

Yesterday we had the sermon entitled 'True Freedom', and the subject matter of that sermon is so incredible difficult for any of us, for God's people to see, because even though we grow spiritually and are able to be inspired by what we hear in sermons and in such a sermon as yesterday, and we receive things that help us grow even more as we grow, as we build, there remains that which no matter how much we grow we still cannot see. The ability to see is something we grow in, it's a process that takes time and there is much wisdom in being able to grasp that and understand that and comprehend the battle in our mind that takes place, the battle that takes place there in our human nature in receiving God's way of life. So, by the time we are of a more mature age spiritually, and as we grow, we become better equipped to receive much more and are able to see much more in such a sermon.

It's through a lifelong process of conquering and maturing, that the longer we have been moulded, fashioned, and perfected, that we also grow in our ability to see much more deeply. It is a process. And so again, the more we grow the more we're able to see, yet even here after years of growth and development the grasp of such matters is still very, very difficult to grasp, it truly is. And we should want to, we should desire to do so, and as a matter of receiving those things and crying out to God to *give* us understanding, to open our mind to better receive it, to better understand the message is to 'me'; for each one of us to grasp that, that what is being said, that it's for 'me' to grow in, to understand.

So it is, indeed, a difficult thing to see clearly what God is offering us, what He continues to offer us. Sometimes we hear something we think we know, we receive knowledge, but knowledge is not what it's all about, and today with technology, especially in a calling that God gives His people, and even on into the Millennium as people go along here, they're going to be able to receive knowledge very quickly in a very powerful way, in *awesome* ways.

That has changed a great deal since I've been in God's Church. We would write into Headquarters in California, in Pasadena, and we would ask questions and by the time our letter got there and then by the time the information came back, because they had thousands and thousands and tens of thousands of requests coming in on a daily basis, and then they would send out letters. So by the time they got through all that and sent the appropriate literature, people would have to read all this, incredible mail processing there in the mail room and people who were on the staff there to go through all this in order to send...and several weeks later, sometimes it seemed like a couple months sometimes, and very close to that before we'd receive a booklet or an article or something back to answer our question.

And so it took a long time to receive information compared to today when you can sit down in front of a computer screen and wham-wham-wham-wham. We didn't have sermons we could listen to during the week, they weren't there, and here we can listen to things at various times. *Awesome*, the knowledge that's there! But *knowledge is not what it's all about*, but *knowledge* can puff up, *knowledge*, because of our human nature, can lift us up, and because we know, because there are things we have knowledge of that we realize we didn't have before and that the world doesn't have, we don't realize what's going on sometimes with our human nature because of that.

And so again, it's indeed a most difficult thing to see clearly what God is offering us, as we talked about yesterday – we see in part and we grow in that ability to see more and more and more as we look into a mirror that God gives us, to see ourselves, not to see somebody else, which is our general human

tendency, but to see ourselves, enabling us to begin to truly see even more deeply the things of self in a realistic and truthful manner.

So, how truthful and realistic do you think you see yourself? How truthful and realistic do you feel that you truly see yourself? Do you grasp that there is much more to see, that there is much more to learn? ...that we only see in part and that you grow in that as you mature, and that you're not going to really come to understand fully your mind until the day that God gives you a new life? ...and then you will see and know far more clearly, far more powerfully? Because that's what we read about yesterday.

One of the greatest areas of revelation and potential places for the magnification of this truth, of our ability to see ourselves in greater spirit and truth is contained in this sermon today. I'll state at the outset that most of you will tend to think you have a fairly good handle on this subject, that's our human nature, but I'm telling you – You. Do. Not! You do not! *You do not!* It takes so long to learn those things and how important such a statement truly is to each one of us individually. You'll have a powerful pull upon you to be tempted to think you have a good handle on this but the truth is that you will literally fight at this battle, if you're willing and desirous in fighting God's way in spirit and in truth, you will be fighting, literally fighting at this battle during your entire physical lifetime and you will grow, and life will become richer and better the more you fight and conquer and overcome. Because that's what this is all about – it's about a fight and conquering human nature. It's about a fight and being able to deal with matters of pride and self and a willingness to humble ourselves.

That's a powerful thing, to be able to come to the point, with God's help, that we're able to humble ourselves so that we can admit – because change doesn't come until we're able to admit it, to see something, to see a need and then to admit it. Because that's the process of repentance – the ability to repent means we have to be able to see what needs to be repented of, which means the desire we have to change from something that's wrong to something that's right...and then we grow and the growth becomes better and better, the relationships become better and better, and we become far more free, just as I read in part of that song we just sang.

This sermon is entitled *Freeing Men and Women*. The longer I've been in God's Church, especially over the past few years, the more this has been magnified in such a powerful way concerning people all over this earth, and the greatest area of revelation is this one right here. The greatest area of the potential to learn is right here in understanding this: why God made us different, how God made us different, understanding the different thinking that goes with that difference in creation, that when we begin to learn about both and we begin to understand both, ourselves and the other, whatever that might be – if you're a man, it's the woman; if you're a woman, it's the man – the more you're able to see those things the more *complete* you can become. It's an awesome thing! ...the more *complete* you can become! And that's what God wants us to do, to become far more complete, mature.

So, in this subject matter, every one of you is still in bondage, you're still coming out of Egypt. It's a process of being freed. It's a lifelong process! Don't ever get to the point where you think you have it covered, that you have it in understanding; you don't! We're all learning. I'm still learning. I will ever be learning until my change comes, and then when it comes I'm going to see it far, far greater than what I do now because I don't have the ability to now. So, you've not fully come out of Egypt; truly haven't. It's an ongoing lifelong process; it's an awesome one too.

So, this is a truth you must begin with if you're going to get anything out of this sermon: that you have not yet fully come out of Egypt, you're still in the process. So as time goes forward you will learn that

your greatest area in life for spiritual growth and growing in your ability to see God will also come with your growth and ability to see how men and women are being freed from spiritual Egypt.

We're going to go over to 1st Peter today and begin there. God is taking mankind a giant leap forward in being made free from oppression in this world, of being freed from so much of the spiritual Egypt that surrounds them. And candidly, people will come to learn that their *religious beliefs* have added to this as far as men and women and relationships. It is because of their *religious beliefs* that they're in bondage and they do not see each other as they should! There are organizations, in the sense of different beliefs out there, that from their very beginning have so tainted and so distorted and so twisted the truth of a relationship between a man and a woman that people's minds are *messed up* in those areas. They truly are!

Whether it be Christianity, so called, I think of Islam especially – both parties...both parties, man and woman. For a man to think that it's a good thing, a righteous thing, a just thing for someone to wear a slit that they can see through, is distorted. For the woman to think that this is good and pleasing and right is distorted! It messes up the mind and it's going to take *a long time* to cleanse those things out of the mind. *You have no comprehension* of how great that is, how deeply embedded that is in their minds, and it's going to be a *horrible* battle to come out of that. And you can begin to learn it though, from your past, perhaps your past religious beliefs.

I think of the Catholic church and what they have taught – 'the original sin'! They have so distorted things about a right relationship between a man and a woman that is just downright despicable and disgusting and perverted. And now it's coming out more and more, that a life that's celibate, so called, if it's for religious purposes, is not what all mankind is to live by, or should attain to as being some high spiritual plane. On the contrary, they can't do it and their minds become perverted, and that tends towards perverted things. This has been the history going back in time! This is not just something of recent time, this goes back through time.

And I think of things Mr. Armstrong had to battle and come out of, because I've never been able to come to a point where I can address that subject yet; I just don't feel qualified, I don't feel I'm able to, and most likely obviously then I'm not supposed to yet. Maybe I will, maybe it will be addressed here before long, I don't know. But 'The Missing Dimension in Sex', it's not all there, it's not fully sound. It helped people back at a time when it was written because of what they were still coming out of, but for today it's not good. It isn't good to address a lot of things because it's a different world, it's a different society and what they're addressing is different. And so there's a need to add to that, as with so many things we've gone through, in order to be sound and balanced and healthy spiritually in our thinking. And I'm trying to think of the term that would be used back at that period of time of that which religion was teaching in the 30's and 20's and especially in some very orthodox ones about relationships. Victorian type, yes, Victorian type of thinking, that kind of hits that, yes, absolutely, Victorian, that which has been around for so long in people's thinking, things that aren't fully balanced.

And so, candidly, people have difficulty dealing with the opposite sex, with the word 'sex', and they don't understand the relationship that God has made beautiful and wonderful between a man and a woman. Man, because of Satan's influence, has tended to distort those things horribly so.

And so those things, sometimes it's difficult to grasp how deeply embedded they are in our thinking, truly, and if we don't know all the truth, if we don't grasp and comprehend all that God intends for life

we will come to the wrong conclusions and the wrong choices and the wrong decisions because of a different nature that we as human beings have.

