

The more you learn about how God has worked with mankind and especially the Church, the more you'll come to be in awe of Him and see more fully the perfection of methodical planning and moulding that has been going into the building of His Temple. We are that temple, those who are part of the 144,000, the first of the temple, and those to be added on later into the millions before the Great White Throne that will be added to that. God is constantly building, is building now and adding on to it, even planning those things that go beyond the first phase of the Temple which is when Jesus Christ returns and the 144,000 are resurrected with Him, to be with Him to come back to this earth.

So again, awesome to see that process and understand what takes place. And the truths we're looking at and going through here reveal much about how God is working with us and it truly is inspiring when you begin to go deeper into this and look at these truths as God has revealed them. And along these lines, it's truly awesome to see how God has inspired His Church to recognize even the order for the establishment and the recognition of His truths in the Church, truly is. When you go back there and look at the 57 Truths and you understand things that took place in the eras and as God revealed those truths, and understand why they're given that way, why they exist in the way they do, it's awesome, truly is; helps you to learn more about God and what He's doing in our lives individually and collectively.

Today's sermon is entitled *The Restoration of Truth*. We're going to begin today by reminding ourselves of the state of Sardis again and why they were given a very specific instruction that ultimately led to their demise because they failed to heed the warning.

All the messages to the Churches in the book of Revelation, to the seven eras, are those things that compliment that which is right, that encouraged them in the things that are right, that are being done properly, that are being done wisely. And also those things that are *warnings* of things they need to be aware of, and Sardis was given much warning, and so much of that because of the state of the world at that time as we went into in that particular series.

**Revelation 3:3 –Therefore remember how you have received**; and so all the messages to all seven eras are very powerful, very specifically the message to Sardis was for *that* era because that spirit was prominent because of what the Church was going to go through, just as much as what Philadelphia would go through next, how God was going to work with them in raising up Mr. Armstrong and the things that God was going to do through Mr. Armstrong at the end of an age, toward the end of the age, which was in the end-time. And then, of course, Laodicea that followed and God knowing *exactly* how human beings would respond when God poured out so much to a Church, to a group of people in an age of technology, when technology was going forward at the pace that it was, and that power then that came through God's apostle Mr. Armstrong during that period of time. God knew what the warning should be to Laodicea, and *we failed to heed* that warning because we didn't get it, because of the spirit that went along with Laodicea and why the Church began to fall asleep and had to eventually be spewed out of, vomited out of, separated from God's presence, unless repentance came.

It's a powerful reminder here; and again these messages, although primarily to each era, because that was their spirit and what they needed to hear, it's for all time. Messages to all seven eras – you can glean from those, you can learn from those and receive instruction from it through any era of time. Although those eras have passed there will be those things that people will be taught during

the Millennium, they will be taught in the Great White Throne, because it applies, because that spirit and attitude in mankind that is always with us in those things we need to battle and conquer and overcome.

So again, He said here to Sardis; **Therefore remember how you have received and heard!** It's an *important* message to remember. How did *you* receive and hear what God has? How did you receive the truth? And I *especially* think of those things for times gone by, for people who have left and are no longer a part with us, who are no longer able to share. They forgot! They didn't heed the warning to remember *how* they have received and learned this way of life. You can't go somewhere else once you have received it! You can't go somewhere else, you can't learn it anywhere else, if you understand what we're discussing in this series of sermons, and especially now today in this particular sermon here.

**Therefore remember how you have received and heard and hold fast**, that Greek word that means 'to watch over, to guard'; to guard it, watch over it. So once you've been given that, once you've received what you've received, once you've heard what you've heard, you have the ability to hear not just by words, because you can go out and tell this to everyone out here that you run into and they'll think you're nuttier than a fruitcake, as many do, because they can't see it, they can't hear. We're talking about when you've been given the ability to hear, because God is giving you a calling, and that which He gives to you then He said, "Hold fast and remember how it came to you, how you've received it. Watch over it, guard it and repent." Repentance goes with it, a need to repent. Why? Because there's a problem in that area in their lives, a problem in their area of forgetting, of not remembering, of beginning to have something else come into the mind that changes or alters a person's outlook to where they don't do some basic things that they should never forget to do.

**Therefore, if you will not watch**, if you will not guard it, if you will not listen and be spiritually alert and remember these things and repent; if you will not do this **I will come on you as a thief**, that's to a period long gone by that existed during the 1500's, the 1600's, the 1700's, 1800's, in our history, in time. And Jesus Christ said He'd come to them as a thief. Not talking about His eventual return, as we've talked about in those verses, talking about when you begin a process of not listening, or not remembering, or not holding onto, or not watching as you should spiritually! Then what you think you have and what you have been given will be taken from you by God, by Jesus Christ, and it'll come at a time when you don't expect it because you're not able to expect it then. You're expected to watch and be alert so that you can be on guard so that that won't happen. But the very thing that one fails to do is the very thing when He comes as a thief in the night and takes away what was given to us, because you can't keep it, you can't have it any longer, you can't continue to grow any longer, you become stagnant.

**Therefore if you will not watch I'll come on you as a thief and you will not know in what hour I will come unto you.** It's just a given and you won't know it; it's just that which happens and God cuts off the supply of His spirit and He will not give it again unless He awakens you out of a spiritual sleep. But for most through time that's not been God's purpose, even in this end time that has not been God's purpose, to awaken people out of sleep. There are thousands upon thousands upon thousands of people that have been called through time, starting with Ephesus, who fell asleep spiritually, who made wrong choices because of the pulls of this world, because of the pulls of the carnal human flesh, 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life' that sums it all up of human beings. And because of that process through time, through Pergamus, through Thyatira, Smyrna, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, and *especially* after the time of Philadelphia, thousands, tens of thousands during the period of Laodicea – asleep – won't have opportunity for the first thousand years as a part of God's structure and government. 'Many are called, few are chosen', and that's all a part of God's purpose and God's plan, how we respond to Him. And these truths have

everything to do with how we respond in obedience, in love, in appreciation, in gratitude and thankfulness for everything that God gives to us. Awesome, it truly is!

So again here, the most basic of truth that remained at the end of Sardis by the time Mr. Armstrong came on the scene, obviously before that when they began they had more, but more and more slipped through their fingers, more and more through time with the revolution of religious freedom that began to take place through Luther and Calvin and different ones in history. And then by the time you get to Great Britain, the king himself who changed, who went away from the Catholic church because he didn't like the idea of not being able to kill off his wives or divorce them whenever he wanted to! He starts a new church, The Church of England, it runs to this day. You think, what an atrocious history, that someone like that, something like that would be upheld today, The Church of England. What a grand history, what a grand start you had! Adultery from an adulterous king. That would shake me up a little bit to think what kind of a relationship was that with God? But anyway, they can't understand, they can't see. This idea of a freedom of religion to where even a king comes along, presumptuous, and decides that he can choose whatever he wants to because of now all this knowledge that's out there, the printing press, the ability to have Bibles in front of you and to read your own things into scripture.

Well, sadly the truth is, the reality is, that even during that period there was only *one true Church* through whom God worked. But all that freedom began to take a toll on God's *one true Church*, freedom of religious ideas, thought and belief. I call it 'teacheritis'; where people themselves think that they have some special relationship with God and all of a sudden He's revealing something to them and to them alone, and it's something that's existed in God's Church through time, through the last 2,000 years, but it took a giant leap during Sardis, and I have to say it took a pretty strong leap through the period of Laodicea as well, but it wasn't the predominant spirit of Laodicea.

So again here, truth that remained at the end of Sardis, truth that in so many ways is simple and not difficult to prove with an open mind, not when one is called to have opportunity at this time, but simple truth that should be admitted to by anyone who opens and studies the Bible, but difficult for so many to truly obey, as I mentioned.

First in order of all the truth that has been given, the seventh day Sabbath, the day before Sunday. I am saying that for foreign countries because of what I mentioned last Sabbath. Because on their calendar the seventh day *is* Sunday because the calendar was changed, especially by Europe back in the seventies. One of the most basic things throughout the Bible, the Sabbath; is the most basic identifying sign of God's people, of where they can only possibly, *possibly* begin to be identified. In other words, you must start with the Sabbath! Sunday, easy, get rid of it. That gets rid of the vast majority of churches out there and even then you have a church like the Seventh Day Adventist, and... on you progress and discern as you go down the truths as we talked about last Sabbath. Easy to get rid of those after a while because of the next truth here.

Second truth is the name of the Church being The Church of God. It isn't a name that magnifies the day more than God, like Seventh Day Adventist. Where's God in that? Where is the belonging to God in that? ...God's called out ones? ...God's congregation? ...God's Church? And it isn't the name that magnifies the people or a building more than God as in Judaism, Jews, or Synagogue. Where's God in that? Where's the Church of God there? So again, basic truths to begin to lead one, to guide one, to help one to recognize God's Church.

Lastly is the acceptance of God's authority in one's life and recognition that *all belongs to God*, brings us to that third truth concerning the tithe, the ten percent that's given to God.

