

Preparing Ourselves Spiritually – Pt. 3

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Today we're continuing with the last sermon in a series entitled *Preparing Ourselves Spiritually* with this being *Part 3*, the final one. Interesting now that we're actually in Nisan, Abib. We have entered a new year on God's calendar, and not too long now the Passover season that we're entering in the first week of April is all about what God has been preparing to do for the past 6,000 years, and now we're there. That's what we believe. You know, it's kind of surreal if you're living this, and all of you are, that's why you're here and listening in today, it's because this is what we believe. But you're learning things about faith that you have never understood too.

Those who have gone before you have done exactly the same kind of things. I think about Noah and the family getting on the ark and how it wasn't raining yet, when the doors were sealed but they were still having to scoop and clean things for a few days. It wasn't a pleasant thing, a lot of animals there and they had to keep care of them and had to wait for the rain and it wasn't coming immediately. That had to be a bit of a strange feeling. Okay? And so many others who have lived through things in the past, you're learning about what it's like to live by faith.

It's one thing to read about it in the Bible, it's one thing to go through and read those things in Hebrews, but when you're told certain things are going to transpire, certain things are going to take place and you live it, it's a totally different story. You go through different experiences, you go through different emotions, but it has to do with what you believe, is why you do what you do, and it's unique. It's unique to those who have had that experience, because once it's done it's no longer a matter of faith, it's no longer a matter of hoping and desiring what God has given and what God has said is going to take place. It's a matter of a reality then.

And so again, it's a unique experience, what we're going through, and it's a unique thing indeed that we live in this particular period of time at the end of 6,000 years. As I mentioned last Sabbath, there is no other period of time I'd rather live it. If I were to pick any time in 7,100 years of mankind in which to have the opportunity to live, it is this one, to be able to witness what we're witnessing, to live at this age, to live at this time is incredibly unique. The end of 6,000 years of man and the testimony, the witness of man at the end of the time here is *exactly* what it's been for the whole period. Mankind does not want God's way of life. Mankind cannot govern himself. The whole history of man is that man cannot govern himself, can't do it, you can't give peace, you can't give democracy - and democracy isn't right in the first place! It isn't God's government; it isn't God's way of life! And yes, it may be the best that man can come up with but it isn't right, it isn't what God's government is all about.

And so that's what we look forward to, and all those who have gone before, it talks about a City they looked for, whose builder and maker was God...when it talks about Abraham and different ones in Hebrews. It talks about those individuals who lived a life and it wasn't this world that they desired, it wasn't the way of this world, it wasn't the governments of this world. That's why you don't have to look very far; we can look just down the road here a little ways – New York City and an organization called the United Nations, and they put a statue out there that's out of the book of Isaiah [2:4 - 'They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.'] But you think of the hypocrisy of all that and how man cannot govern himself. And that's the whole history of what we've gone through, man can't give peace to anyone either.

It comes from God, Jerusalem, the meaning of peace, having to do with peace and what God is bringing to this world. And so for 6,000 years that's exactly what God has been working up to, a point in time where He can lead mankind out of Egypt, out of spiritual Egypt, out of bondage. People don't think they're in bondage, they don't understand that they're not free. People in this country are not free; they think they're free. The best that man can offer, really, is here, in the sense of supposed protections and so forth and a certain amount of law and order. But even in that, there are places in Europe that are much safer to walk around in than here in the United States. There are cities here in the United States that are far, far worse, have far more crime, far more killings in one city alone (if you want to look at different large cities) than all of Europe! ...all of Europe in the deaths by murder and so forth! Sick world we live in, but we tend to think in this country here that we're the best, Europe tends to think they're the best, everyone thinks that, in essence, that they're the best. But the reality is none of it is good, it really isn't; a lot of hypocrisy in the world!

And hopefully you're learning that because that's what God wants us to learn, about hypocrisy, and that this is not the answer. *Only His* way is the right way. It's just like what you're living; you have to come to a point where you're in deep conviction that there is no other way to live life but by obeying God, by doing the things *exactly* the way God says to do them because it's a matter of the spirit... and who does it? Even in traditional Christianity, who does it? Who lives by God's law? ...about honouring your father and your mother and understanding what that means? ...about not committing adultery - it's one of the greatest problems in this country. Sick, sick world.

And so after 6,000 years, finally, the opportunity of being freed from Egypt, and that's *exactly* what these days are picturing that we're getting ready to go into, the final time...the final time within a period of 6,000 years. Obviously hasn't been observed through most of it, except for God's people, to what they knew, for what they understood, because some of God's people have always been on the earth at different points in time throughout history, throughout the 6,000 years. God has worked with different ones to be here, to be alive, to be teaching His way of life and living His way of life, to be a witness of what man has been like through that entire period of time. But as far as the world is concerned they have not lived God's way except for those that God has called and worked with. And so God is leading people out of captivity, that which they don't even know that they're in, out of slavery to bondage.

At the end of the sermon last Sabbath we had come to the point where we were starting to be reminded of the last sermon of the Feast on the Last Great Day this past year, and it was about the final sermon that was entitled 'A Time to Be Sobered'. The entire Feast, as I talked about last Sabbath... I look back at things and how God leads and guides and directs us and am dumbfounded, in awe, that finally...and how appropriate that the last Feast of Tabernacles was all about what God's getting ready to do in the world, about what these days picture that we're entering into, Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, of delivering mankind out of spiritual Egypt, out of slavery. And that's what the focus of the Feast was all about, sermon after sermon after sermon...was about that freedom of what God's leading mankind to.

The last sermon at the Feast was a very unique one in that respect, because it was indeed, as the sermon was entitled, 'A Time to Be Sobered'. It shook a lot of people. That's what God had designed it for, that's what Jesus Christ gave it for, gave it to me to give, so that it would shake people, to help you to think about, "What is the most important thing in life? ...in *your* life? ...in what you're living?" and the bottom line is it is what you're living, no matter what happens on earth at any time for any of God's people, it is the fact that you're obeying God, that you're striving to live God's way of life in the best way you can with what God has given to you, it truly is! And you don't stop doing that no matter what.

But, again, as I was mentioning in that sermon, 'A Time to be Sobered', and mentioned last Sabbath, we are still *in* that time. We are still in a time to be sobered; this isn't a time to let up. You're going to be tried, that's the whole message of these three sermons, if you will, this is a time to focus upon your own spiritual life, where you are spiritually, because living by faith, when you get down to some of the greater moments of time that God has ever given, and when we talk about that, you go back in the book of Hebrews and you look at some of the things that are mentioned by the people of faith, it wasn't a matter of their entire lifespan that's covered and talked about, it's the great *moments* of their life, it's the *momentous* times of their life because that is what spells it all out as to what they were living anyway! And because they were living it then they went through those momentous time successfully so – because they were living God's way of life and so they were living by faith and they were able to go through those great things.

Let's turn over to Hebrews 11, the faith chapter, and look at some of that. Things that are mentioned throughout scripture – the very name Noah - What's he known for? His life? When he comes on the scene, when God begins talking about the things He gave to Noah, it was a momentous occasion that God was going to work toward; over a hundred years! Can you imagine 120 years? Can you imagine building on something for that long? Most people in our time period don't even live that long! Very few live to be a hundred years old, and for a longer period of time they were building a ship! You talk about being mocked and laughed at...I'm glad they didn't have the internet back then but they didn't need it, really! Because everyone, civilisation and where it was gathered together and the knowledge of what they were doing, it went far and wide. "There's crazy Noah! Look at this thing!" I mean, to travel far – nothing had ever been built like that before. Incredible! And so that's why his name screams loudly as to what he did and what he lived by; and then even as I mentioned at the beginning here, even to the very end, they finally get on there, the doors are sealed and still waiting seven days before the waters came. Incredible!

Wonder how his family felt... wonder what his sons thought then, those that were not faithful. Still blows my mind when I think about it; here are individuals that saw the world destroyed, man had become so *corrupt*, his lifespan was so long, several hundred years long that people could live, and they became, if you will, *experts* at evil. You talk about cunning, you talk about evil, you talk about the mind, corruption that was so deeply imbedded in people – God said it has to be destroyed. Didn't shake people up too much, didn't shake up his own sons; actually became angry with God. It's hard to imagine.

Hebrews 11:8 - By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place that he should later receive for an inheritance, that's what he was told, "You're going to receive it for an inheritance. I'm going to give you this; I'm going to give it to your families, from your seed. From your seed great things are going to happen." Some of the things God told Abraham. What did Abraham see? He saw a son born that he was willing to sacrifice, and God stopped him before he did it, but at that point in time God said, "Abraham, now I know you. I know what you'll do in all circumstances and situations in life. Now I know you." And it just simply says about Abraham, **he obeyed; and went out, not knowing where he went**. He didn't know where he was going. Sometimes we don't know where we're going. We think we know, we think we have a plan, we think we have everything outlined for us, and candidly, we do more at this age, at this time, than any other time that mankind has ever lived. God has given us more of a picture, an ability to see things.

