

Today is *Part 3* of the sermon series entitled *The Blessing of a Second Life*. In this series we've been focusing on how God wants us to see human life, that for the vast majority of mankind it also means a temporary interruption of death, obviously. That's how we're to see it, how we're to look at it, understanding something there in the way that God sees time and life and death and the plan and purpose He has. So we need to see death in a far different way than what the world does, and of course we begin to understand that when God calls us into the Church but we still have battles and there are those things sometimes that are difficult for us to erase out of our mind in the sense of how we have always thought and how we think about such things. That's why the example of sleep is used to describe death over and over again in scripture; that God wants us to see it differently than what the world does. And the world has all kinds of ideas about what they think *might* happen because they don't know, what *might* happen after death. But God wants us to see it clearly, spiritually, and to have faith in that in a very strong way, especially at this particular time we are living through right now and what is coming on this earth.

Last Sabbath, we began to look at how much better a second life is from the first life experience of mankind. That's an awesome thing when you start thinking about it, thinking about 6,000 years of human history, all the different things you read about in history in different parts of the world and different times in the world, things throughout the Bible, things that man has written about history, and you realize that life is going to be *so much better* when man lives his second time. It truly is, for all the billions that are resurrected. The quality of life, the kind of world they're going to be able to be in is beyond the difference of night and day as I mentioned last Sabbath, it truly is. It is an inspiring and an exciting thing as a part of God's plan, and so that's why we're focusing on some of this, beyond the differences of night and day, because that's a pretty stark difference, but when it comes to understanding the beauty, the awesomeness, the excitement of what God is planning for mankind it truly surpasses that.

So it's vastly superior, that second life, to any sci-fi example or story (if you will), of suspended animation or cryonics; vastly superior to any ideas about a 'utopia', truly. Far better than ideas people have had about a utopia, because of what God is doing and because of the kind of world that God is going to bring to pass, far superior to any ideas (as I mentioned last Sabbath), about a 'wonderland', whatever that might be, or a 'Shangri-La' of things that people have read stories of, or whatever it might be – far, far, far better that God is going to bring to pass.

So let's pick up where we left off last week, backing up just a little bit here, reviewing some of what we began to cover in a sermon given in 2009 at the Feast of Tabernacles concerning that *great* time when people are given a second life to live, for those who are not a part of a resurrection that precedes that. Because I hope we all understand, as God has given us to understand more fully, there is a great resurrection that's coming soon – 144,000 that are going to be resurrected, and then at the end of a 1,000 years all who had opportunity to become a part of God's Church, learn God's way of life, grow and live and die in life, have an opportunity at the time of a great resurrection that takes place (there isn't just one), but there in a great resurrection that takes place, some to eternal life as a part of the God Family, some to physical life to live life a second time in the things that we're covering and talking about.

So it's an exciting thing, because if you understand how God is planning and preparing to handle and to take care of those things, to think about 144,000 that are going to administer government, that are going to administer the Church around the world for the next thousand years is dumbfounding. And it's the only way to govern, righteously govern, quickly govern, quickly bring judgment about in situations and circumstances in life. And then we take a quantum leap during the Great White Throne when millions have that opportunity then of being resurrected to *help* those in the Great White Throne, to help all the billions that are going to be resurrected.

We're going back to what we were discussing last Sabbath along those lines. It was mentioned how that mankind still has human nature in the Great White Throne, obviously, but just as with so many of you who have come along at a point in time when technology is so great and you're able to learn so much so quickly, it's going to be very moving, very inspiring. But when you have the God Family into the *millions* who live in your midst – just to grasp what it's going to be like in the next thousand years, to have 144,000, different ones speaking at different Feast's and so forth around the world and the things that are going to take place in a very powerful way – the *change* after a thousand years of what's going to happen in the Great White Throne when there are *millions* in the God Family there to serve, there to help, and to have the ability to learn far more quickly than what you did in the last couple of years, or three years, to have a measure of truth that's far beyond because truth is progressive, the things that God gives to us during the thousand years, the things that we understand in a greater way during the thousand years and the ability to drink that in; for those who are resurrected to life again is going to be an astounding experience for them. And so, yes they have human nature, and yes they're going to come back up having all kinds of religious ideas and things of their past, but they're going to be able to learn quickly, they're going to see an awesome world and be able to make changes very quickly in their life as they choose God's way of life, as they're humbled mightily because they're resurrected from the dead in the first place.

And so the greatest change at that time is that the vast majority of mankind will be resurrected to live a second life during that last hundred years with that time so vastly different from the previous 7,000 years and God will ensure a quality of life that's very unique.

We were in Isaiah 65. Let's go back over there and pick that up again just to review some of this of what was said, to get the context once again.

Isaiah 65:17 - For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come to mind. Now, when people read this physically, as people tend to do, as so many things in the Bible are taken physically first, as I've even addressed in some of the things having to do even in the church that's scattered in the recent posting. But even for us in our past, generally we look at things first physically, just like in John, the woman who went to the well. She wanted this living water so she wouldn't have to make this journey back and forth. When Christ told the disciples in John 6 you have to drink His blood and eat His flesh, it says so many of the disciples quit following Him at that time, not the twelve, but some of those who were called disciples who had been following Him quit following Him after that. And it's because of this thing of reading things physically.

And the same thing is true here; **I create new heavens and a new earth.** It doesn't mean that all of a sudden God has that one earth just 'poof' disappears and another one pops up, or that He's recreating this earth or new heavens, whatever comes into the mind of people. It is about things that take place during the thousand years, it is about a process that God is purifying and cleansing His creation over a long period of time – but it is greater than that because it has to do with the God Family. It has to do

with the creation, the physical creation is here to enable what has to take place in a spiritual creation, in the minds of human beings and our ability to be able to change and our minds to be able to be transformed over a long period of time, a lifetime.

...and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. The former what? The past! It's talking about a new age and a new time, something that God has worked and prepared for this world for a long time for those who have been dead, whenever they were dead, whether it was the time of the flood, before the flood, after the flood, before the time of Christ, after the time of Christ, *whenever*. Even during the thousand years there's going to be some resurrected to live life a second time, to have that opportunity, because of choices and decisions they even make during that period of time, for some.

And so in time God's purpose is that the *bad, the ugly, the sorrowful, the pain*, the things that people have had to go through in this world, the pain that's out there today... Today it's difficult sometimes for us in God's Church, in the western world, to grasp and comprehend the kind of suffering that's been going on in the world for the past 6,000 years let alone what is still going on in the vast majority (if you will), of the world. And we go through things time to time and we go through battles and we go through trials, but we don't grasp, so often, the hardships, the pain and the suffering that so many people live in around the world. That's why we talked about Afghanistan and used that as an example, talking about the kind of life people live day in and day out, to where there basically is no hope. There are a lot of them who just don't have any hope. That's why we had some of those quotes and some of the things that some of those people have written themselves.

And so God says **...the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.** Because it's a better world, it's a new world, it's a world where God is creating something better for human beings and the life they're going to be able to live where their life experiences will be so superior *there's no comparison* compared to what they lived in before when the world was filled with sin; cheating, lying, adultery, killing, everything imaginable that man does that won't be in this new world like it was in the past.

It says, **But be glad/happy and rejoice forever in that which I create:** That's God's desire because God wants us to be forward looking, that what we had to go through to get to where we could finally come to make a choice as human beings, to *choose* God's truth, to *choose* God's way of life and finally for this mind to begin to be transformed, to be changed.

And so again here, this desire that God has for people to look into the future to - He says – forever! To look forward in what He's creating, to become more and more excited about the God Family. And people will be able to do that, they'll be able to see so many, they'll be able to converse with so many who are in the God Family, who are there to help, and to realize this is what they can become, this is what they can live in their lives.

Be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and again, I am dumbfounded sometimes by the order, and how God moulds and fashions us, how He gives us truth, how He gives us deeper understanding and I think of some of those sermons we've gone through recently about Jerusalem and about peace, what it means, something that God desires to give finally to His Family that went away so long ago, even in God's midst because of the angelic realm and it hasn't been there since as a whole, except into few people's lives to a degree – even within the Church we have peace to a degree. Not the kind of peace we're going to have once we're a part of God's Family, once we're changed, but we begin to learn the way of peace. But we still have situations and struggles. I think of the times when we had 300, 400, 500, 600 people in a church area in different parts of the

country that I belonged to, that I was a part of in that respect, and realizing the larger we became and the more activities we had, oftentimes the more struggles that people had *with* one another, because that's human nature! People would have certain things that would be said about something or someone and we're always growing and coming out of our past and every once in a while something would flare up, somebody would let down, somebody would say something, do something toward someone else, and then all the pain, hurt and suffering that comes with that.