Very powerful basic truths that try people, that test people in very powerful ways; giant decisions that have to be made before baptism, with these three truths. Powerful, awesome how God begins calling us to Himself and what He begins to *reveal* to us about Himself and what He expects of us.

So, after a person has accepted the truth concerning God's Sabbath day and begins to set it aside for holy use and purpose as one must, the truth that goes hand in hand with it is a recognition of God's Church, is the name obviously, God's Church as the only source of instruction and teaching that God gives...in His Church on the Sabbath day, His called out ones, a commanded assembly for what purpose? For learning like you are learning today. Incredible! And hand in hand with these basic truths is God's instruction that is to be obeyed concerning the method He has established to provide for His Church and continuing instruction and teaching that is to be given to those whom He has given authority, to those whom He gives authority and opportunity, if you will, to be drawn into His Church. There is power with that. Incredible! Opportunity to continue to grow, power to continue to grow, that's in your favour, that's on your side. God calls you to succeed. God calls you to come through this. God states things in His own words as though you have achieved it and accomplished it, but then we have choices to make in response. And so He commands a tithe to be given to the Church to take care of that process.

So these three things bring a person to a very great reality and truth, or at least they *should* bring a person to such truth and reality, as the next great truth is focal to one's ability to continue *in*, an ability to grow in more truth. If you don't handle these three properly you're not going to receive the next one in spirit and in truth; and if you do and you do it in a *shoddy* manner, in a *weak* manner, it may be something you have to have ingrained in you and moulded in you by many trials through the rest of your period and time being moulded by God.

Again, the order and the revelation of God's truth through the Church is awesomely inspiring and the more I'm going into this, already preparing and looking ahead as I am working at the next sermon to follow this in another series, it is *incredible* how and why God gives us the truths in the way that He does and how He wants the Church to recognize those truths. And so if one begins to recognize and obey the Sabbath day, they are pointed to God's Church and to... 'Remember *how* you have received and have learned'. They're pointed to the ministry. That's how you receive, and that's how you learn. It's the way it's always been from the beginning, with the apostles that God sent out to work with people, to teach people. When Paul was called to go to the Gentiles, in a very powerful way God spoke, began to speak through him, through the lessons and the things that Paul went through to be moulded and fashioned and prepared for His job that God did in preparing him, *long* before He ever called him. God had a purpose for Paul before the time Jesus Christ came on the scene. Powerful when you understand those things; the education, the training, the teaching, the things he went through to prepare him for a certain day when Jesus Christ Himself would cry out to him, "What are you doing? Why are you fighting against Me?" Incredible story! (...paraphrasing it.)

It takes you to the next great truth in how God works with all of us, it's with His ministry, through His ministry as a matter of organization, as a matter of structure, as a matter of knowing God and the order that God gives and something that is focal to that which Mr. Armstrong taught over and over and over again. As I mentioned last Sabbath, I don't know if I ever heard a sermon where the word didn't come up, because I believe it did over and over and over again to God's people, especially because of what was coming, God inspiring him to do so.

Those whom God called, began to be worked with, began to recognize the Sabbath day, they're pointed to God's Church and to God's ministry as the only source for being instructed on the Sabbath day and God's source and means of working with His people, through the ministry of the Church in all things concerning instruction, guidance, correction, encouragement, truth and so forth

and so forth, etc...etc. And the great truth that follows and determines one's ability to receive *more truth*, because this is the guideline, determines your ability to receive more truth and to be spiritually fed, is a recognition of God's government in our lives and learning how it works. So important!

Mr. Armstrong would go back to Lucifer; that's where he started. He would tell the story of what Lucifer did, of a spirit and a mind and an attitude, that *free-thinking* that hit Sardis so hard, that *free-thinking* because of all the knowledge that was now out there that before wasn't there, because not everyone had access to a Bible, by *any* measure. They were *rare*! They cost a *lifetime* of wages if you had scriptures, to have a copy. Truly! Expensive! And then all of a sudden this new freedom hit, free-will.

It's the first great truth recognized as established through Mr. Armstrong to God's Church, necessary to the restoration, to the establishment of far more necessary truth and truths in one's life...is a matter of government. There's a reason why it's listed as number one of the eighteen truths revealed through Mr. Armstrong in restoring *truth* to His Church, God's Church.

I think it'd be good to go back here. I'm going to read this from the section that we have on the 57 Truths, again, talking about 'Truths Revealed During Philadelphia'. I'm just going to read that and then go to this particular truth here to read it as it is.

### **Truths Revealed During Philadelphia**

God restored the following 18 truths to His church through Herbert W. Armstrong during the Philadelphia Era. These truths that are foundational to God's Church also served to reveal that Herbert W. Armstrong fulfilled a role of the prophesied "Elijah to come," just as John the Baptist.

John the Baptist fulfilled that role by preparing the way for the first coming of the Messiah, who in turn would fulfill his role of God's Passover to mankind.

...speaking of Jesus Christ. And it goes on here....

Herbert W. Armstrong fulfilled his role as a type of the "Elijah to come" by restoring "all things" (all truths) that the Church had lost by the closing age of Sardis — truths needed for salvation and preparation (of the Church) for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The restoration of these truths, given through Herbert W. Armstrong, paved the way for the appearance of the final and greater fulfillment of the "Elijah to come" in the end-time, the one whom God would use to prepare the way (in the Church and in the world) for the coming of His Son a second time, but this time to fulfill his role as "King of kings"—as the Messiah who will reign in His Kingdom..

So Truth number 4 with this being the first one given to Mr. Armstrong.

#### **4 (1) The government of God.**

It's a very broad subject. It involves so much. Sermon after sermon can be given on this subject. I have in times past. Reading the rest of this....

When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth. God's government was restored to His Church during Philadelphia.

Sardis didn't have it anymore. Sardis had lost it, big time.

It is not a government of men where decisions are made by such practices as voting or one's own will, but as God leads through the power of His spirit. (Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12)

That's how God leads and guides and directs His Church; inspires sermons and works with those things that are given to the Church, if not, then a person is in the wrong place, if God's not there on a continuing basis. And we experienced that in the Church, where God began to leave some because of their sins, a lot of ministers through time, going back in the time when I was early in the Church, heard some of their sermons, people who were already cut off. Incredible!

I think of one not too far from here going west; first one I was around in a larger scale for a time. He didn't grasp it, he didn't understand the truth, you couldn't talk to him about God's plan, not very much, just to a point. Straight 'A' student in college, was able to learn like you learn in a seminary, and you learn truth, but if it's not a part of you, if you don't live it, if it's not guiding and directing and governing your life then it's just a repetition. And you know what? God blessed people to be able to receive things from it at that time because it was the truth as long as he stuck to that, until he began to veer off course as time went along in even what he taught, when he quit teaching what was given to him in college. You can hear the truth and God's spirit can work with you even through a situation like that and come through it. If it's God's purpose and will He's going to bring you through it.

Let's focus on the structure of that government which so many who think they have understood have fallen, have failed to understand. Now it's one thing that I marvel at, looking at the first thing that was given to the Church, in recognition of a truth, the most basic truth, the most foundational, the most meaningful truth to carry one on through the truth, to give one the ability to continue to grow in truth, to understand this basic doctrine, if you will, this basic truth, how so many who have talked about it a few times past, don't understand it at all, they don't get it, they don't grasp it, the spirit of what God is saying. It becomes a matter of the way *man* governs and man does not govern like God. God does not govern like man, thankfully.

**Ephesians 4:1** – powerful verses here in what is taught. *All of you* who are new, think about this: there are many who have gone before you, *many people* who've gone before you who have lived long lives in the environs of God's Church – 20, 30, 40 years – who didn't hold onto this truth, who weren't able to hold onto this truth, who have lost it, who don't have it any longer. Think that they fully understand Ephesians 4 and *they do not!*

And so Paul says here... we'll just read this all the way through, it all fits together, ties together in a very powerful way. Paul says, **I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord**, the bondservant. He knew what his job was. He saw himself in a very specific light, that this was his desire, his choice, his willingness, his life in every way, to serve his elder brother, to serve his High Priest, to serve God his Father in such a manner, in such a spirit and such an attitude; *thankful* for it, grateful for it.

**...beseech you that you walk worthy/in a worthy manner**, because none of us are worthy, and the word used here has to do with the manner in which you walk. **...that you walk in a worthy manner**, How is that? We carry God's name. To walk in a worthy manner is to grasp, to comprehend, to

grow in understanding that *we bear God's name, we are the called out ones* of God. Wherever we are in the community, whomever we contact in life and talk to and visit in life we set an example! ...or we should. That when *they're* called, whether now, soon, or into the future, they're going to be able to look back knowing you, remembering you, and saying, "Now I understand. I understand. I *saw* their sacrifice for the Sabbath. I understand what they did. I didn't understand it then, but now I do, thank God. Thank God *they* did what *they* did!" Just as we learn to be thankful for those whom we read about in here. Many a time I'm very thankful for what some of these people went through in this book and that it's recorded here for us so we can be inspired, moved, and motivated by it, and learn from it – their sacrifice, what they gave so we could be here today. And they did, and they wrote those things!

