

We're continuing today with the sermon series entitled *Perfection* with this being *Part 3*. This will be the final part of this particular series.

I don't know about you, but I'm excited about where we are in time. I know it's going to be difficult as we go forward, it's not going to get easier, it's going to become more difficult, but God has prepared us for a long time, and has been even preparing even us in the short time that so many of you have come along in the last few years, for what's ahead. And there will be some sermons coming up on some of this, but to me it's very exciting that we are where we are in time, that we're able to do what we're doing here today in the peace and comfort that we have with air conditioning, we are very, very blessed, and there are going to be things that happen in ways that we don't fully understand, or haven't fully understood, and God will reveal them to us in His time.

I marvel at the battles that go on out there and the battles are still going on, and that's being reflected in some of your lives because there are beings out there that are highly, highly disturbed right now, very upset with what's taking place, with where we are in time; and they attack in different ways, but they don't understand, they never have been able to grasp it, that that's the very process whereby God moulds and fashions us and helps us to grow more quickly, more effectively, more powerfully in character and the process of maturing that Satan doesn't understand, and the demons don't understand. Because it's by the pressures, it's by the hardships, it's by the trials that you go through that God can mould and fashion you. Because if you didn't go through those things you wouldn't have to examine things in your life, you wouldn't be led to deal with certain things in your life like you do and come to certain conclusions that you do and live by faith in the manner that you must; and God uses that in a very powerful way to strengthen us.

And so we're continuing today in this sermon series talking about perfection, because that's what God is moulding and fashioning within us, that we're to become perfect. We're not in this physical life, but it's a process of growth and it's an exciting process that we yield ourselves to. And so today we're going to do a little bit of a review here. This may be a shorter sermon, and if it is it will be for the purpose of the impact that it's *awesomely important* that we grasp the contents of this series! And we're going to repeat some things because sometimes we listen to things and we hear things and we think, "I see that. I understand that." And I'm telling you no, you don't! What we're going into right now is spiritual in every respect, in every plane, and it's a matter of growth, of where you are spiritually of what you can drink in. And there is *so much more in this!* There are things we're going through that I've been through over 40 years in God's Church, learning and growing and being moulded and fashioned in, and continually learning and growing in these things and seeing things that I've never seen before. And that's the process! It is a spiritual one and it's not a matter of knowledge, it's not a matter of listening and hearing a story, or looking at scriptures and thinking that we see and understand certain things that are spoken.

So it has been emphasised that there is only one person who has ever lived a life of perfection, our High Priest Jesus Christ who is without sin, without fault, without error in how He lived His life. None of us are remotely close to that; and the more we understand that about our own human nature the wiser we are indeed.

The rest of us are imperfect as we have faults, weaknesses, sin, and error in our life. It's the way we are as human beings, we truly are. And it's a healthy thing, spiritually, to be able to see that, to recognize what the battle is, because if we don't see the battle, if we instead justify our state, our being, our choices in life, it's a very difficult, nigh to impossible, for God's spirit to work with us until He's brought us to humility.

But Jesus Christ, again, told us that we are to become perfect, as I started to mention here at the beginning of the sermon, that we are to become perfect and He told us how this is to be accomplished, that it is a transformation of our mind, the very way we think. Again, I go back to the Feast sermon and think about that process, think about why God made us the way He did. There is so much to learn there, brethren, so much to learn. And again, we receive this in varying levels in the ability to comprehend and grasp the magnitude of what we're being told, of what God is sharing with us. Our very thinking, again, our very minds are to be transformed, they're to be changed, and the *actions that follow* such thinking. Because that's what it's all about! The purpose of your mind being transformed, of your mind changing, and the way you think, and the way we think, from one obviously of selfishness to one of give, to God's way, is a process of transformation. The way it comes out, the way it's seen then, the purpose of it is in how you live your life, it's in how you live toward others; and we're tried and tested *most of all* and *first of all* by those who are closest to us.

If you have no other family member in the Body of Christ, the Church of God at this time, then there are those you know within the Body that you have met, that you have come to know and there, in a very powerful way, we are to learn relationships and to experience something that we're able to today in a magnified way, in a powerful way... this is exciting! It's a festive Feast type atmosphere, to have so many people from so many areas come together and share like this, and it's in the sharing of life, the riches are there in the sharing of life, in how we treat one another, in how we greet one another, in how we fellowship and share with one another. It's what it's all about.

So whether it's done on a family level within the Church, with those that might be a part of our family, or with others (if we have no family...in time you will...in time you will), but what's important is the actions that follow, that *reveal* the transformation, the changing of the way you're thinking.

I said a lot, I said the whole sermon right there if we can grasp that, see. That will reveal the level of your transformation; the transformation of your mind is revealed in your relationships, in how you think toward people, and how you think toward people is how you treat people, how you speak to people, it's how you think about them, the excitement, the joy of seeing them, of being with them, or the lack of it, what we hold against others and what we forgive toward others, that we don't hold onto...says so much about who we are, what we are and where we are in the process of this transformation of our mind.

We're going to go back and look at some scriptures we've already looked at in the first two sermons that hopefully we'll be able to latch onto a little bit more, because it isn't a story flow, it's a matter of that which is there spiritually that we can grasp and learn a little bit at a time, and we'll be able to receive a little bit more each time. And each time we go through this God will show us things, add a little bit here and there, and the impact of that is sometimes just a little bit more comes through...then it's well worth the repetition, it truly is.

It's good we remind ourselves of how this process grows in us and becomes a reality in our life. **John 17:14** – Jesus Christ said, **I have given them Your word**; this is an awesome prayer! We read it every

Passover, or at least parts of this section every Passover as we go through chapter 13, chapter 14-15-16 and into 17 talking about those very things that Jesus Christ gave to the disciples, those very things that the disciples were given to write and record, in this case here John, of things that were given on that last night of His human physical life on earth before He died as our Passover. And He said to our God, His God, your God, our Father, **I have given them Your word**; It's awesome! It wasn't His. *It wasn't His*, it's His Father's. It all came from the Father, not of His own ideas, none of His own conjecture.

Just to put the record straight, see, there are times when I have spoken that I have thrown in some of my own conjecture, my own thoughts, even as a minister, even as one ordained to do the job that I have to do, *because I'm imperfect, because I'm a human being*. Hopefully those aren't very often and hopefully they're very minor, but that's the way it is as a human being because *none of us* are perfect, we're very imperfect, but God has an order whereby He works through the Church and in the Church and it's an awesome thing.

So He says, **I have given them Your word**; in *perfection!* *Perfectly* from God! That's why it's such an awesome thing when He stated that the things that He has said, the things that He has given to them, *not a thing* came out of Him, it was all from the Father! ...**and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world**. He says, **I don't pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one**, from the evil that's in the world. And so there's this process that He's telling about here of how it's done. This prayer reveals it.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. This isn't what we're doing, why we do what we do. We gave that up! We said, "I don't want this!" When you made a choice at baptism you decided, you came to a point in time where you said, "I don't want this anymore! I don't want the way that hurts others! I don't want the way of being hurt because of selfish human nature! I want Your way, whatever it takes to mould and fashion us, whatever it takes to mould and fashion me. I surrender self!" That's what you do! "I don't want that way anymore! I want only Your *one* true way of life, regardless of what it costs, regardless..." because the cost is only a matter of something we might put on it when it comes to selfishness – because that's where the sacrifice comes in, fighting against self, and you decide from the very beginning you want to sacrifice it all, you want to keep the body buried in a watery grave.