So even peace within God's Church is not what God intends to give to us in the future. It's far beyond that! But we begin to experience it; we begin to experience the exercising of God's love, of the exercising of God's spirit that comes through obedience. And the more we're able to live God's way of life the more peace we experience.

So again, it's something that God is creating. **I create Jerusalem a rejoicing**, because peace, true peace, when it's lived all the time that's all it is, is a life that's full and rich, exciting. Just as much as people walking through this door today, when you first see each other and haven't seen each other for a long time and the hug, the embrace that's given there, the excitement of seeing one another, that joy! That's what we're talking about here, but something that's lived all the time without difficulty, without problem, without the selfishness that comes and the hurt that comes from human nature and the selfishness that's there. **I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. All the time!** That's what God is working for! **And I will rejoice in Jerusalem**, God will, *finally* after so long!

I marvel at God, I truly do, and the more we learn the more we should marvel at God. Talked about the sermons here recently about sacrifice – how long God has waited, how long God has worked to bring about a certain end and we're just now getting to the point where the fruit of that is beginning to be tasted, in the sense of it's just so close – we're there, we're tasting it more now and yet there's so much more just a little bit ahead of us right now.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people: and the voice of weeping shall not be heard in her anymore; 'the voice of weeping'. We go through that. When we begin to see our human nature, if we don't weep from time to time, if we don't have tears come to our eyes from time to time, then something's wrong with us. If you struggle against your own human nature and you struggle with the condition and the desire to change, it's a part of a process, it truly is. And so we struggle and that's what God is getting rid of, the suffering that comes from conflict, from problems, from disobedience to God's laws and so forth. And so, **the voice of weeping shall not be heard in her anymore, nor the voice of crying**. There's a lot of crying in this world every day – *every day* – in ways we can't even comprehend and imagine, but God sees it all, God feels it all, God knows it all. It's His creation. He knows when a bird dies and falls to the ground, how much more *all* human life. You can't comprehend that, I can't comprehend that, to have billions of people on the earth and God knows – *God knows* – He hears and He sees and He sustains it all.

Man has a *long, long* way to go to get to where we really esteem God for who He is, for the glory and the majesty, the power that's there, the patience, the love, the kindness, all the things that are there.

Let's go back to Revelation 21 and read that again, getting all the context here in things that are talked about. We went through Chapter 20 in the beginning of this series, talking about a process here of Jesus Christ returning. Chapter 19 talks about Him coming as King of kings, talking about the power He's going to come with. He's not going to come back as a lamb, He's coming back as a lion, He's coming back to destroy those who are destroying the earth and that's the way it begins. His reign begins with great

power showing that He is indeed ruler, He is King, and those who oppose Him, well, they're going to meet a quick end. But they have opportunity to live again in this second life we're talking about, in a better world!

Going through chapter 20, it talks about those things, about Satan and what He does and the first resurrection of 144,000 and then Satan being put away for a thousand years, and then this great resurrection, this Great White Throne that takes place and the books are opened, the way of life, when you're called and your mind is opened all of a sudden the books are opened, you can know, you can see what's there, you can understand for the first time in your life because of the power of God's spirit that mixes with His word that makes it come alive. And then chapter 21 brings us to this....

Revelation 21:1 - And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away; and there was no more sea. Again, that which God is working for, and all that this represents, the sea of humanity. It's not about oceans and water and that there's not going to be any water on this earth. It's not talking, again, about something that's physical. It's something that God has created that He's worked for so long to bring about - *His Family* – it's all new. That's what this is about, the work that God has been doing for so long.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Eventually everyone is able to partake of this, not just 144,000. At the end of a thousand years, those who've become a part of God's Family, and then at the end of the hundred years, those who become a part of God's Family into the billions.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with mankind... Finally! Finally after so long what God has worked on, Mount Zion, the Church that is now a part, that is now born, all of it, into the Kingdom, into everlasting life, into God's Family, **and He will dwell with them...**not just beside them, with them, but *in* them for all eternity. Incredible! **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;** again, it's a process, especially during that last hundred years as people grow and mature and come to a point in time to finally be able to become a part of the God Family. Because as long as there are human beings there's going... even in the Great White Throne there are going to be times when people have disappointment, when people have hurt, when people have pain. It's still going to happen, but the quality of life, the way of life is so much better.

And it says, **and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying,** so that doesn't completely take place until after 7,100 is over; **neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away.**

So let's go back to those verses now in Isaiah that we were in and pick up from there and notice some of the things that we have better understanding of today than we did before the Feast of 2009.

Isaiah 65:17 - For behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. That's exactly what we read back in Revelation. **But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people: and the voice of weeping shall not be heard anymore, nor the voice of crying.**

And then going on in **verse 20 – No more shall an infant from there live but a few days,** one version. These verses here are the only place that we grasp and comprehend what is to take place for a period of

100 years. It says **No more shall an infant from there live but a few days**. One version says, **Never again will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days**. In other words, referring back to Afghanistan and the things we covered and all the young people who die before the age of five, all who die within the first year – massive numbers just in one country alone. We talked about the statistics. And so a picture is being given here of a period of time when that will *never happen again*, that that won't be on the earth; that a baby (as an example) is resurrected and because of sickness, because of whatever exists, the poverty, whatever it is that exists on the earth; it won't be that way, things will have changed so that the baby is guaranteed to live during the hundred years on into adult life, on into teenage life, on into adult life. They're guaranteed life! An awesome thing to understand!

...nor an old man who has not filled his days: another version says, **No longer will adults die before they have lived a full life**. So it's covering a span of time, from childhood to adulthood, to a period of time that people are going to be able to live, and talking about those who will not be cut short. And God gets very specific; **for the child**, the child that is guaranteed to live, and people not get cut off in life. Because see, people are going to be resurrected in all different periods of human life, those who were born one moment, next moment they have died. Those who are a year old, those who are two years old, those who are twenty, those who are thirty, those who are fifty, those who are sixty, those who are a hundred, some who were six hundred, seven hundred, whatever the age was when they died, they're guaranteed life and to continue to live. **For the child shall die a hundred years old;** They're *guaranteed life* for that period of time. That's how we know it's a hundred years; by these verses. To show that God is saying they're guaranteed a full life, and even those who are older are *guaranteed life*, to live long enough in this body to be tried, to go through what we need in order for the mind to be transformed!

That's why we've come to deeper understanding than we had in the beginning when I first came into the Church, when I think of a young man that caused me to begin thinking about some of these things at that time, who after two weeks of being baptized was killed in an automobile accident and people talked about, "He's going to be part of the resurrection of 144,000." No, he isn't. He had a long way to go, and the reason he was speeding and the reason he died was because of his lifestyle. He had some big changes to make in his life, much overcoming to do. We're not like the Protestant world where this guy can come into a room when somebody's there almost to gasp for the last breath there and he comes in with... oh, he has to stop and he has to put on this thing around his neck because he just can't do it in person, he's got to get dressed up properly. And he's got to put this thing around his neck with the crosses at the bottom of it and all of a sudden then going through these motions and whatever it is that they do and maybe even sprinkling some water... I don't know *what* they do! But to them it *ensures*, this death-bed repentance, and they can't even talk. How do you know? What do you mean they've repented? And all of a sudden they're going to be in paradise as soon as they die because the priest went in there and that ensures it. And that's that kind of concept!

That isn't how you become a part of God's Family! That isn't a part of a process of living into eternal life, of receiving a body that lives for eternity, that all you have to do in this human life is all of a sudden in the last moment there say, "Oh I'm sorry!"

"Oh, that's okay then. God's merciful, God's full of love. If you just said you're sorry that's okay, I understand."

Nothing changed! What changed? What happens? God says we have to change! The *mind has to be transformed*, it has to change. It's a beautiful picture!

That's why I love what it talks about in Romans 12. Paul makes it very clear what has to happen. That's why these *sickening, disgusting teachings* of the Protestant world; "Just come as you are. God loves you,

He understands, He knows. He doesn't require too much of you! Just come as you are! If you'll just come as you are everything will be okay!" Sick! It's really perverted! It really is disgusting! Because you know what? God requires obedience! God requires change! "Oh, you're a legalist!" Isn't that dumb? You're a legalist if you keep the Sabbath, but you're okay if you keep Easter and Christmas your way and maybe not even go to church at that time, but you take the day off.

