none of us can. What an awesome thing!

There remains therefore a rest/a Sabbatismos to the people of God. It's a beautiful scripture because this is what every human being must go through. Not just the weekly Sabbath. Sabbaths are not just

the weekly Sabbath; they're also the annual Sabbaths. The command to keep the Sabbath day is about every Sabbath that God has given to mankind; and they're all beautiful, and they all reflect His plan and show this process of being able to enter into Jerusalem, peace, rest, oneness with God Almighty.

For he that is entered into His rest, this particular word here, he also has ceased from his own works, and God *did* from His. It's a beautiful scripture because what it's saying here in specific terms is God gives an example here of what He did in the six days of remoulding the earth, of refashioning it, setting it in its proper orbit once again, separating the firmament as He talked about, that was already around this earth here and the cloud that covered the entirety of the earth here and the sunlight that was able to come through to the earth once again and putting it in its proper orbit to give time, as He talked about, establishing time, setting up appointments, appointed times so that we could understand when we are to come before God; not just every week, but every annual Holy Day as well; and on and on it goes.

And all that that was established then; and it says, then on the seventh day He rested from that work to give us an example of what we're to do; we're to enter into His rest, that which He gave to us as a special time to be able to see and understand Him, as a time when He would teach us; because that's the day He set aside for that – it's the seventh day, to teach us. And then, of course, on the annual Holy Days as well; that's the time He teaches us, when we come before Him. It's a beautiful picture. But even magnified more... you know what He's telling you? You're to cease from *your* works – see? That's what it's talking about here.

For he that has entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his own works, it's not just about what we do in observing the Sabbath physically in the sense that we don't work during that seventh day, but that's to teach us something greater. It's not just a matter of ceasing from your work; and yes indeed to obey God and to set aside that day and make it special because God says we're to set it aside and make it special for what we do and what we don't do on that day, that we seek to honour God. But it pictures something more beautiful and greater; it's about self, it's about selfishness, it's about ceasing from doing *your own things that resist God*. Because *our ways are not God's ways* and we must *cease from our own works*. This is what it's talking about.

For he also that has entered into His rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His. So it's using something here on a spiritual plane to show something that God gave to us in the Sabbath day; that we can draw closer to God and what the purpose of it is spiritually on a spiritual plane – that *we quit doing our own ways and learn God's ways*. That's what the Sabbath is *about*. He said, 'because they would not do My ways... they didn't believe, they wouldn't live by faith, they were disobedient to My ways'. That's what we've just read about here through these verses. It's a beautiful thing, it truly is, when God gives us deeper understanding and appreciation of what He's doing and why He's doing it. Truly is an awesome thing!

Let's turn over to Jeremiah, read some of those verses. Jeremiah 17; simple, basic scriptures that we understand, that we know; great to read in this context. Many of you who've been around a long time you know *exactly* where we're going.

Jeremiah 17:5 – Thus says the Eternal; cursed *be* the man that trusts in man; if you trust in yourself, or you trust in somebody else. That's not what life is about; it's about trusting in God. ...**and make flesh his arm,** your strength; if you trust in yourself of how you can work things out in your own life apart from God... you can't do it!

...and whose heart departs from the Eternal. If you're able to be a part with God, you're able to share with God and yet it talks about here the individual who's going to be cursed. I think of all those who ever leave – they bring curses upon themselves and *they do not comprehend how much they bring upon themselves* because of once you know the truth and you live by the truth and you turn your back on God because you want to justify 'your ways', because you want something *different* from what God said you should have, and you *willingly* through your own choice begin to become weak. Dangerous stuff. ...begin to trust in yourself and your own ideas, your own thoughts...

I hesitate sometimes to go into certain examples here; but I will, another one that was given here. Example that came out was basically a condemnation that I'm telling people they shouldn't read their Bibles because I tell everybody they should go to the website and whatever's on the website that's what you should focus upon. Yeah, *duh!* It is the Word of God, it does come from God, it does expound upon the Bible! And yes, we should *read* our Bibles as well, but *not* to learn 'new truth' apart from what God has given to you! Can't be done! How simple and how basic that is! Sad that the mind can become so deceived that at one time you can be in the Body and understand such things and another time not get it; because the fear of God isn't there, because you forget how God works, because you begin to justify your own ideas about 'truths' that you can get out of the Bible that are different from what God has given to the Church. Amazing!