The area of scripture we're going to focus on first is 1st Peter 2, and as we go through these verses, to the degree you are able, you should seek to *see* yourself and how *you think* in these matters, not about anyone else. Just self, your actual thinking process as well about others, especially the opposite sex, as these verses can be a good tool indeed for helping you to begin to see the kind of bondage you are still in when it comes to this subject matter, of being able to free men and women.

1 Peter 2:18 – Peter begins to address something here on a very physical plane, but it's working toward that which is spiritual and has spiritual lessons through it that we can learn from, should learn from - **Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear;** now, today, what does that mean, 'Servants, be subject to your masters?' We don't talk like that because it's not that kind of a society; it's not that kind of a world. You go back in time and for so long the world was more of an agrarian society, and there were those, obviously, who travelled and who traded goods and so forth, but so much in a localized area was so fully agrarian and how people set up, did things. It's hard for us to think in those terms, that so much of the day was involved in preparation of foods. They didn't have the things like we do today. We can go down to the store and just get it off the shelf, and if you're really running behind you can bomb the thing with microwaves and it's done quickly – a baked potato can be done just... things are quick and man tends to go that way, fast, quick, easy. And so we have these fast food places and they're 'really nutritious and they're really helping us to be in good shape,' sarcasm of course, and that's the way we are. But back then it took so long! There was so much work involved let alone the other work of the day and it's all these things.

And so, **Servants, be subject to your masters;** it's like today, employees, employers, we have jobs, people have work to do, **with all fear;** Now that doesn't mean you're scared of them! It doesn't mean you go around that way. I don't like this word translated; instead it has to do with respect, it has to do with understanding the difference, who *you* are. I've used this sometimes in sermons; I remember one time when I first began in the ministry working with a couple Church areas out in the Pennsylvania area in the States, and went into this little place, it's like a BP gas station where they serve coffee inside as well. And I went in there and I heard these two individuals that worked for UPS. (Do you have UPS over here? United Parcel Service? It's like DHL, some of those, Federal Express.) I don't know what you have over here. Fast moving, competing with the slow system we have in government of moving mail and so forth.

Anyway, this is independent, and they were talking one day and they were discussing all the things their employers were doing wrong, all the things that were wrong about the company they were working for, UPS. And I thought, "If you have a better way and you present it and they see it and it's going to save them a lot of money I know what that company's going to do." Because they had an *awesome* reputation at that time for how they were moving forward and the use of technology and so forth that has helped to revolutionize some things as far as... anyway. Incredible, the *audacity!* They didn't 'fear', they weren't 'in awe of', they didn't 'respect' in that sense, those who had gone before them, that gave them the ability to do something in a company that had an incredible reputation that was growing, that treated it's employees really, really well. Unthankful! Incredible! But that's how we tend to be sometimes as human beings, we find fault with others and what they do and we don't grasp if this gets around to the boss and so forth and other things you're grumbling, you're murmuring, you're complaining... "If you're not happy here – go start your own UPS!"

...be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, because that's easy to do, to have respect to someone who treats you well, who is always kind to you, who perhaps let's you mess up here and there without saying too much, and just maybe that isn't always helpful. But it says, **but also to the froward**. ...to those who aren't so nice to you. It's an attitude of mind. This is what God tells us to do! This is what God's telling us, "If you want your life to be happier and better this is what you should do, this is what you should try to do in your thinking toward others." Not talking behind their back, not tearing them down, not being without fear. Today, not in this country because your unemployment rate is really low, but over in the States there is high unemployment and people should have a little more fear to do things like this. To lose your job, what's this going to mean for your family and putting food on the table if you're continually grumbling and murmuring and you're unhappy with what you're doing? And how's this going to affect your productivity? Because it does! It affects your productivity and how much you're willing to sacrifice and give, and be someone who is indispensable, someone who really they can't and don't want to let loose? But if people have that attitude they don't realize the poison that's there, the Egypt that's there. Amazing what we are as human beings sometimes that we can't see.

So looking at this a little closer; '**servants**' – it's a word that has to do with, again, servant in a household, today an employee, as I said. **...be subject** – it's a compound word in the Greek language; means 'under', not over. There's an order here, and that's the second part of the word, 'to arrange', 'to put in order'; for something to be orderly there has to be structure. People aren't just free to do whatever they want to do. Employees aren't just free to do anything they want to do, to do it a different way because they're convinced it's a better way. No, if you have the job you're to do it the way you are told to do it, and if there is a way to honestly improve something to humbly present that and show that. I've known of people who have done things like that and changes have been made in companies when it's done that way. But just to resist, to do your own thing? That's not the right spirit and the right attitude, but that's the normal human tendency oftentimes.

So it's an attitude and behaviour that one should have, that we're being told here. So it says, **to your masters**, the head of the household, the employer, the boss, **with all fear**; recognize, again, the difference and act accordingly with respect and fear of the consequences to do otherwise, because there are consequences, there are laws that regulate human life and relationships.

Again, **not only to the good and gentle, but to the froward**; the word, it comes from 'winding', as 'crooked', someone who may be, in some respects, all over the place, maybe not real well organized themselves, in one respect, maybe just 'crooked' period in the way they deal with things, maybe just bad in how they handle things, or someone who's kind of all over the place and you wonder... There's this thing sometimes of people comparing themselves with their boss or their foreman or their employer because they wonder, "I could do this so much better! I don't know how somebody could do ... I don't know how they ever have this business?!" But the bottom line is they do and you don't!

We have choices to go out and start it if we want, otherwise there needs to be respect there and thankfulness and gratitude for what we're able to.... that's what *God* wants us to do, but our human nature resists that, truly does.

And asking the question – be honest – what if the employer is a woman? What *if* the one telling you how to do various things is a woman? Because I know there are prejudices there, see. You think, "Oh, no, I can do that." Riiiiight! And even women toward women; sometimes women don't have respect toward other women where they might to a man. Why the difference? Why do you even have a

difference? Do you understand what's in your mind, why you might even have the difference sometimes? Sometimes it is just because of that and that alone. See? Do you believe that?

1 Peter 2:19 - For this is thankworthy, these verses really get into the heart and the core of something that God wants us to see, of something that God is offering to us, to see a spiritual plane of something that is so awesome, so incredible. He says, **For this is thankworthy**; it's a word that every place else is translated 'grace'. People like to talk about, in religion, about grace, but they don't understand what grace is, they truly don't, and it's been protestantized, if you will, to where it doesn't even sound good, in some cases, to someone who knows the truth, because of how it's been misused.

For this is grace; he's going to tell us what grace is; **if a man for a conscience toward God, 'if a person'**, it's a word that really just means 'person'. Even when these things are translated – man – man – man – man – man – well, what about the woman – woman – woman? It's for both! It's for people! It's for everyone! **If a person for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully**; that's giving – *that's giving* – that's what grace is about – giving. Incredible!

If a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, what grace is it? *What grace is it?* **For this is grace**, if a man does this. But, it goes on to say, **For what glory**, Greek – **What credit/what real good being done** – that's what it's asking here – **what credit is it to you**, in other words, as a person, **if, when you be buffeted**, literally means 'to strike', 'strike at'; it has to do with correction for something. Carries with it the meaning of being corrected, chastened, whatever it might be for doing something wrong, told you are wrong. You know, human beings just love that on the job. They just take that so well don't they – someone comes around and says, "This is wrong, this is not how this is to be done..." and whatever, and employees generally always respond *well* to such things, don't they? We don't as human beings. We want to justify – even in God's Church – if something is done wrong. The worst thing a person can do is to start to justify why they did something that's wrong, because the reality is there's no justification for something that's wrong. It even goes deeper than that here; it even goes deeper than that here in respect to the attitude God says *He desires to see in us*.

So do we have changes to make? You better believe it. Do we have growth in our own personal lives we need to make? You better believe it! Because grace is a big word, it includes a lot in God's word and how He works with us. You know how it starts? A willingness to overlook our wrong, our error, in order to help us, in order to deliver us...because He does. If He chooses to begin to call us we're loaded with sin, we're totally going the wrong way, we're fighting against Him – but He knows. We understand that people can't help it until they begin to be drawn and begin to be able to see something on a spiritual plane so that they can then make that comparison and say, "Oh yeah, now I understand why this doesn't work. I understand now why..." It's a beginning of a process and so it's how God works with us. Patience! *Longsuffering!* Because we just don't change once we're first called and we're buried in that water at baptism and it goes under the water that Paul talks about, how we're burying the old self and we're to come up out of that watery grave new. It's like it gives the analogy there of likeness of Christ death and burial, and it says, like that – we're put under this water and we come up out of the water to walk in newness of life, to be a new man, new woman, that we buried the old self. That's the desire! We don't *want* to be that way anymore. We don't *want* to stay the same way we were, we want to become something different that God says we can become.