Romans 12:1 - I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice/lively sacrifice, there are things you're going to have to *sacrifice* that you want to hold onto. You want to hold onto your way, your *ideas* about what you think God is like! *God isn't like that!* That's why God brings us into the Church to learn what He's like. Isn't that an amazing thing? We have to *get rid* of our way of thinking and the way we think God is. And sometimes people in the Church get into problems with that too. They have these ideas about how they think God is. Well, just wait, God will show you what He's like. You will grow in understanding of what God is like! Give yourself time to change and grow and overcome – that's how it works, that's why He brings us every Sabbath to teach us, to tell us what He's like. He's showing us today what He's like, His mercy, His love, His patience.

And so we wait and we learn and we learn what He gives us to learn, not what we dream up in our minds or something that's still in our past of whatever it might be that comes out of Buddhism or Hinduism or Islam or Traditional Christianity or any of that garbage, because you'll drag that with you. People do as human beings, because your mind is already moulded and fashioned! That's what God's freeing you from! He's called you to free your mind from the garbage and the swill that the world has fed into it for how ever old you are. If you're 45 then you've been fed a bunch of garbage for that long. If you just came into God's Church today that's what you've got to overcome – those 45 years of being taught the wrong way. You're in a pattern. You don't know it, but you have a *pattern* of thinking that's based on what you've become in those 45 years. And if some of you are 45 I'm not just picking on you. 46-47-48-30-35 – whatever it is – 62 – whatever the age, you've got to conquer and overcome it and become different, a different mind, a mind that is based on God dwelling in you, and it takes a long time. Spiritually it takes a long, long time to change and we have to yield ourselves to that process!

And so we have to present our bodies a living sacrifice, because fighting against selfishness, our own human nature is not a picnic. We have to see some rough things and it takes growth and humility.

...holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: that's what people do in Traditional Christianity; they just conform to whatever they're being taught. If it's Lutheran they conform to that. If it's Pentecostal they conform to that, and to the world. It says don't be conformed to the world and what the world teaches, the way the world is, **but be transformed, 'transformed'** – become something *different by the renewing of your mind, the renewing*, changing; something has to change up here in the way you think. And the first thing that has to change is when we worship God. Isn't that an amazing thing? God brings us to address that one there. You can't worship God on Friday anymore. You can't bow down toward a place on the earth that somehow you think that that makes you better, or good, or that somehow God will hear you because you're looking in a certain direction. Or on Sunday – whatever it is – but that you do it on the Sabbath when God says to do it because that's His day, the day that He's given to us.

So we have to make those changes, you have to think differently. You have to begin thinking, "Well, if God brings us together on the Sabbath in *His* Church that bears *His* name..." Isn't that an amazing thing? It's called 'The Church of God', not the Lutheran, not the Protestant, not the Pentecostal, not the

Presbyterians, not Catholic, not some system that they have, not Methodists. None of those things! It's God's Church because it belongs to God.

...don't be conformed to this world: but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind, takes a lifetime to change, takes a lifetime for this mind to make choices. Do you know that every time you repent you're able to grow in character? It's an awesome thing! Every time you repent you're growing in character. Every time you repent you're saying you are wrong and God is right. Repentance by its own definition means you're doing something wrong and you have to do something different! How in the world does the Protestant world get past *that* one? "Come as you are. You don't have to change. You don't have to change the way you think or the way you are." And they'll say, "Oh yes you do, you've got to quit doing all the 'bad' things." Well, what are some of the 'bad' things you're doing? How do you know what's bad? And so you have to change, and the Sabbath is a big one, the Holy Days are a big one, because only then can you come to understand God's purpose and God's plan for your life.

...by the renewing of your mind, and prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Transformed; I love that word, 'metamorphoo', a change, something that changes in your mind, the way you think. It's a beautiful picture. And so you repent. You repent of your ways and you do things God's way. And one of those that's God's way is the Sabbath. Incredible! I know you all understand this, but there are people who come along who are new and people who listen for the first time on a continuing basis out here that we hear about and hey, they need to understand. This is where you begin to change your mind, the way you think, the way the world thinks, and you either accept God and the truth of God, the commandments of God, the way of God, or you don't. We begin obedience or we don't; and we begin having the mind change or we don't.

So individuals are able to live a hundred years in order for this change to take place, because it can't happen in a day. It can't happen all of a sudden when you say, "Oh, I'm sorry," and then you die and then God says, "Okay, you can live for eternity. You said it, you said you were sorry." I've said, "I'm sorry" for a long time. Since 1969 I've been saying, "I'm sorry, I am wrong, I don't want to be this way. I want to change. I have sinned, I pray you forgive me through my Passover." Over and over again, day by day by day, and you keep doing it, and as you do that you grow in character. You're agreeing that God is right and you are wrong. God's laws are right, holy, just, and we're wrong.

Isaiah 65:20 - for the child shall die a hundred years old; but the sinner, individuals who still won't choose God's way of life...it happens and it'll happen then. **...but the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed**. It's an awesome thing out of one verse to gain so much understanding, to grasp that God guarantees a child will live a hundred years and to understand that that child, once they become a hundred years old, if they are still sinning, if they have not chosen God's way of life at the end of that period of time judgment comes, they will be '**accused**'. And God tells what that will be. He makes it very clear that there will come the time for all who reject God's truth, they will die, and that's the judgment. It's not being eternally punished in some hot place, jumping around with little beings chasing you who are red, who have red little pitchforks or have red little pointed tails running around poking you in the rear end, and it being hot, hot, hot. On the contrary, God's mercy and God's love is at the end of that period of time, if you don't want Him you just die for eternity. That is the judgment – eternal death, to never be resurrected again. It's about resurrections, not to be resurrected to eternal life for certain and not to have another time to be resurrected again. For if we didn't live that opportunity of a second life when God's world is so awesome and so beautiful and the knowledge of God everywhere and God's Family everywhere you turn, that you can go to, you can find individuals to talk to who are a

part of God's Family to council, to talk, to discuss with them; not with human beings who still have opinions and ideas. Now with God's Family, where everything that's given to you and told to you is absolutely true, right, accurate, to the nth degree – that's the kind of world it's going to be in that hundred years, so that individuals will have that opportunity to change.

Verse 21 - And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. Why? Why is he saying this? Because they're going to reap from their labours. No one's going to come and take it away, no one. No opposing person, no person that will steal or rob them of it, no one because of having to pay 20% interest on loans and can't make the payments and so forth and you get into a problem and all of a sudden lose everything that they've worked so long for, or because they've been heavily taxed, 25-35-45-50-60% taxation that some governments have charged people, let alone all the others who are out there ready to get their little bit as well, that'll loan them money that goes as far... that's why they have to have regulations on people about how much you can charge, and even that is taken advantage of.

They shall not build, and another inhabits; someone else isn't going to come in and take what they've worked hard for. You work hard? There are principles that God gives. He says, "If you don't work you don't eat." In God's Church we're to learn how to be *productive*, we're to learn how to *work*, not to mooch off of anyone else. We're to work, we're to be productive, we're to strive to be. Now in this age, at this time, that's becoming more difficult, but we're to *strive* to do that with all of our being, truly. Sometimes a younger generation, people get caught up in the ways of this world and sometimes because they haven't been taught, it's too easy to take advantage of others around them. We're not to do that in God's Church, truly. We're to be productive, to pay our way so to speak.

And so this example is given here during the Great White Throne; **They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat:** someone come and take what they've worked hard to produce and they're going to be able to enjoy the fruit of their labour. Time isn't going to cut it short because they die too soon as well. That's a part of the context here. They're going to be guaranteed life. To where they've worked hard and all of a sudden they can't enjoy what they've worked/laboured for? Yes, they will enjoy it. That's what God's promise is over and over again.

...for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, not going to be cut short, **and My elect** – Who's God's elect at that time? All who will receive Him. Everyone has the opportunity. Anyone who's ever lived in previous time is given a second life – *everyone* has the opportunity to be a part of God's elect, part of God's calling because God offers His spirit to everyone at that time. They still have to do the same things though, repent of sin, seek to overcome selfishness, learn how to live with neighbour, learn how to live with everyone around them, learn how to live with family properly, learn how to obey God, seek to obey God, because they still have to overcome their human nature, their basic drive of human nature, the human thinking, 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'.

...and My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. It won't be cut short. The whole point of this is that life is not going to be cut short and things be taken from them. They're guaranteed the opportunity.