I'm very thankful Paul wrote what he did, that it's written in scripture, that he opened up himself to be able to say it, "There's a *war* going on inside of me! I am in a battle! There is that which rejects God! There is that which fights against God that's in my flesh!" ...that he's prisoner to. As long as you're in this body you've got a battle on your hands. And he says, "And there is that which is in the inner man..." that he loves, that he cherishes, that he wants – God's spirit that works with him, that gives him understanding and knowledge and all the things that God's spirit does. The inner man, that's what he's talking about, the inner man, that which is in the mind, that which God has given to you – but then he sees this battle. I'm *thankful* God gave that to us. I'm thankful that Paul opened up that way, because he had to open up for us to have it. God brought him to that ability to do so.

Over and over again here, things that they went through. Seriously, when I travel there are many of times that I think about what they went through and what they travelled through. If they saw the ease, if they saw that we have a little bit of cool air here today compared to no cool air at all and what they had in their day, they'd say, "Wow! And lighting as well, on the inside without having to smell smoke? That's great!" Incredible what we have, the abundance of what we have. And when we leave we get into what? ...and go where? ...and it's cool too? "Wow, you really had it tough. You really had it tough didn't you..." Think about what they went through bobbing around in the sea, shipwrecked, storms, because of the kinds of ships, because of the kind of technology they had back then which wasn't all that grand compared to what we have today. Easier for a ship to get pretty messed up in a storm. Today, the size, the comfort... I think about Paul being down in the hold of a ship there and he didn't have nice bedding, he didn't have a nice pillow, something nice to lie down upon...wood, heat, mugginess, following behind a donkey, riding on one, whatever it might be. So how dare I be one who complains? And so when I do I try to catch myself and find myself at times catching myself and then repenting because I have it made in comparison. You have it made in comparison to those who've gone before us.

And so he says **walk in a worthy manner**. Walk in a worthy manner of what you reflect. Sometimes we just don't grasp the magnitude of what we reflect in places where we work. I remember a place where I worked after college, worked for seven years before going into the ministry in the Houston, Texas area, and I remember the one job I had down there and how that it wasn't until I left that a couple people, one in particular that was over so much of the operations of the company, came up to me and said in essence that he'd always respected my stand on the Sabbath day and that I didn't give in when the pressure was there. Because they'd try to pressure me to come in at different times, especially during times of inventory when everybody had to show up without exception, and I didn't. And he said, "I respect that." Awesome! I had no idea he even *knew* about the Sabbath because he wasn't directly involved with things about me in that respect, as far as why I was doing what I was doing, but it was obviously talked about.

Sometimes we don't understand what people see, we don't grasp what people know, what has been said about us and so forth, though they don't understand. And so you're to walk worthy; and how

many of you... you don't know what your neighbours know and see, or people at work and the example you *can* be, of the light you *should* be because you stand up for what's right and you suffer for it. That's why he said what he did, because he knew that there was some suffering involved with that.

**...that you walk worthy of the vocation**, the word is 'invitation' or 'calling'; that's what it is that God gives us. What an incredible invitation! What an incredible thing to understand what a calling means, that God invites you individually, that God Almighty, God the Father is the one who does the calling. Jesus Christ doesn't, God the Father does, and then we're given to Christ. That's what He says. And Christ said the same thing, 'No man comes to Me except God the Father draw him...' And so God the Father individually has the ability and the power to individually work with as many human beings as He wants to at the *same time*, and that's a hard thing for human beings to grasp and understand. It's easier when the Church is smaller to think, "Oh, I can kind of understand how He can work with a few thousand." A few million? We don't grasp the power of the might of Almighty God.

And so it says, **walk worthy of the manner of the vocation**, the invitation that God Almighty, God the Father has given you, to draw you, to call you, **wherewith you are called/drawn/called/called out** if you will, **invited, with all lowliness and meekness**, knowing it's not *you*, knowing it's not because of how good you did something or how smart you are or how much you studied in the past or how much you *think* you love Jesus Christ *because you never did!* How many people come along and talk about how that, "Well, it's because I love Jesus and I always had this hunger and this thirst for what was true." Well if you did, understand where it came from if it was genuine, that it eventually led you to the truth. But in most cases it *never is* because you *didn't know* Jesus Christ! You loved a *false Christ!* You loved one who was long-haired, weak, mealy-mouthed, effeminate, that the world portrays! "I love Jesus...gave my heart to the Lord." If it's that Protestant garbage that's what it is, it's swill, its garbage, it's a lie, it's filth in the highest degree! The one that was supposedly on the 'cross'.

Didn't even die on a cross as I've said so many times! It's just amazing what the world believes! It was a stake! It was up and down and His hands were like this [straight up over His head], and the nails went through... the hands together, one nail, not two nails out here [arms spread to sides]. They conserved their nails and they didn't have to worry about building crosses, they just stuck a big ole pole in the ground and your body jerked when you were put down because you were nailed to it while you were lying on top of it. Your ankles the same way, just one nail all the way through! Makes me so upset when I think about what the world teaches in those things! A cross... and they wear it around their neck! Sick, sick, sick, sick, sick! If it'd been a shotgun they'd wear that around their neck! Seriously! You think, wake up, smell the coffee, whatever! Lies, lies, lies, lies in this world! It's a sick world we live in, it truly is, taking away from the truth!

So if you loved that Christ and you gave your heart to him, you gave it to the wrong place and God had mercy on you later on to take you out of that bondage, that prison if you will, because that's what God does when He begins to draw us to the truth, to the true Christ, the *only* Christ, the *only* Messiah! And so if God brings you to that then glorify God, thank God that He took you out of the stupidity and ignorance of your past! That's why I'm glad I never had too much in my life of that, because the more you have of that sometimes the harder your battle is through life to get rid of it. If you receive a Protestant spirit it's a hard thing to get rid of it, it is your battle. If you have it in strong doses, that's your battle *in a big way* the rest of your life in God's Church. Hope you believe that, hope you understand that; it's your battle whether you understand it or not, it truly is. Getting rid of it, truly coming out of it all the way!



Mr. Armstrong couldn't come completely out of that past he had with the Quakers. He fought it, he worked with it and God blessed him mightily to come so far, but he didn't make it all the way out. He still had some things that still stuck to him to the end.

So...**with all lowliness and meekness.** Lowliness, a spirit and attitude of meekness, meaning a teachable spirit. Meekness means 'teachable spirit' in essence, that you're teachable, that you *want* to learn, you have a desire to learn. Lowliness – not thinking yourself high and mighty, never getting to the stage where you can't accept this very truth that we're going into. *Why* is He zeroing in on this when it comes to the subject of government and structure of the Church of God in the ministry? Because if a person has a haughty spirit he's going to become a *teacher*! He's going to raise himself up to make himself a teacher. *God* makes you a teacher! *God* places us in the Body where *He* wills, not where we *want* to be.

I've had my *fill* of that garbage in times past, of individuals who have come along and they think that they have this special message they want to give to others. "I have this sermonette I want to give." Well, that's the first tell-tale sign *you should not give it!* Seriously, I've had people come to me and tell me that. My wife has experienced that because they figure they're not going to get to me because they know me, and because of what I've taught, so they're going to go talk to her.

One man had this...was it...it was taped already? ...or was it a subject matter he just had you read part of it? Anyway, she looked at that and he didn't understand what she was saying. She knew full well what he was doing. He was talking about, "Look, I've prepared a sermonette..." Well, he'd never given sermonettes; he wasn't giving sermonettes at that point in time. And so he says, "We're talking... a sermonette." Well whoop-tee-doo! When are you getting up to speak? Basically he wanted to give the Church... she was looking at it and it was real long. She said, "Well, this looks more like it'd be a sermon." Basically his comment, "That's what I thought. I was thinking that too..." He didn't get the point, that you're not only not going to give a sermonette, this is too long and you're not going to give that either! But she didn't have to say that. He didn't understand spiritually.

We had so much of that in the Church after the apostasy and we had so much of that in the Church before the apostasy took place, of those things that began to happen. Sad, things we had to go through.

...**with all lowliness and meekness;** if you know how God works you will be *afraid* to do such things. You will be *afraid* to tell people something different than what's being taught; you will *fear* it, even if it's true you won't teach it, you won't tell others about it because you fear to go against God's government and God's structure knowing full well that God will give it in His time, if it's true even. And so you put it aside because *you don't have* that authority and government yet where God has made it clear that this is true.