Verse 6 – For he shall be like the shrub in the desert and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places of the wilderness, and a salty land, not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusts in the Eternal and whose hope the Eternal is. So again, it's about trusting in God and not on ourselves. And never beginning to think that we can do something other than the way God says that it's done or should choose.

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not see when the heat comes, but her leaf shall be green; and shall be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. It's incredible the verses here and what it's talking about. And I think of other scriptures that talk of being like an oasis in a desert and this is a part of that same kind of thought here, thought pattern. That if you're close to God, you can be in a ... indeed we are in a spiritual wilderness, spiritually there's nothing around, and yet look how God feeds us if we'll stay where we're supposed to be – plugged in and receiving of His spirit and being fed and nurtured even when the world around us... Look at what happened to the scattered church and continues to happen.

Verse 9 – The heart, see this is in the context of something very powerful. **The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked:** that's the way the human heart is, that's what our thinking is like. That's what God says... carnal selfish nature is like this, it's deceitful; means we want to justify ourselves, that's how it becomes deceitful. We want to *justify* wrong actions; we want to *justify* what we did... we want to put God in it too. That's how we justify it. We find some other scriptures that justify our wrong actions – see. "Well, this is what it says over here."

The heart is deceitful, willingly deceives itself, **and is desperately wicked:** we don't see ourselves. Do we see that part? ...that that's what human nature is like? It's wicked, evil. Human selfishness is evil. When we respond to self and selfishness, it's just flat evil, it's filled with pride. And that's where the battle is. Only God can show you that kind of a mind and show you what to fight.

That's why it goes on to say, **I the Eternal search the heart**, He knows what's in us; inside and out. And so that's why I've talked about at different times for praying about it and asking Him to show you certain things, but to ask Him to reveal it in mercy. I did ask for one thing here recently not to ask for mercy and I think that had to do with men and how they think toward women.

I, the Eternal, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, his ways; according to the fruit of his doing. So again, respond to God with proper fruit and live by what God gives and the blessings God desires; but if we go the other way and... in other words, God will show you; only God can show you what's inside of you. Isn't that an amazing thing?

A great email this morning from someone – been a long time member and I won't go into all that was said there, but he made a comment here about something. He said, I finally get it. He talked about a battle that's been lasting for about 3 years and he said he finally saw something in his life, in his nature, that he's been crying out to God to help to see and to understand. He didn't know what it was but he knew there was something there to learn and to understand about himself that he couldn't see. And he said, "Now I see it." And he explained what it was. It's amazing what we go through in life. We go through hard things a lot of times in life; but it's a constant struggle, it truly is, but you come to that point of seeing certain things in your life if you keep at the battle and you keep crying out to God to show you, to help you to see and to understand what it is you need to learn and where it is you might be resisting and on and on it goes; to be able to see what's in your mind and in your being...because that's hard. Our human nature is hard, difficult to reach.

Jeremiah 10: I love it when we have that kind of a breakthrough in life, when we're able to go from one area to another plateau, another area of growth; it's exciting, it's inspiring when we can do those things. But it doesn't come easy. We go through a lot sometimes to get from point 'A' to point 'B'. It's a constant struggle, constant battle.

Jeremiah 10:23 – O Eternal, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps. We don't know how to do it! We think we do... Oh, we *know* we do! We *know* what's best for us. But God's saying you don't know what's best for you, you *really don't get it* until God begins to call us, give us of His spirit and help us to begin to see something in the mind that without His spirit we never would come to grips with. That's what makes us different from the world; we have human nature, but God gives us of His spirit so we can begin to *change* the way we are; we can begin to see things in our self that the world can't see, they can't grasp.