Says, **[By faith] he sojourned in a land of promise, as in a strange country, a foreign country, dwelling in temporary dwellings/tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:** His

wife died, he married another, had several more sons – doesn't tell us too much about them because God had a plan of what He was going to do through a son that would lead up, finally, to a promise that He gave to Abraham about a seed, a Son, the very Son of God. Incredible stories! Abraham didn't see the fulfillment of a lot of things. He lived in a different land. He didn't see the fulfillment of very much, but he believed God. He believed God and lived a life faithful to God, obedient to God, but He didn't see these promises come about, he didn't live through that time, neither did Isaac, neither did Jacob. Matter of fact, there was a time when the family had to flee and go into a different part of the world. They went into Egypt to survive. They didn't see the promises fulfilled, and yet Abraham passed along to Isaac, Isaac believed it, he passed it along. Incredible! Jacob on down through time.

And it says, **he looked for a City which has foundations**, that which *God* established for mankind to live by, a way of life that God has established, a *Kingdom* that God has established, **whose builder and maker is God**. And so if anyone holds onto what man has built he's holding on to the wrong thing. If we think we are going to take anything with us out of this into a new world we're sadly mistaken, because it *all* has to be changed, *all*, one way or another, has a corruption, the hideousness if you will, of a wrong mind that's influenced it. Truly has. Everything! Education, government, religion - that's just a beginning; and that's permeated everything in society, in *societies* throughout the world. It's what *you* battle when you come into God's Church, to be freed of Egypt, to come out of sin. Because that's what God shows us, coming out of sin, coming out of Egypt is a matter of coming out of sin, it's a matter of a change of mind that has to take place, a transformation in the way we think, and everybody has to go through that in time. It's just that we're blessed to go through it earlier. I hope you feel blessed by that because it isn't easy.

Talked to some today and even last night about this process of life you go through when you're called; it's not meant to be easy for us and for those who've been called out in the first 6,000 years. It's difficult. It's in a difficult world that isn't God's world and yet you live this way of life and you find out what it's like to live God's way of life in a world that isn't God's yet. He makes it very clear who's the God of this world, and it isn't God yet. It's about to be though.

Different ones through time – says a lot about Abraham here; it goes on and discusses some of these things about Abraham and then finally some things about Jacob, Isaac in **verse 20...By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come**. They were both blessed but received different blessings of what God was going to do and how He was going to work through these families.

It was by faith; *they never received the promises! They didn't receive them! They didn't get them but they believed in them! They believed what God said!* **By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshiped:** he believed it. He believed what was given to him from his father, that was given to him from his father, and on.... Incredible! These are incredible stories, they truly are, when you understand more about faith today than what you even did two years ago or three years ago or ever how long you've been in God's Church. You're starting to understand things about faith in a way that you never did before except the difference is that you get to receive them, you get to receive of so many of the promises that God gave, because they're for our time, they weren't for their time. And some of the things that had to do about a Promised Land, even that isn't what it was all about.

When God finally took Israel out of Egypt and they started journeying then for forty years, the way it turned out, and then finally when Joshua led them into *the* Promised Land, *it isn't what it was all about!* It was only a 'type'; a 'type' of something God was going to do later on because that was all very physical! Yes, they were going to have a *physical* nation, but that isn't what it's all about, it's about a

spiritual one! And this is where we are, this is what *we* get to experience, this is what *we* get to see come to pass – the greater meaning of those things that God did long ago. And this is *awesome* to understand! But sometimes until you live it you don't grasp the magnitude of it!

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because of what his parents believed. And on and on the story goes, talks about Moses, things we know about Moses and all that God fulfilled and did through his life and the momentous occasions there, especially as they left Egypt. You can read stories of others and realize that it's a part of a process that people live by and that you live by as well, and it's not easy. You can read their stories and maybe you think it was easy! It wasn't easy! Little surreal for them? You bet!

So again here, 'A Time to be Sobered', the title of that last sermon on the Last Great Day. As I mentioned, we're still *in that time*. We need to understand the importance of being sobered on a spiritual plane because as time goes on, as we continue forward, it doesn't mean it's going to get any easier by any means.

Again, a few excerpts from that particular sermon:

As the words for sober are used in scripture, they have to do with being of sound judgment—of a right mind...

That's what it means when you talk about being sobered spiritually. It talks about right judgment. Where does that come from? It comes from God. The ability to have right judgment in matters in your life is something that comes from God. It has to do with *your* focus upon God, your trusting in God, your believing in what God has to say and looking to Him for the help, the guidance, the direction, the answers in your life, of a right mind. Most of the time we already think we have a right mind. That's what we're striving to grow in, that's what we're striving to develop, that's what God is working to mould and fashion within us, a right mind, because it has to do with the way you *think*, it has to do with your thinking process and the judgments you make, and more of the meaning of the word 'to be alert' spiritually...

—and to be alert spiritually...

...just like we talked about the *real* meaning of what is called the 'Night To Be Much Observed'. We dwell in, we live in the night. 'Observe' has to do with being watchful and being alert and being on guard spiritually, being close to God.

So of all time, the point of all this is it's not a time to let down, it is not a time just to want to get the time by you and past you. It is a time to use, in a wise way, to draw closer to God. And that's what we're striving to do as we draw closer to even next Sabbath here in a fast we're going to have, a unique fast. We had a unique fast a year ago on Passover. I candidly believe there has probably never been a time in God's Church, or through time, where God's people have fasted on Passover day. But the meaning of that in what we did as we are drawing closer to the end here has incredible meaning, it truly does. And now the fast that's coming up next Sabbath before we enter into, indeed, a final Passover in the age of mankind, just before He comes back again a second time.

And so again, another quote from that sermon:

SO, what do you believe concerning this end-time? What is your conviction concerning God's calling you into His Church? Are you *certain* of your convictions?

You're tried in those things! Where are you? Because within the Church I can tell you right now there is a wide gamut of ideas and beliefs and where people are spiritually in this process – they truly are! You're tried in those things as to what your convictions are. And then another question was asked:

Are you certain of what you will do in your response to God and His leading you?

It's an awesome thing, it truly is, to examine in our lives. That's why to me it's awesomely exciting right now, to throw everything into what we're doing. We have prepared for this time – matter of fact, today was the first time, I just happened to be looking for some other things on the internet, and all of a sudden www.the-end.com, www.the-end.com, www.the-end.com. I haven't seen it for a long time on there when I have looked for various things, and today, every time I looked www.the-end.com, because we keep putting more into it, because this is where we are, the exposure that's there so that when it comes to that point in time we'll be able to be found easily. That's what we're building up to, every week going up twenty percent, twenty percent, twenty-five, sometimes more, until there's *nothing*.

We are entering IN a time and entering into a deeper time of great spiritual conflict and war.

That's what we focused upon this past year at the Feast of Tabernacles; that was stated. That hasn't lessened. ...great spiritual conflict and war – you felt a lot of that. Some of you have gone through some incredible things in the past year, yes, but since the Feast of Tabernacles things have been stirred up immensely in a spirit world, they truly are. Because they know this is it for them, that they're coming down to the wire. That's why the demons asked Christ, "Have you come to torment us before our time?!" They *knew* they had a lot more time by things that God had said. They didn't know the exact time but they knew there was more time for man, they knew there was six days in there, six thousand years and they knew they weren't anywhere close to it by the time Jesus Christ came along to die as our Passover. They knew who He was! Incredible! "Have you come to torment us before our time?!" They're in torment right now! They're in torment because it has to do with what's up here, [in the mind], because of where they are in time. They know their time is very fast winding down and things are stirred up in the world around us.

So as mentioned again:

We are IN a time and entering into a deeper time of great spiritual conflict and war.

Not to be taken lightly. They are not to be messed around with. That's why you're to be alert and on guard more than ever. Because when it talks about Satan being 'like a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may devour', it means what it says. And now is a more critical time in that area than ever before, not a time to let down. You don't want to be one of those! And yet I still know of people that go by the wayside. It kills me! It hurts! All the way to the end, to understand, to know that there are going to be those who just throw their hands up in the air, and I think, "Why?! We're almost there!! Can you not hold on a little bit longer?!" It's like (I mentioned last Sabbath), when Christ went to pray, because He knew what was going to happen to Him, *His prayers were so intense because He believed*

and He knew what He was getting ready to go through! None of us have ever experienced that with that kind of a mind.

We know some things that are going to come to pass, but even there we're so very human still. But what He knew...what He knew that was written in the book of Isaiah about Him, what He was going to suffer through was so real that He perspired, droplets of blood came through His perspiration. Awesome to understand, by thinking about it, by praying about it, it was so intense in His mind, in His being.

Speaking of those beings, they know they have but a short time, they are stirred up and this is not a time to let down. So all the way to the end here, again, thinking about what I said about Jesus Christ, that He asked the disciples, when He was praying (we just talked about that) what He went through because it was so real in His mind. He went away to pray and He came back and said, "What?! Could you not watch with Me for one hour? Could you not stay up a little longer?" But the lesson there was for us now, for the Church that would follow, and it was a matter of being alert spiritually because that's what He used that opportunity, those things to teach. It was about staying awake spiritually, being on guard. And this was part of the message that was contained in that example of what Jesus Christ gave. But I think of that as where we are now. "Could you not wait just a little longer? Could you not stay alert just a little bit longer? Here we are almost down to the end of it all and you can't stay alert, *fight* just a little bit longer?!" We don't know what we're throwing away sometimes in life.

Another statement made as we were going through that sermon; then we'll go to some scriptures here.