...**with all lowliness and meekness; with longsuffering.** With patience. Patience, doing it all in patience. Patience before God. Patience with one another. A willingness in how we work with one another, how we act toward one another...and waiting for God as well. Patience. Because we're impatient as human beings. Look at this 'Time, Times, and a Half a Time', are we impatient? Who-wee... let's get on with it, not understanding, not grasping how blessed we are that we don't have to 'get on with it' yet. It'll come soon enough. It will come *soon enough*. There is a reason *why* God allowed the Church to believe what they did during Philadelphia about the end-time. There's a reason why God allowed us to believe what we did all the way up to 2008 about 'great tribulation' that was so in my mind, so much a part of my mind from my past, from Philadelphia on that I sort of, but not fully, expected on that first day that things could begin to happen – kind of half way

wondered, kind of watched the news a little closer...and it didn't happen. You learn through the process.

You know how you learn? You look at what God *does*! You look at what God does; that's how we learned there was an apostasy, when there was an apostasy. We looked at what God does. It is God's Church. A third of the Church has quit and quit going anywhere, because they were given truth and they knew that it wasn't in Sunday, they knew it wasn't in Christmas and Easter; they had already proven that to themselves. But how could this be God's Church? What has God done? If this could happen in the Church? And all of a sudden the truths that were foundational are gone and not being taught anymore, so how could this be God's Church? And they just gave up because there wasn't an answer. But there was. **...longsuffering** and patience would have taught it. Some longsuffering and patience reveals it, because you look back and you learn from that process. It did happen, but it wasn't God's fault, it's not a matter that God prevents it from happening – He *warned* it would happen! He *warned* there would be an apostasy! He *warned* that there would be a man of sin! He *warned* that there would be a son of perdition, and that it'd all fit. And Laodicea would be spewed out of God's mouth, vomited out of God's mouth... it all fit! The scattering, it all fit! And so you look at what God does and you can learn. That's the primary way He's led us from the very beginning. It's the primary way He's taught us from the very beginning, whether you know it or not.

**With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering**, God will work out His plan. Whatever comes to pass, whatever part you have in it, so be it. God knows what's best. It doesn't matter *what it is* you experience or have to experience in life or must go through for the purpose that God has. Some of it, much of it in time to teach others, that others can learn from. Look at all these people that suffered, and I have learned mightily from them and so have you. It's not a cake-walk, it was never meant to be.

**...with longsuffering, forbearing one another in agape/Godly love**; can't do that without God's spirit, and yet Paul's admonition to the Ephesians here is having forbearance. It's a word that has to do with 'tolerance, tolerating', but in a positive light. We tend to think of that in a negative light, 'to tolerate someone'. That's not what this word means. This word has more to do with like 'to appreciate the differences' – viva la difference – thank God we're not all the same! Thankfully we're from all kinds of backgrounds and we can learn from each other and we can see how God works in each other's lives and different people's lives to bring them to this way of life! Thankfully we're not all yellow pencils, never meant to be! That tended to be something from the past in part through a process of teaching at one time through a college because of human nature, of what took place in our lives, and that was man's fault, human beings fault, young people's fault, teachers fault, not God's. We're to be different. God moulds and fashions us, but with the same mind in unity and oneness, but so many different personalities and thinking and things involved with that, but one that's done properly in God's way.

**Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit**, it's amazing the flow of these verses if you understand them. Seek to understand them! This process here that works in our lives to help us to become a part of Elohim, that helps us in our growth and our moulding and fashioning that God works with us. This **endeavouring**, which means you put a lot of work into it! If you endeavour...and this word here is you put a lot of effort, a lot of work into it! It doesn't just happen in your life, you've got to fight for it! That's why I've mentioned so many times in the last three years here, nearly three years to all who are new who have come along, at whatever stage that is. If you want this way of life you've got to fight for it! You've got to fight for it; you've got to *want* it with all your being! If you want to live in the Millennial period, if you want to be a part of that, if you *value that you've got to fight* for it! It's a *battle*! You've got to fight against yourself! You've got to fight against the way of this world, and there are battles because of things you have to sacrifice and give up. Things of family

oftentimes, obviously, because all your relatives and all your family isn't going to accept this! And those who do, how blessed you are to have that with you. And that which you don't, you still do it because it's right before God!

Fight for it, **endeavouring**, and this is a part here that goes with it...**to keep the unity of the spirit**, it's powerful if you understand this message! **Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit**. I think of Mr. Armstrong crying out, *desirous* that people be of the same mind, *desirous* that there be that unity and oneness in the Church, *desiring* that there be that harmony and oneness within the Body, because battles in the Church came from that which was not a matter of harmony, with that which was a matter of unrest, of that which was a matter of people not abiding by, by not listening to the warnings that God gave the Church at Sardis, for those who didn't hunger after what God was going to give through His apostle. When they became so *fat and sassy* that they didn't even have to *sit* before him anymore, the very one's he taught in college! The more I think about that the more perturbed I get. How *haughty*! How *hideous*! How *sick* is that? ...for people to get tired and don't want to listen to God's apostle because they didn't grasp government. They didn't grasp how God's spirit works in the Church, that the truth comes to Mr. Armstrong first and foremost, *he* has to make the decision, it's on *his* shoulders to do so before God, thankfully so, not anyone else's in the Body. His and his alone and he accepted that and did that. But how many went astray? Every evangelist went astray. *Every evangelist in God's Church* who was directly under him in authority went astray! Awesome what we lived through! Scary what we lived through. If they had only remembered *how they had received and learned* God's truth.

**Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.** Jerusalem is not the name of a city; spiritually it's the name of what God is building, of what God is working for, the place of peace, the place of rest. He has sacrificed much through time to give us Jerusalem, to give us Mount Zion, to give us Elohim.

**There is one Body, *one spiritual Body***, not 500, not 600: one. We all had to prove that back in Philadelphia, those who lived then. When God opens up your mind it's not hard to prove. You recognize the rest of the world... today for some it can be harder to prove because of all the splintering that took place. As a matter of fact, you *can't* prove it on your own, God has to draw you to it, just like He did before, just like during Philadelphia. God has to open up your mind to give you the ability to see it. You don't have the ability to go out and study 600 different organizations that are splintered off from the Church. You don't have the ability, you don't have the time! God has to bring you to it, it's God's doings.

**There is one Body, and one spirit, *one spirit***, not 600, not 500, not twenty, not two, just *one* that comes from God the Father through Jesus Christ to the Church; and if we understand what that means we'll never go astray from what God calls us to. **...one spirit, even as you are called/invited/drawn by God in one hope of your calling/of your invitation; *one hope***, that which God begins to reveal to you once you receive those first three truths we've talked about and now this one here and another one that follows. That when you grasp those then and you begin to live by those then God has so much more He'll give you, and if you don't you won't receive the rest or continue in the rest, indeed.

**One Lord...** one! **One Lord, one faith**, that's awesome! Simple. Basic. One faith, meaning there's only one belief. There's only one belief of what is true. There's only one truth over all that comes from God. One belief, one Word; it's like the Word, Logos, there's only one! There's not a dozen Logo's out here, there's not a dozen different opinions, there are not a thousand different opinions about the Word of God, the gospel, the truth of God, there's just one that comes from God the

Father, and we come into unity with that through time if we yield ourselves to the process when we're called with an invitation that God the Father gives to us.

**One Lord, one faith, one baptism;** Why *one* baptism? There's only one that counts in life! There's only one that's true and real in life and where do you go to receive that one? God's Church. And God's showing that government and that authority in the Church through the ministry that's ordained in the Church. It's very powerful what God shows right there. You can't be baptized any other way. It has to be by someone whom God calls, whom God has made a minister to serve Him, who's been ordained to that, that's happened for the last 2,000 years passed down through time. Then those words are said and it's between you and God, for the truth is there; because some get baptized who just got wet. But it's your commitment between you and God. And so we go through the motions as God's servants to do a job, and those who are true to God, the same words are said, to those who are untrue and those who are true, because both of those have happened in times past. And that which is true before God, you're committed to live this way of life, you want to be baptized, you want your life to be God's, for God to be in charge, you don't want your life anymore in the sense of you governing your own life, you want God's law, God's way, God's truth to govern your life and you tell God that, "I desire to be able to be forgiven of sin and to grow in *Your* way of life, to become at one with You." Awesome! And then hands are laid upon you. *Awesome!* You can't be impregnated with God's spirit in any other way save God sets you apart and give that to you, *save God* give that to you just as Mr. Armstrong had to go through a period of time where finally it was through his ordination and through what God gave to him, could he receive that which was true in his life.

**There is one Body, one spirit, even as you are called in hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God;** *One* God! Not two! Not two eternal Almighty Eternal God's out here. Like I said, Mr. Armstrong wasn't able to escape totally from Protestantism, from the Quaker religion. He escaped much, to the degree that God wanted him to escape, but to reserve for another for later on, for God's Church to be revealed in time, the rest of the coming out of the trinity, if you will.