So He said, **They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world**. That's a choice we made. We make mistakes, we stumble, we fall, we do stupid things, we say stupid things, we hurt people still, but we're God's people and what makes us different from the world is *God*. God dwells in us! And that covenant relationship we entered into, that's what makes us different, because He gave us of His holy spirit, He gave us the impregnation of His spirit. We're still very human, we still have weaknesses, we still have faults, but we've entered into a battle and we had a great desire from the very beginning, and if we're able to hold onto that, which God promises we can, it's a matter of our choice, we can keep fighting until the time we overcome, conquer. And so we go through a process of always battling. *We are in a great war!* We have been from the day that we went under that watery grave. We entered into a great battle. It's the greatest that's ever been fought, the greatest that will ever be fought; one person at a time by your own choice.

Sanctify them through Your truth: Your word is truth. There's only one source of truth, it all comes from God. At some point we're going to go into a series, maybe the next sermon here, about some of those truths, going clear back in time in history with truths that God has revealed as God gives us a greater focus of who we are, what we are, what we've been given, and what's coming.

Let's go onto verse 17. I wasn't planning on reading this earlier, but again, that's what He said here, **Sanctify them through Your truth: Your word is truth.**

Verse 18 - As You have sent Me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world. And so, what does that mean? People see us. We're not out of the world, we're in the world. We have relatives, we have neighbours, we have people we come in contact with, we have people we work around, and people see us all the time...and we're to be different. We're to be *different*; we're not to be like everyone else. We're not to *treat* those around us like everyone else treats them in the world. There is supposed to be something different there! They may not be able to grasp, obviously, what it is, because they can't. But when their time comes they should be able to say, "Ah, now I understand, now I see." They should see something different in us that's not us at all. So we're to stand out.

So He says, **As You have sent Me into the world...** And what happened? People saw a different way of life, they heard things that were being said, a different way of being treated, a different way of being spoken to, a different way of responding. ...**even so have I sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.** And so He did, made it all possible for us so that we could go through this process as a Body, as the Body of Christ, as the Church of God, being set apart for holy use and purpose...**that they might be sanctified through the truth.** That's what sets us apart from the rest of the world. It's not just knowledge. It's not what you know! It isn't about how much truth you understand! It's what you live! It's the mind. It's how you treat people.

There used to be times when we were much, much larger, and still happens even when we're small like this that it stands out in different areas we go into, and we find at different places where there are hotels that rent to us, that there is something unique that oftentimes develops in the relationship, and they make comments oftentimes about the people and that there's a difference in how we do things and how we behave and how we clean up afterwards. Little things that sometimes you don't think are *important*, that *are* important, that make us stand out. It doesn't mean they believe what we believe by any measure. They know we keep the Sabbath. They know we're meeting there on the Sabbath, but there is something here in the mind that's been planted there for a purpose and for a reason for their time.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on Me through their word; Beautiful! And that's where I thought I'd mention some of this today, heard it in the opening prayer. When you've been away from an area for a while and then you come back and you see so many people you've never met before, because there was a time when we knew each other, we knew everybody. We were all at one Feast site, as a whole, at the very beginning. When you have that experience it's one that has to be magnified in a very big way when all of a sudden you come into an environment like this and you see so many faces, so many people that you've never met, yet the same mind. It's an awesome experience.

And so I think of what we're able to have here today of individuals that fulfill all this because this has gone on for the last 2,000 years through time as God has worked with and called people and He says, **Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word;** and so God's word continues to go out. We've gone through different things because of Philadelphia, what happened at the end of Sardis, but as a whole thinking of what takes place and all of a sudden *you* believe. Something happens and you come in contact in some way, sometimes in strange ways that you can't even go back and find again; because we talk about these things sometimes of how people came

into contact with the Church, strange occurrences sometimes of things that happen. If God's going to call you He's going to get His word to you...even if it's a matter of you walking down the street and all of a sudden a gust of wind comes up and slams 'The Plain Truth' into your chest. It's happened. Strange things. And over and over again things are repeated like that.

And so today we're very, very blessed to be able to experience that with one another. I'm going to go through and mention some of the states here today. Sometimes we go into an area where you might have one or two people visiting from out of the area; today we have several people from different areas here that's to me very inspiring to see, because they wanted to come here and be able to fellowship. When you have an opportunity, the closer we get, and have the things we know that are coming, it seems like every moment like this becomes a little more precious, it truly does, and it's an inspiring experience.

So we have those that come from Texas, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois – and I'm not talking about just the normal ones that would be in this area like from Indiana, but from other areas that aren't normally here, on this weekend... Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, Florida, Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Carolina... have I missed anyone in the States? Any state? West Virginia too... *oh yes*, West Virginia; and Canada, Great Britain (or the UK), Belgium, and The Netherlands. Awesome! This is a very festive environment today in the beginning of July, but people that God has called through time because they hear the Word, God's word, God's truth as God draws them and calls them...and again, Christ's prayer. He didn't just pray for those that were there, but those who were going to follow through time, and we do what we do for those who are following through time.

...that they all may be one; even as You, Father are... and this is what it's all about, because this is how it's accomplished, and that's what was revealed. I find nothing more inspiring in God's word than when I go through the book of John, when I know the things that God revealed to John. There is no greater revelation than what God gave on this particular night; that God Almighty can dwell in human beings. The world doesn't understand that, they don't grasp and comprehend that you can have a life in you that is beyond you, a life that comes from the great Creator, the great Sustainer of the universe, that He actually lives and dwells in us. But He won't dwell in sin! He *won't* dwell in sin, that's why it's so expedient, so important for us to repent when there's sin, to repent quickly so that God will continue to dwell and come into our life and dwell within us. And if we understand that we will strive, cry out to God, pray for help to live this way of life more perfectly. Because you see, it's easy to be cut off from God by how we treat one another, by things we say, by things we do, and that's been the greatest problem through time in God's Church that people haven't grasped the *importance* of that, of how important it truly is to have right relationships with others, to be right with others, to be forgiving – always forgiving – never holding onto anything against others, but letting it go. That's a tall order, something you can't fulfill on your own, your human nature won't let you; but with God's help, with God's blessing, with God's guidance and direction, with His spirit living within us you can live it more and more and more.

That they all may be one; God's great desire for Jerusalem, for peace, for rest, is that we come into total oneness with Him. That's what perfection is all about, being perfected, being at one with God. Oftentimes when we get together in God's Church, especially those who've been around for some time, oftentimes the conversation will (as it did today, this morning, and as it did last night) go toward things we've experienced, especially since 1994 in God's Church, an apostasy, and all the battles, and all the

people that are no longer around, even since that time, even since the apostasy, and the struggles that have been there. And we think upon those things, and I think upon how difficult it is to be at one, to stay at one, to be one – because there's only one way – and yet it's a great battle. It always has been through time. **...that they all may be one even as You, Father are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in us:** it's about a way of life, it's about a unity of spirit with God's spirit, and that has to do with how you live. It has to do with doctrine too because so often that reflects how you live your life, whether you live it in this environment or some other scattered environment; but it always boils down to how you treat one another within that environment as you are seeking to become one with God.

...that the world may believe that You have sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them; What glory? The holy spirit! That life, that word, that ability to be at one with God, to agree with God, to say, "You are right and I am wrong!" That's an awesome thing to be of that mindset where you are able to acknowledge, "I am wrong, God, You were right! Your way is right!"

And the glory which You gave Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; If I had anything that I could ask for, or would have wanted through time (which you can't have), since I came into God's Church in 1969, it would be that we could all *agree* with the truth we've been given. Because I've seen horrible battles, I've seen horrible warfare, I've seen horrible loss of life over and over and over again in God's Church, from the very get go, from the very beginning of people from one Feast to another, from one Feast and then another Feast some are gone, over and over again because it's so difficult to be at one with God. **...I in them, You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one.** There's so much more here but let's continue on.