How many people have lived a hundred years in the last 6,000? Well, before the flood, a lot! But after that the life span began to be cut shorter. And just like in Afghanistan, the average lifespan, what was it? Somewhere between, at different times, depending on the time they made the comparison, but between the age of 41 and 44. Incredible! The 'wild west'; you know how long people generally used to

live back then when you talk about Dodge City, some of those places, Wyatt Earp and some of them? Do you know what the lifespan of man was? It wasn't 70. It wasn't 60. It wasn't 50. Much lower (Does anyone know for sure because I don't know the exact number, I've heard different figures, 40ish. Low forties is what I've heard in the past.) Amazing, people didn't live a long time. Rugged tough life.

And so this is God's guarantee, you're going to have the time to be productive, to learn His way of life, for the mind to be transformed with the hope, the desire, to be what you see around you, those who are in God's Family and all the stories they will have. Think of the stories! I think of the incredible opportunity we were talking about just before services here. I think of what in my time I've lived through and seen in God's Church. Just the stories of things that have happened, of what can happen in God's Church – an apostasy – Philadelphia and Laodicea, to have seen those things and then to be able to share that with different peoples at different times. The opportunity so many of you are going to have of being able to have been called just before the very end of the end-time here, and to see, to witness the things that are going to take place and live on into a new age...and to share that with people? Awesome! Incredible! How much more when so many are resurrected?

I think of the 144,000. I have a lot of questions for a lot of people. It's going to be exciting! Moses, Noah, Daniel, Abel, all the periods of time you want to talk about, of what they lived through, of what they experienced, of how they grew. What's written in this book is not too much! Some pretty short stories here, just a little bit of a capsule here and there of what took place. It's going to be *rich*, and when you hear those things and you're inspired by those things and you recognize what it leads to – here they are standing before you talking to you. It's awesome!

First time you came into God's Church you were able to fellowship with people in God's Church. What an awesome thing! Little scary sometimes in the very beginning. *How much more with members of the God Family?* We can't comprehend that because we've never lived in a period of time like that, but it's coming.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in troubled time; no more troubled time. That's all this world has known, troubled times, over and over again from nation to nation, from different parts of the world, struggles that nations have gone through. Through history, every century of mankind filled with woes and battles and troubles, killing upon killing, war after war after war. **...nor bring forth in troubled time;** won't have to worry about people being greedy in large corporations, economically raping the world, taking advantage of others, people who are ignorant of what is really going on behind the scenes.

I was talking to Wayne Matthews when we were down there and he was talking about how that Australians really don't grasp and comprehend how bad it is here in the United States. They think everything is great! They think this is a great nation as far as the economy and everything – because people don't get the news, they're too wrapped up in sports and so you can't get good news. To understand what this government, what this nation is like right now, to understand the conditions of the world, what's going to happen if Greece defaults, which we're getting closer and closer to; Ireland, Spain, Portugal right behind it, wham, wham, wham like domino's and us as well. We're in as bad of shape as they are, if not worse, if the truth be known. Sick, sick world! *There won't be a world like that in the future* where people get hurt by such things, where people are taken advantage of by other people, because people are just concerned about themselves and how much they can make, or because of being concerned about the political power. There won't be all this garbage going on behind the scenes where people are receiving *money, benefits, help* for political favours. There won't be all these people going to a capital city somewhere and spending millions and millions and millions to lobby to get

their way. That's what they're doing! They're lobbying to *get their way*. And so they lobby so much with enough money and they get their way, and politicians become whores to them! Just calling it what it is. I know people really love that one out there, but that's what it's like, it's being a harlot. That's what God calls them in the Old Testament over and over again –harlots! Harlots, harlots, harlots; it's far worse than a real harlot.

You think adultery and harlotry is bad? What they do is *far, far* worse, truly! I know they love to hear that! I'm thankful it's about to come to an end, that their end is coming very quickly, that they can't do those things anymore. I don't know about you, I hope you're sickened by such things in the world and you have a *desire* to see people not have to live in that kind of age, just like in the Millennium. We don't have to have that around. In the Great White Throne it won't be around! And people who are resurrected from those things of the past, and they know how to do those things, they're going to have to learn how to *not* do them and *not* take advantage of others; because there won't be any politicians in the future, people vying for office and power, because that's where corruption comes from and evil comes from. It comes from people wanting more power, more money; never satisfied, there's never an end to it.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Eternal, they have the impregnation. They have the blessing of being able to receive, like you have when you were baptized, the impregnation of God's spirit, to begin to grow with a small portion in the beginning as we do, with the very mind of God that we're able to grasp and begin to see and begin to understand and to agree with and then our mind begins to change and begin to be transformed and we come into greater and greater unity and oneness with God and agreement with God and we get rid of our ideas and our ways. And it's going to be a whole lot better and a whole lot easier to do that in the future, truly is.

...they are the seed of the blessed of the Eternal, and their offspring with them. What an incredible thing! **'and their offspring with them'** – generation after generation after generation of people that get resurrected at the same time. I'm looking forward to learning some of those things, as that inquisitive thing about wanting to know about ancestry and different ones through time, and just of those things alone, of how people lived, what they did, what their struggles were and so forth (and even though we share that with all mankind), because there's something about the uniqueness of those who you have known especially. What an incredible thing that grandparents, great-great grandparents, great-great-great-great-great-great grandchildren, they're all resurrected at the same time; that's what this is talking about **'and their offspring with them'**. Incredible family life! And as you begin to learn we're all family, because this goes all the way back *to the beginning*. You get to see it all through time! Awesome!

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. An awesome relationship that people are able to have during that period of time with God and the God Family. That's what makes it very powerful!

The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, we in God's Church not too long ago used to believe that this was the Millennium. It's not the Millennium. It isn't the purpose of the Millennium to guarantee life, to guarantee quality of life. A quality of life is going to begin to be experienced as we change, as we grow, and the quality that mankind is given through the changes we are able to be a part of and help to bring to pass, but the purpose of the Great White Throne and mankind living at that time is *different*

than the Millennium, because death will still be in the Millennium and we'll still learn from those things. It's essential that mankind learn from those things and that's why they're going to continue.

This period of time though, **a wolf and a lamb shall feed together and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock:** I can't comprehend that one, but I know God's going to make the change, as much as He's made different changes through time. It's just like when you talk about the change in languages, the Tower of Babel and all of a sudden people of different background and so forth, different families, all of a sudden they begin talking a different language. Now, how do you do that? Well, God does in the mind, whatever it was. It's like all of a sudden they're given this different program, a different language. If you have a program for your computer like Rosetta Stone you still have to learn that. You have to put it in your computer. What an awesome thing if you could just have it programmed in here. All of a sudden you can spit it out, a different language, and understand it, speak it fluently. I would have English first so I could do it well. ☺ I'd start with that one.

But what an incredible thing what God can do. It's a small thing for Him to cause a lion to eat grass like a bullock, to no longer look at a sheep and begin to drool and have those instincts that they have if you've ever watched things on 'Wild Kingdom' or some other kind of programs, whatever they are. Sometimes you're flipping through the dials and you see different animal kingdoms and how cheetahs function and how packs, different animals function together, and the things that take place as they survive, the survival of the fittest goes on. This is going to be different. What an incredible world!

...and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy, meaning they shall not inflict *harm* nor *kill* anymore, **in all My holy mountain, says the Eternal.** In all that God is building and creating and doing at that time, in all of His Family and all of the people who are resurrected. God says, "These animals that are out there in their midst, they're not going to hurt nor destroy anymore." Not a one can inflict damage. You're not going to get bit by a mad dog. All of a sudden if somebody has a Rottweiler or a pit bull they don't have to worry, those different breeds that can attack. If people are walking dogs; you don't have to worry about them chasing you let alone if you happen to live around lions. You don't have to worry about them coming after you. The things that are fearful today are going to be like pets. I can't comprehend that, but I believe it. What an incredible world! But it's *because* of that kind of a world and what God guarantees; no one's going to suffer, no one's going to receive, be inflicted with hurt and suffering from them. People are going to be protected from accidents and harm.

You realize that's what that guarantees? God does? If you're up on a roof... What was it? The man I was named after fell off of a windmill and died. Fell off a windmill and died! ...don't have to worry about that, God's going to protect, God's Family's going to be there to protect people, to help people, to ensure that people aren't going to die and have those kinds of things happen to them. I don't comprehend all that but I believe it because God says it's going to happen during this period of time. What an awesome world!