And so He's longsuffering, because the reality is, that's the start of coming out of Egypt, but we have a lifetime of doing it and so He has long patience for the end product, which is His Family, us in His Family. How well do we do that with others? How well do we do that with one another? Sometimes we don't

fare so well – long patience, understanding the battle sometimes that people are fighting to come out of and appreciating that in the sense of recognizing that we’re all different and we’re all coming out of different backgrounds and we all have battles that have made us who we are. And as much as God has patience with me through time, what am I to learn from that? See, if we’re just selfish and we just receive everything from God that He gives to us and all the blessings in life, then we just become spoiled rotten children, and He doesn’t want that! He won’t even accept that, obviously! If we’re just on the receiving side, we receive forgiveness of sins and we receive His love, and we receive blessings, and we receive other things from Him and there’s no change in us? ...because grace is supposed to live through us to others. The long suffering of God is given to us so that we can learn to be long suffering to others. The patience that God gives to us is so that we can be patient toward others. The mercy that we receive from God is so that we can learn to be merciful to others. See?

That’s why I think of Old Testament scripture that we talked about here a while back, that God told the Israelites, “Do not forget...” which is really for us, for all people to learn, “Do not forget what it’s like to be in captivity in how you treat people who come out of it, or people who are still in it. Don’t forget what it was like there...” because the tendency is to forget.

What glory, what credit is it to you, as far as God’s Church is concerned, as far as God’s calling is concerned, in the sense of how we’re really living our life, because it’s not just a matter of how much knowledge you have and how many sermons you listen to, and how even memorizing everything that’s on the website, if you could do it, and the books word by word if you learned it, and the Bible word by word if you could do it – that’s not what it’s about! It’s about what you live! It’s about the change it brings about in your life.

And so He says, **What credit is to you if when you are corrected**, in essence, chastened for something, **for your faults**, for something that is wrong, for something that is not right, **you take it patiently?** Well, that’s what we *should* do, isn’t it? We *should* take it patiently. But human nature doesn’t tend to do that. A child gets in trouble and the parent catches it and starts correcting them – so often there is this ...the reasons why, and especially the older a person gets, in the teen years... “Yes, but you don’t understand *why*...” And so you sit and you listen, maybe, and you... And we just go on in life, it’s just we become better at it. We become better at it because we try to protect self. We don’t want to see self in a bad light. We really don’t want others to see self in a bad light and so we put up this facade, this -whatever - barrier. We don’t open up because we don’t know how, because we’re afraid to.

Husbands and wives are oftentimes afraid to open up. Men and women are afraid to open up. Women with women; men with men – it goes very deep. It’s just the way we are. We tend to be very protective of self, and it’s very difficult for us to open up.

...but if when you do well and endure suffering, and suffer, that’s what it’s about. In other words, you swallow your pride because that’s what it takes. You have to swallow your pride, this desire to come back and justify self, because we try to keep self elevated, we don’t want self to be seen as bad by anyone, nor ourselves to even accept it sometimes. **...but if when you do well**, you do the right thing, **and suffer for it, you take it patiently**; someone says something, not complimentary or especially in this context here, chastened, corrects, criticizes, and you just take it patiently, understanding if you know you’re right before God, and you have patience and you swallow your pride and you don’t try to respond back, and you give some time and perhaps discuss it and perhaps...and you do that calmly – that’s not so easy for human beings. But it says, **if you do well and suffer for it, you take it patiently, that that is ‘acceptable’**, the word is ‘grace’ again – same word as thankworthy above. This is what

grace is with God. This is what He wants to see us live, that which He does toward us, the love He pours out upon us, because grace is about everything that involved love, love toward others and how we treat others. Because to love others requires mercy, it requires humility – because pride gets in the way in those matters. We lift self up! We justify self! We have to protect self and we lash back if we're not careful, and our way is right and we don't slow down to think it through and strive to do it God's way....and what does God say is right and do it calmly, in a calm fashion, in a peaceful environment. We're not that way as a whole, as human beings. So we have a lot to overcome and conquer in those things.

These are verses to go back to, to digest, to pray about as you go forward, to ask God to help you to understand this matter of grace and what grace is all about. How merciful are we toward other people? What are we like in our judging of other people? Do we judge? What kind of judgment is it, and for what purpose? What end? What is it all about? How does God use that with us? Do we learn from that process of how God works with us so that we can use that then to the benefit and the serving of others? Because that's what God wants us to do...that's what He wants us to do!

So, what about a man toward a woman, and a woman toward a man? What about a wife toward a husband and a husband toward a wife when things happen? ...when there's conflict? Because this is what we're talking about here. If a woman says something to a man, or a wife says something to a husband, that comes across in some form as corrective, as "This isn't the way to do it." How does a man take it? It's not so easy!

I'll give you a simple matter...what about driving? Men think they're very good drivers. Men are convinced and convicted deep down inside that women aren't so good at driving. And so, for a man to hear something from a woman about how to drive, or this is a better way of doing it, or whatever, is just a *very difficult thing* for a man, because of his pride, to take. Is that right? All the women say, yes. ☺ But you see, sometimes to see things - even something simple like that - is hard because of our natural quick reaction to things; and even the reverse of that is not so easy, because it's just human nature. A man saying something to a woman about her driving... or a woman to a woman or a man to a man, it really doesn't matter, it's just human nature. It's just some things there's just a little more prejudice in sometimes, there truly is.

Sometimes there's just a little bit more prejudice, but sometimes we just don't really see it – but God *wants* us to see it so that we can change, because that prejudice is not right and it *hurts the relationship*. Because if you do it in something simple and *small* like that – that's why I use driving oftentimes, to show you how *blatant* things are in human nature – because if we can see them in some of the small areas of life then *hopefully* we can begin to see them in the bigger more important things in our life in relationships at home, or relationships in the Church, and so that we can change those and draw closer together to love each other even more and become a better family, a stronger family! That's what God desires! And we do grow in that and we are growing in that, but you *can't quit growing* in that – especially at home!

We tend, as human beings, to watch more closely our behaviour in *this* kind of an environment, in a Holy Day period or on the Sabbath. We tend to, all of a sudden before we even come through the doors if there's something that hasn't been good that day, we put on a different face! Have you ever been guilty of that? *I have! I have!* ...that maybe something was said and it hasn't been...we haven't had time to fully talk it out yet? Has that ever happened? Sometimes you... I can... you may have tried to hide it but sometimes it is *so clear* ... see? Because when you have done things in your life, when you

know things about human nature and you see the way people act, you can read them. My wife can read people. Whew!! She can sit in the back of the room and read you. Sorry, maybe I shouldn't have said that! You didn't want me to say that?! I shouldn't have said that; but she's very good at it because she'll ask me if someone was having a battle with something that's said, as an example. I'll just... it is what it is, that she can tell by their position, their gestures, the way they're sitting and so forth that they're having a battle.

And so can we, especially the longer you've been fighting certain battles, see someone come into a service and recognize that someone has had a battle that day and things on the home front need to be discussed and aired out. But people try hard – and we should! That's not wrong! You should try hard! But the same effort you put into it when you come into an environment like this is the same effort you should put in it when you're by yourselves together...peaceful, calm, more in control, striving to do what's right – because sometimes when we get off by ourselves we're not really trying as hard. And that's what God wants us to do. It's a matter of love and learning how to love each other more.

But boy, those prejudices in our lives are so deep, and what a beautiful thing when we can begin to root them out. Because it's a matter of being freed! We want to be free! And the freer you are, the more we conquer and overcome some of those things, the richer, incredibly so, beautifully so, that relationships become. That's why there is no greater, more beautiful relationship in life, in that sense when it's lived right, that God has given two people to live - when it's lived right. And in family, it's a beautiful relationship – family. Husband and wife, mother, father, children, parents – and the more it's lived right, the better it's lived, the *happier* that life becomes, the *sharing* in that life becomes. It's an awesome thing!

That's how we learn; we grab a hold of those things and then we're able to learn on a greater plane what God is offering with His Family in the Church, where prejudices don't exist, where there is no such thing as jealousy, envy. Sometimes those things exist in marriage and people don't recognize it – a husband toward a wife, a wife toward a husband. Or outside of marriage, just a man toward a woman or a woman toward a man – prejudices that are there, jealousies that are there, envying that are there. “Why are you there? I should be there! I should be doing that job, I'm better equipped! I should be driving that vehicle, not you! I'm better equipped! Don't you understand?! *Males drive better!* Look at the Indy 500 – how many women are out there?” Anyway, sorry...and if you want to go out and do something insane like that – pshew.

Verse 21 - For even unto this, even unto this, were you called: This is what it's all about, God is saying, **because Christ also suffered for us**, this is what it's all about! *He* suffered for us! ...**leaving us an example**; God wants us to change, to become Christ-like in spirit and in truth. He didn't have prejudices, jealousies, envying, the things of anger that human beings have. He was in control; He was of one mind with His Father of how to live life, of how to judge matters. That's why I *love* the things when you start reading them, about judgement, and people read through those and they think it's like He's contradicting Himself. “I judge no man.” Later on He starts talking about Him judging...but it's not Him, it's about the Father. It's the Father's judgement and He knew it was. It wasn't His, because of how He saw things, it was because of the truth and because of how things are.