**And that one God,** it says, **Father,** He is the Father, only one who can be the Father of all, **who is above all, and through all, and in you all.** You don't exist without God. You don't come into being without God! This building isn't here without God! Nothing exists without God! God, that we don't grasp and comprehend the might and the power of, sustains it all! ...of things that they're looking for in science. "If we get these big things and we build them someplace and we make them bigger and bigger, they move faster and faster, and we're going to get down to see what's inside of that. And you break it down...there's something in there that binds it all together, that holds it all together!" But they're never going to find it, because it's not something physical. They're looking for something physical. Accelerate these things round and round, they break them up and they try to isolate and try to look at and view something and "We're getting back to the creation..." Well, they are, they just don't grasp where it came from! It's God Almighty and He sustains it all! Things we can't comprehend! You can't begin to comprehend such power. You can't comprehend such a mind, such a being, but He lets us start to grow and comprehend things about Himself that's so awesome. And that's the way we should be toward God, seeing Him in that light for eternity. He will always be in that light to us, through eternity, and here on out.

**...one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.** *In you all* – those of you who have His spirit, going beyond that which is just physical and that which is held together in life because of His power, but that which is in your mind and in your being, the power of God's spirit, the ability to dwell in human beings spiritually in your mind, to bless you in growth, a spiritual growth, of that which is like an embryo growing inside your very mind. The body's going to go to

pot! The body's going to go back to dust, but it's what's in here – that's what God's working with! The mind put in a different body, an eternal one.

**But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.** That which God pours out upon us. It's in His hands what is given and how it's given, when it's given, everything that's given, because He does the moulding and fashioning. All a matter of grace and mercy and power that works in our life. **Wherefore He says, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.** Speaking of those things that God did through His Son Jesus Christ and the power and that might that began to take away the power of Lucifer who became Satan and the power of Satan... it says his power is that of sin, sin that has it's hold upon us in life because of our being made physical in the first place, 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.' And we learn to fight it and conquer it.

**(Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above the heavens, that He might fill/fulfill all things.)** Fulfill God's plan! What is the basis of God's plan? Elohim, family, what He determined from the very beginning before anything was created, that design and purpose that God had eventually for our being made, created, put on this earth, and that which we go through then when the holy spirit is given to us, the impregnation of the holy spirit, because Jesus Christ died for us, the beginning and the end. The fulfillment, the fullness of our life is in Jesus Christ. It's powerful to understand our High Priest and our Saviour, our Passover.

**And He gave some, apostles;** it's the foundation...it's the foundation, if you will, of the Church, of what God has given through time, of that which He has built upon. **He gave some, apostles;** that's where it begins, that's where His government begins, that's where it works and goes out then to the Church to work with the Church, to lead the Church, to mould and fashion, to guide and direct according to His will, not ours, not mine. **And He gave some, apostles,** it's God's doing that does that! Those of you who become elders? Those of you who are ordained? It's *God's doings!* It's *God* who put you there, not me! It's a matter of faith and understanding to grasp such things. Then it's up to us to yield to that process.

**And He gave some, apostles, and some prophets;** talking about the structure of the Church. Before that there were no apostles. Before the Church there were no apostles, there were only prophets through whom God worked through time, working on a smaller scale in a different way. Powerful indeed what God did with them and through them, but again, as far as truth and what was coming and so forth... **...and some, prophets; and some, evangelists;** evangelists. There was a basic structure that was in Worldwide; one apostle. See, in the very beginning there were twelve that worked with Judah, the Jews only, not with Gentiles, and there was one who was chief over all because there there had to be structure as well, Peter was over all, until they all died out, then there was only John and God continued to work through one. To the Gentiles God worked through another because of the structure of the earth, because of our not having communication like we do today. Back then it was necessary to have one who went out to the Gentiles then, who related to the Gentiles, who worked with the Gentiles, and that was Paul. Very powerful how God divided, worked with, moulded and fashioned the Church. And yet even Paul was very much in tune with the other twelve. They worked together in a powerful way.

**...evangelists; and some pastors and teachers;** and so again here, a method by which God teaches. Pastors pastoring the Church, pastoring Churches where they were. Paul went out when he set up various ones, he ordained some in different places because he couldn't be every place, obviously, and God inspired him to ordain people in different areas to take care of the Church. Mr. Armstrong had to address those things very early on. He had to address things about a growing Church that

was growing at such an incredible rate per year, incredible percentages year after year after year, 30% - incredible, unheard of through time of something like that in that magnitude, and the structure that needed to be there and working. God inspired him and led him to eventually establishing three colleges as a primary place to teach. Others whom God could then work with and use and send out into the world to represent a common truth, common teaching; in other words to be in unity with what God was giving through Mr. Armstrong and had given to the Church and would continue to give to the Church and that faithfulness that was supposed to be there in people's lives...and was there for a long time in many people, truly was. Very powerful what was structured there.

And so there was that order of an apostle and then evangelists who eventually became a part of evangelizing and doing work under Mr. Armstrong, being sent out to different parts of the world to help organize and establish areas around the world in different countries, to organize different countries together. And their work of working with, then, ministers in different areas. And there were different kinds of ordinations back then; some to Church pastors, who were given more authority and more responsibility, preaching elders under them who were ministers in different congregations and so forth, and all the way down we had different elders, we had different things even starting at one period in time later on even in the beginning of Laodicea. But again, all a part of a structure and organization within the Church.

And now in the end-time we don't have that same structure. We have it in part; three who are ordained evangelists, one who's referred to as a senior evangelist, because there is that structure and order in the Church. If you have more of one there has to be a structure there, there has to be someone who's over the others. In this case there's only three and there's one who's over all. Two prophets above that with one of them being both an apostle and prophet. Just a different structure God has given, a different way of teaching the Church. We have computers, we have telephones, we have an awesome way to keep together in unity of spirit in a very powerful way that they didn't have a long time ago and wouldn't work if we were into the thousands. It wouldn't work. Think God doesn't know how to mould and fashion and work with us? It's awesome.

But notice the structure and why it's there; **For the perfecting of the saints...** We just went through a sermon series talking about perfection, becoming perfect. How do you do that? How do you grow? '...remember how you've received' – 'hold fast' – that admonition that was given to Sardis that's important for all ages. **For the perfecting of the saints**, it's a part of moulding and fashioning, it's a congregation, a commanded assembly, and that is where the truth is taught, there is where Sabbath after Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day God teaches His people, the primary method. There are other ways as well in things that are written and so forth.

**...for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry**, of ministering, of serving within the Body, whatever it takes to accomplish that. It took something else during Philadelphia than what it takes now and God is the one who determines how that is to be and what that structure is.

**...for the edifying of the Body of Christ:** that's how the Body is edified, strengthened spiritually, given health spiritually, encouraged, admonished, sometimes corrected, whatever it is that goes together with edifying. We're edified when we see a fault, a mistake we have, when we are given guidance and direction and correction about things of our nature and so forth – and that's a good thing to learn about what we are and how we are the way we are. And we respond to that, it edifies our life because we know what to repent of, what to fight, what to get rid of. And when we have something in here and God reveals what the truth of the matter is – as an example, the return of Jesus Christ, when it will be – and makes that absolute and doctrine within the Body, we learn from that, we're edified and then we build upon that! There's much we built upon and come to

understand in a more powerful way, with greater conviction because of what God gives to us – truth after truth after truth.

**Till we all come in the unity of the faith**, the unity of belief! Because belief isn't enough. All the truth we've been given isn't enough – that's why the word 'faith' is used. But the beginning of faith is belief, what God gives to you in your mind and spirit, to see, to grasp, to comprehend, of every truth that comes along. The Sabbath... "Oh, yeah." Your faithfulness comes from doing it! The name of the Church, the commanded assembly – you're going there, you're desiring to be there – that's your faith when you do it. There are people out there listening today who are not here, who think all they have to do is listen right now or "I'm going to kind of wait." No, you can't! You're disobeying God! You have to be there if you can! You have to be there and desire more, desire baptism, desire to be a part of the Body, desire to repent, desire to change, *desire to be forgiven*, because you can't be forgiven until you go under the water. Very basic. Incredible!

**Till we all come in the unity of the faith**, oneness, unity, harmony with the belief. Oh if we'd had that during Philadelphia, but we couldn't. If we'd had that during Ephesus, but we couldn't. Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, but we couldn't. Philadelphia, Laodicea, but we couldn't because we're all human beings, we have battles, and everyone responds in different ways and different things are allowed in order to teach, in order to learn from that.

But today, I believe with all my being we have a greater fiber and strength of unity than ever before in time, because of the method, the way that God has brought us together, the power that is given through the use of the internet, through the ability to be connected like we are to a voice... to a voice. It's powerful, truly is, to help us to be unified. God is using that in a very powerful way. It's His spirit that does it and brings us into oneness and unity with what we're taught, with everything that's given to us. That's not a matter of haughtiness and pride, it's a matter of the way it is. It is what it is! It works the way it works! We're blessed to be a part of it, thank God, but always done in humility of spirit knowing it comes from God!