So we can't comprehend what it's like for people who are suffering and who die today and all of a sudden when they're resurrected to live in that kind of a world? It's awesome! It truly is awesome! To be able to have the opportunity then because of humility, because they're going to know that they were dead, those who are old enough to understand that process and what takes place, the opportunity to have that kind of world to live in all of a sudden and not have the kind of suffering that they had in this world? It's night and day. It's *beyond* night and day and I hope you see that! That people who lose their lives – doesn't mean you need to rush toward that either, doesn't mean that individuals should say, "Oh, when this life is just too tough I'd rather end it now and be there." No, that's not God's way. So

whether it be the taking of your own or the taking of others, it's *wrong*. It's a matter of yielding ourselves to God's purpose and God's plan, the changes that take place in our lives.

I want to read you something, because you know what? We have situations in time where people have battles and they have struggles and I want to read you one here because there's an individual that's struggling as I know others struggle from time to time. We have in this world today, and sometimes we have in our own lives, battles because of things that are taking place out there. We have far more situations in life today... it's incredible when you think of the human body, the degeneration of the human body. We're falling apart, we truly are, just as this world is falling apart, and it's far more common today, matters of... I can't even think of all the letters that doctors give to some things anymore. They give all kinds of letters and things they don't really understand so "we'll put this label on it for a time" and then after a while it changes. There is one, bi-polar – but what was it called before that? ...manic depressive. All the things that doctors have out there; but these things are so much more common today. What an awesome thing when that won't be in the world anymore.

You know the brain is an organ? Just as much as the heart, just as much as other things in your body. My problem with my heart attack wasn't my heart, that I had back in 2005, it was my veins. They got clogged up. They kept telling me, "You have a great heart! You have the heart of a twenty year old." Wonderful... then all of a sudden I find myself in the hospital, my heart quits acting like it should because it's not getting blood. So you're going to have problems if you don't get blood. I think of people that have problems with the liver or stomach... we have all kinds of things in the world and in the Church. We are a witness of what the world is like today and so we have those things too and I truly feel for individuals who have problems because of this mass that's called a brain, because it's a physical organ, and there are things that are happening because of preservatives and drugs and everything else that's in this world; and we're falling apart. We're not the way God created us 6,000 years ago and literally some things are passed on in time even through the breakdown of genes, some of the makeup of human life that's passed on from generation to generation and certain things that happen.

But the farther we get into time, if time were to go on another hundred years, and the way man is, and the kinds of things we're doing to ourselves... I think of foods alone and what we're doing to the foods out here, the grains! Some grains that some people won't even feed their own cattle with because they're worthless as far as nutrition's concerned. Sell it to China, India, South America...but ourselves, some think in some cases it's not good. That's why Europe is trying to guard against some of these things over there. They don't even allow some things to come in that some people are doing in some parts of the world.

So anyway, just making a comment here, sometimes these things become battles for people because of the world we live in. It's one thing if you can go and have your appendix taken out like I did... things that we can do. But they don't even understand why you've got it, but at least they can take it out and sew you up and clean you up and whatever...do awesome things with the heart, do *awesome things*, but there's still not a lot they understand about the human mind and the way it works. And the world today is getting worse and worse in those areas so people have battles sometimes because of that. I look forward to a time when I know, that in so many of those situations, God is going to grant healing. But I want to read you something....

This might be the last letter....

This individual knows who he is and listens every Sabbath.

This might be the last letter because I can't go on like this much longer and think it would be better for everyone if I disappeared; and I hope I wake up in that last hundred years. I can't see any way out, I've tried everything.

That's pretty tough... pretty tough. I won't read you the rest, some of the battles of certain things there, but I wrote him back and thankfully the individual's fighting the fight again to the end. But I've had those kinds of conversations in times past with different ones through time to a degree, to a point, and I hate to see people suffer, I hate to see people going through these things, of things that are beyond us, of things that the world doesn't have answers for right now. And yes, the hundred years would be immensely better, but that isn't the answer for you, for any of you. See, we're going to go through some hard times and different people go through different things at different times, but *fight the fight* to the return of Jesus Christ because the opportunities of establishing a new world are awesome. And that's what God has called people to. Sadly some people get some weird ideas about us anyway and think that that's a possibility. No, it isn't a possibility, it isn't at all.

I look forward to this time here, this hundred years, when people who have fought all kinds of battle, it doesn't matter what it is, have an opportunity to be changed, to become something different. But again, I said you don't want to rush it either. Paul talked in the vernacular of how he looked forward to getting out of this body, of being in a new one. That doesn't mean he was rushing out to end his life but he genuinely looked forward to a time when he didn't have to battle any longer and a time when he would be in God's Kingdom. We look forward to that, we truly do, but we do it God's way.

Going back to some of the things stated here – all the suffering that people have gone through thru time, things that people go through today, and if you battle some of those things (because I know that people do), hard things, difficult things because of the human mind today. It isn't enough in some cases that we're just battling and fighting our own human nature, but some people out here – matter of fact there are plenty – who battle the added battles of the emotional things that come as a result of that part of the world as well.

Please understand that God has called people from every experience in life, to witness in the battle, that He's going to bring us through it. He gives us what we need to see, to grasp, to understand, to hope for that which is better than He's about ready to give us in this world; and He's given you the ability to fight that fight. *Keep fighting* no matter what your situation in life is, no matter how difficult it becomes around you; because we're going to go into some hard times. Different ones of you in different parts of this world, different ones who are called later on that hear this sermon, you're going to go through some tough things out here, and it's not going to be a picnic. That's why we're going through a sermon like this, to grasp and understand that even those around us whom we love, if they have to wait a thousand years – so be it. The opportunity they're going to have is going to be beautiful and exciting and inspiring at that time and we'll be able to be reunited with them then. That's why God has us see and understand and grasp things in a way that He wants us to because of the way He sees it. He wants us to hold onto what is true as a part of His plan.

And so again here, an encouragement to fight whatever fight is before you, to fight whatever struggle is there in order to be there when Jesus Christ returns, to continue on to what God has called you to be a part of and to receive the help then in a very powerful way to forge forward. God's called you for a purpose.

Verse 25 - They shall not destroy in all My holy mountain, in other words, as we talked about here, says the Eternal.

Let's go on to Isaiah 11. In talking about some of the battles that people have sometimes we can be quick to judge others, we can be quick to find fault with others. Sometimes you don't understand what others go through, what they're coming out of, what their life is like. You have your hands full! You should have your hands full with your own life – overcoming. I do! My hands are full with my own life, conquering and overcoming this, to be in God's Family, to be in God's Kingdom, and at this stage of my life I still battle. You always will until it's over with. It's a part of our life and that's why it's so important that we have compassion and mercy on one another because you don't always know the battles that people have, the struggles that people have, the things that they're going through in their life. Work on yourself, conquer yourself and have mercy on everyone else.

Isaiah 11:1 - And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Eternal shall rest upon Him, and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Eternal; And shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Eternal: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes... We do. We as human beings, that's how we judge as a whole. We judge the way we see things, we judge others the way we see it – sometimes not understanding how someone else could do something that we just *know* we would never do. Don't ever be so *cocky*, so *sure* that you would *never* do what another human being does lest God show you what you're capable of, to learn the lesson. I've seen God do that with people's lives...so sure they'd never... You know, we can be *so sure* we would never do what the Church did, we would *never* fall asleep spiritually, we would never...! And be spewed out of God's mouth! We've got to be careful how we think. Everyone is capable of it. Everyone is capable of everything of human nature. Different circumstances, different situations, different things that come upon you – Oh yes we are.

And so it's speaking here, **and shall make Him of quick understanding of the fear of the Eternal and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, but by righteous judgment...** What comes from God. That's a beautiful thing when choices, decisions, things are based upon, "What does God say? How does God say...?" And always remembering in the midst of all that when it's dealing with other people, whether it be in your own family, others in the Family in the Church of God, always remembering that mighty thing that God is showing the Church at this end-time, and the world at this end-time that they're going to come to see one day. What is the greatest aspect of judgment? What is one of the most important tools, ingredients, of judgment that God wants us to know inside and out of our being? *Mercy!* *Mercy...* *mercy... mercy!* The weightier matters of the law; judgment, mercy and faith. Even of God's law, He says the weightier matters are a matter of judgment, mercy, and faith, things that we believe, what we have to believe, the truth that God has given to us. Judgment, we learn that through time, but a part of that and the biggest part of that candidly is this matter of mercy.

...neither reprove after the hearing of His ears: You know why it says that? Because human beings, sometimes we hear the first story that comes to us – maybe it's a situation, we hear a story and that one seems to be the plausible one. Someone else comes along and tells us the other side of the story and... you know, sometimes it's the first one you hear that you tend to side with sometimes, oftentimes, *too often*. That's the way human nature is. We have to be careful how we judge.