For even hereunto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving an example, that you should follow His steps: I know a lot of husbands in the Church who do not suffer a whole lot for their wives, but should. You should...in the sense of if you understand what that's talking about. **Who did no sin**; we have sin and that's the problem. We don't do things the right way. We have prejudices. We

have things that are deeply imbedded in our minds that keep us in captivity, keep us in Egypt; until we address it and conquer it and overcome it we're not free and we'll always judge certain matters a certain way until they are addressed and overcome. *Then* we go onto a higher plane, a plateau of spirit relationship with God and with one another.

...who did no sin, neither was guile, the word here, I love these when you dig into some of these things and the riches that are there and what it exposes and shows and reveals...**neither was guile**, it's a Greek word for 'deceit', 'craft, crafty, craftiness' – There was no craftiness in how He dealt with people. And it's important to understand what that's about...as in not being fully honest and truthful, with introspection, at such a time when there is conflict, but rather being crafty in how you deal with a matter with someone else and turning the tables and turning it back around on them. That's what 'crafty' means here. Oh, do we as human beings become good at that sometimes. See, something is said, something we really should address our self, a woman to a man perhaps says something and a man can take that... there's different ways of thinking between men and women, and men have this in a greater distorted scale because it's not a skill you want to have, it's one you want to repent of, of turning something around because of perceived authority and power and all of a sudden finding something else to turn it back around. And women do this with women too, and women do this with men too. Do you understand what I'm talking about? ...this thing of turning something around, turning the tables of something that really needed to be addressed or should have been addressed but all of a sudden you're wrong about something else, and even worse? Guess what I brought up wasn't all that big was it? I've got the problem! And it's like... That's really sick. I mean, that really is sick when those things happen in life.

And you know what, I have counselled with hundreds of people through time since being in the ministry in 1981-82, in through there; hundreds and hundreds of people; and some, many, on many occasions in families, and husbands and wives and... *Amazing*, this battle right here! Amazing that during the counselling where people turn on each other and something that comes out all of a sudden, an individual will come back with something that's *far worse* that they've never, ever buried, because *they're* worse. Human nature's such an ugly thing, it really is. We tend to be selfish, self-protective, even against the ones who we're supposed to be the closest to, where life can be the richest, that God is offering us the richest of life in any relationship...and that's where He offers it, in family. And if we don't learn it in physical families, how on earth are we going to grasp the beauty of what God is offering us in a spiritual Family.

So **He**, speaking of Christ, **had no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who when He was reviled, abused, spoken of in a wrong way, spoken to in a wrong way, He didn't revile**, He didn't abuse back, He wasn't abusive in His language. I really hate it when I hear - and this is a tendency too often that men do - when they speak in an abusive manner toward their wives. It's harsh, unloving, cutting, tearing down, mean, because it's worse when it comes from a man to a woman; and He gets into this a little bit later here. It's really worse, it's an uglier thing, because we don't grasp the creation of God, we don't grasp how we're made differently and how there's a different thinking that *should* be there – to not abuse the way we're made and created! Men are made strong! Men are made this way for different reasons, for a different purpose through time – more in the sense of that which is physical – and a person (and people do) so abuse and misuse that strength, even physical strength, if you understand, whether it be in voice, whether it be in action, whether it be that which comes across as threatening in life – to put down someone else, to beat down someone else! It can all be done *verbally*! And if it *ever* happens physically that indeed is most sick, and yet it happens in life. And God calls us all into His Church and we come out of different backgrounds and some have to conquer that very quickly so.

Who, when He was reviled, did not revile/abuse back; and when He suffered, He didn't threaten; He didn't threaten; because He was the Christ, He was the Messiah, He could have called legions of angels to deal with matters...but He didn't do it, He just took it. What kind of an example is that? One that God wants us to learn from. There are times when you need to just take things and to take it away. I think of King David – what an *incredible* spirit of someone who had that authority to lop off a man's head when he came up to him and started cursing him and throwing rocks at him. And the one by David's side, in the military (don't remember which one it was exactly this time, which individual it was), one of his, you can call him a general in the military – but anyway, he wanted to lop off the man's head. "I'll kill him! How *dare* you do this to the king! How dare you *speak* in such a way to the king!" And what did David say? Perfect, perfect...that's why he's a man after God's own heart, because he tried, he wanted to do it the right way - not the way human beings would normally do it; that's an easy thing, just killing someone if you're in that position of power and authority, and especially in those times. You could kill him...no one's allowed to do that, no one is allowed to do that period in such a world, such a society. And he said, "Nope, don't touch him, *maybe*..." in essence, paraphrasing it, "there is something here from God that I need to see about myself, that I need to hear." In other words, so that I can change. "Perhaps there's something I need to learn here." What humility! Would to God we could all respond like that in all situations in life when we are challenged, when someone comes at us, and especially someone who is closest to us in relationships. And it becomes more difficult between men and women, it truly does, because this thing is rooted deeply in your minds and something you can only pray about.

I can only give some examples, I can only address this in part – *in part...IN PART...small part* – because it's up to you then to cry out to God to say, "Father show me in my mind so that I can see myself, so that I can receive what was given there, so that I can see what needs to be changed, because I know, I am convicted of the truth and the reality *I need to change!*" Because I know I need to change I ask for this – and you have to ask for it too, no matter how long you've been in God's Church, so that you can do things better in all relationships...*all* relationships. And it's a beautiful thing as we change – there is more love and greater respect in the relationships then.

What an awesome thing if in any kind of relationship, whether it be on the job, whether you're the boss or the employee, whether the employer or employee, whether it's in marriage, or whether it's just between the sexes or whatever and people are discussing something and you receive something back that you are not expecting because generally human beings, we like to get along, we like everything to go well, we want to have some nice pleasant conversation and so forth, but if somebody says something, to say something that's corrective to you of something you're doing... whew...we back up a little bit and we put up some barriers and our countenance changes. How do you deal with it in our mind? "Who do you think you are?! What are you bringing that up for?!" What a beautiful thing if you can just continue to love them and take away what they said and think about it, or think about it right there and ask God for help right there. "Is there something I need to see here? Is there something maybe I need to acknowledge and admit here?" It's hard for us, sometimes, to admit who we are and what we are.

One of the most awesome sermons that helped me make an incredible change in my life as a minister – because candidly, I wasn't trained right. I was under individuals who tended to use their authority in a way that really wasn't the best for serving. It had measures of what we call 'sheriffing' in it that I've talked about in times past. And my experience was, which is so much a part of the world and society, was seeing ministers of a mindset that there's this thinking within the Church that somehow a minister is up here and somehow doesn't have the same battles as everyone else, doesn't have to overcome,

doesn't have the same *sins* in life to battle and conquer in the mind, and can never acknowledge, can never admit it, should never be expected to admit or to talk about those things, and so there's this always trying to...it's kind of like (I don't know if I should use that or not...no, I won't)... and I heard an individual. A tape was sent out from headquarters from a minister and I had never, never, *never*...and this had to be almost twenty years of being in the Church, and he began to open up and talk about his battles. I had *never in twenty years* heard an individual take a zipper and open himself up so you could see who he was, that he had faults, that he had battles he had to fight, that he acknowledged "I have weaknesses." I had never heard a minister say they had weaknesses. It was like you had to... I don't even know how to describe it – to present yourself in a way that somehow you didn't have sin. I don't know how to explain that! But it's not true.

That's why I began to change, I began to acknowledge, to bring it into sermons, to be open with people, to be.... like driving a car - I have battles. You know it well! Some people know it so well, they've heard that so much, they think I must be one of the worst drivers in the world! I get that sometimes! "We know you got a driving problem, here's a cartoon you might like." ☺ Well, don't you know you have a driving problem too? Maybe there are some people out there who just don't have a problem when they get out there on the highway, I don't know. I don't know how you can't have one with the way people are today. ☺ I must have a lot more that I'm in prison to that I don't see yet. I'm in bondage – okay? I'm trying to come out of it. I'm trying to do better when I drive. But that's minor compared to other things of our lives, isn't it? It's a big thing, because you can do some stupid things! When you see some people do stupid things sometimes and you think...don't you place a value on your life and other people's lives? You should! People should, but they don't!

And so I saw a minister do this and I started making changes there, I started opening up. And we're all the same! And people made comments that they'd never heard such a thing before, they'd never heard those kinds of things before. I realized what an incredible, powerful tool! What an incredible tool that God uses to say, "This is what you should do. This is how I should be! ...that this is..." Anyway, we're all in this together. We're *all in this together* – nobody's better than anybody else, we all have human nature, we all have things to conquer and overcome. We all misspeak! We're not perfect. I'm not perfect in what I say. I may be God's apostle, I may be God's prophet, but I'm not perfect in what I say. You know that well... or you should; sometimes wrong scriptures and sometimes misspeak as a human being. See? Things I have to strive to do better for everyone's sake. See? So we're all human beings. We all have weaknesses, we all have problems, and we have them in relationships. And we have to come to see that those are the things that hold us in bondage to where we're not as free. Because you know what? When you're free it's a beautiful feeling. When you finally see something in your life and you're able to address it and conquer and overcome it, there's a freedom that goes with that that's just an awesomely beautiful thing. There's a peace that's there that comes in no other way.