The conflict has not lessened around us although we have often been unaware of its magnitude.

Speaking of spiritual conflict and the spiritual wars that go on around us. It's hard for us to grasp those things sometimes, that there are spiritual beings out there who are stirred up and they war, they fight, they move and motivate through attitudes and a spirit that works with the mind of human beings to agitate, to magnify feelings, ideas, thoughts, and make them worse. They stir up and agitate.

That power that seeks to wage conflict and war is now being stirred up and so many of you have never experienced such wrath around you.

That's why you can't let down, because you haven't experienced those things. A lot of us have. A lot of us have during the apostasy; we experienced that in a very powerful way, that wrath that was stirred up against God's Church. Let's turn over to 1 Peter 5 - because again, all this is about an encouragement in the final part of our race here not to let down, not to let up, but to put everything into it, throw ourselves into it, to be spiritually on guard, to be alert, understanding this isn't over until it's over, God's Kingdom isn't here until it's here.

1 Pet. 5:6 Humble yourselves [be willing and desirous {on a spiritual plane} to wear sackcloth]...

That's what it's talking about. When people fasted there was this routine they went through and part of it was to wear sackcloth. Why? Why is that lesson there? Because it's about humility which is the opposite of pride which is the opposite of relying on ourselves, or trusting in ourselves. It's a matter of

seeking to trust in and rely on God, to wait on God, to look to God. Humble yourselves – to understand God has the answers, we don't!

...Humble yourselves... therefore under the mighty hand of God,

It's about an attitude toward God; to realize your life depends on Him, on Him and His Son to deliver you, to strengthen you. He brought you into the truth and only He can keep you in it. And when we know that and we understand that then we have strength and He will bless that strength even more so. It says, again:

Humble yourselves...therefore unto the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.

And I think, "We don't have a whole lot of time!" This was written a long time ago and everyone who has ever been in the Church through time here since these things have been written, since the Church began and on, all the different eras of God's Church, the seven era's of God's Church that people have lived through, to come down to this point in time here to think how incredible it is. They lived and died in this way of life. Here, we live in it. We live in this time to the very end now. And it says...

...that God may exalt you in due time.

That's why I think about where we are, for those who are a part of the 144,000, very few that are left that are going to be added to that at this point in time that are alive; the rest of you who've been called to live into a new age – you have a head start, you've been trained, you've been given an opportunity in ways you don't even begin to comprehend, to serve, to help in a new world, a new age. Just hold on! God will strengthen you up and lift you up and exalt you and give you those things to do. He's called you for a purpose, and so much of that has to do with where we're going. And you have a head start! You have been able to study, to practice, to pray, to make changes in your life that have given you an incredible head start. There's a lot of work to be done as soon as Jesus Christ returns, and the 144,000 aren't going to do it all. You're going to be very *involved*...more than you can begin to comprehend.

Vs. 7-8 Casting all your care [worries, stressful concerns, anxieties...]

Where it says don't take any anxious thought; it's the anxieties that are there that sometimes people get. And it's understandable in this age to have some of those things happen to you; the doubt, the thoughts "What if..." the 'what if's'. When you live by faith you can't worry about the 'what if's'. You just do what you've been given to do; that's what you live.

Casting all your care...

...all your stressful concerns, your anxieties, your anxious thoughts...

...upon Him; for He cares for you...

He's called you for a purpose! *God* cares for you. He hasn't called you to this to lose. He hasn't called you to this to not make it, to not accomplish, to not succeed, to not conquer. He's called you to conquer

and He'll help you to do those things but we have to make choices along the way. And when you understand what this word even means more so here, when...

He cares for you...(in other words)... **[you are the object of His desire, His care, His love]**. What an awesome thing for God to do and He's getting ready to do it for the whole world, but what an awesome thing to be pulled out of the world early, to have opportunities in great ways because of a great purpose that God is doing. It's *His* calling, it's *His* purpose. We don't understand it, we're just thankful to be a part of it. It goes on to say:

8 Be sober...

Just what I mentioned earlier... Be sober, be sober-minded. Understand that there are reasons why these verses are here in the Bible. Understand that there are reasons why God inspires at different times for sermons to be given out of here, because there are things we need to focus upon, and especially now.

Be sober, be vigilant...

That word means... just like the 'Night to Be Much Observed', when we talked about that. 'Night to Be Much Observed' – we live in the night, we're to be observant, watchful, on guard. This word vigilant has to do with being...

...**[alert, watchful** (that's what it means in the Greek language)—**spiritually, toward self]** because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion...

He's always tried to thwart God's purpose. He's always gone after those with whom God works; that's the way he's been. He tried to go after Christ before and after His birth; tried to destroy all the way through His life. Incredible! And everyone that God has ever worked with, that's the way it's been.

...because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour:

He can't devour you – he *can't touch you* if you're faithful to God, if you're *vigilant*, if you *strive* to have this attitude of mind, a humble spirit and you are truly looking to God for your strength, for your guidance, for your direction, for your help. If you're indeed looking to Jesus Christ. You know the primary way you do that? He's your Passover, He died for you *so that* you could be forgiven of your sins, *so that* He and His Father can dwell in you, live in you through the power of the holy spirit. That's an awesome thing, that God desires to live in and dwell in us, because it's the only way we can live right. Because if He's not dwelling in you you can't live right, you can't be of a sound mind, you can't grow in a sound mind, you can't think right, your thoughts will not be right; instead, they'll just turn inward, selfish and distorted, perverted, backward, influenced by wrong influences of life. Only God can lead and guide and direct us to have a sound mind, a right mind, right thoughts.

...because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour.

Verse 9 - Whom resist steadfast in the faith; How do you resist? He can't touch you if you resist steadfast – *steadfast* – not wavering, not faltering; Going before God when you need help and crying out to God and saying, "I need help! I need help to fight 'this', to fight 'that'..." perhaps the wrong thinking and doubts that come into the mind. That's understandable, that's a part of your life! Those things are just a part of life; you're not the lone ranger! But you have to cry out to God for help, for deliverance, because He's the only one, God the Father and Jesus Christ are the only ones who can help you in those things. And that's what God desires to do, to give you that help.

Whom resist...Whom? He's talking about Satan and the demons, that power that's far greater than what we are. That's why I go back to John so often and read those verses back there in 1 John 4, 'because greater is He that is in you'... *in you*... 'than he that's in the world', speaking about Satan and the demons. Because God's in you! That's where your power, your life is! So again: **Whom resist steadfast in the faith;** By what you believe - it's because of what you believe in this way of life, that you're living it. ...**knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world.**

That's why I made a comment here, you're not the lone ranger; you're not alone in this. We all share in this! We share in this battle! We share it differently, we go through different trials, we go through different hardships, but we share in the same things, the same things come at you, they truly do, in a spirit world.

Verse 10 – But the God of all grace who has called us into His eternal glory by Christ Jesus; Do we just read through things like that without thinking about what it means? Do we understand? Do we meditate upon what's there and pray about it? **But the God of all grace;** God is the one who grants grace. Do we know what grace is? We've talked about that! It has to do with forgiveness, it has to do with patience; and that's the way God treats us – with patience, with mercy...*mercy, long-suffering* with His creation. It means there are things that He sees above and beyond. He sees us for what we are, but He knows what we can become.

But the God of all grace, who has called us, so God has to call us out of this world, because He does give us grace, He gives us mercy, He gives us patience, He brings us to the point where we can be forgiven of sin. ...**who has called us into His eternal glory through Jesus Christ/by Jesus Christ;** and so, into His eternal glory? We know! The world doesn't understand! They think when you die you go someplace. Where do you go? Well, it's either up there or down there... and you don't want to go down there where it's hot, where there's like lava flowing around or something – I don't know – lava and little things with pitchforks and they're trying to stick you with them or whatever it is. But if you've been good you're up there! And then that causes people problems with family and different ones because they know there were a lot of times when you weren't good. And so it causes doubt and frustration in people's lives sometimes.

No, God's called us. Who teaches? Mr. Armstrong used to ask that, and some of the literature that was written got to the point. *Who teaches* what our purpose is? Our purpose of life is not to remain in a human body and one day either be up there or down there and somehow kind of floating around on kind of a spiritual cloud, I guess, or maybe fishing... because a lot of people like to quote that one there and say, "He always loved fishing. I know that's what he's doing up there." You think, what kind of a meaning is that? I would be so sick and bored in a week or two - two months, two years...what do you need? How much time do you need to fish to get kind of tired of it? Is that what you want to do the rest of your life? ...just sit out there on the banks and fish? ...sit around on a cloud and look on the face

of God? Do you think God wants that? Just millions and billions of people just looking up at Him?! What kind of a life would that be? What kind of a God would that be? Seriously! And yet we know and understand that God wants us to be in His Family, that there are great and awesome things into millennia of time that we can't even begin to comprehend because we're so narrow minded anyway. We think of a lifespan maybe of 70 years, of time for people to live and die, and something beyond that is hard for us to grasp, to comprehend what God has put out there and placed out there in the universe that we're going to have a part of one day.