But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth: and shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the

wicked. Powerful, powerful – a part of God’s plan, the things we started at the beginning of this sermon series, talking about how Jesus Christ is going to return; came as a lamb the first time, this time as a lion. All the process here of salvation that’s going to be given to mankind through time. **And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins.**

Verse 6 - The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb...so just moving right on into the time, and finally to the end-time here talking about what we have been, the last hundred years. **The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.** That used to be the symbol/logo during Philadelphia – the lion, the lamb, and the little child as a part of the seal – quoting this very scripture here. Been our focus, our desire for a long time but *we believed* it was for the Millennium. Now God is helping us to understand it’s *beyond* the Millennium, it’s on into the Great White Throne. That’s exciting, truly is, focused fully on the fullness of God’s plan all the way in through the last hundred years.

And so again here, incredible time when God changes the very nature of animals because of His purpose. **And the cow and the bear shall feed together;** What a sight! If he’s hungry he’s not going to maul it to death. ...**their young ones shall lie together: the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play in the hole of the asp,** poisonous snake, a nursing child, that young, doesn’t have to worry in places where there are a lot of poisonous snakes, if they happen to be outside; **and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy,** again this promise that God has, no harm, no hurt, nor being destroyed by any measure, **in all My holy mountain: and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Eternal, as the waters cover the sea.** A vision, a time in the future, a focus that God wants us to have. To understand that it’s not a matter of this thing that sometimes human beings come to and they think, “Well, how unfair that they should die, different ones should die.” Death has been a part of human life for 6,000 years; it’s going to continue on.

Verse 10 - And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, talking about that last hundred years, the Last Great Day as we call it as a Holy Day, **the Lord shall set His hand again the second time...** beautiful scripture, **the second time to recover,** and that word there having to do with in the Hebrew ‘to purchase,’ ‘to redeem,’ **the remnant/the residue/the rest...** who are the rest at this time? Everyone who’s not a part of His Family yet, everyone who’s not had that opportunity whether in the great resurrection that takes place at the return of Jesus Christ, or at the end of the thousand years. And so it’s a time to save, the second time, to a second life, **the remnant of His people, which will be left, from Assyria, from Egypt,** ancient nations, ancient times, different times, modern times in the sense of where we live now, **[from Pathros], from Cush, from Elam, and all their descendents, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for all the nations,** the truth, God’s way of life starting with Passover, **and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.** So just talking about that incredible resurrection when it finally takes place.

Let’s go over to John 11. Again, we can go through a sermon like this, but it’s a perception of death that God wants us to address, and to grasp that it is an enemy, and it has been for 6,000 years, and it still will be during the next 1,000 years. It happens, but it happens for a purpose, as a part of God’s purpose, of something we can learn from in a very powerful way, great lessons, mighty lessons, but in time the hardships, the hurt, the suffering and the pain are forgotten because of what God plans for the future. So it’s a matter of coming to see things more fully the way God sees them.

John 11:11 – notice how God wants us to look at such matters - **These things He said**, speaking of Jesus. Again, incredible story here: **and after that He had said to them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps**; so He was talking here to the disciples and all of a sudden in this part of this conversation He said, just made the comment to the disciples, **Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I'm going so that I may awaken him out of sleep**. Now you think... sometimes the way He talked, the way He said things to them – but it was to teach lessons and the lessons are for the Church through time in the last 2,000 years and on into the future as well. But again here, an incredible story where all of a sudden here He's not talking about him sleeping, but this is the only way they took it, this is the only way they understood it. Why in the world would He separate himself from them now all of a sudden to go and awaken him out of sleep? But that's what they thought, that's all they could understand.

And then the disciples said, Lord, if he is sleeping, then he'll get well. The sickness here, or whatever, was taking place and that he needed some sleep and why wake him up. This is what was in their mind. **However Jesus was speaking of his death**; he'd died. ...**but they thought that He had spoken of him getting rest through sleep. Then Jesus plainly said to them, Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes I am glad that I was not there**, in other words, with him, **to the intent that you might believe**; because in this particular case here, making it clear in the long story here, that if He'd been there He would have prevented it. And that's what He's talking about in the context here. And so for their sakes, for the sake of our learning and our ability to grasp more, He wasn't there, he was allowed to die and then this took place... **nevertheless let's go to him.**

Then Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him. Kind of puzzling; what's he talking about here? Well if you go back through the context of some of the story here and some of the things that were being talked about here, they were talking about Jesus Christ and some of the things that were taking place and don't go here and don't go there because there are people there to kill You, they're out to kill You, they're out to take Your life. And so it was like, "Christ, if You're going to go there we're going to go with You, we're going to be killed along with You. We're going to go with You." It wasn't about Lazarus. He already told them he was dead but it was this matter of preventing Him, from Christ from having to go through a particular thing here. And so, "If You're going to go there and die, we're going to go with You – die right along with You." That's what they were talking about.

Then when Jesus arrived, He found that he already had been lying in the grave for four days. Now Bethany was near to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs: in other words, about two miles away, **And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming went and met Him: but Mary stayed in the house. Then said Martha to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** Which in this case, by what Christ said, was true. **But I know, that even now, whatsoever You will ask of God, God will give it to You.** That's an incredible thing! Seen enough things, known enough by this point in time that she had this confidence, **"...that if You ask, I know God will give it to You."** Incredible, it really is! Didn't even have the holy spirit yet in that respect. Being drawn by it as the disciples were, yes, but again, not impregnated with that power and that life and that mind yet because there are many things the disciples hadn't grasped by this point in time. There are things they believed, they continued to follow, but there are still many things they didn't grasp until the day of Pentecost.

Verse 23 – Then Jesus said to her, Your brother will rise again. And Martha replied, what an incredible response here... she says, **I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.** Christ had told them enough, talked with them long enough about different things here, about God's plan, that she

believed there was coming a time when there would be a second physical life. And so she says, **“I know that he will rise again.”**

And so **Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life:** powerful! Incredible ways that God has used to teach mankind, to teach us, to teach us through our Passover, to teach us through Christ when He first came and continues on, has continued on through time. It goes on to say... **whoever believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:** and so again here, giving that as an example of something here that is also that which is going to have to do with eternal life as well.

And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. And so going on and teaching something here that would happen as far as the Church is concerned, those who have the opportunity to receive this way of life and what that would lead to. Not just a resurrection that Martha was speaking of here, to a physical life, a second life again, but here is something beyond that which Christ is beginning to give her a little bit about, a little bit of teaching and instruction about, that by belief in and through Him, that **He is the resurrection and the life;** and so talking about something that would last longer, not just a physical life but a spiritual life, a life beyond that which is physical, the life beyond Lazarus being resurrected in the last day as Martha talked about that he would be resurrected in.

So again here, He said, **whosoever believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?** Straight out – Do you believe this? Because she hadn't heard this part before. This is something new, this is beyond the last day, this is beyond Lazarus being resurrected in the future in the hundred year period. And she answered Him – this was new for her. **She said, Yes, Lord: I believe that You are the Messiah/the Christ,** - that's what she said! **You are the anointed one of God,** You're the one that God has sent to the earth; **the Son of God, who would come to the world.** She believed those things. She believed what she'd been told of prophecies written by David and others.

And after she had said this she went her way, and secretly said to Mary her sister, saying that The Master has come and calls for you. And as soon as she heard that, she rose up quickly and went to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. So He stayed out, just barely out, where Martha came to meet Him. **The Jews then which were with her at the house, and comforted her, when they saw that Mary had quickly gotten up and gone out, followed her, saying, She's goes to the grave to weep there.** So, she's leaving quickly, she's distraught, she's going out there, we want to go with her to comfort her. That's basically some of the thinking here. And so they saw her leaving not knowing that she's going to meet Christ.

Then when Mary had come to where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. Therefore when Jesus saw her weeping, not quite in the same mindset as her sister, but again here, saw the sorrow that was taking place there and so forth that she was going through, **and the Jews also weeping who had come with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,** because of what He saw, because of the mind that didn't comprehend things about God's plan, the encouragement about how we should see things about death and understand – without hope as it were, uncontrollable in sorrow. That's why God tells us we're not to sorrow like the world does. Those things are hard, those things are difficult to address in life because of those who are the closest to us in life that we tend to mourn the most for when those kinds of things happen. But even here, God says... Jesus groaned within Himself because would to God that we didn't react that way, that we could see more fully as He did and that we could see more fully in the way that God sees matters of life and death; that we could see the Great White Throne and not have

that kind of sorrow on this earth for the things that we see around us, but to be encouraged by God's plan. There's a big difference there, there really is; not to sorrow as the world sorrows because they do so without hope, without understanding, with confusion of mind and spirit. We don't have confusion of mind and spirit about what will happen, about what takes place.

