

Last Sabbath we started a new sermon series entitled, *A Day of War*, with this today being *Part 2*. In that sermon it was stressed how important it is for us to grasp the magnitude of the spiritual war that exists in this final 'day of the Lord'. We are in a day of war, as we talked about last Sabbath, talking about Satan and his demons are not going to give up without a great fight and they know that their time is nearly over and they are stirred up.

So we need to be aware of that; that's why God is blessing us with the kind of messages He has since Pentecost and that's why people were encouraged to go back and listen to those and read the posts and drink in of those things because this is a dangerous period of time we've entered into, it truly is, far more than we can truly grasp. The only way we can grasp it is that we go before God, ask for help to understand it, be inspired by, moved by what we're hearing and that we be able to be sobered, and to understand these things are powerful and they're real.

I'm going to just go back and do a little bit of review here... We first focused on **Ephesians 6:10 –Finally, my brethren, be, or 'become' as the word is strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.** That's what we have to do! We have to recognize that this is a spiritual battle we're in, a great spiritual battle.

Ever since we've come into the Church there have been spiritual wars and fighting and we have to enter in to that and we're encouraged to do so, but we need to understand that all that has intensified right now and we need to understand that this is the method, the means whereby we're able to fight. It's God that has to do the fighting. We have to be strong in God in the sense of being filled with God's spirit and a right focus spiritually and following the admonitions in this sermon series we've been going through, but it's God's power. Mr. Armstrong, as I mentioned last Sabbath, made comments along the lines of, paraphrasing, that we have to do everything as though we're doing it ourselves knowing full well, (in other words in battling and what we do as far as God's work), knowing all along that God is the one who does it. It's God. It's by the power of His spirit these things are accomplished.

And so again, to be strong in Him **and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God;** it's God's! It's what God wants to give to us, and He says, **so that you may be able to stand against the wiles/the 'strategies', as the word means in the Greek language, of the devil.** The slander. I think it's interesting the words God uses to define who he is, what he does. This defines who he is. It defines what he does. The word in the Greek means, 'the slanderer', 'the false accuser'. This is the way Satan has always been before God having to do with the things in the angelic realm and then when mankind was put on this earth and those whom God has worked with. And so again, we're to put on the whole armour of God as it goes on to talk about.

We went through some other scriptures and then we went to the book of Daniel where we were reminded of real battles in a spirit realm and talking about Michael and his entering into battle, and also Gabriel then as he came to speak to Daniel and some of those things that took place at that time. And so it talks about even Gabriel's involvement in the warfare, but Michael is the primary one, as far as the archangels are concerned, and his angels, those who are assigned to him. There are things that God did in establishing government from the very beginning with Michael, with Gabriel, and with Lucifer. And because of that influence that they had, that's why Satan (Lucifer) had the kind of influence he did in the very beginning to deceive so many.

And those things we've seen in the Church. We've seen those things within the ministry, when individuals are able to be in an area by themselves, are able to communicate apart from another area like headquarters or other areas around the country. If someone has a desire to mislead, to guide or take someone in a different direction, or an entire church in a different direction, there's tremendous power and ability to do so over a period of time.

So we ended last week in chapter 12 of the book of Revelation, and this chapter, of course, covers the warring that Satan has engaged in against God, against His Church from the very beginning and I thought it would be good if we go back and just pick it up there, review a few of these verses again. Because I don't know about you but to me this is awesome! When you go back and see what has been taking place, what we have lived through, what God warned the Church about, what took place as we even looked at last week, what happened as far as what Mr. Armstrong felt when he was at the verge of death and God brought him back stronger than ever before, and Mr. Armstrong believed it was at that period of time that Satan was cast out, cast down, or thrown out of heaven. And as it talks about in Revelation here, as we go through some of this, his place was no longer there. He didn't have a place there; he couldn't go back and forth any longer. I don't know how that works or how it worked but God restricted him from doing that from that point forward...and at a particular point in time that it's important for us to understand.

So let's pick it up again today in **Revelation 12:7** where it talks about this war - **There was war in heaven:** again, I can't comprehend that! I don't understand that fully. We read it, we have knowledge of it, but to understand what took place, how it took place, we don't know how an angelic realm battles like this, how it wars...and let alone in heaven where God's throne is, that God allowed this to take place like He did, but He did, because the angelic realm has a part in God's plan. God can do it all but that's not His purpose; His purpose is to share, His purpose is to work with, as well, the angelic realm as well as those that God is calling into His Family, and they all have a part. It's an awesome thing to understand.

So it says, **There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against/battled with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought/battled. And they could not prevail;** in other words, means here in the Greek as we mentioned last Sabbath, 'they were without strength', they weren't strong enough, they were without power. So God began to intervene, whatever this means fully, God began to intervene and power began to be taken away from them.