Let's get back to 1 John 4 where we were last Sabbath, again a review here. **1 John 4:1 – Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world** and as I mentioned last Sabbath, better translated **many false prophets have come forth out of the world.** That's an incredible thing! You see, 1969, 42 years in God's Church, well 41½, and these very scriptures here and to think about what's happened. You see, I've seen many, many, many, many, many, many false prophets in God's Church, that have come out of the world into God's Church, who didn't surrender or wouldn't remain surrendered to the truth that God gave to them, who wouldn't hold onto the truth that God gave to them, who wouldn't hold onto very basic truths that God gave to Mr. Armstrong to strengthen the Church. It's an awesome thing to think back in time, and I know it's very difficult sometimes for some of you who are new to grasp there were only three truths by the time Mr. Armstrong came along, three foundational truths! Those that cause people the greatest battle oftentimes when they're first called into God's Church; first being, the one that's easier to see, is the name of God, that God's Church carries or bears His name. It's not the Presbyterian church, it's not the Lutheran church, it's not the Catholic church, it's not the Seventh Day Adventist, it's not Mormon, it's the *Church of God*, it belongs to God Almighty! And you'd think that'd be a very simple thing for the world to see, but they can't see it, and then they get upset and mad, "*Who do you think you are?!*" Well, I know who I am, in time you'll come to know who God is, but you just don't understand yet. You think you know Jesus Christ, the one you think died on a 'cross'. Anyway, they have to come to understand in time that they're totally ignorant of what is true and have been lied to for so, so long.

But in God's Church that's a different matter. In God's Church when people are brought along and they're brought to an ability and opportunity to repent of error, to repent of sin, to repent of things that

are wrong and start a process but at some point give in or give up because of something they don't agree with, or because of something they won't surrender to. And so often it goes back to relationships and familiarity, things of that nature that destroy, that will kill if you don't stay on top of it.

And so I think of one truth alone that followed those three truths. You know one of the greatest truths that Mr. Armstrong over and over and over again spent time expounding and hit his fist so many times on a podium or on a table as he was moved by God's spirit, because he saw something so powerful over 40-50 plus years of time as he spoke, of things he was battling and dealing with in the Church of God as it became larger and larger and larger, growing by thirty some percent every year for so long, and as more and more came along *this* became a greater reality in God's Church – 1 John 4. There were many who came along through time who ended up being false, against Christ – antichrist. Awesome! You think, "How can that happen in God's Church?" It has, witnessed it so often, and it's painful...it's *painful*.

You know what that number one thing is? It's the first of the 18 truths – government! *Government!* I can hear him, I can hear Mr. Armstrong crying out *loud*, powerfully, talking about government, and you know what he always did? He went back to Satan, then he'd bring it forward showing a spirit and an attitude and a mindset and how he wasn't in unity with government. And that's a powerful thing that we learn in time, a way that God works – *one way* that God works! And I became so sluggish through time that by the time the apostasy came along and because of betrayals and things that took place and lack of trust within the Church, within the ministry, that that one there escaped me for a while. I had to have my nose rubbed in it for a while. Some of you understand what I'm talking about in a very deep way and some of you probably wonder, "What on earth is he talking about?" Because a scattered Church out there, if they could come to acknowledge that one truth and understand it.... I think of different ones that have had conversations with some who are part of the scattered Body out there and they don't understand that that's a doctrine, it's a doctrinal truth – government – in a very powerful way.

And so because people don't agree with something.... If you ever find yourself out of agreement with anything that's taught, as a whole (doesn't mean everything is perfect, because it's not), but as a whole when you look at the different truths that are there, every one of them, if there is something that's out of kilter it's time to throw yourself down on the ground before God, if you will, thrust yourself to the ground before God and cry out for mercy because you live on incredibly dangerous ground. And it happens, that's why it's so important to know what all the truths are that God gave to us and to be able to answer, "Am I 100% in agreement with every one of them?"

...do not believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have come forth out of the world. Hereby you can know the spirit of God: Every spirit that, or if you will when it's referring to an individual, if you understand, who confesses that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is of God: in other words, by their life.

And I don't want to keep repeating some of these things but it's a matter that our lives should reflect by how we're living that God's in it, God's doing it. If you're living right, if you're able to be right toward someone else, if you're able to treat them right, if you're able to forgive over and over again, if you have the right kind of mind, if you're able to be at one in doctrine, it's because of God. It's not because of you, it's not because of your abilities, it's not because of how spiritual *you* are, it's not because of how much *you* know, it's because of the blessing of sharing God in us; sharing God, the mind of God.

And every spirit that does not confess/reveal/show by how they live, by what they do, by how they act. There are tell tale things that happen in people's lives. **And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God:** in other words, it better be evident that Jesus Christ is alive there, just as when we all come together here and we have this excitement of seeing each other; prayerfully it sticks every Sabbath, every time you come in contact with each other, wherever you are, whatever you do. And if you have others in the... that you're close to every day, that you're blessed to have others in your family with you it better be alive there and living there! It better reflect Jesus Christ.

Verse 3 – And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God; this is the spirit of antichrist... What an awesome thing! I think of what you're blessed to understand about antichrist. There are people in the scattered Body today that don't even... they don't even have the *foggiest idea* what antichrist is. They think it's about the pope! I hope you're dumbfounded by that! People who were once a part of the Church of God for many, many years, *much longer than you were*, a lifetime, some who came along as teenagers and then were baptized when they were old enough, who are no longer with us, who are out there scattered someplace, who went through several decades of being in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God, believe that the antichrist is about a man, who believe a *Protestant* teaching! It's a Protestant teaching that the antichrist is about one man.

And yet John was blessed to reveal something very powerfully to us and we have been blessed to be able to see what this is about. It's about people that come into the environment of the Church of God. Not to be taken lightly. You don't want to be one of those. You don't want to be one of those! And I say these things because there are things to be learned in a very powerful way because we have problems. We always have in God's Church, it's always been there. I feel and believe that we have some of the greatest unity we've ever had in God's Church to this time, to this period of time, but because there are so many who are new as well we also have difficulties and struggling and growing pains, we truly do.

I'm thankful we're not much larger. I truly am. Because we are not organized in such a fashion to be able to handle and take care of that which would be much larger. We are very unique in the way God has moulded and fashioned us and given us what we have. See, that's why the timing and things that take place are in God's hands and we probably won't have that experience very long if we're able to have it where we have a lot of people come into our midst because we can't handle it, because we're not structured that way. There will be a way that everybody comes through what they must come through, but to have this opportunity, what you have, sometimes it's hard to grasp what we've really been given.

See, I hate it when I have to get involved, or hear of people who aren't getting along, people who have conflict with each other, people who have disputes with one another in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God. Because you see, I know and understand that doesn't exist. Can't be! Because I know when those things are going on those individuals are not in the Body of Christ. I know it's a lie! God says so! I would be very deeply moved if I thought I were *anywhere close* to that kind of a mindset, to think that I'm allowing disputes and disagreements and saying things or doing things within the Body of Christ toward someone else in the Body of Christ, let alone toward me or toward my wife, which I have experienced on this last trip with one individual bold enough to speak out and find fault with. *Blows my mind!* If you can't get along with, if you can't understand where God's love is coming from in the Body, in the Church, I know what your relationship is like with everyone else in the Body, and it's not right and

you're not in the Body unless you repent deeply of what you're doing! I already know that with every fibre of my being!

And so if you're anywhere close to having disputes, disagreements, bad words with someone else, it's the time to repent *in tears*! And if you can't be moved to tears, *ask God Almighty to help you to do so because YOU ARE IN FIRE, in a difficult way*. You're not in the Body of Christ, you're in 1 John 4 and you're working against Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ doesn't act like that. No one who has Jesus Christ living in them *acts like that*, and talks badly to others in the Body of Christ, treats each other...treats others in the Body of Christ in an improper way!