**Till we all come in the unity of the faith**, of belief – then you must do it. That's the only way it's faith, if you practice it. And we practice it. You are affected by every truth and you're able to practice it whether you grasp that or not. You bring it into your life, it affects your life, it involves your life, it has to do with choices you make and why you do the things you do. Things we're doing now has a great deal to do with our outlook of what's coming, what we think about things. As an example of that, in that respect; how we are using money, striving to save some aside here to be used again. We had a massive advertizing campaign back in 2008. We're still doing some but this world is not bothered right now as a whole, at least not in the United States. In some areas of the world it's been going up at different times here, which is encouraging to recognize there's that mindset out there where people aren't comfortable with what's going on in Europe, they're not comfortable with what's taking place and they're responding more. Here it's getting less! Because when you have days that unemployment goes up higher and housing is the worst (I think they said in 14 years the other day), and *in the same day* the stock market goes up, up, up. Help me keep my sanity! It's incredible! People's heads are buried in the sand! The *exact same spirit* on a national level that existed in the Church *before the apostasy*! The *exact same spirit*! And those who lived during that period of time often make that analogy – they see the same spirit in a nation that existed in the Church before the apostasy, before finally it happened and the walls came tumbling down. That's where we are in time! It's an awesome thing to understand.

I want to continue on here...**Till we all come in the unity and the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God**, the unifying knowledge of the Son of God, of what He gives, of what He teaches, because it's given to Him to give to the Church! It comes through Jesus Christ! ...**unto a**

**perfect/mature/matured...**one who's growing in perfection in the way that God desires us to do, as we went through in that series talking about it. *This* is how it's done. It's done through government! It's done through a structure that God has given! God's government, not man's; with God's love, with God's spirit, with God's mind!

**...unto the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ:** what an awesome thing, of what it says can take place in our mind; my mind and your mind. The ability to change! **...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness in Christ,** is a better way of explaining that.

**That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine,** see, if that's stronger in our lives and we grasp those things and we hold fast to that and we look back and remember what Sardis did and we don't want that to happen to us so we hold onto number 1 that God gave to Mr. Armstrong because we see the value and the importance of it so we can grow in more truth, and we grasp that, to remember how we learned, how God's worked with us, how God's taught us – the primary way in which it happened. *We didn't learn it on our own!! We didn't figure it out on our own!!* God did it! If He drew you to it and helped you to see a few little things here and there along the way it was to bring you to a place where you could be fed the *fullness* of what He had for you. God does it all!

I *loathe* the way of things that have happened in times past, when people took it upon themselves in thinking they were here, or were able to continue on because of *their abilities*! No, it's not true. The day you start thinking like that you start losing, you start sinning in a very great way before God, you raise yourself up before God, you make yourself an idol, an obelisk.

**...and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men,** that started happening in the Church early on. I've talked about 1972 and people accusing Mr. Armstrong of teaching the immortality of the soul when he said there's a spirit *in* man. Simple to understand with God's spirit. Later on, with the changing of Pentecost and people who left because it didn't happen quick enough, or people who left because they wanted to hold onto the past and wouldn't accept the truth that God gave through His apostle...because they didn't remember how they first learned and how God was working in the Church, so they thought they knew more than God's apostle and so they went out and started their own stuff... and on and on it goes through time. It's been that way over and over and over again in God's Church. If only this unity of faith had existed, if only these things had been understood, they wouldn't have happened.

**...and the cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;** like Mr. Armstrong said. I didn't grasp it at the time. I'll say it over and over and over again, it's a powerful message, "They're like vultures," he said, "waiting for me to die." Flying around, just circling.

"What's that up there?"

"Oh, it's the evangelists waiting for me to die." That's what he was saying, in spirit.

What a sad thing! What a sad commentary of our past, of what happened, of what people gave themselves to, waiting for him to die so somebody's going to take 'the spot', 'the power', 'the recognition', and if you're with the right guy...because you don't really maybe see yourself as being there but you're going to be on the right side. Politics entered in very powerfully so in the Church. Mr. Armstrong saw something in a very powerful way spiritually that was taking place; a foul spirit, a wrong spirit. And that's why every one of those individuals is where they are today, have experienced what they've experienced to this day, because God did not take that lightly. That is the worst of rebellion because they *had* God's spirit!



It's far worse than things that happened in the Old Testament. We read about things in the Old Testament about rebellion against kings, about things that took place, about things that happened. *Nothing* can be compared to the rebellion and the betrayal that took place during Philadelphia and led into Laodicea.

**But speaking the truth in love**, the truth is a matter of God's love, agape. **Speaking the truth in love**, knowing where it comes from, knowing where God's love comes from, knowing where the truth comes from and thanking God, loving God for it, loving one another because we're able to share in it in the same truth, we have this bond that makes it possible so that as soon as someone walks into a room and you've never seen them, that which unifies that you know is true because of this bond that God has given of the truth, this oneness, this unity. Powerful what He's given! Done in God's love if we yield our self to God.

**...may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:** shows He's the head of the Church. He's the one in charge, always has been. **From whom the whole Body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies**, we're all a part of the Body and we're all to supply in the Body through our prayers, through our life, through our yielding ourselves to the moulding and fashioning; especially in what God prepares and what He prepares for the future and what He's preparing every one of you that's yielding yourself to the process. *You have NO GRASP, NO IDEA*, because I don't even have a full grasp of it, but I know it's true because God's given it as being true, of what's going to take place yet in the end-time, when people you have *talked* to, people you know, people that you've shopped with, your banker, whatever it might be, your dentist, whatever it might be, people you have talked to, that you don't have any concept that God's going to draw them through you, that you're going to have a *part* in being able to share His way of life, His truth with them. It's going to *blow your mind* when you start sharing in that way!

It's never happened in the Church of God like it's getting ready to happen; never has taken place, but it's what you've been called to, it's a part of your job, it's a part of your work. And God knows the exact size of what it's supposed to be, that's why we are the size we are. It's to be this size, and whatever else He adds to it in the meantime, and as we go forward and what He gives to it then and what people are going to share and how that's going to mushroom through time. It's hard to grasp! It's hard to grasp Jesus Christ returning in a very short time, appearing in the heavens. Hard to grasp the reality of 144,000 through time who are going to be resurrected. It's a little hard to grasp all that, but we believe it and we live by it, it's our faith, it's our confidence, it's our boldness. It's awesome! God gives it!

**...by that which every joint supplies**, every one of us, **according to the effectual working of the measure of every part**, what God gives, what God has called us to, to do in its proper time, to be prepared for it, to be moulded and fashioned for, to be ready for. It ought to dumbfound you to understand that the vast majority of what Jesus Christ was prepared for and what He did happened in the last three weeks of His life. That ought to dumbfound you...!

**...according to the effectual working of the measure of every part, makes increase of the Body unto the edifying of itself in love/in agape.** So again, awesome, awesome, awesome – such a basic, sound thing, to remember as God told Sardis, to remember how you've received, how you've learned, hold it fast, guard it – it's your life! We're sanctified by it. You're set apart by it. It's what makes you who you are, a part of the Church of God. You're sanctified by the truth; that's what it says, that's what John said. Powerful when you understand that, when we grasp that and live by that.

So the first two great truths that God gave to be recognized by His Church that were restored through Mr. Armstrong were necessary for the establishment and understanding of the *next sixteen truths* that God would restore to His Church. The more that God has led us into this, is leading us into this and giving this I knew it was going to come in a different manner than what we've given in times past, but I knew we were to go back into the truths and talk about so many of them in how and why they are structured the way they are. It is truly incredible, especially putting it on top of sermons that God has given us at the Feast, to understand how God works in our minds to mould and fashion us. It's an awesome process of how He works with the mind to teach us.

Number 5 in order, number 2 given through Mr. Armstrong here....

### **5 (2) The Gospel of the Kingdom of God.**

The good news, that's what it means. Gospel = good news, of the Kingdom of God and all that that means. What do you think of when you think of the Kingdom of God? I think of one word – Elohim, the Family, the structure, the way, the Family of God. A family is organized, structured in how it works. The larger it is the more structured it has to become. God's Family is very structured and very orderly and at one in unity with Him in a very powerful and awesome way through the power of His spirit in ways that we can only strive to appreciate and grasp and understand. So number 2 here....

### **5 (2) The Gospel of the Kingdom of God.**

It says here, as what was given in times past as well, talking about...

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God has been restored after 1,900 years.

What God did through Mr. Armstrong. It doesn't mean it wasn't taught, it doesn't mean it didn't happen, it doesn't mean it didn't go out for a period of time, because it did, but it began to become weaker and weaker as far as going out into the world through time to where finally it was gone and had to be restored. It began 1,900 years earlier. God raised Mr. Armstrong up to continue, very powerfully so, with restoring it and fulfilling so many things that we'll talk about as we go along here through time in this. But again here it says....

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God has been restored after 1,900 years. It is the "good news" of the government of God, which is to be restored at Christ's return.

So a structure and a government, but it's all about one word; again, it's about Family, it's about Elohim, the Kingdom of God, and again, those things that God began to give to and through Mr. Armstrong in tremendous understanding. I think of how this inspired Mr. Armstrong because he grasped that it was right at 1,900 years later that God had to restore things within the Church, restored truth in the Church, and the gospel going out again...and this time... it didn't go into the world right away...and then later, you get up to about 1950, 19 time cycles later and all of a sudden it starts to go out into Europe like it did 1,900 years earlier, started to go up in Europe, the truth, the good news. Incredible how God has worked through time. That was a very inspiring thing for Mr. Armstrong, a personal thing to him, that understanding, grasped in a very deep way indeed.