...**neither was their place**, and that's what it means, it's talking about their place, what they were able to do in the past, whatever place they had in being able to come back and forth, and it says from that point on it, **neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out/hurled down/thrown out**, as it means, **that old serpent called the Devil**, again, that serpent whose name is 'the slanderer', 'the false accuser', and **Satan, the adversary**... From the very beginning he's been an adversary to God's purpose and God's plan...so aptly named. Names have a great deal of meaning. **...and Satan, the adversary, who deceives the whole world: he was cast out/thrown out**, in other words, **unto the earth, and his angels**, in other words **the demons were cast out with him**.

Then going on in **verse 10 - And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now...** this is a beginning of something great in God's plan. It marks a point in time that's important to God. It's in the end-time, it's toward the end-time, Mr. Armstrong talked about being in the end-time, and so at this point in time Mr. Armstrong believed that this is when this began to happen, just before the events that happened in California took place, and so Satan stirred up and began to attack the Church in a very powerful way.

And so it says here at this point though, when this happened, when he was cast out (speaking of Satan), **There was this loud voice in heaven saying, Now salvation and strength and the Kingdom of our God, and the power,** which means **'the authority' of His Christ has come:** and so there are things that begin to happen at that time that was leading into, candidly, the period we're in now, but there are things that had to take place in God's plan. There was an apostasy that had to take place. There was that which... again, God was giving greater power for His Kingdom to come and authority for His Kingdom to come. That's why 2nd Thessalonians is so important to understand, that God gave understanding that there would come a time when there would be a great falling away, an apostasy, and so these things had to take place, and this was a part of that process for God's Kingdom to come, for Christ to reign, for the authority given to Christ to rule and to reign. Certain things had to take place.

...for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night. Can you imagine...in a spirit realm? We live in an age of technology when through the internet and through whatever other means is out there, printed press, everything else, that these kinds of things flourish. We receive that. Mr. Armstrong started getting that; thankfully not to the degree that we have now because of the internet. Can you imagine? And that's just in a physical world because of technology. How much more in a spirit realm where that's all that's there all the time before God and before God's throne – yap-yap-yap-yap-yap – condemning, accusing, find fault with, tearing down, twisting, distorting things about God's own people before God, before the angelic realm, before the rest of the angelic realm, mocking, making fun of...because that's the spirit, making fun of God's people. *"These are the ones you're working with?! Look at them!"* He saw human weakness, and he doesn't understand that, how on earth can God call, work with, something so puny?! To Satan, he can't comprehend that, he cannot comprehend how beings like us, as weak as we are as physical human beings, that God could work with our minds to mould and fashion something that will become greater than the angelic realm, to become a part of Elohim, of God's very Family. He doesn't comprehend that. He hates it! And so wherever he can he finds fault with, twists and distorts, before God; and finally, which I can't comprehend, finally God said, "Enough! This is it! There is no more of this here."

And so he was cast out to the earth, but he still uses those same things, he still strives to do the same things. You receive that. You receive that as soon as you come into God's Church from family, from friends, from whomever. You start to understand a little bit of that, of those things that come at you, a distortion of what you believe; a distortion of how you live your life, a twisting and distorting of things about your life. And it's not a fun thing to live through but it's been going on for *6,000 years*.

And so it talks about this being and what he's been doing and it says here, **for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night.** Constantly! ...can't comprehend that!

Verse 11 - And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, speaking of those who had been accused through time, 6,000 years of this, and talking about how they overcame, which means 'to conquer'. It's a word that means 'to conquer', which is a word about war, it's about battling. How do you conquer? How do you overcome? This is how you do it...**by the blood of the Lamb.** What does that mean? That you can be forgiven of sin. It's about the ability we have of repenting, of going before God, of repenting of sin in order to have a right relationship with God so that we can grow spiritually. That's how we become stronger – Ephesians 6, become strong in the power of His might – that's how we do it. We seek to overcome and conquer our human nature – self! We want to change! We *want* to become something different! We see the way of mankind, the selfishness and the attitude and the spirit that's

in this world and we don't want it; and God helps to mould and fashion that desire in us. Through time that desire will become stronger if we're yielding to God.

And so **they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the Logos, the Word of their testimony, of their witness;** beautiful scriptures here, they truly are. We're going to go into this a little bit more in a little bit here but this is what this word means, 'the testimony', the witness that's in our lives, what exists in our lives because we're engaged in this war, because we're conquering and overcoming by this, by the Word of God, by this life that can live within us.