So when He was reviled, He did not revile back, and when He suffered He didn't threaten, but committed Himself/delivered over – committed Himself to Him who judges righteously: striving to do it God's way. Put your life in God's hands. Don't worry about protecting self; don't worry about putting up this barrier. I hope you all understand that you put up barriers. Do you know that you do? Do you know that about yourself? ...that you all put up barriers. Those barriers prevent you from being closer to others. Those barriers in marriage prevent you from being closer to your own mate in life until you conquer them, or as you conquer them. Barriers prevent you from drawing closer together in a Body. Because we do! We all have barriers that we put up to where we can't fully yet be ourselves in front of others, before others. It's a process you grow in, it's a process of being free, it's a process of combating pride. Truly is!

Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, so that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; and what are we willing to bear? *This grace, this mercy, this love* that we receive from God, *this love* that we receive from Jesus Christ; how willing are we to bear for others whatever it might be? ...to carry whatever it might be for the sake of someone else, to give them more time, to deal with them in a spirit of peace, a spirit of calm, not in the spirit of contention and anger. Things don't get resolved in that kind of a spirit when those things are there, when people have anger issues or something that they haven't conquered and they're angry at each other. It's not good. You know, when you're angry at someone, when you're upset with someone it's not a good feeling is it? Do you know why? *Do you know why?* Because there's sin involved. There's always sin involved, why you take it the way you do, why you're hurt in the way you are. Sometimes it's hard to see ourselves, of what we're carrying, rather than understanding, rather than comprehending yourself and the other party.

...should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes you are being healed; it's a process. It's what it's talking about in scripture, that's what it means in the Greek. It's a process – being healed, not just healed. It's not a single one time event, it's a process.

For you were as sheep going astray but now are being returned; it says, **being returned;** again, that's a process, **under the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.**

I Peter 3 – Now Peter is moved by God's spirit to address these principles much closer to home, and so he's starting out with masters and using these examples and then getting closer to home to help us to see a spirit and an attitude here.

1 Peter 3:1 - Likewise, you wives, be in subjection, that same word 'under', 'to arrange', 'to put in order'; it's an attitude and a behaviour that we should have, that one should have. **...be in subjection to your own husbands;** Oh, husbands love that one! 'Be in subjection to your own husbands.' They don't hear what it says later on when you're to be in *subjection* to one another. But this one they like. They don't understand what's being said and why it's being said, that it reveals things about God and God's creation and God's plan for human relationships. It's an incredible thing, it truly is, when you understand it, the spirit of it and what's being given and why it's being given.

Likewise you wives be in subjection to your own husbands; it didn't end there! It didn't end there because there's a reason why it's said in this way, of something that you will need to focus upon, to work with in order for this to take place...**so that, so that if any do not obey the Logos/the Word...** you know what most people have always thought in times past? Well, that's someone who is not a part of this with you and they don't believe the same thing you do. Oh no, no, no, no, no... Your mate who is baptized with you, or before you, or after you in this particular case here, **if they do not obey the Logos/the Word of God,** it applies to them too. Do you think that happens in God's Church?

And so God says in order to help others...because you see, grace is about serving others, it's about helping others, it's not about ourselves receiving something and being on the get side of everything and everything being made easy for 'me' – it's about work you have to do to change, to know how to help and serve others, and real service comes from sacrifice. Service always comes with sacrifice! Real giving, real love.... look at God's love, look at what God is... Real love is one that has a spirit of sacrifice in it – truly does – otherwise it's not real love. That's why God gives those examples and Christ gave those examples. You know, if you love someone else and they love you back, you invite someone over for dinner and they invite you back for dinner, what big deal is that? Whoop-tee-doo! You love someone who loves you, you get along with someone and they get along with you because you're kind of alike

and you have the same kind of conversation...what kind of love is that? It's just a human selfish love. Do you do the same thing for others that don't invite you over?

My wife and I have had that in Church going back in time; invite people over and you think...and talk about others...I've had some come to us in council and say, "You know, so and so they're always inviting so and so over but they don't invite me over." Well, when's the last time you invited them over? "Never have." Well... maybe there's a lesson in there somewhere.

So, incredible sometimes how we think and we want people to do things for us, to do things toward us, but sometimes we don't think about doing it toward them and realize you give, you give, you give and through the giving, you know what? If someone can receive from it and learn from it, in time they will learn the same grace by example. We follow the example of Christ. If you step out and do those things and strive to do those things before God and strive to give to others, and strive to sacrifice in giving to others, in time, if they're being led by God's spirit, they'll come to see those things and it spreads and it becomes bigger. That's what it's about! God gives more grace so that you can have more grace to give away, more and more and more; it grows and grows and grows. It's a beautiful thing.

...so that if any do not obey the Word. Whether in the Church or out it's immaterial, because in times past this has been focused upon of someone who's not baptized with you; whether in or out. **If any do not obey the Word/the Logos they might also without/apart from Logos/the Word,** because if they're not going to listen to God's Word, if they're not going to obey God, if something happens and there is a dispute, a contention, as an example in marriage or on the job, it doesn't matter where it is, between two people, but especially in this environment here of a husband and a wife, and this takes place and the husband isn't really doing...and you know it.

Oh boy, at home do people know whether someone's living by what God says you're supposed to live by or not! ...and so they know, and if you know that a person isn't responding in the right way, that this isn't the way God says how you should... "This isn't how God says you should treat me! ...the way you're acting, the way you're talking, the way you're being selfish, the way you're not contributing, you're not helping, you're not working with the children, you're not doing your part here! You expect me to do it all!! I'm worn out, I work all day! I come home, I have to cook, I have to do this, I have to take care of the children, I have to... what are you... It get's hard after a while!" I say that because that's the way life is a lot of times and the husband is in there watching a ball game, and it's just the wife's place to be over there doing all that and I don't have to necessarily contribute and help out. And if the wife is just worn out and she can't do it anymore and she brings it up to the husband it's like all these defences go up: "I'm the husband! That isn't my place!"

"Well, it wasn't *my* place forty years ago, fifty years ago, a hundred, to go out here and have to work all day long either and do those things and then come home because society's changed so much that if we don't both have a job then we can't provide for the family and they'll come take the house away!" You're caught in a catch-22. Almost, anymore, both people have to work. So if both people have to work doesn't the husband have to do something above and beyond the way it was forty, fifty, a hundred years ago? You bet! He has to do his part!

And sometimes these things come up in marriage, don't they? And men don't always take it well. They. Don't. Always. Take. It. Too. Well...and they should. But anyway, this is what it's saying here.

So it says here, **if any don't do what they're supposed to do according to God's Word**, they're not sacrificing, they're not giving, they're not contributing, they're not living, they're not doing these things in return...okay, **that they might also, apart from the Word, be won by...**the word is **conduct**. Conversation, it often comes out in conversation. Our conduct *often* comes out in things we say, because sometimes what comes out of our mouth because of the way we're feeling about a matter isn't always real nice. It says **that they might be won by the conduct of the wives**, that's why you do it. ...understanding, being patient, being merciful; you look forward to the day that they get it in that one area, but you go ahead and sacrifice because you love them, because you understand he's a man. It's as simple as that, he's a man, he can't help himself, he's in bondage. That really is the answer. *He* is a man! *He* doesn't get it! *He* still thinks it's something else and he doesn't yet get it. He hasn't matured yet to grasp and understand what is spiritual in a relationship here, in this particular area in the household. And so you continue to be 'in subjection to', in the sense of doing your part and yielding to something that he has a battle in. It's about serving and it's about giving.

But oh, when these scriptures are read the man takes it in a different way. "See!" Because I've seen in over and over again in God's Church, I've heard it over and over...especially going back many years ago and in the way things were – because of where we were in time – and people always wanting to pull that one out! And the one about Adam and he is the head and this is the way it is; and they don't even understand why, because they don't understand it's because you're a man, fool. It's because you're a man and God made you a certain way! And so because of that He has given certain... Anyway, I always talk about these things in the man first, because you know what? We are so blockheaded and we have strength and we have power that we can mightily misuse, that comes then with a greater responsibility, candidly, if you understand.

A woman is made differently, thank God. I'd hate... pointing at myself... I marvel, the spirit of women, the beauty, the tenderness, the kindness, the gentleness that by nature is there far more than a man. Multi-tasking...I can't do that. I was made more blockheaded, thick, strong in that, it's just the way I was made, for a different purpose, to be able to, especially in the past 6,000 years if you go back about a hundred years or so and then all the time before that, why we're this way in large part, things we can do and the things we can do to help the family and accomplish for the family and so forth that's very much needed in a physical world. And we have to learn then why God made us the way we are; and so often the answer is for the woman just to understand the man.