Now, new people listening might think, "Well how can they...?! They can't be God's Church then!" God's Church has *always been like this* because we're human beings, *because we're human and we're very imperfect* – but we're not to stay that way, we're to repent and change. We're to repent and change every time we are shown sin, and God is blessing us to come to understand a level of sin that is so *needed to grasp* that which is a matter of relationships. It's the highest level of understanding of that which is spiritual. And that which reflects Jesus Christ is the fact that there is repentance, and when there is repentance there's *change*, there's a transforming of the mind because you start thinking different, because you understand this is wrong and "I cannot live this way and I must repent of this and I can't allow this to continue day by day or week by week to exist in my life! It can't be there and be in the Church, and be in the Body!"

I hate lies! I hate lying! ...and God doesn't love it either. God hates lying! And the worst we can do is when we lie to ourselves, truly. *We are called to change*! We are called to become something different than what we are! The mind has to change, the mind has to be transformed and we have choices every day of our life to yield our self to a process of change.

When's the last time you had sharp words with someone? ...and who was it to in the Body of Christ? How long ago was it? This morning? Because I'll tell you I know that it was. Because of God's Church, I know that it existed. We can't be this size and that not have happened somewhere in the Church this morning; it's just the way it is. But you see, as God's people we can change, we can repent; not only that, we're told to. I won't ask a show of hands of how many of you stumbled in that today, to someone you love. Don't show me your hands! I just told you, you don't have to show me your hands! Well, that's a humble spirit, that's good. Pride oftentimes wouldn't allow us to do that, but that's good, it's healthy.

When I give a sermon like this I ache inside. I *ache* because I have over forty years of sorrow of people who've made the wrong choices, of people who've given up the fight, of people who are no longer in fellowship. I think of the prophecy that was given in Matthew 24, 'because the love of many waxed cold'. You know what it's talking about? God's love. The word is 'agape'. It waxed cold, no longer hot, no longer on fire, no longer alive as it should be in God's Church; and that's all about relationships. It's how people got along with each other and God said after a time it *just wasn't there* in the way it should be. I understand, I lived it. I grasp in a very powerful way what Mr. Armstrong said toward the end when he said, "I wonder if even 10% of you get it! *I wonder if even 10% of you in the entirety of the Church of God GETS IT!*" And he was right! The Church had become so weak, that's why we went into an apostasy not too long afterwards. It followed in time. The greatest battle through history, the greatest battle through time is what we enter into, this mind being able to be changed and transformed

and become at one with God. It's the most awesome battle in each person's life if they choose to fight it.

...and yet there's the other side of it just as much as there is with Paul when he talked about how this battle goes on inside of him, this battle that he sees on one hand, this spirit, this life that's God's, and yet he sees this other thing working in him that pulls, that fights against Christ, fights against God's spirit; and yet with him and with so many others through time you keep fighting it because you recognize there's that part of your own human nature that continues, but you can't allow it not to change so that this mind to become something different. We have to become different than the way we are.

There is *no excuse* in the Body for people to continue in certain kinds of relationships without change. Doesn't mean you won't stumble and trip...absolutely. I look around this room and I know there are problems in people's lives, I know there are disputes – been involved in too many, seen too many, know they're still going on in too many cases. I know it's there. Relationships! Prayerfully you're at the battle and that's probably why you're here today, because you're still at the battle, you're still repenting. But sometimes we need to make a quantum leap and jump in growth and recognize how serious all this is and repent more deeply of things that come out of our mouth, of things that come out of our actions in the way we treat others, and that instead what happens is that it's replaced by that which is from God.

And so God speaks very candidly and says here through John, **and every spirit that does not confess...** is not in agreement, is not at one in that one word. Remember the word? 'Homologeo' - not of the same word. It's not just in doctrine and what you believe, which is important, but it's in what you live, otherwise it's a lie. Why have all this knowledge, why have everything that's written on the website – if we knew it perfectly, could spit every bit of it out – everything that God has blessed us with so mightily in the last few years, all the sermons if we knew them by heart; what good would all that do if we're not living it? It doesn't mean a thing! It means nothing!

And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God: because that's what makes a difference. Either Jesus Christ is coming through you, living in you, you're changing, you're becoming something different, your mind's thinking different, you're learning lessons of how you're doing things wrong, you're starting to see things in yourself that need to be changed and you know what has to be changed and you're working on those things, you're crying out to God that it doesn't repeat itself, and when it does you repent quickly and you make it right in relationships. And He just calls it what it is – if it isn't happening then what's there is antichrist, that's what's being seen, not Christ but that which is working against Christ.

Verse 16 - And we have known and believed the love/the agape that God has to us/for us. In other words made available to us. **God is love;** caring, sharing, kind, patient, merciful, *grace* - everything that we receive from God is for a purpose so that it can live through us, so that grace starts living in us in our relationships toward others. Forgiving? Are we that way toward others or do we hold onto things. **God is love; and he who dwells in love/agape dwells in God,** it is a direct reflection of where you are spiritually in your life, to how much you're truly surrendering your life to God and God dwelling in you and you dwelling in God.

Herein is our love made perfect; it's not ours, its agape. Shows you can change, shows it can become a part of your mind. You have God's spirit; not just an access to God's spirit but you have God's spirit

dwelling in you, the impregnation, a life that's growing in you that is to become you. That's what the transformation of the mind is, that being that's growing in you, that which is growing in your mind, that's changing day by day, week by week, as you surrender yourself more to God and fight and resist that which is wrong and cry out to God for the help to live that which is right. In time, it becomes *you*, you become more like God. We are *made* after the likeness of God, that's what we are. We're in a process of growing to become like God – not God, not God the Father - but of the same mind, of the same thinking, which is a matter of peace, of love. God is love. That explains everything about the Word. It explains everything about every motive, of every purpose of God Almighty. Giving, giving, giving, sharing, sharing, sharing, *giving, giving, giving*. *Sacrifice to give* because you grasp how important it is to do so, and to fight against the taking.

Every time you mistreat someone, every time you speak out against someone, every time you say a harsh word, it's because of your *stinking, rotten, selfishness!* That's what it is! It's our *selfishness* that takes control and you've got to *hate* that and *loathe* that or your change doesn't come. You've got to loathe that when it pops up, despise it, and love God and love that mind that wants to give, share, forgive, think kindly, be kindly toward others. It's night and day and it's something you grow in. You become a different person through time.

I'm much, much different from the day I was called, thank God! Night and day! I have farther to go; a few more months He can pound some things into this thick skull, and it won't come easy, never does, but it's a refining process. It's a beautiful process, and therein is our joy, that which agrees with God. But there's much sorrow with it as well because of others that don't choose or don't continue to do the same thing and can't share with them then. That's what hurts the most, is that you can't continue to share with others. Even before the apostasy, so many who went by the wayside, you could no longer share with and it's like a cutting knife that stabs so deeply.

God is love; and he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. Herein is our love being made perfect... our love; it can be, it's moulded and fashioned in you, agape. That's an awesome thing! It's the mind of God! You can look back in your life and understand that your mind is not the same as it used to be, that there are changes taking place, that you're becoming a different person, a different being, one you embrace, one you're thankful for, and you want to get rid of the other that resists all that, that is the old self.

Herein is our love being made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in the world. To be more of the mind of God. Even ten years ago, five years ago, couldn't believe the mind, the changes that could continue on through time as you continue to yield to God. It's an awesome, awesome thing, it's a beautiful thing; and the only thing that doesn't make it as beautiful is what's still lingering of self, because self is ugly and selfishness is hideous, grotesque, evil. That's why it's a healthy thing to acknowledge the error, the wrong that's in us and to embrace that which is God that He's moulding in us.