...and they loved not their lives unto the death. In other words, they didn't love their life to the point of not being willing to sacrifice. That's a big obstacle – selfishness – that we can love our life to the point we're tired of battling or like we talked about last Sabbath, we get sidetracked into other things, whatever it is, health issues, financial issues, relationship issues, all kinds of issues that Satan likes to stir up in order to sidetrack us to get our focus off of what's important. And we do as human beings because we're human, and so if we're not careful we can become sidetracked far too much so. It's one thing to address issues in our life, it's another thing to become so sidetracked that we let down spiritually or that we get tired of the battling.

There are some out here right now I'm a little concerned with that they're tired of the battle we've just gone through, and if they don't get their act together I don't know whether they're going to be able to come through some of these things this time – speaking candidly. God's been very merciful with us, He truly is. He *wants* us to conquer and overcome. He *wants* us to succeed. But we have to make choices along the way and God has given us great mercy. But *now is the time to stand!* Now is not the time to shirk and pull back and begin to let down because you're weary of battling. This is the great warning that God is giving us! Don't be getting weary of the battling, of dealing with things in family or onslaught by other family members in or out of the Church sometimes; it's immaterial – you have got to stand yourself before God! That's what it comes down to in order to receive what God has planned for you at the end of all this. And so we have to stand now so that God can make us stand. That's the message since Pentecost, over and over again in different ways.

We have got to stand now in God's way in order for God to make us to stand before the world! *Why* would He give us this if we're not standing?! *Why* would He give us more? *Why* would He make us stand in the sight of others if we're going to shirk back, in that respect, pull back and let down and begin to let physical things dominate our lives, family problems, whatever it is!

This is a sobering series we're going through right now, truly is, and I hope and pray we can all receive it that way because we're being judged. Right now is a time of judgment upon us in a very powerful way, as to whether we want this with all of our being. It doesn't mean that some aren't going to be awakened and shaken back up again later on... but I'll tell you what, if it happens this time around what you give up is so great! What you give up is so great if anyone does that out here. I heard another one today in another country, gone by the wayside...and I think "Where is the commitment?" And, "Why did you give up? Why did you let down?"

I believe with all my being that most of these are going to come back before this is over with, before this year is over with...but what they gave up in the meantime is mighty. Because there are blessings with the calling God's given to us, there is a *purpose* in things God gives to us, and if we yield to that process of what He has planned for us farther down the line, that's what's so vitally important in our lives right now. He's called us all for a great purpose – not just speaking of those few who are a part of the

144,000, I'm speaking of all the rest whom God has called in the last several years here and is working with. It's for a great purpose, but we have to fight for it, we have to work for it with all of our being, we have to throw ourselves into it in every way we can because it's not owed to us. *It is not owed to us!* And it's not going to just be given to us just because He started a work in us. Okay? He said He's faithful to complete that work in us but that has a big 'IF' with it... *IF* we yield to the process God is faithful. The only thing is, sometimes, human beings; we're not faithful in responding and yielding to God's process.

...and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the Word/the Logos of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. In other words, they didn't love their life even in the face of death or whatever they faced; in other words, to love self, to choose self to the point of giving up the focus we need to have...in other words, choosing selfishness – what we want, what 'I' want, what 'I' need out of this, what 'I' need... "I need to rest a little bit now because it's been hard!" Boo hoo!! This is not a time to turn inward and feel sorry for ourselves because of what we've gone through or what we're going through right now.

We are *so blessed!* Whenever I think about some of the *hardest* trials anyone has out here I think of people in the past...and we have it *so easy* compared to them. *So easy!* What I'm going through is so puny and so minor. What you're going through, whatever it is, is so puny and so minor compared to people who have gone before us, what they have sacrificed, literally to their very lives, what they've sacrificed. And who of us is going to have to do that? Well, maybe somewhere up the line some will...maybe some will who are part of the 144,000, maybe some others will as well, I don't know if God has a purpose in it. He knows what's best for every one of us and we yield ourselves to the process for whatever that is.

Therefore rejoice heavens, and you who dwell in them. And there's a flip side to this. Indeed, what a wonderful time when Satan's no longer around, the heavens. What a wonderful time when he could no longer go back and forth, him and his demons, go back and forth in their communication, however it was done, I don't understand it. But whatever was done here, no place was for them anymore and the heavens were cleaned and cleared of them finally...no more of this accusing and this yap-yap-yap-yap-yap on a continual basis to the angelic realm or before God's throne. No more! So God says, **rejoice you heavens....But woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil has come down unto you having great wrath because he knows he has but a short time.** So ever since that time, ever since that time...after Mr. Armstrong nearly died, and then came back with greater strength than ever before, in whatever period this happened in there, and he came back as he did...and Satan was cast down at some point there, whatever that was, came back filled with greater wrath than ever before to destroy anything to do with God.