...who has called us into His eternal glory, by/through Jesus Christ; to become a part of the *God Family*, to become a part of *Elohim*. *Awesome!* ... **after that you have suffered a while**, what does that mean? It means that since I was called in 1969 I've done some suffering; hasn't been a picnic all along the way. I've been very blessed all along the way, but it hasn't been easy all along the way because you fight against the pulls of this world, you fight against your own mind, your own human mind, because we're very carnal. The human mind is selfish by nature; that's just the way we are! We're selfish! That's why I mention it so often; it bears repeating over and over again, because there are people who were around a lot longer than you've been around, who went out and *taught* this way of life, who never got it when Mr. Armstrong said the best love that he could give an example of that human beings have is a mother's love to her own child. She gave delivery....and that should, to him as he pointed out, should be the greatest example of the potential human love that there is – and yet there were people who didn't understand that, because he said, that's still selfish love, it's not *God's love*, it's not the love of God. Because people, human beings, mothers or fathers aren't capable of loving others the same way they do their own child! God does far above and beyond that...loves us, has purpose for us, has a plan for us – all human beings – above and beyond anything that a parent could ever begin to hope for and dream for. So, we're selfish, and it's hard for human beings to understand that, to realize, "I want more than this. I *want* to be able to love others with that kind of capacity, with that kind of an ability!" What an awesome thing!

What an awesome thing not to have prejudices, "Well, you're not my child, you're so and so's child and I know them..." To be empty of prejudice, prejudice of race that people have in their lives. To me it's a sickening thing! As I mentioned last Sabbath, prejudice – men toward women or women toward men – prejudices that are there in the world that people have to fight to get rid of. Prejudices! It doesn't matter where it is it's throughout society because people don't have the love of God! They're selfish by nature, we all are. And so we have to fight that fight. And so since 1969 I've been fighting that fight; and that's why it says here, **after you have suffered a while**. You have to suffer in this physical... because you have to experience that, you have to learn to fight against self.

People who live in the Millennium are still going to have to fight against their own nature, because that nature is still selfish. They won't have to deal with Satan anymore and the demons anymore, but they're still going to have to come to see things in themselves – which God will help them to come to see themselves because it's the only way we can change, when we come to see and have a desire, "I don't want to be this way. I don't want to be selfish. I don't want to make selfish judgments. I want to be of a *sound mind*. I want to have the mind of God more, to be at one with God – atonement." That's why I love the spelling of it: at-one with God; to be of the same mind, to have His thinking, not our thinking, not our selfish thinking.

...after you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen and settle you. And that doesn't happen until we go through this - and then finally it does and we enter into just what it talked

about before 'who has called us into His eternal glory', to be in the God Family. **To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever, Amen.** A lot of things to be thankful for.

The sermon we're getting ready to go through next Sabbath as we fast, as we humble ourselves before God, a desire we have within ourselves while we're fasting, while we're not eating, while we're not drinking, which is a time of humbling yourself and learning some of the greatest lessons of life; that you can't go a long time without food and water. How much longer in that which comes from God? How long can you go without God dwelling in you? How well can you do? How *dangerous* is that? ...to not be indeed seeking to be close to God all the time, to be experiencing the life of God living and dwelling within you.

So that's what we're focusing on and next Sabbath we're going to continue with that focus in a different sort of way and understand even more so the importance of being thankful, grateful for the things that God has given to us, and thankful for the fact that we do have to suffer for a little while in this body – whatever it might be. So, since 1969...hmmm – you know when Paul said, 'nothing can be compared'... Nothing can be compared to what God is offering us and nothing can be! And everything you go through makes you who you become, what God is moulding and fashioning in you.

Let's turn over to 1 Corinthians 10. Preparing ourselves spiritually is very much about being *vigilant*, about being *watchful* of our spiritual well being. This means that where we've let down, where we've been distracted we need to repent and change, and we need to seek to draw closer to God – because this is just a normal human tendency – we let down at times, there are things we let down in our life, there are things where we're not as focused as we should be and that's where we need to repent – *especially now* more than ever!

So as a part of that process in preparing for Passover that's rapidly coming upon us... you know, God says a lot about entering into Passover and taking the Passover.

...And by the way, just as a reminder to everyone and some who are new, to remind you that only baptized members are to be at the Passover service: only baptized members – no children, no one that is unbaptized - it's strictly for baptized members, that God has given to the Church.

So again, to understand that as a part of a process here in preparing for the Passover there are things that God gets very pointed about, about how you're to partake of the Passover – that it's not a small thing to enter into. It's an inspiring thing when you realize that God prepares us to even take the Passover service itself, and this is very much a part of it, the sermon series we're going through, because it's about examining ourselves. It's about examining ourselves and recognizing, understanding where the change must take place in our life, crying out to God, repenting of those things we *know* must change.

This is very much what this is about as you go through the book of Corinthians here even. We'll start in verse 1 because it leads up to what Paul has to say about partaking of the Passover. I don't know what the world of traditionally Christianity does when they go through this because it's all right here. One day they get to see it because they're in bondage and they don't know they're in bondage, they're in captivity and they don't know they're in captivity. Islam is in captivity! Buddhism is in captivity. Traditional Christianity is in captivity! They're not free! They don't understand what freedom is! You know what God says freedom is? ...what Christ said? The *truth* is what sets you free... and the truth comes from God. Incredible! Very soon now they get to have that, no more confusion in the world.

1 Corinthians 10:1 - Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; so going back there in time; he goes back to the story here that he's telling them about a moment in time, about Moses and things that happened. **And they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;** And so again here, it talks about that which they followed Moses; God used Moses to lead them and led them through the Red Sea out of Egypt. And all these things picturing those things which are spiritual that we're to learn from, and that's what Paul is showing here.

He went on to say: **And did eat the same spiritual meat;** Now, it was there but they couldn't take of it like we can, like God's people can that are in the Church and those who've been in the Church through time or those that God worked with at different times, or even like Moses. The rest of the children of Israel... Moses was able to, Aaron was able to partake of in a unique way, but the rest of the children of Israel weren't able to because to them it was physical.

When they came up on Pentecost to Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments were given – what an awesome thing when you look at the plan of God – on the Pentecost – God led them out of Egypt, took them up to the Mount, gave them His law, the Ten Commandments, and they couldn't do it. Their whole history – they couldn't live by the Ten Commandments. It wasn't a part of their life! They constantly fought against it, rebelled against it, didn't want it as a part of their life. Forty years in the wilderness magnified that many times over! The things they continued to do after all their experiences! They wouldn't obey in some of the simplest of things!

There was a period of time – matter of fact, some scripture in the Psalms I was thinking about for next Sabbath – but a period of time where they went into and they mixed with other people's around them and brought them into their own camp when God said, "Don't do it!" The primary reason was because, "You're going to let down! You're going to start following their gods!" And that's exactly what they did! Incredible some of the things that happened and the plagues that came upon them for their disobedience, because they were going to commit adultery, they were going to do things that God told them not to do! Incredible!

They did all drink of that same spiritual meat. They had the opportunity to but they couldn't do it. **...and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.** We've gone through this in times past and talked about what this means, and it has to do with something that's pictured here in time, but something that they had at that particular point in time showing what God was doing and what God was giving to them, what God gave to them on Mount Sinai and so forth as the children of Israel left Egypt, they were baptized unto Moses – that wasn't a baptism of Christ, it wasn't a baptism unto repentance even, it's not showing that, it was just in a physical nation, as a people, and they wandered around the wilderness until they finally went into the Promised Land, and yet they had something given to them that they couldn't receive because it was for later on in time – Christ – that Rock that followed them when it's talking about Jesus Christ: and again, because they couldn't partake of the things that God had given to them.

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. There were very few, obviously, that we know God did work with – Joshua, we know of Moses, Aaron, Miriam.

Now these things were our examples, they're written there as examples for us to learn from, because they couldn't receive it, their time is coming still. When? In the Great White Throne when they're resurrected...the Rock that followed them in time, for them.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. Mentioned some of that; always disobeying God because there were things they wanted different from what God said they could have.

Neither be you idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Amazing, even when Moses went up there to get the tablets, talking to God, visiting with God and God talking to him, teaching him - and what are they doing down below? Incredible! They make a molten calf! And it says, talks about in the Psalms [106:19-20] that they made something, an image like unto a calf rather than the image that they were to reflect of being of God – they chose of something that was of an animal, that they would rather worship an animal, something in nature, and make that their god and lower themselves in the process. That's why the Psalm says it in a very unique way, in essence they lowered themselves to something below animal, because they didn't choose to honour and glorify God, that God had made them in His image - of all things - and the purpose of becoming a part of His Family! So they lowered themselves! Awesome here the history of Israel and what they did!

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day, just talking about that. Incredible, in one day **twenty-three thousand people**...in the wilderness for disobedience. Was it Phinehas that had the spear...incredible! [Numbers 25:6-8] Went into a tent and rammed it... a man brought in a woman, they were told not to do this, of other peoples; brought her into the tent, committing fornication. Phineas in his outrage did this before the children of Israel, before God, took a spear and rammed it through both of them because they were both together – rammed one spear through the two of them killing them both. Again, incredible things that took place and God stopped some of the plagues....

The serpent that's on the pole? [Numbers 21:8] Some of the rebellion that was taking place at that time...I think the death toll at that time was twenty-some thousand people who had died by poisonous serpents, and so God told them "Take a serpent, Moses, and wrap it around a pole, this bronze type of serpent made out of metal; stick it in the ground and anyone who was bitten by a poisonous snake, if they looked upon that pole, they won't die." [Paraphrased] Some twenty-some thousand people had died and after so many people are dying and all of a sudden you're told this, you know what your tendency is going to do? You're going to go look on the pole when you're bitten by snakes. So it's through an act of obedience that you're able to be saved.