Let's go back to 1 John 3 because I want to read some of the context that preceded these things recorded in chapter 4, because it more fully gives a direct context, if you will, of the crux of all this, something that again needs to be repeated, because as a whole the connection, the importance is not fully grasped by people, those in God's Church. This isn't written for the world, this is to God's Church.

I John 3:18 - My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; Oh, I've seen that so much in the environment of God's Church it makes me want to puke whenever I've seen it! Seen it over and over and over and over again, but it's something we all had to go through, it's a part of nature. Because this is not simply (when it's talking about this), **let us not love in word, neither in tongue;** because it isn't a matter of what we know that we can talk about, that we can speak, that we see that's true. It's not a matter of that which is in the mind, simply a matter of thinking, simply a matter of what we say, of what is spoken, but as it says here, **but in deed and in truth.** It's easy to talk about this way of life; it's easy. Well, if you have God's spirit, if you've had access to God's spirit. But see, the problem is that sometimes we can deceive ourselves because we've had this access, God draws us to the Church, He's the one who has to begin to draw us. He begins to open our minds so we can see things about the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and other truths, and other doctrines, and then we come to a point and a choice where we want to be baptized and we make that decision, and we have all this knowledge that's flooded into our minds, especially in this age more than during any other time in 6,000 years. We can't grasp that because that takes time. But more than any other time we've been given so much of what we can latch onto and it's a very easy thing for the mind then to deceive itself, it truly is, to deceive itself into thinking that this is what it's all about, all this knowledge, the things we can talk about.

We can talk and we can experience being *inspired* in our conversations. You ever been talking to someone else in God's Church and all of a sudden different ones are telling different stories, different things that have happened, things you're learning and one thing just leads to another? It's very inspiring because there's something... you're not pushing it, it's just there. It's not something you get to experience all the time, but once in a while you get to experience it, it's something that comes from God and you recognize that. You have to be careful... God gives us those experiences, didn't come out of you, came from God. It's a fellowship of God, with God, of God's spirit and by His power, and it's something He's putting in you or giving to you and giving you opportunity to share in, but never take it to yourself that it came out of you. Because sometimes then with all the other knowledge we can begin to be lifted up by that and see ourselves in a light that we should never see ourselves in.

So he says, **my little children, don't let us love in word, neither in tongue;** it has to be because it's true, because it's truly there. We can get into a phase or a part of our life sometimes, we're able to talk about this, we're able to talk about what we know and the truths we know, and it goes way beyond that. It goes into your relationships every day, every person you talk to, how you think about them.

And this is how we can know that we are of the truth, and can be assured in our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. And sadly sometimes our heart cannot even condemn us.

Had some recent conversations with some individuals. It's a constant thing from time to time because we're human and because we get *caught* in things we do sometimes, and one of the things I hate the most sometimes in life is when you want to help someone, when even there is correction there and you're trying to help someone see something in their life that will help them make a breakthrough and live a better life, and all of a sudden there's this, "Yes, but you don't understand... Yes, but that wasn't what was in my heart... Yes, but... Yes, but..." We justify! The human mind can justify. And every person I've ever worked with who's finally left, who you cannot communicate with and work with any longer, that's what they did at the end. They justified themselves out of God's Church all the way. You can do it! It's a human thing that can be done very easily where it's somebody else's fault, or it's some other circumstance or some other situation, but it's not *your* responsibility. We're responsible for

everything that comes out of our life. God holds us accountable for every word that comes out of our mouth, for every action that proceeds from you. And what is it motivated by? Where does it come from?

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, then we can have confidence toward God. So again, there's a spiritual matter there and the ability to see that though depends on whether or not we can have that confidence as a matter of whether or not we really are spiritual in what we're doing and changing and repenting.

Verse 22 - And whatever we ask or receive of Him, not asking for physical things, things that we think would make our life better or easier. That's not what this is about. This is about what God promises. God didn't promise us when we came into His Church that everything from that moment forward was going to go well on the job, was going to go well with your finances, was going to go well with your health. God didn't promise you could have all those things in your life when you came into God's Church! There was a time when sometimes we kind of felt that way. But it's because of those things that we're able to change and repent and become something different, because we struggle with things in life and we learn lessons in life that we cannot learn in any other manner save what God *bleses us to have the opportunity to live*, and what He promises is what He promised from the beginning. That's what all these scriptures are all about when it talks about how that you can ask and He will *give you*...and it's about His holy spirit. That's the promise.

When the disciples were told, you wait here until Pentecost to receive the promise from God; that's the promise, it's a promise of the impregnation of God's spirit, it's a promise of a continual flow of God's spirit, but there are things we have to do. It's not without requirement, if you will, not without obligation on our part. On the contrary; we're *obliged* to change, we're *obliged* to repent of the sin, we're *obliged* to obey the law of God. It's a *requirement* in order to continue to have God's spirit! And so if you see battles you're having, if you see certain struggles and you ask God for help because you *don't* want to be cut off, because you *do* want to overcome, God will help you in those battles! But you've got to enter into it and fight it and recognize what needs to be fought!

And that's what this way of life has always been about and always will be about – crying out to God for the help of His holy spirit because you know you can't change and treat others right, you can't change the way you are, you can't change and become Godlike, you can't change and have a spirit that's constantly giving or more the mind of giving, or one that is changing and overcoming, and again, forgiving and striving to make relationships right and acknowledging when they're wrong and so forth without God's help. You have to have God's help! You can't do it on your own! And so God promises He'll help you in that because He wants your mind to change. *He wants your mind to change.*

And whatsoever we ask of Him, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments; That's what we want to do. You want to keep His commandments? Which ones are we not keeping? Which ones are we having troubles with? What area are we struggling with? What part of relationships? What is it that's interfering? What is it in our mind? ...and you cry out to God and ask Him, "This is my commitment! I want to live this, I want to obey. Help me! Help me to repent! Help me to change! Help me to conquer this!"

...**because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.** That's the heart. Doesn't mean you can do it, because you *can't* do it perfectly. *You can't keep God's*

commandments perfectly! You can't do all things **pleasing in His sight**. I can't do it! *I abhor myself* when I see things that I'm not able to do that I want to do in my mind, and that's the way we are. That's what Paul talks about! But if you don't *abhor* the evil, the wrong, the error, the wrong thinking or the wrong thought, or whatever it might be in life, the wrong action, the wrong thing that's said, or the inability to love like we should be able to love...that's how change comes if you really abhor it and want to change and ask God for the help to do so.

And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another; What an amazing thing! Over and over and over again it's always been about this, how we think toward each other, how we treat each other. And yet this morning some of you sitting here, you had *wrong words* to someone close to you! I didn't ask for hands but I saw a couple come up, of very truthful individuals! But I *know there were a lot more!* Shouldn't have been! *Shouldn't have been!* Shouldn't have happened! Why did it? *Why did it?* Do you know why? Did you repent? Have you during that length of time since then asked God to forgive you? Because see, until you repent you've been cut off from God's spirit, you've been cut off from the flow of God's spirit. If you hurt another of God's children, another one who's been begotten of God, or anybody who hasn't been begotten of God's spirit; if you've hurt them – far worse someone who's begotten of God – but if you've hurt someone and haven't repented, *do not deceive yourselves that you're okay with God!* Do not deceive yourselves that by coming into this environment or this congregation or wherever you're listening in today, that just by being in the Sabbath day, by listening on the internet to a sermon *that somehow you are okay with God!* Because if you haven't repented yet of something you've said wrong to someone else you're cut off from the flow of God's spirit. Call it what it is! Sin is sin and it cuts you off from God's spirit!