O Eternal correct me, but with judgement; not in Your anger lest you bring me to nothing. So here's that thing about mercy; you want to ask for mercy. When I first came in the Church I had a prayer before God and I didn't ask for mercy – and thankfully He gave me an answer. My jaw got broken in a couple places and my mouth was wired up with wires where I couldn't talk for 10 weeks and it helped me to be humbled, it helped me to be of a more humble mind at age 19. I started changing my entire lifestyle in college. I had the wind knocked out of me in a big way. And about six months later God called me; but He had to bring me to that point there first of having a 4X4 knocked in the head so I'd listen to Him. Because if that hadn't happened to me, I would not have listened when I heard the truth. I would have said, "You are stark raving mad!" So, we don't get to where we're going easily. God calls us, He opens up our mind and our entire life sometimes is going through some mighty big struggles fighting against self, being able to humble ourselves before God so we can receive what He has for us.

Proverbs 3:5-6 - you can read it later; it all plugs in here.

Hebrews 4:11 - we left off in verse 10 where He said He wants us to cease from our own works as He did from His; the spiritual intent of that meaning for human beings with human nature. **Verse 11 – Let us labour, WORK, therefore to enter into that rest,** that's what we've been talking about – *it takes work! You can't idly sit by and all of a sudden you're praying to God for certain things and it's just in your mind and all of a sudden you've conquered and overcome.* No, you've got to put effort into it because the effort is what you do in your life. If it has to do with relationships then it has to do with how you're *talking* to people, how you're *responding* to people, how you *treat* people! And then that work then of fighting against that is what it's all about, of bringing it into subjection to what is true, of doing it the way God says to do it and realizing it's about self and the need for self to change.

Let us labour/work therefore to enter into that rest, to enter into God's peace, to obey God, **lest any man fall after the same example of disobedience,** that word again, of **unbelief,** of not believing what God says. **For the Word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.** If you yield yourself to God and God's spirit, He'll get through, He'll show you what's in your mind; and it can cut deep sometimes and it can hurt. You know why we hurt? Because that's our selfishness and we have to change; and we see ourselves. It's not a pleasant thing to see your nature. It's not a pleasant thing to *see yourself*; the selfishness... it's not a pretty sight. It's like looking in the mirror and seeing something *really, really bad.* And who wants to look *bad*? We pamper ourselves; we want to appear and look good, and then we should, to not look bad towards others with hair stringing all over and dirty in the face and stuff in our teeth and... Anyway...

So if we could see ourselves spiritually that way – what a blessing when you want to clean it up; but that takes work. You've got to do something about it; you've got to take effort, just like we do physically.

...even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, in other words, it gets right down into the marrow, that which is in the middle of the bone where the blood is made and created, those things that come together in human life and go out into your body. **...and is a discernor of the thoughts and the intents of the heart.** God's spirit will cut through and help us to see ourselves and begin to understand why we do the things we do. What an awesome thing!

I have told so many people in counselling at times – trace back to when you responded this way – where did that come from? Why did you respond that way? Why did you act that way that wasn't right? Why did you say that? Where did that come from in your thinking? Do you know? Can you understand? Because it will reveal things in yourself that you otherwise can't see; and you ask God to help you to see it... He'll bless you to see it; He'll bless you to understand.

You can read the rest of the verses then yourself. All this is a part of a process of a desire to come before God, to receive from God what He has for us.

We'll just end in verse 16... **verse 15 – For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tried like as we are, yet without sin.** He had things thrown at Him right and left; but He didn't sin. We do. And He knows what it's like to be in a human body. He knows what it's like; it isn't a pleasant thing. He knows what's there, He just lived right, He responded right; we don't. And so He knows what we're dealing with, and He is a faithful High Priest, and the things He went through; and He's there to help.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, and I'll tell you what; I've just said some things here that if we can meditate upon them, and as you grow through time you're going to come to understand in a far deeper way spiritually on a spiritual plane in a relationship with Jesus Christ that is awesome, truly is. **Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace**, that's where you go, you go before God, you just open yourself up before God and you *admit* to Him. So much of it comes to just admitting who you are and what you are. That's what we have to come to. You have to come to the point where you're willing to open yourself up and not try to hide it. You can't hide a thing from God. He knows you inside and out. He knows; He discerns everything in your mind. He knows you inside out, but He wants you to know yourself, to understand, to see so you can begin to conquer and overcome and fight it.

So God says come boldly before that throne of grace, mercy, kindness, love. His desire is to help us to change. That's what He wants; but it's up to us to go there and receive that...**that we may obtain grace and help in time of need**. And when do you need help? All the time.

~~~end