And I still marvel...seven hundred some years later a king, Hezekiah, [2 Kings 18:4] had to come along and destroy the serpent that was on the pole, had it destroyed because the children of Israel were worshipping it to that day because they thought it had some kind of mystical healing power. Isn't that the mind of man? Rather than glorifying God for saving them from something, instead they start worshipping... it's not the calf this time it's the serpent on the pole, for healing. And so they had these little symbols. Even though he destroyed the symbol he couldn't destroy what was in their minds and their ability to make these on their own. So today you see ambulances running up and down the highway and still the serpent on the pole for healing is on them. Incredible, human beings, the way we are, passing things down generation to generation to generation. Astounding sometimes!

Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted and were destroyed of serpents. Got ahead of myself – that’s the one.

Neither murmur as some of them also murmured and were destroyed by the destroyer. Murmuring, it’s an easy thing to do. Murmuring. I think of all the people who used to murmur against Mr. Armstrong when I was in Worldwide, murmur-murmur-murmur. I remember driving with a family back and forth, couple different families, but a family back and forth from services from one part of a state to another part of the state and it was about a hundred miles away to services and sometimes I’d become so sick of listening because all the way home after a sermon they had what became known as ‘roast minister’, because they’d just tear apart the sermons. Supposed to be in God’s Church? ...listening to sermons and tearing apart what was said? I marvel at some of the things that happened in God’s Church, but it’s happened through time, and this is what God’s warning about. Be careful!

I remember when...saw the yearbook here a moment ago – was that 1986? The ’86 Yearbook from Ambassador and going through there and looking at the auditorium. I remember when Mr. Armstrong was planning on having the auditorium built in honour of God, and not trying to build a temple but building something that would glorify God. Everything he did, candidly, his attitude of mind was one of glorifying God and being an example in this world so that when people looked upon it it wasn’t something that was drab or normal in this world, it was something of quality. He taught that, because everything is God’s and God gave him that mind and that attitude, to give the very best!

If you have a college, let’s have it be the very best; not the largest, but have it be the best it can be. Amazing the things that he did and how leaders in the world, in time, showed great honour and respect to that attitude and mind. And they did! They were impressed by him, by that quality of his mind, if you understand. And yet as Mr. Armstrong talked about that and was willing to put the kind of funds he was willing to put into it, and the Church was going through a difficult time financially at that time, some people were making comments about, “Oh, see, God is trying to tell Mr. Armstrong that he shouldn’t build that thing! Can’t he see that?! What’s wrong with that old man?!” Now, thankfully not everybody was like that, but there were too many like that.

So, you have to be careful not to murmur, not to grumble, not to complain, because God doesn’t hold that lightly. **Neither murmur you as some of them murmured and were destroyed of the destroyer.**

Now all these things happened unto them for examples: we’re to learn from these things; we’re to understand. Just like I read earlier here about ‘those that followed’. They weren’t able to keep God’s law and God’s way of life, and yet it was there. Mount Sinai, that was the truth, and yet they didn’t understand it. And the Rock that followed them, what did He have to do later on? He had to come and show the spiritual intent of it. You’re not only not to kill someone you’re not to have hatred in your heart! You’re not to have evil and evil thoughts and evil thinking in your heart toward someone else! It goes *way beyond* murder. You’re not to lust upon a woman let alone commit adultery. So He showed the spiritual aspect of God’s law – the Rock that followed them – it’s the same truth, same Word that was there, but they couldn’t grasp it, they couldn’t grasp the physical part of it let alone the spiritual; and Jesus Christ came along to give the spiritual.

Now all these things happened to them for examples, but they are written for our admonition, it’s for us so we can see our nature and understand we’re no different than they are. As far as human attitude, as far as nature, we’re the same. We truly are! We have human nature and human nature is just ugly. That’s why I love what Paul had to say, that we have to be able to see ourselves for what we are, and

that part we want to get rid of, and the part that we see that God offers us and the change that takes place in our life as you begin to change...you hold onto that, that's what you desire and you cry out for.

I had a conversation earlier today and the person was talking about working with people in this particular phase of a job that he was working at, in working with some young people, and was noticing an attitude of mind that's worse today than what it was a decade ago. We see changes taking place in society and yet the individual mentioned that he also understood that "I know a lot of this is because I see human nature in a way that I couldn't before back then." And that's true, but there's a combination of both; it is getting worse and the blessing is *we are* able to see ourselves. God does give us, by the power of His spirit, the ability to begin seeing things in ourselves that we couldn't see before. Why? So we can change. So we can repent.

And so that's why Paul gave those examples of the need to be able to see something in ourselves that needs to be changed and we want to get rid of. We don't want to be like that. And something that God offers us, as we see those changes, that we can begin seeing where we need to become different, because that has to go.

Again here, **examples, that they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.** How much more for us? This was written nearly 2,000 years ago – not quite, obviously – but again, the end of the world, after 4,000 years Christ came, the Church began, and they were talking in those terms there, the end of the world have come upon us, we're toward the end time. Can you imagine? People over the last 2,000 years have been living in the end-time. They have! We just live at the end of the end-time.

Wherefore let him who thinks he stand take heed lest he fall. I have seen many, many people in God's Church take this course, think they stand, and God says, 'take heed'...that's the moment in time you're vulnerable, that's the moment in time you're not thinking straight. That's exactly what happened to Laodicea isn't it? ...rich and increased with goods. I want to read that to you because it's still an awesome thing to understand what happened, what the Church went through, what we all went through. And for those of you who are new, that it'll be preached throughout the Millennium as a warning that this, indeed, can happen to everyone, because our nature is the same. We are the same. We can do these things. These things can happen to us. This is a human tendency for such a thing to happen and this, what happened to Laodicea, is written there for a purpose as the very last era of God's Church, as one of the greatest times of lessons to ever be learned.

And so it talks here about not being cold nor hot, they were lukewarm... It says, **Revelation 3:16 - So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.** God wants us to be on fire for His way of life. You can't do it haphazardly, you can't do it in a complacent kind of spirit, you can't do it in a way where you're not really alert and on guard, you can't do it kind of coasting along. You can't do it that way! You've got to want this way of life! You've got to fight against your nature daily, on a daily basis! And when you let down that's when that being can come around, that's when you're vulnerable, because you're not watching like you should, you're not seeing things realistically, of a sound mind. A sound mind, a mind that God gives to us is understanding we need help, is understanding that this is dangerous, what we're in, that we can't do this on our own, we need God, we need God's help and God living within us to go through these things.

Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, (1 Cor. 10:12 – '...he who stands take heed lest he fall.') This is what happened to an *entire Church*; tens of thousands of people came to this point in

time that it's talking about right back here that Paul mentions... 'Wherefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.' Because that's what follows. If you think you stand, if you think you have it made, if you think you're doing okay, you think you can kind of sit back a little bit, rest a little bit, relax a little bit, things will happen in your life that shouldn't happen; you'll let down standards, you'll let down in things you shouldn't let down in . This is a constant fight; it truly is, never let down.

Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; Think you're okay? Think things are okay? This is even more dangerous here; it's a spirit that can come in very easily right behind that when you begin to let up; **and know not that you are wretched, our nature, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:** Without God we're nothing. And that's what happens if we let down, if we begin to coast, if we begin to become lukewarm. That means you don't have God dwelling in you the way God should dwell in us. So we have to cry out to God on a regular basis for Him to dwell in us, and that's what we're going to continue to focus on as we enter the Passover period, striving to make changes in our life so we actually become more like God, more Godlike in spirit and attitude and mind.

1 Corinthians 10:12 - Wherefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Verse 13 - There has no testing, it says '**temptation**', but testing that has **taken you but such as is common to man:** we have human nature, there are things we go through. When God calls us there are things you're going to go through, it's just a part of a process here; **but God is faithful, who will not allow** , the word means here, **to allow you to be tested above that you are able;** some people misuse this sometimes, can go in a wrong direction and misuse this verse. It doesn't mean you're not going to suffer and suffer mightily. It just goes on to explain here, **but will with the temptation/with the testing also make a way for you to escape that you may be able to bear it.** So the reality is you're going to go through trials, you're going to go through testing in this life, and the reality is that God knows what we're made of and the reality is, again, it's a matter of you're looking to God for deliverance. It's a matter of how you respond to God when you're going through these things and you're crying out to God for the help.

That's why it goes on to give another verse here: **Wherefore, dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.** God gives us the ability and the warning and the admonition to flee, to seek to flee. And how do you do that? You cry out to God for deliverance, you cry out to God for help and conviction to flee and to be able to repent of the things that are wrong in your life. It's not that you're not going to stumble again, because you will. It's not because you're not fighting certain battles that are going to be in your life all your life, because they will be as long as you're a physical human being. You're going to have things you're going to fight *all your life*; it is a reality. It's a reality in selfishness. It's a reality of three things it's that John summed up [1 John 2:16], '...lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'. It's what makes us human beings. And that's the battle.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. God gives us a way to escape, but we have to make choices along the way. You have to make the choices to cry out to God. You have to make the choices in asking God for deliverance, and you have to make the choices of looking at yourself and realizing what has to be repented of and how you can come through these things; because God gives the answers.