That's how horrible it is! To not repent quickly when you do something wrong; and if you recognize that then you can bring those things into subjection more quickly, you can repent more quickly, you cannot continue to deceive yourself into thinking that you can walk a certain walk *OF LYING TO GOD!* Because God calls it antichrist – against Christ. I think of all He went through for us so that we could have access to His spirit, to God's spirit, to the spirit that comes through His Son to us. I think of all He went through for us, something we observe every year at Passover time and we focus in on it. And yet on the way home after Passover services, sometimes it's happened, didn't take too long before someone says an ugly thing to someone else. You think, "He died! He had a spear rammed into His side, beaten beyond recognition, and yet we're capable as human beings of doing things like that?! Of saying something?" Because He made available to us an ability to go before God, to be forgiven of sin so we could have a continual flow of God's spirit, so it could continue to work within us?

But see, the sad thing is so often within God's Church, if we're not careful, we get to a point where we go through the motions of life and we have all this knowledge and we go to Sabbath services and rejoice in seeing certain people and friends we haven't seen for a week and we can get into this thing that makes us no different from the world, unless we're changing, unless we're treating, unless we're making changes in how we treat each other.

You make someone else feel badly? If you hurt someone else by things you say? That instant – *do not deceive yourself, you have been cut off from God's spirit!* You're cut off from God's spirit and the love of God will begin waxing cold from that moment. And the longer that's extended and the more sin that's involved that's not repented of, the greater that happens. And that's why we came to an apostasy in God's Church, because God wasn't dwelling in us to the capacity, to the life, that He should have been.

I know that we don't grasp this very fully, in varying levels. Ask God to help you to grasp it more fully, to understand how serious sin is, to understand how serious it is to hurt someone by things that are said. It's like a sharp knife thrust into somebody. Why would we ever hurt anyone that way as human beings? But we do it! And we do it because we're selfish! There's something we're protecting or there's something we think we're protecting, or there's something we're judging improperly, or there's something that we're crying out inside about that we don't understand in our self. Cry out to God to see it, to understand what it is so you can change, because it's so wrong to hurt anyone else by our words or by our actions.

I don't think there's a week goes by... don't think I've ever had a week of real peace without conflict. I don't play the violin because I think of Moses. Millions of people? You can't help it... I can't comprehend things that Mr. Armstrong went through. I truly... I've come to understand in a greater way a loneliness that had to be there that I didn't grasp until later on in life. Came to a point where he couldn't trust anyone he taught at Ambassador College; that the Church through Philadelphia could come to a point in time where even when Mr. Armstrong came back with greater power than he ever had in '79 through the time he died in January of '86, have that kind of power that he came back with, and during that period of time not one evangelist who sat at his feet as he taught them back in the 1940s and 1950's at Ambassador College was he was able to trust.

It's an amazing thing what the human mind can do through time and you're very blessed to live in the time you do. Think about that! What if you'd been called back at that time? You see, if you'd been called back in that time, because there are vessels to honour and there are vessels to dishonour so we can learn. And those during the Millennium and the Great White Throne have 6,000 years (well, the Great White Throne will have 7,000), but the main things they're going to learn are the things that happened in the first 6,000 years. That's an incredible thing to understand, why that's true. Vessels to honour and vessels to dishonour. And so God allowed, because of what happens with human nature, only the individual/each individual to blame his or herself, because that's all we can do. If we turn away from God, if we get to a point where we begin to become weak, lethargic, lukewarm, whatever, no one is to blame but ourselves. And if God chooses, for a greater purpose, to allow you to be an example of what happens when that takes place, that you are allowed to go ahead and follow your own human nature, get cut off from His holy spirit, yourself to blame, and see what happened in history through time. That's an awesome thing for people to learn lessons from. It's a horrible thing because you see, not a one of them, not a one of those individuals is going to have opportunity (of those who went through the apostasy, not talking about those who died before), is not going to have the opportunity to be a part of the 144,000, not going to have an opportunity to live into the Millennial period.

So how blessed are you? How blessed are you to be called when you've been called? To be awakened once again, if that be the case, to have opportunity to be a vessel to honour if you yield yourself to God? We've been awesomely blessed! Hope you never forget that, how awesomely blessed you are!

There is so much here, brethren, there truly is, of what a little bit can do when you don't live right toward others. A little bit of talking about someone else, a little bit of talking to someone else in a wrong way - happened at Ambassador College, happened at the headquarters of God's Church in Pasadena - and things just got worse and worse and worse; and families, it got worse and worse and worse. But you're blessed to live in a very unique time - but it's not owed to you, it's *not owed to you* to live on in the Millennium. Now it's already been decided who's a part of the 144,000. But be sobered by that! I wouldn't want to be a vessel to dishonour. Ask God for help to live what is right. Ask God for

help! If you want to live into a new age then you've got to yield yourself to the process of change and that you live this way of life and not just know about this way of life, not just know the truths at the end of this time, not just to know things contained in two books or things that are on the website; it's what you're living.

Verse 23 - And this is His commandment, That we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He/Jesus Christ gave us commandment. Perhaps something not stressed enough in God's Church through time.

And he who keeps His commandments, in other words how you treat each other, when you do it the right way, when you're changing, when you're not yielding to your own human carnal nature, when you're changing the way you talk, when you're changing the way you think toward someone else, when you're repenting of that which is done wrong and you're forgiving and you're learning to forgive more and more. **And he who keeps His commandments dwells in Him, and He in him.** That's what this is all about; it's how God dwells in us or whether or not He doesn't. I go back to this morning! How many had wrong words to someone else, or about someone else to another person that was wrong before God, that God says don't do? Because that has to be repented of, and if that wasn't repented of between that point in time when it happened to this time today in services during that whole time you have been hurting yourself by what you can drink in today, because without God's help you can't drink in of the message that He prepared for today to the intent that He desired it to be drunk in. So think about that! That's what sin does; it cuts you off from the flow of God's spirit. It's true! It's whether or not you really believe that or not, to what degree you really believe that.

Verse 24 – and He who keeps His commandments dwells in Him, and He in him. And the last part of that – **and this is how we know that He abides in us, by the spirit which He's given to us.** There's a confidence you can have when you're doing the right thing, when you're repenting quickly, because you know how dangerous it is, you know what it's like to be cut off from God's spirit and you don't want that to happen. You want to be able to drink in of the sermon when it's given, not just relying on your own intellect humanly to maybe pick up some things. Because if you're doing that, as soon as you leave, as soon as the door slams here today, you're going to say something again! ...you're going to do something wrong again! ...and you're going to sin again because you haven't repented of what happened already, *and so you didn't really drink in of the sermon today!* You probably... you need to repent and go back and listen to it again! Pray to God, "God help me to *hear it* this time! Help me to *hear it* and drink it in so I can begin to live it more fully! I need help to live it!" If you think otherwise you deceive yourself and you lie. You lie to God first, you lie to yourself, and you're lying about the way of life you're supposed to be living. That's how serious it is that we live what is right before God!

1 John 5:1 - Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ/the Messiah, is born/begotten of God; See, there's a lot more to the story, because the Protestant world says, "I believe that! I believe that Jesus is the Christ." So is that a proof that God is saying then, that this shows that they're born of God? Not at all! It's the context of chapter 3 and chapter 4 and what he's covering right now in chapter 5; it's what you live. Because believing that Jesus is the Christ, is the Messiah is believing how it's possible that He can live in you and you can live in Him. That's why He's the Messiah! That's why He died as our Passover, so that can be a reality! And if you believe that, and you live that, then these things can be true! And that's the only way these things are true, that you're begotten, born of God's spirit...if you believe that Jesus is the Messiah and you're living accordingly. That as soon as you say something that's wrong or do something that's wrong toward another person you repent quickly because you *believe*

that Jesus Christ is your Messiah and He can save you! That's why you repent, because you don't want to be cut off from the flow of His spirit, of the Father's spirit that comes in and through Jesus Christ to us. That's what it means to believe that Jesus is the Messiah! It's not just a simple thing, "Oh yeah, He's the Messiah." Messianic Jews, "He's the Messiah." Big deal! They're blind! They don't understand the truth! They don't understand these things that we're talking about here. It's what you're living that proves it!