So along with the establishment of God's government, again, was the authority that God gave His Church to preach the gospel, the good news of His Kingdom and of His government, for that good

news encompasses *all of the truths that would follow*. It's an awesome thing when we begin to see and have this awesome picture of what God reveals to us, the big picture of what He's doing. It's powerful, truly is. We learn a lot about God, we become very inspired, moved and motivated by what He's doing in our life.

So again, I want to read that again; a lot is said here. Along with the establishment of God's government in His Church was the *authority* that God gave His Church to *preach the gospel*. Government has to be first, the order has to be first, the way and work in which it's going to be accomplished has to be first. It was to be recognized first through Mr. Armstrong and what He gave. It took time to have that lesson pounded into him. I've had to have a lot of lessons *pounded* into me. He experienced things that were wrong.

I think of when the apostasy came, how many people went back to (I think it was) a 1934 article that Mr. Armstrong wrote about Church government, because it's like we're going back to that – 1934, *this* was the vision of government that we should have. No, it wasn't. Mr. Armstrong totally had it wrong because his concept of organization within the Church at that point, at that moment in time, was something that was still in the Protestant world, was something that was in Sardis and it was something that God had to teach him in time, *it doesn't work that way*. You don't have different ones telling you how and what to do and when to do it in the Church of God by their whims, by their desires, by any council, by any deacon, organization, whatever it might be of the world, or supposedly in the Church. You find out something's wrong here, it doesn't agree with God's spirit. What's wrong? It's how it works that is wrong. He came to learn that God worked through him to the Church. He had to come to learn to yield himself to that process.

I had to relearn it. He taught me and taught me and taught me. I heard sermon after sermon after sermon, but after the apostasy there was so little trust in the ministry because of what the ministry did that we *boomeranged*, we had a *ricochet* take place in the Church of God and it was like, "We've got to write these bylaws to protect us in the Church so this will never happen again, so that no minister will ever do this to us again! And so we're going to have boards and we're going to have these people make decisions for the Church..." and okay, I agree, we've had some bad times and I don't trust it either, and so we had all these bylaws and after a while I'm sitting in one of these meetings early on and listening to people give their ideas about structure and what should be done, what we should be doing, what I should be doing, maybe what I should be teaching. And I'm thinking, "Wait a minute, something doesn't click right here!" God's the one who gives that... comes from God.

And so I'm sitting in the back of the room one day and all of a sudden [smacks forehead] "Duh! It doesn't matter how many bylaws you write!" You can write the Talmud, how much has that helped the Jews? You can write volumes and volumes and volumes and the reality is without God's spirit, if God's not in it, if God's not leading it then it doesn't mean a thing because people interpret things that are written in different ways. And that's what was happening! And some were telling me, "But this is what the bylaws say." And I thought, "*DUH – I wrote them, I know what they say, and that isn't what I said, and that isn't the spirit of it at all!*" This. Doesn't. Work.

So I had to come back to what Mr. Armstrong did after he wrote what he did in 1934 when he came to understand that *he* was the head of the Church under Jesus Christ as a physical head on this earth. Had a man tell me that before and I wasn't ready for it at that time. Ralph? I am talking about you. He told us earlier on. He said, "God has always only worked through one man!" And I thought... "Ummm... Ralph, that's kind of strong!" Shows how weak I was at that time until I got my nose rubbed in it and I learned a lesson and came back to understanding and thank God that He taught Mr. Armstrong what He did so I could rebound a little faster than having to wait a few years –

because we didn't have a few years. Awesome what God gave and what He gives to the Church and things about the truth and the gospel and how to go out. It's about authority given to the Church government, and so that authority was there and it's clear because of the gospel.

I want to read that, let's turn over to Mark 1. **Mark 1:1 - The beginning of the good news/the gospel of Jesus Christ**, it's the good news, what He taught, what He was teaching was all good news! Things that for the previous 4,000 years had been spoken of through the prophets, that a Messiah would come. It was taught from the beginning! They knew that a Messiah was coming. They didn't know when, it was always...people had the concept in mind, in the thinking, that it was going to happen soon. Soon! That's a hard thing to deal with when you come to realize it may not be that soon. Paul came to that understanding in time. Began his ministry in one way and ended it differently.

**The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I will send My messenger before Your face**, about Jesus Christ, the messenger that would come before Jesus Christ, announcing...talking about John the Baptist, leading up to talking about some things about John the Baptist, **who shall prepare Your way before You**. Your way – what is *His way*? You know, we read things in a funny way sometimes. **Who shall prepare Your way before You**; so yes, it was to prepare the way to receiving of Jesus Christ, but it had more to do with what that way was, the good news, the gospel. It starts out, 'This is the beginning of the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ' – *His way*, which was His *Father's way* that was to be given to the world, to show *God's way*.

**The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare you the way of the Lord**, it's about the truths of God, it's about the way of God, it's about that which God is going to give to mankind, the *good news* of how we're going to be saved, of how we're going to be able to be saved from what we are, how we're going to be able to be forgiven of sin, how we're going to be able to receive of God into our very lives and into our very being, into how we're going to be able to grow in the ways and the mind and the truths of God... **prepare you the way of the Lord, make His paths straight**. That's up to you! That's up to *us* to make those paths, those ways straight, *not* crooked, *not* distorted, *not* messed up, *not* pot-holed everywhere.

Someone made a comment one time talking about how the only time we're really going down the center of the road is when we were criss-crossing from one ditch to the other. We were trying! We've always been trying! We're still trying! It's a matter of yielding to God. We learn, sometimes rather slowly, we careen from one ditch to the other and we learn along the way because when you're in the ditch you're in sin and you've got to repent and come back out and get back on track, get back on the right path.

Notice **verse 14 - Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the good news/the gospel of the Kingdom of God**, He began to reveal and teach things that they couldn't receive yet, wouldn't understand yet, taught His own disciples, taught those who would follow so many things that we have gone through at different times. I think of so often before the Days of Unleavened Bread and through that period of time we talk about the things that Jesus Christ taught and gave, that good news!

**And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand**: Oh, *powerful* at that time! It was at hand for those *at that time*! It's at hand now for us in *our time*. It was in hand for those during Philadelphia at *their time*, because they were being called to be *a part of the beginning of the Kingdom of God*! The Kingdom of God is at hand! An escalation, if you will, of the Kingdom of God, because now a Church is going to come out of this, the Body of Christ. That's what it was all about! The good news of what was going to follow what He was going to do; die for the sins of mankind so

we could have a relationship with God, so that God and Jesus Christ could dwell in us. Awesome! All good news; doesn't get any better. How rich are you? *How rich are you?*

**Saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the good news.**

We have to repent. Why? Because we're wrong, because we don't know what it is. And so any time you're shown something – the Sabbath – good news – you have to repent. "I haven't been keeping the Sabbath. I don't keep the seventh day, the day before Sunday. I need to change that! I need to repent of doing the wrong thing. I need to repent of accepting the lies that the whole world has always accepted." On and on it goes. The more truth you learn the more you repent the more good news you have in your life that's given to you; all the truths that God gives to us are about the Kingdom of God. Good news, good news, good news.

**...repent and believe the good news.** It's the gospel. The *truth* is the gospel! What is taught, the good news; it's always good news. I remember truth number 50, it was good news. It was exciting news. I remembered the difficult time we went through in the Church because of it. I remember the mercy of God that He let us have it before He revealed to me when it was to be given. First off He revealed to me, very powerfully so, that this was to be given at the Feast of Trumpets, and it wasn't too much later that He revealed to me, "You can't wait that long. You must give it now or many will not be here at the Feast of Trumpets." And so we grew through that. We became stronger. What we went through then prepared us to go through what we've been going through and what we're going through right now – *living by faith*. Confidence and boldness in where we're going, knowing that God will fulfill what He says and we'll learn from it. You're going to learn from it, just wait. You're going to learn from it. Very possibly at this Feast of Tabernacles you're going to learn a lot more about it. Hmm, that was a big carrot.

Herbert W. Armstrong knew what His commission was that God and Jesus Christ had given to him, spoke of it often. We're going to turn over there in a moment, Matthew 24. He was moved by the age he lived in as he witnessed what God was doing in his life. He was made stronger and stronger through time because he saw something that God was doing. He didn't take it upon himself what *he* was doing. He was moved by what he saw *God* was doing and the things that followed and the things that happened.