Doesn't mean certain things are pleasant, but we hold onto God's plan and the encouragement of what He has in that plan, to strive to see things the way He sees them.

Therefore when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping that had come, it says, He groaned in the spirit as said, Where have they laid him? They said to Him, Lord, come and see. And a verse here; **Jesus wept.** Referred to as the shortest verse. **Jesus wept.** Not like they wept, not for the same reason at all.

Then the Jews said, See how much He loved him! So it's like He's like Mary, He's weeping, He's like the other Jews there who are weeping and He loved him so much, that He was so close that He's distraught and He's overcome with this suffering as well. That isn't why He wept. He wept because of them. He wept because they didn't see and didn't have the kind of hope and didn't grasp and comprehend the might of God. They didn't *grasp* who was in their presence and the power of the Christ. They didn't understand. And so He was groaning within Himself of what man is like, of what human nature is like, of what people are like, because they have this void because they don't have the power of the spirit dwelling in them yet, and this desire for them. And so that's why He wept, because of that agony within Himself as a human being but His Father being God and the mind of God that was in Him and that which was coming through Him in a very powerful way about how a human life is and how we think.

And some of them said, Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? Amazing! He knew what was in their minds and what was in their heart. He knew the thinking that was taking place here, the lack of the ability to comprehend and see. **Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself arrived at the grave.** Not because He was sorrowful one whit that Lazarus was dead! It wasn't about that! It was about people, it was about what it's like for human beings who don't have faith, who don't see things through the power of God's spirit, through the eyes that He could see. He looked forward to the time when they would have that, obviously, and that's why He was going to suffer.

And so it says, **It was a cave, and a stone was lying upon it. Jesus said to them, Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him who was dead said to Him, Lord, by this time he's stinking for he has been dead four days now.** Not a pleasant thing. Not a pleasant thing to have to discuss from a family member. Why roll it away, it's been four days and we know what happens to a human body when it begins to decay. **And Jesus said to her, Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead had been laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.** He did this for us and He did this for them. **And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who stand by I said it that they may believe that You have sent Me.** To reinforce, to strengthen confidence, boldness, faith, the ability to believe what is true.

And after He had said that He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. Awesome! Incredible to experience something like that, to have been there to see that; something that human beings.... So far removed from our thinking as human beings because we haven't experienced those things so we have things that God tells us that are true, that we live by faith, things about the Great White Throne.

Because I have witnessed, even from within the Church, but especially people outside the Church, sometimes talking about the various things that happen on this earth, “*How could God allow this to happen?*” It’s like finding fault with God. “How could God allow people to *suffer*? How could God allow *children* to die?” It’s like something’s wrong with God. And the reality is it’s *us*. We’re the problem, not God. God’s very merciful, has an awesome plan, and if you see that plan and you have faith in that plan, boldness in that plan, then you’ll see death in a totally different way.

There have been a lot of people who have died in God’s Church; been in a lot of funerals. And I’d say without a doubt that the greatest of sorrow comes from the sorrow of others because of seeing others sorrow, knowing they’re hurting. Not what Christ was, but akin to that, if you understand, because we can’t... we’re not like that, we grow in those things and we’re able to experience those things but we have an understanding of what’s going to take place, especially for the Great White Throne.

So many people have died in the Church; they’re going to be... talking about the 144,000 when Jesus Christ returns...for those, as a whole, of so many funerals that I’ve been to, so many are going to be resurrected then. I know there are going to be some who are going to be resurrected in the Great White Throne later on at the last hundred years and have the opportunity to continue on as so many in the Church are going to have, who are a part of the Church, who are scattered. They’re going to have an opportunity to be resurrected then. That’s not being sorrowful, that’s being excited about what God is doing and the time. It’s just a matter of time! I hope that is conveyed more and more to us, that we can grasp that more and more and hold onto that more and more. It should be a desire we have of being excited and bold of what God gives to us – the truth.

And he who was dead, speaking of in sleep, because that’s how God wants us to see it. It’s like Lazarus had been dead for four days – what’s the difference between Lazarus being dead for four days or 2,100 years? 2,100 years. ☺ Time! It’s just time. But in this particular time he is able to be brought back for a purpose, the Messiah was there. God had a purpose in the kinds of miracles and things He performed to make it evident and clear, “This is *My Son* on the earth! He is the *Messiah*! He is your Saviour!” And so the kinds of things that happened in the world then.... That’s why I’ve given sermons in times past... that’s why things aren’t happening in the church the way some would like to see them, the way some have fasted and asked God, “...give us the power of healing so people will know *we’re the Church of God!*” That’s not what this age is about! That’s not what God’s will is! What happened in the time of Christ was different for a different purpose! The reality is it’s totally flip-flopped for what happens in *this* age, the *horrible* things that are going to come upon this world to show mankind the truths, the prophecies of God, that His word is true. Totally different! God’s purpose right now is not one of massive healings and resurrections or anything like that whatsoever – not even close to it! We have a personal relationship with God and God intervenes for us on a personal plane, helps us through various things. So much of what we do is what we can receive physically even in this earth, and then God helps us through and the struggles and the battles we go through. He gives us the help because of the truth and we go through those struggles. But He’s going to be back with us pretty soon.

People are going to have those opportunities in a very powerful way in the future. Not a guarantee. Some have thought that in the Millennium it’s going to be a guarantee, everybody gets *healed* massively around the world. That’s not going to happen. It’s a matter of an individual relationship with God.

And he who was dead/in sleep came forth, his hands and his feet were wrapped with burial cloth, linen strips, that’s how they did it, wrapped up in the cloth, **and his face was wrapped with a cloth**, a

burial cloth the way they did it. He had all these things on him. He's coming out of there, walking out a little bit like a mummy.

And Jesus said to them, Release him/undo the cloth and let him go. These things had him bound up. Take them off. Incredible story...and not so incredible. Incredible because we're human beings. Incredible what God did. Incredible what Jesus Christ did at that particular time, and yet to understand that if Lazarus hadn't been resurrected then he still would be resurrected later, just like Martha responded the way she did, to know that it was going to happen later on. And so we should have that kind of confidence in what's going to take place in this world around us.

Let's go to Acts 13. I want to go into something else that's stated. Again, it's a matter of how we think about God and God's plan and God's purpose and what God is doing. But let's pick up a different story here now.

Acts 13:33 - God has fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus again; meaning from the dead, **as it is also written in the second Psalm,** This is talking about things that God did with His own Son. And when He said, **You are My Son, this day have I begotten You. And as concerning that He raised Him from the dead, now no more to return to corruption,** in other words this word meaning 'to decay' or 'to spoil' or 'to decomposition' as we would call it today, of the human body. God didn't allow Jesus Christ to go through that. **He said this on that same occasion, I will give to you the sure mercies of David.**

So it's quoting prophecies here of things written by David, of what would happen, that God wasn't going to allow the Messiah, the Christ, the Passover to experience this.

Verse 35 - Wherefore He said also in another Psalm, You shall not allow Your Holy One to see corruption. So again, this same thing about decay and spoil and decomposition. **But as for David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep,** showing that David fell asleep, that his sepulchre was still with them to that day as it talked about in different places. Says... **and was laid down with his fathers, and he saw corruption:** so they were making a distinction here; David died, his body decomposed. This had nothing to do with David. Over and over again... that's why in Acts, even in chapter 3 when it starts talking about some of these things in chapter 2 it makes this distinction to the Jews that David died, his body did corrupt, 'his grave is with us to this day', as it talks about in other places.

So it says, **he fell asleep** – and that's the whole point of this, that *he fell asleep*. God wants us to look at things, and even as the disciples talked about here, there's that thinking that we need to see in that light, that death to us is a matter of a sleep that God has the power to resurrect someone from. I think of different ones through time – it doesn't matter who it is – some of those that are going to be in the 144,000 when they have opportunity to be resurrected what's going to take place in their life.

This thing back and forth between David, and over and over here, again, the apostles making it clear it's not about him, it's about Jesus Christ and the things that Jesus Christ fulfilled and that His body didn't see corruption.

Verse 36 – But as for David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, fell asleep – that's what it's about here. It's not about a matter of him dying. He wanted them to have a *different* focus, a different way of looking at something, a different way of understanding something.