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ/the Messiah, is born/begotten of God: you can't know these things and believe that unless that's true. And you've been begotten of God, you know it's true, that He has to dwell in you and you in Him, that that's why He died, that that's how He saves us, that He can be in us and we in Him, and that's why we repent quickly, because we understand if we don't we're cut off and we're antichrist as long as that exists. As long as that stays we're antichrist and you don't want to get to a point in time where that becomes a *permanent label!* Because I have seen so many where that became a permanent label in their life.

...and everyone who loves Him who begat, loves him also who is begotten of Him. It's easy to say, "I love God." It's another thing to live it! The Protestant world says, "Oh, we love God. We *loove Jesus.*" And they don't get it! It's just words. If you're not careful you can have just words as well, with knowledge, with true knowledge but they can just be words. That's why it says it has to be more than words and thought, it has to be in deed and in truth. That's what we're talking about here; what makes it true in your life is what you're living day by day. And that's why this is such a horrible, horrible, horrible thing when someone doesn't love someone else in the Body of Christ like they should, doesn't show... it means a matter of *showing love* in things you say and how you say it. For someone to be hateful toward someone else, to say something in a hateful manner.... Because when you tear someone down, when you argue with someone, when you get into dispute.... Be thankful that God isn't asking you today to hold up your hand to acknowledge, to confess before Him, "Yes, before today's sermon I cut myself off from the flow of Your spirit because I spoke in a wrong way, in a very unloving way, in a hateful way toward one of your children." Because you know, it happened. It repeated itself many times in God's Sabbath already.

...and every one who loves Him who begat, loves him also who is begotten of Him. Because anything other than that is just impossible! So if God's in it, you're going to love everyone that God dwells in because you love God. You may have your human nature slip, you may say something, you may do something, but you're going to repent quickly and it's not just between you and God, you've got to make it right because God says you must. And if it means just saying, "I'm sorry, I was wrong." That's love. Anything else is just cut off from God's spirit and is a lie, a sickening, sickening, damnable lie, lying life before God.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

There is great boldness in this, great faith in this, great strength in this when it's done right before God.

By this we know that we love the children of God; that means in how you talk and how you think and how you treat them. Look at just your thinking toward them... Because you see, it's your thinking toward them that reflects what comes out of your mouth, or comes out of your actions. And if that thinking isn't right ask God to transform it, to change it.

By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God, because that means you're obeying Him, you're doing the right thing. If you love God you're going to obey Him **and keep His**

commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. Sometimes it can be so *hard* to humble one's self and say, "I'm sorry. I was wrong."

For whoever is born of God overcomes the world: it's a battle and you just have to keep at it. That word means 'conquer'! That's why Jesus Christ said, "I have conquered. I have overcome and *you* can overcome." It's the process of becoming perfect, of being perfected before God, of changing the way we talk, of changing the way we treat others and learning to cease to live a lie before God. God hates a lie! We don't want to be hypocritical! We don't want to be liars! We want to live this way in spirit and in truth, in deed, in our doing, and truth.

For whomever is born of God overcomes the world/conquers the world: which has so much to do just with self; **and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.** See, it's not enough just to believe it. Faith is a matter of the belief, the truth that God gives us, but it's the doing of it that reveals the faith. It's like what you're preparing for right now. You, in God's Church, in a very physical way, we have saved up some things if we're able to because of what we believe is going to come to pass – it's the action – that's faith! That's living by faith! If you didn't do that then.... well, anyway...woe is you.

Verse 5 - Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes, lives their life according to, **that Jesus is the Son of God?** See, we all see this, we all see what was just said in different ways, different levels. It means something different to every one of us and in varying ways spiritually. It's very moving, very inspiring.

Let's go on to 1 Corinthians 13:1 because this is what I've been saying over and over again in different ways here. This is what God tells us over and over again in so many different ways. It's been what John has been saying in so many different ways. This is referred to as the 'love chapter' because the word used here for 'charity' in the Old King James is the word 'agape', God's love, Godly love. It comes from God, shows the source, it has to come from God.

1 Corinthians 13:1 - Although I could speak with the language of men and angels, especially people talk about speaking in tongues, different languages, the ability to do those things in order to teach God's way of life, to pass along God's way of life, the truth of God, or whatever... **and do not have agape/God's love, I have only become a sounding brass,** in other words a noisy metal gong, that's how much that's worth, **or a tinkling cymbal:** it's a word that means 'screeching, clanging symbol'; it's like it can kind of get on your nerves if you listen to it long enough. You know you have metal clanging against metal, after a while it's just what it is, a bunch of noise (unless it's put together with other musical instruments or whatever, might sound okay), but just by itself, just banging it, it can really get on your nerves fast; it isn't good, it isn't healthy.

And although I had prophecy/inspired speaking; in other words about God's purpose and plan, inspired by God's spirit to be able to talk about God's plan. That's an awesome blessing and an awesome gift. That's what I cherish mightily, one I have the opportunity of experiencing week after week after week in a profound way, in ways I never grasped years ago. **...and although I had prophecy;** and then we have that ourselves, our ability because we see the truth, know the truth, and we can talk about it amongst ourselves. It's inspired because God's spirit's in it, because He's blessed us to see what we see, to know what we know.

...and understood all mysteries, and all knowledge; That's what we've been talking about in this sermon. We've been given *so much* at this end-time; more than any other age! And that doesn't dumbfound us sometimes to the degree it probably ought to, because we don't understand that because we haven't lived in some other periods of time like some of us have during Philadelphia and the things in Laodicea that led up to losing it all

...and though I have all faith, the ability to believe all that's true, **so that I could remove mountains, and yet don't have charity/Godly love, I still would be nothing. And although I should give all my goods/possessions to feed others,** in other words these things that so often the world looks at as 'being spiritual'. These are the things that so often deceive people into a mindset of thinking because I've done this or because I've done that, or because I'm doing this, I'm active here, I'm active there, especially in times past in God's Church, therefore this is what is spiritual in God's Church, this makes me spiritual or right with God, and it doesn't.

...although I should give all my goods/possessions to feed others, and although I should give my body to be burned, and yet have not charity/God's love it would profit me nothing. It wouldn't profit a thing. Says so much here, so hard to understand; easy to read as a story.

Verse 4 – Charity/agape suffers long, those of you who this morning...and I pick on this morning because it's the Sabbath day. Hey, if you didn't do it this morning go back to Friday, go back to Thursday, Wednesday, somewhere along the line you've had wrong words with somebody else. I know the last time I did. Do you know the last time you had to repent of that? **...it suffers long...** see, those things that happen, how long did you suffer? Well, must not have been too long or it wouldn't have come out of you; it wouldn't have happened if you'd been suffering with the situation, with whatever it was, with whatever it is that was coming out of your human nature, whatever selfishness that finally led you to say what you said or do what you did, the impatience, the whatever. Wasn't much long-suffering here. **...suffers long** – God's love does. See, that reflects God, reflects the spirit of God.

I think of how long He's suffered with me, and I am so thankful. That's why I love Him like I do. I've grown in that love through time because I've come to understand that more deeply through time, and the more I see it and the more I've learned that the more deeply that love is, or the deeper that love is and becomes, because I grasp a relationship that I treasure, and that's something we grow in through time. Patient and a willingness to suffer for others. *Patient* with one another.