Verse 15 - I speak as to wise; judge you what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, you know what this is talking about now, '**the cup of blessing which we bless**', they understood exactly what he was talking about, **is it not the...** I *hate* this word in the English language because of how traditional Christianity has so distorted it; **is it not the 'communion'**; and so in churches all across this country,

every Sunday people have what they call 'communion', especially one great big church. And you go up and you take a wafer and ... anyway, did any of you come out of places like anything like that, where you had what you called 'communion' every week? See, I never had that, but I know it's out there. And they call it 'communion'.

We'll it's a perversion of what Passover is. God says you're to do it *once* a year, *Passover*, it's not communion, it's Passover, and so they've taken the observance of Passover and distorted it totally in its meaning and what it pictures and what it's all about. And so this feel good type of thing, you can do it every week, and they call it 'communion'. It's a word that just means 'fellowship'. That's what it means. It's a word in the Greek language that means 'fellowship'. **The cup of blessing which we bless;** he's leading up to here talking about Passover and the keeping of the Days of Unleavened Bread. He's working up to that point in time in what he's telling the Corinthians. And so it's all about a subject matter, because they're about to keep the Passover and they've done some things wrong in the past, and so he's telling them things that they need to focus upon in a proper way before God. Just like what we're doing today, we're getting ready to take Passover and so we want to take it *properly* before God, in a way that God says we should take it. And so this is what he's telling them.

So he's saying, **The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not for the fellowship of the blood of Christ?** You are partaker in the sufferings of Christ. That's what it's about. It just talked about a little bit ago here; we read about suffering, that we do go through suffering in this life and we willingly do so because we realize this is a part of the struggle, scriptures that talk about that you must enter into the sufferings of Christ so that you understand what it's like to fight against self, to fight against sin, to fight against this world, to live God's way of life in this body, in this life. That's what it's all about, and we're able to do it because of a fellowship that we're able to have with Christ, with God the Father. *Awesome* what God shows us.

And so again here, **The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion/the fellowship of the blood of Christ. The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the Body of Christ?** It's all about Passover. He's talking 100% about Passover and nothing else! That unleavened bread we break, that we take on Passover night, that Jesus Christ gave to the disciples, the wine that they took on Passover night that pictured something that He was getting ready to fulfill in His life on a spiritual plane that God tells us we're to partake of year after year after year on that day, on Passover day, no other day.

And so again here, a unique fellowship that we're able to have with God in and through Jesus Christ, with Jesus Christ in a very powerful way because of its deep meaning, of a beginning relationship... What could be more beautiful in how it's stated here, a fellowship...a fellowship, a relationship with God that begins with Passover. You cannot have a relationship with God except by receiving the Passover. It's the first... it's not a High Day even, it's the first commanded observance by God as far as an annual observance. It precedes the Holy Days.

I can't help it, when I go through and talk about what's written in Leviticus 23 and it lists all the Holy Days, it first lists Passover, you think of the beauty of how God has expressed things. Much of the Bible is in a kind of poetry; Proverbs, other things, Psalms, and it's just beautiful writing. And then the story that goes with it is more powerful and more beautiful, especially with God's spirit in our lives. And you go through and you see how God has laid something out so beautifully, so perfectly. You can't enter into the observance of those Holy Days, because it's about the plan of God being fulfilled in life, in your life, except you take the Passover first. It's not a Holy Day but it's a commanded assembly.

And so we first take the Passover when we're baptized – that's when it begins, and then from then on it's on a set day every year, the 14th of Abib. Year after year after year we go through this observance, of what we're getting ready to go through here in a little over a week. About a week and three-quarters from now we'll be taking Passover already. It's almost upon us. A communion, a fellowship with Christ and with God because of our Passover; because until your sins are taken care of – because it's about sin – until your sins are paid for, which they are by our Passover, because of His blood and because of His body - He died for us - because He spilled His blood out to the earth so that you can be forgiven of sin. It's an awesomely beautiful picture. *Then* you can enter into the plan of God for your salvation, but not before that.

So what does the world do? Well, Judaism keeps it on the wrong day. They moved it up to, later on in time - a little bit like what the Catholics did in 325 AD with Easter and Passover, they got rid of Passover and they instituted Easter – the Jews before that even instituted a change in their Passover observance, the Seder that began to be observed toward the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th. Because of all people they don't want anyone thinking that someone actually came along and maybe actually fulfilled something that's in the scriptures in Isaiah and other places, that He indeed might have been the Passover! So they changed it to a day later. Human nature - sick, sick, sick, perverted!

For we being many are one Bread, we're to be at one with God, one mind. All of this has such incredible meaning to it. **For we being many**, which we are, and we're about to become far more in the world, **For we being many are one Bread and one Body**: the Body of Christ - that's how we're able to have a relationship with God, by being *in* the Body of Christ, the Church of God. The Church of God is Christ's Body spiritually. **For we being many are one Bread, and one Body: for we are all partakers of that one Word/Bread**. That's what it means here, the Unleavened Bread of Life; that's what Jesus Christ pictured by His life, by breaking of that bread. It's the unleavened... He had no sin and we're all able to be partakers of that same Bread, that Unleavened Bread of Life which is the Word of God, the truth of God, the unity of mind, spirit, with God. Awesomely beautiful thing, it truly is.

Jumping on down to verse 23; let's jump down a little bit here. **Verse 23 - All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient**: He's going through here and talking about certain problems – I'm not going to take time to go through all this – that the Corinthians had. It was unique to them. We go through different things; the Church has gone through different things at different times where they've had admonitions, but the primary focus here is about Passover and what it means in order to come out of sin. And so he was addressing certain sin and things in their life, things that they didn't understand. They were very new in understanding. They were coming out of a unique background of the Gentile world, and so he's addressing one thing.

But he goes on to say here... **all things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient**: in other words, it may be okay for you to do certain things in life, but if it hurts someone else, if by the wrong example it hurts someone else, then you shouldn't do it, you should think about others, you should think about others who are younger in the Body. It's like it might be lawful for you to have a couple drinks in an evening, but you might be encouraged to only have one for the sake of your brothers and sisters who are coming out of the world because there are so many who are younger coming out of the world, that for their sakes, so they can learn by that example, that you should be careful when you drink. Because people are coming out of society in a world where people really aren't careful about how much they consume.

See, that's just one example of so many numbers of examples we could give about life; that's one we understand. And so this is what Paul is talking about. It might be lawful to do it, it might be okay for you to do it in a certain circumstances, in an evening meal and so forth, but it may not be expedient for the sake of others and what they see. But if they see someone who is setting a different example here hopefully it will cause them thought, to think about what they do and why they do it.

He says, **but all things are not expedient... All things are lawful for me but all things do not edify**: See. So just because it's lawful for you to do certain things you need to be careful in life. Isn't it an amazing thing, it's about relationships, it's about consideration of all within a Body, in the Church and outside the Church. There are things even in the Church we're supposed to be careful of so that we don't give the appearance of evil to others in the world, so they can't even misconstrue something they see. But they always will. If they're looking for things, they're going to do it. But as a whole, in community and neighbourhoods, to be a good light, a good example, a good neighbour. That is what God has called us to be like: to strive to live right, to be a right example.

Verse 24 - Let no man seek his own, but every man another's (wealth). That translation is totally wrong...If you understand what it's saying, it's amazing how many things here – it's like I was reading something here the other day about a book that's been written that I don't recommend you read, but it's called 'The Harbinger', written by, I think, a Jewish fellow in the New York area. It's about 9/11 and it's about some things that happened later on, about Isaiah 9:10? I'll have to look at the verse. Has anybody heard about that? ...that particular article? Let me find this real quick before I spout something off that... It's about building things better and stronger than what they were. He goes through and talks about this verse here and says that 9/11 basically was the beginning of something, a warning from the God of Israel to the United States. And he's spot on in some parts of it, and he goes through and talks about these harbingers, these things, prophetic events, that just as Israel and Judah fell, that there are things happening in this country that are a matter of a warning to this country and they're not listening, this country is not listening, that it's going to fall as well.

And he said what's interesting is – I believe it was the very next day – I may be wrong about the person, but was it Tom Daschle that made a speech and he quoted this verse? But anyway, the author brought out how they don't understand this verse is not how it's being quoted. A year later it was John Edwards who quoted the exact same verse again on the anniversary of 9/11. And he's showing that this verse – and it is – it's an attitude that's reflective in society, although people go off on tangents in some of the things that are there and they don't understand the full meaning of it.

Still, this is an awesome thing to understand, this is a part of something that's even there - **Isaiah 9:10 - The bricks have fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones**: in other words, this is down but we're going to make it *greater*; **the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars**. "This has happened to us, we're going to come back and make this greater!" And the point being was, when God warns...this was a condemnation to Israel, this wasn't something that was... and so they're quoting something they don't know they're quoting the exact opposite of. It's like the obelisk in Washington, D.C. It's like thumbing your nose at God and saying, "This has happened; we're going to make it *bigger* than it was before!" Instead of learning from it and what can be learned from this, what is it that we're doing wrong, what is it that needs to be changed. And that's basically what the book is about, some of the things there that are happening in this country, and they believe that, aptly so, that it is a warning from God, it was a beginning in a very powerful way - they're right.