God wants us to look at it as sleep indeed. Like I mentioned here, doesn't matter who it is in time, those who are going to be a part of 144,000 when I think about David, different ones, doesn't matter, or different ones we've known of in recent time who've died, that I believe are going to be a part of 144,000... They're asleep! It's not without hope. It's an excitement of realizing we get to see them in just over a year from now. What an incredible thing! And for those that might not be there, that we're not sure about? We get to see them, because they're asleep, and God's going to wake them up a thousand years up the road. It's just a matter of time, and with God time goes by quickly, it truly does.

What an incredible thing for human beings that it doesn't take very long...isn't it an amazing thing? Someone dies and after a while, depending on where you are spiritually in your life and how you think, you get past it. A different routine of life, someone who's close to you, husband, wife, child, parent – as a little bit of time passes, again depending on where we are on a spiritual plane, has a great deal to do with how we deal with that, how we think about that, the change that takes place over a period of time, and whether we see it in the form of a fashion of a sleep and just being awakened up later on and look forward to those times that God has given to us.

But it doesn't take very long and life goes on; and so it will be in the Millennium, except you'll have, for those who live on into that period of time, you want to continue to share but you can't. But what does that do to the human mind with God's spirit? You come to understand something in a deeper way, something that God has experienced for ages and ages and ages. God blesses us to latch onto it, to grasp a hold of, if you will. It's a beautiful thing, it really is. It's a hard thing for human being to go through that, to be separated by death, but we learn through the process, we truly do. Do you know what you learn, magnified in your mind many times over? It *is* about the sharing. It's about the sharing, things you can't share anymore, your routine of what you would go through day by day – you don't share in that anymore, but your life goes on and you begin to share, and hopefully with a greater value on life and relationships, to do better with those who *are* around you. It's about the sharing and the quality of life you live with one another. Would to God that we could learn that and had learned that a long time ago through Philadelphia and on into Laodicea and that we hadn't had the kind of battles and troubles that we experienced in the Church of God. Even with God's spirit we've had great battles in relationships and how people look upon each other.

And so I am struck by such things because I think of, when that comes to mind, Passover. If we could have the spirit of Passover in our minds *all the time* there would be no conflicts *ever* in the Church of God. We're not perfect, but we're to strive to become perfect, we're to strive for perfection. And so again, death is a great teacher, but how we handle it and how we deal with it is what this sermon is all about. God wants us to grow and God is giving us the opportunity to grow in greater hope of His truth, His way, of things that are going to come to pass, because what you're going to experience in the next year.

I Corinthians 15:49 - And as you have borne, in other words, 'wear' as the Greek word here, '**carry**' **the image of the earthy**, in other words what is physical, **we shall also bear/carry/wear the image of the heavenly**, that which is spiritual. I'm looking forward to it. I don't grasp it but I'm looking forward to it, a spirit body, spirit life, the ability to manifest spiritually, the ability to be spiritual manifested in a physical body and enjoy physical food. Incredible! Never have to worry about fighting battles of weight and so forth because we'll know balance and all those things of life and the world will be being cleaned up anyway and people will be able to live better as it is.

Verse 50 - Now this I say unto you brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; and so as long as we're in a physical body something has to change. He's making it clear here that you can't do it in a physical body, it's something spiritual; **neither does corruption inherit incorruption. Look at this mystery that I am showing you; We shall not all sleep...** isn't it amazing? Over and over again God says it's about *sleep*, because He wants us to think in those terms and not the way we did in the past or some religion we had in the past, whatever belief we had in the past. He wants us to hold onto those kinds of terms that we have here that do give us hope. They truly do! Your ability to handle things when someone dies that's close to you... this means all the difference in the world, it truly does, and so that's what God is offering us.

We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: and so again here, this is focusing first and foremost primarily, because this is what it's addressing, this is what the New Testament was addressing, the writings of the disciples, the apostles. They were addressing things having to do with the Church and looking into the future. So if you go back in time 2,000 years, or a little less obviously because of the lifespan here in the time Paul was writing here, whether it be around... I think this was the late 50's when he was writing this...and you go through and read a story like this and he's talking about what's going to happen *in the Church*, because their focus wasn't in your age at this time when he was writing. It wasn't about a transition of something that was going to happen to some who were going to be in the 144,000 while the rest of you live on into the Millennium. That wasn't the focus of the Church and it wasn't the focus of the writings at that time. It was about the Church. And so he's talking about the first step in becoming a part of the God Family.

In a moment, in the blink of an eye, at the last Trumpet: What Trumpet? The seventh, when Jesus Christ is returning, when the 144,000 are resurrected? This is what it's talking about! **...for the Trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.** Speaking of the Church, that everyone has to go through a process of change in time, whatever that is. At the end of the thousand years, those who have died will be resurrected then and those who are still alive at that moment in time moment will be resurrected as well as God knows when and if that process is completed. At the end of the hundred years, there is another massive resurrection. Everyone has to go through the process of this change.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, become a part of the God Family, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. We don't have to experience it anymore. It won't be on the earth anymore, or at least in this case it won't be in our life, for the 144,000 that Paul is talking about here. Those at the end of a thousand years – it won't be in their life when they come into the God Family. And then finally at the end of the hundred years. So as time goes on, this is the battle, because death is very much about sin, death is very much about the human experience and the human life and whether we live once or twice in life that's a part of God's plan; because for most human beings we live twice.

O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin; that's an awesome thing to understand. **The sting of death is sin...** and so there are things we have to live through by God's grace, by God's mercy, by God's plan. The vast majority of mankind can live a second time to conquer this in their life so that they can live eternally. And so it's about a process that God is giving to grant us the ability to conquer and overcome so we can live into eternal life.

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. But again, the focus on this is about this matter over and over again – sleep. Death is a sleep, that’s all it is, whether you’re going to be resurrected to spirit life as a part of 144,000 or or the Great White Throne – still a sleep that God has the power to give you life again.

One more scripture, 1 Thessalonians 4; again, we’re very familiar with these and they’re very powerful when we live them, when they become a part of our being, and the more they become a part of our being the better able we are, the better equipped we are to deal with those things around us. Because a lot of what’s coming is going to be very ugly, and our ability to deal with those things has a great deal to do with how much we *see* God’s plan and how God is working things out, and to be a part of that and be excited about it.

I Thessalonians 4:13 - But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep... Isn’t it amazing, over and over again, asleep...asleep...asleep. Small thing for God to wake somebody up. You’re able to go in in the morning, wake up your children or wake up your parent or wake up your mate or whatever; you say something, say someone’s name and they come out of a sleep. And we think about that. That happens to us every day of our life. And it doesn’t matter the span of time, for God it’s still the same. He has the power to wake us up, no one else does, only God.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, so that you do not sorrow as others who have no, as it should be here, **have no such hope.** It’s about what you believe and that we’re *not* to think like the world. We’re to see things the way God desires us to see them, and so that’s why He shares things like this with us in a greater way, and especially now at this time, to be able to grasp even more deeply so that we can deal with what’s coming in a better way, in a stronger way, an opportunity to grow in these things. And this understanding, even though we *know* of them, our ability to live them is a different thing. It’s something you have to pray about. I encourage you to go back and pray about this sermons series because these things are going to come upon you tenfold, a hundredfold and a thousand fold around you in life. And so God is getting us better equipped, better prepared for what is ahead of us so that we can see things the way He does and understand it’s a part of a process that has incredible hope to it - truly.

And the stronger your faith and the stronger your confidence the greater your boldness in what’s going to come to pass. It’s an awesome thing!

Verse 14 - For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. And so God shows us that, not only about a resurrection to eternal life, but even for the future, for a second life, we see, we understand, we grasp it’s just a matter of being awakened to life again. What an awesome thing! It’s like a sleep!

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord shall not precede them who are asleep. Over and over, sleep, sleep, sleep. And so any resurrection is about being awakened out of sleep, whether it be a resurrection to eternal life or just a resurrection back to life a second time.

For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Beautiful scripture! Isn’t it amazing! How far away are we now? Somewhere around 53 weeks away right now? Incredible! It seems a little surreal. We believe it! I’ll tell you what, in the last few years when you read through Hebrews and you

read about faith and God's people, they just go forward! The ability to see, the ability to believe, to *know* that God brings to pass what He says? It truly is an awesome thing! To me it's an exciting thing to experience, to live. How else can you describe it?

Verse 17 - Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air/the atmosphere: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The more you see and the more you believe it the more comfort you have and the less sorrow you have, the more the mind of Christ you have concerning Lazarus. Think of that example of Lazarus and how Christ saw Him, and that His mourning, His sorrow, was not about Lazarus being dead. That wasn't the remotest part of Christ's mind. He wasn't shedding a tear in any fashion or form like we do as human beings when we cry...because crying so often is without hope.

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