As much as it is understanding people out here who can't understand the truth. You can't tell them about the Sabbath, you can't tell them about the Holy Days unless God's drawing them and working with them, because like we talked about yesterday, they just can't hear it yet, it's not there yet.

While they behold, notice **...that they may be won by your conduct**, the conduct of the wives, **While they behold/look upon/see...** and you know it's not a onetime event. You may just have to do it for weeks and months and years and look forward to the day, if this attitude is with it, that maybe, hopefully, prayerfully, and especially now they're going to be drawn and called because we're at that age or if they're already in that finally that spiritual light bulb will go on and they'll see something and they'll change and they'll start doing different than what they've been doing. **That they may behold your holy**, that's what the word means here, 'chaste', **holy**; that means God's in it. And so you look to God for help to respond to a matter in a way that doesn't cause conflict and bitterness and anger and a wrong reaction, because you know what, people know how to push certain buttons sometimes because we know each other so well, and if you're not careful, if you do that in a wrong way that's just bad,

that's just wrong. And so God says, No, look, seek to do it God's way, constantly – don't ever quit. And that's sacrifice. And for God to be in it too it's a matter of looking to God.

So, **while they behold your holy conduct**, again, **coupled with fear**, that means 'respect', a respect. It's talking about a kind of respect. First of all it's toward God. It's not this thing of where you're 'subservient to'... a wife is not subservient to her husband! A wife is not a *servant* to her husband – that is not her place! ...but that's where the world has put people. I *hate it* when I see the things that are sometimes in the world of a man sitting there on his big fat recliner and he asks his wife, "Honey, would you bring me a ...what do we have in there? Coors? ...a Budweiser?" (What do you have here?) "Fosters...in the fridge, babe." Well, why can't you get of that big, fat recliner and do it yourself? You think, what is she? ...a servant to you? I'm sorry, but that's the way sometimes things are, and that's sometimes the attitude of mind that husbands have had toward wives. "Your place is in the kitchen, honey. Bring me my food. Set it all up." Do you think life isn't like that sometimes? "Your place is in the kitchen." If I ever hear that one, fella's, and you ever say that around me, look out! I'll strive to do it God's way... 😊 ...as I talk to you.

But anyway, we really have to come to a point when we can kind of laugh at some of these things, because you know what, human nature is funny. Some of the greatest comedians in life are those who can make something come to life because all of a sudden we see ourselves in it and we can laugh at ourselves. What a blessing if you can laugh at yourself because then you can begin to acknowledge it and seek to get rid of it – because you don't want to be that way! Some of the greatest... they don't have to be crass and harsh and ugly about things, it's just bringing things about life because that's the way we are. And if we can laugh at our nature and realize, "Man, isn't that ridiculous? Aren't we a little ridiculous sometimes in the way we are? We can't see each other like we should..." And that's a beginning, now deal with it and conquer it and overcome it and become something different.

1 Peter 3:3 – speaking to wives and women in general Peter went on to say - **Whose adorning let it not be that which is outward**; it doesn't mean you shouldn't adorn yourself. I've known of people who think in order to be religious you shouldn't adorn yourself, and husbands have had that attitude toward wives. Just let your hair grow until it hangs over the balcony. A man should want a woman to adorn herself. He should want to sacrifice to enable his wife to adorn herself; that's the spirit that should be there, more than himself. So it's not wrong to adorn yourself, it's a beautiful thing! It's the way it should be.

In other words, as far as her focus is concerned, it's saying here, as the primary focus, **of plaiting the hair**, in other words elaborate care and preparation and the braiding that this is referring to here, **and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel**; the outer garments and so forth, of what someone wears. This isn't saying, as some religions teach, that no, it shouldn't have any of this stuff here, you should go around with something black and no buttons. You can't even have buttons because that's just pride and haughtiness. There are religions that do that in the States. We have that, maybe you have them over here. And people get these weird ideas about how people should dress and it shouldn't be nothing that's colour in it, it should be drab and bland...and give me a break! Give me a giant break!

Verse 4 - But let it be the hidden individual of the heart, in other words, God says, let this be the primary focus, because the tendency is sometimes in life, especially in a commercialized world we live in today, and if a person is thinking in a wrong way, a woman in particular here it's talking about, it's more concern about how they look to others and so forth. And so God's saying don't get overly consumed with that! It's good to do this, but don't do the other too that goes to an extreme, because sometimes a woman is more concerned (which I think is a good thing) in how they look, as long as it isn't a matter of

the fashion in the world and getting caught up in that. Because that's not so good, is it, in what people are wearing today, the skimpiness of things. That's not good; but in moderation, yes. And so again here, a desire to have those things in a balanced way, but the primary focus God is saying is what's inside. It's what's inside you, in here.

But let it be the hidden individual of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, does not decay, in other words, wear out or perish, because everything we wear, it's good, it's enjoyable, it can be done in moderation, but that's not the what the primary focus should be. Because sometimes, especially when people are younger, it can be more than what's on the inside – how they look to others, how... if I do something different, if I do it in moderation then... Some people just don't feel comfortable doing that when they're really young, especially... if you understand.

It goes on to say; **'even the ornament'** which it doesn't say in the scriptures, it's just something that's been added; that's not in the words at all in the Greek, it's just saying here, **let it be the hidden individual of the heart**, what's on the inside, **in that which is not corruptible**, in other words doesn't perish, **but of a meek and a quiet, tranquil and peace spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price**. That willingness to give, that willingness, that attitude of mind of striving to remain peaceful. God has made us different; that's what we've talked about in ordinations and so forth even, that there is that which when speaking even, that that will never change, that there is that which comes across that doesn't fit and that which does, and it's...if you can have a picture... I hate smoking, but something that's one of the ugliest things to me in life is seeing someone that might be a grandma's age, that you see as a grandma, smoking a cigarette. It's just so *ugly*! And sometimes being boisterous and loud and gruff, basically sometimes the way men are isn't feminine either. And so, again here, things that people learn to change if those things are a part of life and embrace that which is a beautiful thing that God gave to women in a beautiful way. We all have to see ourselves for where we are and what we are.

So since Peter specifically addresses wives and women, what about the men? **For after this manner in times of old**, notice what it goes on to say, more about women, **the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands**: And people misread all these things. Again, it's the same word here about a way of thinking, but it's more about why and how you are created the way you are and understanding something. To really help people to serve people it's to understand, to appreciate, to respect their battles, what they're coming out of, a desire to see them conquer and overcome what they're coming out of.

Even as Sara 'obeyed', compound word here which means 'under' as before, but now also having to do with 'listening and attending to'. In other words, listening to what's being said, not cutting it off but just an attitude of mind here that was very unique; but a reason for this as well in society. **Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord**: that's not our society today, it would be out of place. Last thing on earth I would want... ☺ - waiting for my wife to say something - because it isn't what we perceive it to be. We tend to think of this in a strange way. But I think of the South of the United States, people are taught to say, "Yes Ma'am", "Yes Sir"; it's a matter of respect, it's a matter of listening. I've had people in the Church, young people, old people, older people, because that's what they're taught as they grow up, and they say, "yes Sir". I don't want to be called Sir, but it's just the way they grow up, it's a matter of respect; "Yes Sir." "Yes Ma'am." And it's just a matter of respect, of listening to someone.

And this is what it's showing here, whatever the term is it's a matter of respect of listening to someone and showing that respect and recognizing something here that God gave *especially in times of old* – basically from the time of Adam and Eve to two years ago, a structure in the world, a structure in family,

a structure that is indeed a matter of order of things within a family, of how things are to work. But if everyone understands that structure and understands an order of those things they will not abuse it, they will not misuse it and they realize it's very seldom needed when two people love each other and care for each other and give to each other – very, very seldom. If two people live that way, very, very seldom in life will there be a need for what we call government, order in a matter, to say, “No, this is what we're going to do in this particular case.” Very, very seldom, if we understand. And so this is what it's talking about, this is what it's discussing here and we'll come back to this a little bit later.

...**whose daughters you are**, in other words, spiritually. It's like this thing about Abraham, you will do as she did, you will have that spirit, that mind and that attitude as a matter of spirit and attitude, **as long as you do well/doing right and are not afraid with any amazement**. Oh, this is a mouthful! ‘As long as you're not afraid with any amazement.’ People don't understand what that is. The Church has not understood what that is. There hasn't been a right focus upon this as to what it is.

Whose daughters you are, in other words speaking to that which is spiritual, **as long as you do well**, in other words you're doing right, you're seeking to do it God's way because you respect and honour God first and foremost, and so we strive to live the way God tells us we should, **and are not afraid**, the Greek word means ‘put to flight’ or ‘afraid’. Sadly, in some marriages there are wives who become *afraid* of their husbands! As long as this doesn't exist, it says here, because when this exists something else must take place, or you are free to do something, and *should* do something else. And the other word is **with any amazement, with any fear of terror**, of fear and of terror. It's too bad that sometimes this happens, sometimes these things have happened. They happen in life too much in the world and they happen in certain religions *way* too much in the world – traditional Christianity as well and justified by some. It's even happened in God's Church, that there are some in the ministry that have told a wife that even if your husband, if you're fearful of him - what a *sick thing* that should happen in life – even if you're fearful of him you need to stay, you need to stay there, you need to listen to your husband in what he decides, what he chooses to do.