And people don't understand sometimes, they quote scriptures and it's not what is being said. And so instead of not learning from it, to have a haughty attitude?! It's like the stock market, it's that attitude we've been talking of in some of the sermons; it's this attitude we're going to do it bigger and better... "We're a triple-A nation, and we always will be!" That attitude is what God condemns! And it's that attitude over and over and over again, "*Nothing's* going to bring us down!" Well, they don't understand – yes it is, and that's what's happening.

And so I guess this verse here reminded me of that, and if I could find that verse again I'll read it to you, where it says in **1 Corinthians 10:24** – **Let no man seek his own**, it's a very awkward translation, **but every man another's (wealth)**. Is that what you're supposed to seek? I mean, really?! That's like saying, "Okay, just lust for everything out here!" ...**but every man another's wealth**; it's about an attitude of mind, and it's basically talking about, don't be selfish, ...**let no man seek his own**, in other words don't be selfishly motivated in what you do and how you're motivated in life, **but let every person another's interests**; because you see, that word 'wealth' there, it's not in the Greek anyway, it's in italics, it's a word that's been added by the translators because they think that's what it's talking about and that's not what it's talking about.

It's a thought that's basically saying, **let no man seek his own interests**, selfish in other words, **but let every man another's interests**. In other words, think about others when you do things. That's what this is going through and telling. Some things are lawful for you to do but it's not expedient all the time. Some things are lawful for you to do, but again here, it doesn't edify. We have to be of a different mind, we have to think about others around us, how we can be an example to them, how we can help them. That's a different kind of mindset that God wants His people to have, and that's what is being discussed here. It's not a matter of lusting after something that's not yours, it's a matter of an attitude of mind of giving to others, of restraining and refraining yourself from maybe freedoms you do have before God in order to help someone else. It's beautiful, it really is.

And so again, it's about relationships. And so much about Passover and preparing to take the Passover is about relationships. First of all we're told it's about a fellowship with Christ by His blood, through His blood, and the fellowship through the bread we break. It's about a fellowship with God, that God blesses us to have through Jesus Christ. That's what Passover is all about. And then if we understand that there is so much instruction that God gives us before we take the Passover, to think about, to examine ourselves in *all* of our relationships, because God's Family is about family, relationships. It's about how we think toward each other; it's about how we feel toward each other. And there are things we have to examine in our lives because all of our feelings and all of our thoughts aren't always right and good, and that's what God wants us to look at in ourselves individually. Not to find something wrong with someone else, but to find something that's wrong in us, that has to change.

It's easy to find fault in others and what they need to change, what they need to work on, but it's so difficult for us to look in a mirror spiritually and see what we have to work on. That's what God says we have to do in order to have a right spirit of entering in and taking of this Passover that we're getting ready to partake of.

Let's jump to **1 Corinthians 11:23** – because we really need to think about these verses here before we come up to partaking of the Passover. Next Sabbath we're having a unique sermon having to do with the fast and we won't be covering this so we need to cover this today. **For I have received of the Lord that which also that I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread:** and so Paul is establishing here for the Church, for the Corinthians, that this is

what we've received, this is what the disciples received from Christ. There is a way to observe something here that is to be observed year after year after year, and he talks about how he **has received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread:** and so He's going through this Passover service on that particular night, of what Jesus Christ gave to the disciples. It talks about Him washing the disciple's feet and He came up to Peter and Peter said "You don't need to wash my feet." It's like, "I can't have you do that, you lowering yourself, humbling yourself..." in essence – that's what it was, it was a matter of humility – but it was a matter of "Who am I?" and that was really Peter's attitude of mind, "You shouldn't wash my feet, I should be washing Yours..." was his attitude, but Jesus Christ said, "If I don't wash your feet then you have not part with Me." And he said, "Well, wash me all over if that's the case!" And basically that's what He's doing but it's a spiritual thing and they didn't understand yet.

So again here, this is what he's talking about, on that particular night; **And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you:** so this is what Christ did on that night. He said this is what He did with the disciples, **Take, eat: this is My body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me.** And we read this every year on Passover. We'll read it again this year on Passover. Passover service doesn't change much at all. There might be a few things stated here and there a little bit different, but as a whole it's the *exact* same service year after year after year, because of its meaning, because of these things contained there, these things that God tells us we must focus upon.

And so again here, it talks about partaking of this Bread, again, the Unleavened Bread of Life, partaking of Christ, which has to do with something that's broken. His life was broken for us. He was *killed!* A soldier came up, rammed a spear in His side, and it says, out came water and blood, and He died. He had to spill His blood to the earth, He couldn't suffocate. He couldn't have His legs broken like the two thieves beside Him. He had to die because He spilled His blood to the earth, and He fulfilled those prophecies, just like a lamb going to the slaughter, and having to die because of his blood being spilled to the earth. And so Christ fulfilled the Passover by having the same done to Him, and it didn't happen until a spear was rammed into His side and then He died. That's why when they came around to break the legs they were surprised that He was already dead; and then it says in John [that it was] because a soldier had done this to Him.

And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, small amount of wine that we take. And it's not 'when' He had supped, but if you follow the story and understand it, this is a bad translation, it's **after He had finished supper,** dinner, whatever, we call it dinner, some places call it supper. **...after He had finished dinner saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood:** a new covenant that was being made with mankind, establishing a new covenant with mankind and not a doing away with the law. Isn't that amazing what the world teaches? A new covenant, it's all about 'doing away'... this Christ came long to do away with His Father's harsh old law; it's been done away, it's been 'nailed to the cross'. Well, it wasn't a cross in the first place, but anyway, that's what they say, that it's been 'nailed to the cross', the law's been 'nailed to the cross'. No, it wasn't. It was a pole, it was a stake in the ground, it wasn't a cross. I hate these things, I really do! The ignorance of mankind out there! They don't understand, he had to have one nail through both hands that held them up in the air like this... [hands placed together raised high above the head]...and that's why they had to break the legs. If your arms are out here [straight out from your sides, shoulder height] you're not going to suffocate. But up here [hands placed together raised high above the head] you'll suffocate. When you have your legs broken you no longer can push yourself up to breathe anymore. You become so weary

and after a while you body just sinks worse and worse and you suffocate. That's why they broke their legs, so they would die before the end of Passover, before the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the High Day, came. That's exactly why they had to go around and break the legs and kill the other two.

Some of these stories sometimes just absolutely astound me. Anyway, starts out with a lie of a 'cross', and you think if it was a guillotine they'd wear that around their neck. What a horrible, sick world this is! So that's the symbol then of their righteousness. It's a sick world! I really look forward to the time people are freed from this, I really am! Some people hear me sometimes and think I'm mad at them. I'm not mad at them, I feel for them. I look forward to the time they're freed. It's their beliefs that they're in captivity to. It's their beliefs and why they do the things they do that they don't understand. And they're about to be freed from all that, thank God! Because *you* were there at one time, most of you were there at one time. Some were there, a captive to those things, not understanding the beauty of God's Word, the truth, the truth of what Jesus Christ went through, that before He was even put on a stake (which is what the word means in the Greek language)...

There's a word for 'cross' in the Greek and it isn't the one that's used in the Bible: 'stauros' or 'stauroo' - it's a pole, it's a stake in the ground that they were put on. Amazing! And it's because of that. He was so marred; He was so beaten that people couldn't even recognize who He was. His face, His body, chunks of flesh just ripped off by the cat o' nine tails because of His beating. That's what it talks about in Isaiah - His visage so marred, His image of who He was so changed that no one could recognize, wouldn't be able to recognize Him. This happens sometimes in car wrecks where there have been mistakes, two people riding together. It's happened, mis-identity, they think one died and it wasn't, it was the other, but because they're so beaten up because of the car wreck they didn't know, and because of misidentification someone thinks their child died and it wasn't, it was the one who's alive and the other... saw a show like that not too long ago, but it's based on something that's really happened before. Well, Jesus Christ, no one could tell who He was.

After this same manner He took the cup, after He had completed dinner, saying this cup is the New Testament in My blood, a new covenant whereby man can be saved. A new covenant, it's what you enter into when you're baptized. You enter into a covenant agreement! What an awesome thing, that from the moment you're baptized and your faithful observance of the Passover and all the Holy Days and all of the Sabbaths and everything else that God has given you to live by, that from that moment in time you enter into a covenant with God. That's what you do when you're baptized, you enter into this new covenant, a covenant with God - that *now* at any point in time you are *guaranteed* that if you strive to live by this way of life looking to God, seeking to put God first, seeking to be obedient to God, that God has already promised you that every time you come before Him in repentance *He promises to forgive you*. That's the covenant. It's a covenant of a promise to forgive you every time you repent.

And every time you repent what an awesome thing, you are growing in character, you're agreeing that God is right and you are wrong. That's a beautiful thing! Sometimes we don't look upon it that way. Sometimes we beat ourselves up and we don't even forgive ourselves for things that have happened, but you've got to let it go. Yes, you have problems. Yes, you have weaknesses. Yes, you'll probably even do it again! Isn't that amazing? And maybe again, and again, and again, and how many times will God forgive you - just as many time as you go before Him and say, "Forgive me; help me to be different." It's because of this desire that sometimes we don't actually understand what God is moulding and fashioning in us. He's moulding and fashioning in us holy righteous character. You're growing spiritually!