...and is kind; acts in a *kind way*. See, this morning, or Friday, or whenever it was that you didn't act in a kind way, what happened? Why? What was the excuse? What was the reason for not acting in a kind way to one of God's begotten children? What's the reason? How are you justified in it? **...acts in a kind way;** warmheartedly. Words come out of our mouth that aren't filled with love, care, concern, compassion, mercy? Not very warm hearted if they're cutting, hurting. Words can hurt so deeply. Kind, generous in speech, kind words, being in friendly manner; in other words, not cutting, harsh or rough.

That's where men have to be very careful sometimes, because men, because of the way we're made, can tend to be rough in how we speak to a woman – and therein is a far greater condemnation in that. So we have to think about those things if that is the case, if that happens in life, because it is a very strong human tendency to speak roughly. Woman is not created in the same way that man is. We're different, for reasons and purpose that God made beautiful.

...**does not envy**; God's love doesn't envy. Oh, there are a lot of things in human relationships that come out of envy, jealousy, sometimes being protective or guarded toward one's own status or perceived authority sometimes, or superiority. That's what this is all about, the struggle so often in human life, in our own human lives. And we don't recognize that's where it's coming from! When sin comes out of your life, when something is said, that's a good time to go before God and say, "Where does this come from? What am I thinking that would allow such a thing to happen? What is the motivation? What is the real motive behind this?" And if you ask God for help He'll help you to trace it back to thinking taking place in the mind that has to be changed, transformed. If you can't trace it back there, you know what happens? You're just doomed to repeat it over and over and over again, become weaker and weaker, and if you're not careful in time can become *permanently antichrist*. And *many bear that name* over the past 2,000 years; not a few, many! Many have been called and *few* have been chosen through time. So it does not envy,

...**love does not seek to elevate itself**; one's own importance. You know, pride is an ugly thing, when we see ourselves in a certain light. Humility is a beautiful thing. Humility! Night and day! But it has to do with something that's in the thinking in our mind of why we react the way we do sometimes and sometimes this is the problem, self is trying to elevate itself. It happens in God's Church. It can happen when you're ordained. If you're not careful, and especially if you have a history of times past and what it was like in Worldwide, if you're not careful it can do a number on you and it can lift you up and you kind of like that lifting up and if you're not careful you want to enforce lifting up and that's where sheriffs come from. Can't be in God's Church, can't be, doesn't exist. It *doesn't exist* in God's Church because the moment you do you put yourself out of God's Church. If God doesn't continue to come in you those are the moments you put yourself out of God's Church, if He's not dwelling in you.

The *moment* God spewed the entirety of the Church out of His mouth - at the apostasy - was the moment everyone was cut off, totally, fully from God, no longer in God's Church! But people have deceived themselves that they're in God's Church; they've continued on since that time deceiving themselves they're in God's Church, they're doing different things... **love does not seek to elevate itself**; one's own self importance. We're not important! God is, God's plan is, Jesus Christ is, but we're not, we're just blessed to share in it and it is God that does it. We're just blessed to share in something so awesome and so great!

...**is not puffed up**; haughty and proud, believing that he or she is always right. That's what pride does. Pride believes its right and someone else is wrong, looks down upon others, "Oh, they're wrong!" It doesn't matter what it is, "I read about this, I know about this, I'm an expert in this..." or whatever, "and you just don't get it!" It can be over the stupidest little things. I could tell you story after (and I have in sermons), of things that people have gotten into arguments about, things that because they just *know* they're right.

Does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, when things were misspoken this morning, rude, rude, rude, rude, nasty, nasty, nasty to speak in a bad way toward someone else, to hurt someone else's feelings, to cause pain and sorrow or hurt in someone else's life; shame, shame, shame, shame. That's why I think of the 'asham offerings' in the Old Testament; people who should have been ashamed at what they did and recognize the need to offer up before God in the spirit of repentance.

...does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, in other words isn't selfish, **is not provoked, thinks no evil**, in other words, doesn't read evil into others, or ascribe evil motive, thought or intent to others. So many conflicts can come out of those things.

...does not rejoice in iniquity, in other words, isn't looking for the faults of others – we all have them – we all have them... **but receives happiness in the things that are true**. Beautiful! **...receives happiness in the things that are true**, looks for the right, looks for God. And that's what excites me when I go from area to area and visit people. I don't focus on the weaknesses, I don't focus on the faults, sometimes I have to deal with some and work with some of those things for the hope of bringing others into this spirit of unity and oneness so that they can conquer and overcome something, so that they can become stronger in the Body and experience more of the joy and the love of God; but it's the blessing of being able to go around and see God, to see what God is doing and the changes that are taking place in people's lives.

The ones I feel the closest to that don't even know it, because I know it's on a spiritual plane, are those whom I know have conquered and overcome the most, who have gone the farthest. Because you know, it's because they yield themselves to God, and it's God that did it because they yielded themselves to God. And so there's that spiritual bond and connection that people can have in a way that's beyond words, that you adore, you love, you cherish, because you see the power of God and the mind that can be transformed and the growth that takes place. That's a beautiful thing!

And those are the things that we should focus on, *always*, not just once in a while but always. When you do that you know what? You're not focusing on the faults, the weaknesses, because we all have them. I have them, you have them, we all have weaknesses, we all have bad moments. I have a lot of them when I feel just cranky in life because of this sick world we live in and it rubs off and I hate it; and the stress and the pressure that's there. We have these things happen in our life and so it's a horrible thing to battle against, but we have to be careful it doesn't interfere with how we love each other and how we care for each other and how we think about each other.

Does not rejoice in iniquity but receives happiness in the things that are true. Focus on the good, focus on the things that are right. **Love bears all things**, in other words is willing to do what it takes to work through difficult problems with others, because you have a right desire for them, that they make it through this, that they come through this, that they grow, that they conquer and that they overcome. Willing to bear the weight for others.

...believes all things, meaning 'seeks to build trust toward others' and believes that which is good, not that which is evil. It's easy to find the evil, the bad, the wrong, the mistakes and hold onto those and not forget. You know, one of the worst things that happens in God's Church, especially if it's been for a long, long time, that people have known each other for a long, long period of time, it's remembering what they were like when they made some of their biggest boo-boos and mistakes and flubbed up! What a *horrible thing* to hold onto! *Free them!* Free your own mind! Let them be free! Isn't that what you want? Not to have anything held against you? See, that's the way God Almighty treats us, that's the way He works with us; He lets us be free. It's a beautiful thing!

Believes all things, hopes all things, those things that are right and good. **Love never fails**: it means it never gives up. When you stumble you repent and you ask God for help to change and become better and treat others better and not hold anything against them - ever!

...but whether there are prophecies, they shall fail; they're going to come to an end. That's right! Because they're fulfilled!

...whether there are languages, they shall cease ...hmmm, amazing! You know how God communicates with us? It isn't through language. It's the mind. It's not a matter of vibrations in the air and different accents and different things that cause something to be heard in the ear. Things are going to change once you're in the God Family. Whew!

...whether there is knowledge, in other words as used in scripture of knowledge of God's way of life, because that's what it's talking about here, of such truth. It says all are going to know God. **...it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.** We have these experiences from time to time that God lets us taste of, like the Feast of Tabernacles. You don't get that taste all year long; you get it during the Feast of Tabernacles. You can't carry that with you! As soon as the Feast is over and people are gone and you stay around for one more day it doesn't feel so good, because others are gone, you can't share the Feast with them anymore and you're back in the world already. Amazing! But it helps us to look forward to that which God says we're going to have.

But when that which is perfect/perfected has come, then that which is in part shall be done away with. God speed that time.

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