We have one woman that's an elder in the Church today who was put out of God's Church long ago because she couldn't live like that – because the minister said, “No, you have to remain in that marriage and be in subjection to your husband in whatever he says. That's the way it is, that's the government.” Give me a break! That you have to live in fear?! That you have to be in that kind of environment? No, what you need is one of these great big round heavy iron things with a handle on it and if they come up to you and boom... deck them out and then leave. Anyway, I'm sorry...but there are some things in life that should not be taken! And *why* would a woman feel like she ever has to take it? Do we see the sickness that's in the world sometimes? That sometimes women have allowed certain things to exist – sometimes within the Church as well, that there are certain things you take sometimes, that are allowed to exist because of how you see yourself? ...and that there is a *right* to address certain things, that there is a *right* at times in life to address before God, before the ministry, to bring things out in the open if it comes to a point in time where it gets so bad that by being what we said earlier, if striving to do it right is getting nowhere and it's getting worse that you're crying out for help. Yes... yes- yes... do it.

Verse 7 - Likewise, it's a Greek word that means – ‘now the same thing’, the same way, **you husbands, and dwell with them according to knowledge**, basically that's what is already said to the wives, it just didn't say it in the same terms. It's like, in other words, just understand he's a man, it'll take a little longer in certain things; you want them to come out of that, of acting like a man. Men, you're not to act like a *man in the world*. You're not to act like a *carnal man* in the world, steeped in selfishness, because that's the way men are in the world. Men are heavily prejudiced, mightily prejudiced toward a woman!

It's in society, it's *deep* in society, and you are not to be that way! You are not to treat them in the same manner! See?

My wife and I get in elevators, and all across the world it's amazing to us sometimes how that men have no respect, they show no respect to a woman, to be courteous, to treat her as a woman because they recognize something special. Woman should be treated special by a man, but men don't as a whole because they're blockheaded, they're thick, self is what's big and they don't see the importance of what God says in how a woman should be treated and they won't let her out first, they walk right in front of her. Amazing! People are not taught if you're going through a door you open the door, you let them through. Little things of respect, it's how you think! It's how you think toward others! They just aren't in a part of the world in society. Why don't men think that way? Well, that's what men have to ask, isn't it, so they can start seeing their nature and their prejudice, and that they're not doing things God's way. I'm talking about, primarily, obviously, within the Church.

Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, that means understanding *why* the differences, *why* God made us different, *how* we think differently, *how* we operate differently, and how we are *built* differently physically. That's what God wants us to understand. That's the primary reason why government is the way it has been the last 6,000 years – because man was made strong, healthy, overpowering to a woman, as a whole. A woman isn't expected to be as strong. I don't *want* to see a woman as strong, to have the same build, wide shoulders, beefed up if they want to do work... We understand a man can overpower a woman very easily. There is a strength there for a purpose and for a reason. And that's *why* God set up the order *exactly* the way He did, creating us the way He did, starting with Adam and so forth. But there was a relationship that was supposed to be there, and one of understanding the differences, and the appreciation of that. I'm *appreciative* that women don't look like men! Yuck! Garbage! There wouldn't be the mass populations on the earth today, except for *perverted* thinking, you know.

Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, giving honour. That's something I seek to grow in more and more. You should seek to grow in that more and more...more and more to understand yourself as a human being, men, in your thinking toward women. It's not just the wife. It exists with your wife – understand it exists with women, things that aren't sound and balanced and right that have to be rooted out. And it has to do with understanding of creation and why God made us the way He did, and why we're different and how we think differently.

You know, there are books that are written about people, and some of the greatest things that people can come to do is to understand how we think differently about different things and how we react differently to various circumstances and why we talk differently and all the things that are different about us and to learn to appreciate those, and to understand and appreciate the differences. That's the beauty of life. You don't have a hard time sometimes doing it physically, to appreciate some of the differences – sometimes that goes out of control. Why not the rest that's more important? That takes work, it takes self-examination to understand why you're created the way you do, why you have certain kinds of hormones and women don't, hormones that women don't even have that affect your very thinking. You're made differently.

Sometimes in marriage and in life and just women understanding that about men, they're made differently, to help women to understand things about dress and why they shouldn't do certain things – out of love toward men. It's a matter of understanding the differences and what those differences are that *God made* to be used in a beautiful way. But human nature misuses those things, sadly so.

Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour; that means valuing highly, of great price – that attitude of mind – of great price, **unto the wife**, giving honour unto the wife. Now, we have no difficulty understanding such a word when it's used in scripture like (I'm just going to give you the scripture) **1 Timothy 1:17 – now unto the King Eternal, immortal and invisible, and only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever, amen.** But if a man's told to show honour unto the wife...a little harder to do sometimes, an honour, a respect, an attitude of mind of thinking, of value, high value. See? You know what? The more you value someone the more you're willing to do. The more you value something or someone else the more you're willing to sacrifice for them, because of how you think toward them. That helps some men to get out of that or off that big, as I said, fat recliner. Something's wrong with your *mind* if you think like that and you're not getting up and participating. Something's wrong in your thinking that isn't right before God that you have to repent of and change; to share in, to be a part of, to sacrifice for, because you value highly and honour highly another person in how you think.

Now returning to **1 Peter 3:7 – Likewise, you husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the wife as unto the weaker vessel**, that doesn't mean, just like with driving, that "She's a weaker vessel all right... she should learn how to drive like I drive." Well, you drive differently because you *think* differently, and candidly, your driving isn't so great compared to them, because they tend to drive safer, more cautiously, and I think, "What's wrong with that?" Isn't that a good thing? But not us, or not me anyway, I don't know about you... *power*, it's this thing of power and how we act sometimes. We're there to use the power; they're there to use it in a better way, candidly. So 'a weaker vessel' – without the strength, is what the Greek word means, 'without the strength'. It has to do with that which is physical, why we're *made* different like this.

In times when I've given sermons about men and women I had these two bells. One was a brass bell, you could ring it up here and bang it around and bang it and bang it and make a lot of noise, and the other one was a crystal bell. You *don't do* the same thing with crystal, you *don't* bang it like that, you treat it differently because you understand, you don't want it to break. You don't want to break them. Men can be *hard* on women to a point of breaking them. There is a different spirit, a different way that God has made them that's delicate. They aren't meant to be like we are! It was never meant that they should be able to take what we take in some things! Truly! What a shame, that in homes that that would be expected of a wife, to be like they are. Why don't you just clone yourself and marry yourself...! Anyway! I hope we see these things more and more in ourselves how we think and the differences that are there, the need to change, the need to understand this is a matter of being in prison, it's a matter of Egypt, it's a matter of something that sometimes is so deeply ingrained in our minds without God's spirit we'll never come to see it, and that's the reality.

What a beautiful thing that as people come in out of the world, when Jesus Christ returns and God's government is established, that all of a sudden they begin to see and to learn now like Israel couldn't when they came to Mount Sinai, and they begin to *see* the changes that need to take place and they begin to be taught that. That's why I *love* what Mr. Armstrong said – it's going to take three and four generations to get to a point, paraphrasing it into today's terms, in our terms, to bring people out of Egypt. That's what it's about. Three and four generations into the Millennium. Why? Because we're going to carry along with us, as we tend to do, the baggage of who we are. And the reality is we're going to rear our children with some of those prejudices because we can't help it, because we haven't addressed them yet. And they're going to have some of that baggage in their mind. Now, they're going to be better and they're going to be able to do it better than us – and we're thankful for that – and then the next generation...and it takes time to come out of Egypt, even there. What an *incredible* thing to

understand. So understand it's deeply ingrained in your mind and in your being in ways that it's difficult to acknowledge and grasp and we have to ask God to help us to see it, to look in that mirror. And we only see in part. We only see in part.

And it goes on to say here...**and as being heirs together**; what a beautiful thing, heirs together, in this together. What an awesome blessing if you're able to share in this together, **of the grace of life**; not just receiving it but living it toward each other, that grace, **so that your prayers are not hindered**. Getting rid of the sin because sin is what hinders your prayers. On and on it goes.

It would be good to pause and consider some great truths that God has revealed in this final end-time to His Church. I'm going to read through some of this. Because you see, when we address these that God gave... I thought we were through with 50. I was convicted of it at that time, this was it, 50 – what an incredible number – 50. But God was going to give seven more past the other side of Laodicea. 50 up through the period of Laodicea and 7 more past it.

52 (2) God is restoring knowledge concerning the rightful place of women in the family. This involves the start of the greater removal of the curse laid upon woman from the beginning which was the result of sin.