I remember something that was very moving to me, that gave me a greater boldness and confidence and has given me a thrust through time, and that was the Feast of 2005, because we touched upon an incredibly powerful doctrine for God's Church, for all who had come out of the period of Philadelphia and into the period of Laodicea, early Laodicea – that Jesus Christ had not eternally existed. And to understand sermon after sermon after sermon things about God, things about God's Kingdom and the structure of God's Kingdom. I believed that the Church would receive it, but when I witnessed it and I *saw* the oneness and the acceptance of it sermon after sermon after sermon I was moved very powerfully because I knew and knew that I knew in ways that cannot be expressed – it can happen in no other way but God did it through the power of His holy spirit. That wouldn't have happened any other way, can't happen. Things like that can't happen any other way. It's powerful!

Going on here, things that Mr. Armstrong saw that he was moved by, through this and other revelation that God gave to him one after another after another, changes that he made, a willingness to change, a willingness and a desire to grow in truth that God continued to give to him. Mr. Armstrong became convicted of the truth that Philadelphia was in the time of the end. He became convicted of that through time. He saw what God was doing, he saw that message of a commission that was given to him, he knew what his job was in a very powerful way just before the coming of Jesus Christ as King of kings in the Kingdom of God. He would not see that, he didn't

know, but we live that way, not knowing all the truth at a point in time, thinking that maybe a period of Philadelphia and Laodicea would go hand in hand side by side into the end, because it was so hard... it was *so hard* to believe that if you had the mind of a Philadelphian that you could become one of those nasty, weak, lukewarm, *despicable* Laodicean's, and yet that's what happened to us. And they weren't side by side; when one ended the other started. And I saw myself that way. Yes, I am one and I had to repent of that attitude and that spirit! Incredible!

Matthew 24:10; a part of our history, a part of things Mr. Armstrong was moved by, but very powerful and an awesome truth that God gave to the Church, the preaching of the gospel the Kingdom of God, the gospel of the Kingdom of God that God gave to him which is truth after truth after truth. And this one here goes along with number 1, they're tied together, you cannot separate them: government and the authority to preach and teach the Kingdom of God, the good news, the gospel. It's a powerful thing! And through that all the other truths followed. It's a beautiful picture, it's a beautiful truth.

**Matthew 24:10** – talking about the end-time, the things that would lead up to the end-time - **And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another**, starting seeing it in '72, in a greater way in '74. Mr. Armstrong became sick in the late '70's and it grew, it's self-feeding, fuelling, became stronger and stronger, of what was taking place within the Church. People being offended, things being taught that weren't right, struggle for power, the vultures flying around in the air, as Mr. Armstrong said, waiting for him to die. *And then God gave him a boost of life*, made him stronger than he was before, and he came back with a central message and theme for the rest of his life; *to put the Church back on the right track!* How many of you heard that again and again and again? Put the Church back on the right track! ...because it had gotten off track in a big way; and that was what he dedicated his life to and God gave him power, and then God gave him recognition in the world in ways that are dumbfounding, by governments and so forth. Awesome what took place!

Along the way this was happening: **many shall be offended and shall betray one another**, betrayal. Where does betrayal come from? To betray the truth? To not be in unity with the truth? You begin to betray Jesus Christ, you begin to betray God, you begin to fight against that which God gives and how He gives it and to whom He gives it to – and that's where it goes.

There are people to this day out here who write on websites and such, who hate Mr. Armstrong's guts with a passion and he's been dead since 1986. You think, "Give the man a break! Go fishing! Enjoy life a little bit." Don't you know that it's like a cancer inside of you? ...that you're eating yourself up? ...you are killing yourself? And you're a step away from the unpardonable sin because of your spirit and your hatred and your bitterness that's been eating you up all this time? The mind and spirit you've given yourself to. What a horrible thing to have your life revolve around something like that, and then going out there and *trying to find* that which might closely associate itself with that – and wherever that is to chew it apart, to eat it up, to seek to find fault with, to mash it in the ground, to seek to destroy it. I wonder where that really comes from?! I know where it comes from. Sad, for them they don't grasp it.

**...and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise**, that's what happened through time, people beginning to teach things that are wrong because they fight against the government, because they fight against the good news that God is giving, the authority that God gave. They began to fight against doctrines, the immortality of the soul never being taught, but man has a spirit in him, *yes*. Pentecost, changed, *yes*, because it became understood that it's on Sunday, not on Monday. You received that truth, that understanding. There were those who didn't, they became

false prophets, false teachers; began to go away from what was true. On and on it went! Thousands left before Mr. Armstrong died, *thousands* fought against the truth and became false.

**...and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound**, lawlessness, sin, so often in the individual's lives because they're not living a right life anyway. That's why so many hated Mr. Armstrong! That's the real reason why so many hated him! Because they wanted to do something else; sometimes to maybe marry the one they shouldn't be marrying because it was done in adultery - and so they got put out of the Church. Some because of a certain lifestyle, other things they might do and so forth - they're put out of the Church, and so they learn to hate Mr. Armstrong because they hated why they were put out of the Church, because they hate that truth that God gave to the Church, that good news of how to live life, of how to make straight the paths, the ways of the Lord, because they didn't seek to make them straight, they didn't want to yield themselves to it. They wanted something *different* than what God was giving to them, a different way of life.

There are many people who have left God's Church for various reasons, but it always begins with lawlessness, sin, because you begin to cut yourself off from the flow of God's spirit. Can be adultery, an adulterous mind; it can be just a wrong lifestyle in what you engage in in life out here and rub shoulders in the world with, because you want that and you won't separate from it, their life, you won't fight the fight. It's in fighting the fight that it's all about. You may have weaknesses, we all have weaknesses, but you've got to fight the fight. If it's alcohol, if it's drugs, if it's marijuana, whatever, you've got to fight the fight! You've got to come out of that! If it's adultery, fornication, pornography, whatever it is you've got to fight it because *it's very much a part of the human spirit! That way of life!* It's just the way of human beings and you've got to say no and cry out to God to hold onto what is true.

*Many ministers did these things!* And for that reason they went astray, or they lusted for something more; sometimes it's a matter of power, what they think is the power and so forth that's there that they want for themselves. Or like the false Simon Peter, the bad one, not the true one, the one who the Catholic church is built upon, Simon Magnus, that one; he wanted something, he sought something, he sought a following, for people to follow him, and sadly that's what happened in God's Church as well. So that's what it's talking about here.

**Because iniquity shall abound the love/the agape of many shall wax cold.** You can't have love, you can't express love anymore, you can't express God's love toward one another. If a minister goes that way he can't express love to a congregation, the people, anymore; on the contrary, what he does is foster up disbelief and suspicion and doubt about doctrine and so forth in order to get a following so they'll follow him out of the Church. That's what happened in Hawaii twice, happened in Washington, D.C., whole region out there followed a minister doing that. I think this one was called a regional superintendent at that time, ministers in God's Church who became false prophets and teachers and they didn't have any of God's love in them anymore.

**Verse 13 - But he who shall endure unto the end**, endure, fight the fight, yield, do what it says in Ephesians, *seek* to be of a unity of the spirit, *seek* to be of a humble spirit, a *meek* spirit, a *teachable* spirit, appreciating and loving the light, the truth, the gospel, the good news, the government that God has given to us to lead us, to work with us, to mould and fashion us, because it's from Jesus Christ His Son. **But he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.** A fight to the end! You don't give up the fight.

**And this good news of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then the end shall come.** It's what happened, the end. Amazing what happened! The gospel of the Kingdom - God let it go out to the world to the exact degree He intended to through

'The Plain Truth', through the radio, through telecasts in a very powerful way, blanketed the earth in a very powerful way *to the degree* that God intended it to. Powerful, recognized as being the most powerful in televangelism at that time as far as TV and radio combined, around the world. 'The Plain Truth'. Powerful! The largest religious publication of its type in the world at that time. Incredible what took place, to the degree God wanted it to. And then when that job had been done as a witness, governments, people, they've been the same for 6,000 years. A lot of the witness here at the end-time is about this same thing but in an encapsulated timeframe, this time without any more teaching.

And it says, **and then shall the end come.** And that's exactly what happened. It says, **When you therefore shall see the abomination....** Mr. Armstrong would go to verse 14 often saying that was what he was doing, that was what his commission was that God had given to him, that the good news, that the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom would be preached in all the world. And so God continued to reveal more truth to him; we've only touched on two. And all the rest that we go through or talk about that are there, that are written there, God continued to give and build upon in a very powerful way; all about God's Kingdom, all about what God is doing, all about these truths that Jesus Christ began to teach so early on.

Then **verse 15** - he never went on, he stopped because it wasn't for him. He stopped on verse 14. **When you therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, (whoso read, let him understand:)** It wasn't given for Philadelphia to understand that. It wasn't given for the beginning of Laodicea to understand that. It wasn't given to understand *until it had happened*, the end came. The gospel went out into all the world in a very powerful way, in a way that God intended it to, and then verse 15 came, the end came, the abomination of desolation, the scattering of God's Church spoken of by Daniel the prophet.

So again, as we continue to go on, especially in the next Sabbath's sermon, it becomes even more inspiring; it is to me in a very powerful way. How it all fits together, *why God gave these truths* in the organized fashion to His Church, to have them revealed in this manner, in this order. It's very powerful how it all fits together, it truly is.

~~~end