What an awesome thing to understand, that sometimes the thing you beat yourself up over the most is the very thing that you're growing in and changing in, and sometimes we don't see it. Many a time I've gone before God and felt like I couldn't, felt like I shouldn't, "I am not worthy to even pray, that you forgive me." Wrong thing! Wrong thought! Fight against that! On the contrary, it's a matter of faith and conviction to believe God and say, "God, I have sinned again – same sin..." whatever it might be. Something said about someone else...some battle you're having...whatever it is. It doesn't matter what it is – sin is sin – and you say, "Father, forgive me...and I know it's removed and gone as far as the east is from the west and I don't have to beat myself up over this." And you can go on and pray to God about what it is you desire in your life, for change, for answers, for petitions placed before Him. Do you understand how awesome that is? It's a matter of your faith in what is being said here; it's about faith in the sacrifice of Christ and why He died, and your confidence in it. The human thing is to beat ourselves up. The Godly thing is to be freed; trusting in God, believing in God. It's a spiritual thing, it really is, to where you're totally freed of it.

Paul says there's a warning in the midst of all that too, not to take advantage of that liberty that's been given to us because of the blessing of being able to be forgiven is you want to be careful of that too, that you don't go in a wrong direction with that. So there's a balance and a soundness of mind even with that. The reality is we're human and we're going to make mistakes, and you're going to sin, and there are going to be times you're just going to feel sick about yourself when you go before God, so much so that you don't even feel like praying that day to Him because you just feel so unworthy. Well, that's the reality, yes, we are unworthy, but what a beautiful thing that God's given us, the blessing of forgiveness. It's gone. That's a matter of believing God, something that you grow in through time - that it's just gone. It's an awesome thing!

...This is the cup of the New Testament in my blood, this do you as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till He comes. There's more in the meaning of some of this but, yes, there's that which is going to continue and literally until His coming, but until a change takes place for the Church, until they're resurrected and become a part of the God Family; but this process continues through time. **Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord,** and it's not the word 'unworthily'; that's not the right word, it's a word that's expressed here if I have my grammar proper, it's not an adverb, it's an adjective, should be an adjective, **like an unworthy manner.**

Whosoever eats this bread, and drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, because we're all unworthy, it's the manner in which you do it that God is concerned about, it's the attitude of mind that we have as we partake of the Passover that God wants us to be concerned about as we examine ourselves, as we think about how we're doing this, that we have the proper honour and respect and obedience before God to do this in a sound-minded way, in the way that God shows us to do it. And so much of it, again, is about relationships, it truly is. We have to examine ourselves in our relationships, that's the bottom line, and that has so much to do with being spiritually alert if you go back and think about some of the things given in the first and second sermons of this series.

Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. Don't want that. I've known of a lot of people who've taken of the Passover in an unworthy manner, and in time it comes out, through time. And it's not something to be taken lightly. You don't want to be guilty of the body... Do you know what this is saying in different terms? It means your sins aren't forgiven. That's another way of saying the same thing, because when our sins aren't forgiven we have over us the death penalty and we've taken lightly the sacrifice of Christ.

And so the point being here is that you don't want to take lightly the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, you want to take it soberly in how you go before God, and you don't want to be guilty of His death – because our sins is what killed Him, and you want to be able to be forgiven of your sins, you want to be able to have a right relationship with Him, a right fellowship with Him.

For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner, eats and drinks, and the word is as it should be '**judgment**' – in my Bible it says 'damnation'; that's not what it means, it means **judgment to himself**, eats and drinks judgment to himself – in other words we've condemned ourselves in a sense if we have done something in a wrong way, we've done something we shouldn't have done and we brought judgment upon ourselves, **not discerning the Lord's Body**. A word that again has to do with making a distinction, or making a difference in and understanding what it's all about. **...not discerning the Lord's Body**; in other words, what He went through and suffered for us so that we could have this, so we could partake of the Passover year by year and what it meant when we were baptized, that covenant relationship, and the blessing of being able to be forgiven of sin and understanding why we have such freedom and such opportunity...why we have Family like we do, why we're able to partake of what we partake of Sabbath by Sabbath when we all come together. It's a beautiful thing, especially at times when you're able to have more people come in, because then you're able to share more. Maybe you've met someone at the Feast and you haven't seen them for a whole year and you see them again; that's an exciting thing because we're of the same mind, we're going in the same direction, we share in something together that from the moment someone walks through the door it's unique to you. It is! How can you explain such a relationship that you're able to grow in within the Church? The world Family! I mean, candidly, stronger than physical family! And if you're so blessed to have physical family in a spiritual Family that's even better! What an awesome thing! And that's what it's all about!

And it goes on to say then; **For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.** Physically...but spiritually. The primary focus here is one of [spirit]. You don't want to be asleep spiritually. That's why it says to watch, to be alert, to be on guard. That's why Jesus Christ came back and said, "Couldn't you stay awake?" It has to do with this example here of being alert, of being spiritually alert and being spiritually on guard, preparing ourselves spiritually, seeking to do what we need to do and being able to be at one with God.

And again here, let's notice what it says, **For if we would**, the word is here the same word as discerning above; **if we would discern ourselves, we should not be judged.** And so that's what God wants us to do; He wants us to enter into examining ourselves.

Matter of fact, let's go back to that scripture, **2 Corinthians 13:5** – because some of the same words are used here and it is what this is all about – **Examine yourselves whether you are in the faith.** Well, that's good, and we're to do that all the time but especially during this time of the year. God wants us to look at our lives, to look at ourselves and be honest with ourselves and with God as well, about all of our relationships first; first and foremost about all your relationships, your relationship with Him - your relationship with Him is going to be reflected so much indeed with your relationship with one another, truly is.

So, **Examine yourselves**, and this is a word that means to 'take account of', to 'put yourself to a test' if you will, are you performing the way you should in your response to God. **Examine yourselves, put yourselves to the test, whether you are in the faith;** So how do you do that? **...prove your own selves.** 'Prove your own selves' – it's a word that means in essence to ...it's a word that really means to examine. It's kind of flip-flopped around here. It's really a word, put yourself to the test is really the

word above here, it means 'to take account of', like an accounting. And then it has a word here in the Greek, it really means 'to examine'. That's what you do. How do you put yourself to the test, to see where you are? By examining yourselves, by investigating: it's a word that means 'to investigate' your own life, look at your own life, look at your own selves.

...know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, it's about Him dwelling in us; **except you be reprobates**, it's a word that means 'unapproved', 'not approved before God'. Again here, it's something that's taught over and over again in God's Church as you come toward Passover period, of taking it, that this is something you enter into before you partake of the Passover. You don't want to take it in an unworthy manner, you want to make sure your relationships are right with one another, you truly do, and whether or not you need to work to make them right. If you've done things that are wrong with others in the Church, if you've said things that are wrong, if you've had confrontation, you need to strive... you know, it's not enough just to say, "Father forgive me." It's a matter of trying to make them right; it's a matter of working on them to make them better. It's a matter sometimes of just simply saying, "I'm sorry, give me another chance." Working on it, acknowledging, admitting our faults, admitting our weaknesses to someone else and letting them know you're Family and what I said, what I did was wrong. None of us are above that.

So there are those things we have to do in our relationship sometimes and then we're to carry that with us all the time.

1 Corinthians 11:31 - For if we would discern ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. So God's desire is that hopefully we respond and that we voluntarily look at our own life and repent, because it's about repentance, it's about seeking to make change in your life.

How do you treat people? How do you treat one another? How do you treat people on the job? How do you act toward them? That's what it's about. Everything you do in your life, how do you treat others? Generally you have to start out in your own family, and then with relatives or neighbours, or whatever, people you spend most of your time with. Because that's where you're tested in life as to how you're really living your life, is toward others and how you speak to them, how you talk to them, how you treat them – is there anything that could be made better in that? Are there things that you can do in a much better way? Are the things that you're doing wrong in that, in how you think about or how you talk, how you respond, how you react sometimes? See...that's where you have to start, and then you just keep going from that.

How about in the Body? How about in the Church? How about in the congregation when you're together wherever you meet together? Are there things you have to work on in certain relationships with different ones? Are there some that maybe just kind of rub you the wrong way sometimes in something that's said? Do they need to change...or do you? That's what it comes down to: 'I' need to change so that 'I' think right toward others. And hopefully everyone else is doing that in the Body, and as we do we become a better Body, we draw closer together as a Family, we really do.

So, if everyone's working on themselves that's beautiful, it really is, because that's what Elohim is all about, to get to that point. And to get to that point we all have to work on ourselves and change, and the more we do that the closer the Body is.

So again here, a need, a desire that we should have in a very powerful way; more than anything else you do in preparation for the Passover is to go through these verses we just read here and understand the importance of examining yourself, of looking at your own life, not at someone else's life, but at your own life and what it is you need to do to change so that you are living more the way God says you should toward each other.

Because every one of us listening today have changes we can and need to make in our relationships with other people; and that's what God wants us to do before we partake of the Passover in a unique fellowship we're able to have and because we're able to have it with Him and His Son Jesus Christ.

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