So again, we know what that's about and this is a part of that story, bring it back to today. So even when this was given, this was a sermon given at the very end of 2009 on December 26th that was entitled 'Restoring All Things', and I'm going to read part of this to you now as some of these things are covered that were said toward the end of that sermon. Incredible here that even though that was given back then and made comments to the effect that 'there are those things we're going to just begin to see' and here it's that much later and God is giving us the opportunity to see more! Because it takes time to digest these things and begin to understand the process of what God is doing *with everyone*.

Breaking in here:

It's in the Song of Solomon, and if you understand what the book of the Song of Solomon is about, it's a love story between a husband and a wife. It's quite strong about a husband; about a man and a woman – husband and wife relationship if you will – Jesus Christ and the Church – that's spiritual if we understand that which is physical...

So again here, it's said this is physical but the point was to learn that which is spiritual that He's showing about the Church, relationships, spiritual relationships, the way it's supposed to be.

...then we'll understand that which is spiritual. But one verse where this word is used about 'the desire'...

As we went back and talked in Genesis about, the desire, referring back to what was covered there.

Song of Solomon 7:10 - "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."

And the question was asked...

Isn't that what every woman desires? Isn't that what God says it *should* be? 'Husbands love your wives.'

He didn't say the same thing to women because this is the primary focus of something that *men* need. 'Husbands *love* your wives.'

Why did He say it this way?

The question was asked:

Why doesn't He tell the woman the same thing? ...in the same manner?

It's a beautiful verse, truly is. So we have to learn to take control of our lives and our thinking and our mind, and that's what we're shown, that's what I mentioned the other day; to train your eyes as to what you will look at and what you will not look at, and in time it becomes a natural thing. I didn't even tell my wife fully, but that's why when she wants me to look at certain things, or see certain things, people walking down the street and I say, I didn't even see... and she knows it, because I, a long time ago... a long time ago asked God for help in those things. And you learn.

You learn not even to look, focus on any certain kinds of things, you learn to have certain eye level and after a while it just becomes the way you are, but it takes God's help because it's not natural. It's not natural. The natural thing for a man is to look and look some more and look some more and start thinking as he's looking. That's the natural thing of a man, that's the truth of it, if you understand your own mind. And if you say you're not that way – pshew – yeah, you're a different creation than me, because I know you're that way if you're a man, if you have hormones...and You. Can't. Help. It. God created you that way with those hormones, but He wants you to control them. He wants you to control your thinking, He wants you to learn from that. You have certain pulls, you truly do, and you have to learn to control them, to love others by doing so, and if you don't work at it then who are you and what are you before God?

Well, there are reasons why and this is a part of it! And it's about the difference in the mind and the different ways we function and live in life. On the contrary (referring to why God has said this to men and not to women) – a man needs God's spirit and God's help to CHANGE the way he is in order to LOVE his wife...

Why do you think it was told in such power and strength, 'Husbands love your wives'? Because it's something you have to focus on in how you think and how you act.

... and not look upon her in a wrong way... as a servant! ... or as something beneath...

That just blows my mind! ...something beneath you? ...lower than? ...a servant? And yet that mentality is in society in the world, and women accept that, to be treated that way. Sad.

Amazing! ...the way women have been treated for 6,000 years! ...and it's wrong! It's not

God's way and those scriptures in Genesis are not authority for a man to rule harshly over his wife!

But that's how religions puts it so often, and traditional Christianity and some of that garbage came into the Church.

Yes, there's government and order, and that's why I've always said, "If you love your wives, husbands, the way God says, you don't have to worry about any of that! About the things that sometimes you are concerned about.

If you love you're going to get a response back that's good. See? You don't have to worry about order of government, because you'll be of a mind that's serving and sharing. I've given the simple example... I don't have the time here – about a husband and a wife. You know, we just have a simple thing that is good if people live by it, and it should be that way in the Church as a whole, that we shouldn't strive to do something 'our' way. I, candidly, don't want anything in our home that's my way, but both of our ways. And if we don't agree on something, I don't care if it's a simple as a plant outside, as I've mentioned, we just don't do it unless we *both* like it. And there are so many homes and stuff that have conflict because basically, oftentimes, it comes down to the husband saying, "No, this is what we're doing." or... "this is how we're spending the money..." or..."This is not how we're..." There's no discussion, there's no talking it out, there's no matter of a desire to have great honour toward the wife and having a desire to make her fulfilled and happy. Why isn't that mind there? That should be what becomes more natural in the man in his thinking toward a wife. That's what *should* be there, and frankly, that's what grows through time. And it's a beautiful thing, what you're able to share together in life then. Marriage, life toward men and women becomes better and better. And it's not just in the marriage then, it begins to affect all relationships in how you think, how you treat others.

This world has been *ROBBED* by *Satan*, because of sin, of the wholesome, exciting relationships that God offers of sharing in life;

Satan's done an incredible number in that, truly has. I want to rush forward here a little bit – don't have time to go through all this. We receive in part, whatever part you receive today you have to pray that God give you ability to see even more.

Number 53, just to make it clear here. We had two incredible things that God has given to the Church, this one here...

53 (3) The ordination of women in the Church.

Now, the reason I'm going through this today and mentioning this toward the end of the sermon because this is something my wife and I of recent time have come to understand back in the States and in talking with different ones as we have through a period of time here now, that there are some in the ministry, and maybe evidently quite a few, who don't understand the full ramifications of this one right here.

53 (3) The ordination of women in the Church.

It's a beautiful thing! It's a door that God has opened up into the future that's an awesome thing, and it's going to be a very powerful tool in helping to set things better in a right way. Because you know what the structure of order should be for God's Church no matter what? A spiritual one, not a physical one, and that's what God is doing. He's changing the order of things for His Church, for the world in the future. It is a spiritual order in a greater way so that people can comprehend and understand. It's no longer a matter of a physical thing that started from the time of Adam and Eve, and because the world was in the situation that it was, that it needed to exist that way for 6,000 years, for a form of civility, for a form of an ability to function, for *selfish* mankind for 6,000 years... and even in the home, that things were set in a certain way. But now all that's changing! ...because we're all going into a spiritual world, if you will, in the sense of everyone has the blessing and opportunity of being in God's Church, and they'll see things on a spiritual plane. No longer is it a matter of a physical structure for the sake of the way it's been for 6,000 years of having some kind of structure that could exist. That's being changed.

With the revelation of the 52nd Truth, God is continuing to reveal the rightful role of women with the 53rd truth by showing that God has and will continue to work with and through women to help prepare the path for the return of Jesus Christ and to fulfill a breaking of bonds...

...*bonds*, bondage, captivity...didn't even know the fullness of what was being said there! Because I hope it is for you as it is for me, that this is being magnified many times over, this matter of coming out of Egypt, this matter of coming out of slavery that's so deeply embedded in our being, and it's an ongoing process through time.

And here we are as God leads us into a new age, the blessing of being able to see these things in a greater way, because the reality is, just to make it clear here, that *within the family this changes everything*, within the family, within the home! I've heard some people make comments that they don't understand - yes, and we have more and more fitting into that category - and that is a spiritual order of things. But see, that won't be a big thing if everybody's living by what they should. It shouldn't be a big thing now if we're all living by what we should be; that government is not an issue! When is government needed? When is government in God's Church needed? When something's going wrong! When somebody's doing something that's really wrong! When something needs to be addressed in order for there to be order and unity and oneness...and it's the same way in a physical family. But government is so often abused and misused, it's a matter of *power* and authority and men have *misused that for 6,000 years*, as a whole, in families, in life. And we're blessed to be able to break that. What a blessing to be able to begin to break that and to live a life that's richer and fuller. I'm thankful of that.

Marriage is an *awesome* relationship in life, beautiful in life, and the more we conquer and overcome the richer it becomes and we want this for the whole world. So if we understand we're not threatened by that. You shouldn't be threatened by me. You shouldn't be threatened by any minister and fearful of any minister in the sense of being around them. We're here to serve, we're here to help, but yet in times past, there was a kind of fear that was wrong...and it shouldn't be that way. And neither should it be in the family. It's a matter of unity and oneness and cooperation and love. Only when something is not coming to a point of being able to be agreed upon, which candidly should be a rarity, should a decision have to be made in a government fashion before God. But the reality is, in the Church now, more and more into the future in the Millennium, there are going to be wives who are ordained and the husbands are not...and the decision will be made by the wife if there's conflict, not by the husband, *that's all in the past*, behind us. It's the matter of the order of God's spirit and how God dwells within us. And when it's used that way, when it's used the way God gives it, it's a beautiful thing.

So, with that I hope we're all excited about this process of coming out of Egypt and excited by seeing what this means for family. Because you know what? It's a beautiful thing, family; and the more people can live and enjoy each other and share things in a right way without regret, without problems, without conflict, without anger, without hardship, without difficulty, it's a beautiful thing.

~~~end