God didn't let him do that, did He? God had the Church continue on until January of '86 with tremendous power, but after that they kind of coasted for a time on the strength, on the shove, if you will, that God had given to the Church through Mr. Armstrong in those years of... What was that message he gave over and over again when he came back, 'putting the Church on the right track'. That's what it was, over and over again, and any message you heard from him basically was about putting the Church back on the right track because he saw the trouble the Church was in. He taught very powerfully about a spirit of Laodicea that was already in the Church. By the time he got close to his death he began to ask, "...are there even 10% of you out there? ...who are living more of what was described in Philadelphia," and not more of what he saw in Laodicea. That's interesting because a transition was taking place, we were going into a new age and that spirit was coming into the Church more and more. Very powerful!

So, we continued on for a little while. By the early '90's there were great wars already taking place, things that we didn't even know as we became weaker and weaker and weaker in the Church. So, indeed, he's had great wrath and there was a purpose in why God allowed that, for 2nd Thessalonians to come to pass. That's exactly why it happened. It was never allowed to happen in God's Church ever but that one time, that one time period, and God allowed it to take place for a great purpose...and all about the return of Jesus Christ, and what should have been, what was supposed to be, a great sign to God's Church about the return of Jesus Christ, about that power that was coming to this earth.

So again, something to be sobered by, to realize that... How much more? How much more if you are a being like that and you know this is it? This is the final great war on earth that he's going to be able to be a part of. His hatred, his disdain for God's Church is greater than it's ever been, his disgust for what he's seeing coming to pass and what God has been doing, and he's stirred up, very powerfully so. It's not a time to become weak or we can become a casualty; you can become a casualty, truly.

So it's a time to be deeply sobered.

I'm going to read a few articles here, because I'll tell you what some of the things going on in the news right now... I had so many... Since the week before I've been reading something almost every week, different articles, and this week here I've been going through different ones and just throwing a whole bunch of them away, there's so many out there you can't go through everything. But to be able to see everything that's taking place, to me, is an awesome thing right now because behind it all, in the midst of it all, everything is pulling together *exactly* as God talked about through time, things that we *didn't* see coming together in times past in the same manner. So I just want to read a few of these.

If you want to talk about armies and nations, right now where they're focusing in the world, it's the Mid-East. That's the hot spot! And that's what God said, that would be the hot spot that would be the place that draws all the armies of the world together. There was a time, even in writing the last book, because God hadn't revealed everything, that we talked about things about the areas of Megiddo, Armageddon, and all the armies of the world that would come together there and trying to understand, "Well, why would they come together there?" You know the story. But in actuality it's about a representation of all the armies of the world coming together. It starts there. That's where they're coming, that's where it's starting.

Look at what's taking place in Syria right now! Turkey! Iran! Saudi Arabia! Jordan, what they're doing. Israel! All the way through there... this is an incredible hot spot in the world and who's it drawing in? NATO, United States, Russia, China, the *whole world*, in essence, is focusing on that part of the world. This is powerful to understand what God is doing, what God is allowing to take place in what He said would take place. It's starting there, in that region, candidly, in that *very region* where people are amassing and what's taking place.

Here's one:

WND World

Russia Warns Turkey, NATO Against Military Actionⁱ

By Aaron Klein | June 24, 2012

And so that's been in the news a lot this past week, different places you read it. Don't need to read all those things.

Prime Minister Erdogan of Turkey said, "The Turkish army is ready to respond to any Syrian Violation." A couple jets get blown out of the air - hot spot all of a sudden in the world. It only takes one more thing to take place there now, one more thing to spark a World War, candidly, that's all it takes...or at least to *cause* nations to become more set in their ways, like Russia, like China, like Turkey, like NATO, to do some of the things that we know they're going to do in time, in a short time. Says, Turkey will treat Syrian military units which approach its border as a threat and a military target.

So, anyway, there are already reports that they may already be doing that. They're not real bright. You know, some of the things that nations are doing right now, it's not a matter of a lot of forethought and a lot of 'smarts' behind it. Sometimes in thinking, perhaps, they're going to pull some other nations into it. Do you suppose that some of these nations want to pull other nations into this, like the United States, like NATO, like Russia? Do you think they have reasons that they might want them to come into the area, that they might do something to force their hand? That's exactly what they're doing.

Another one here:

The Muslim News

Syria: Saudi forces mass on Jordanian, Iraqi bordersⁱⁱ

DEBKAFfile Special Report June 29:

The Syrian crisis was Friday, June 29, on a knife edge between a Western-Arab-Turkish military offensive in the next 48 hours and a big power accord to ward it off.

debkafle's military sources report heavy Saudi troop movements toward the Jordanian and Iraqi borders Thursday overnight and up until Friday morning, June 29, after King Abdullah put the Saudi military on high alert for joining an anti-Assad offensive in Syria.

So people are preparing for what they see is a strong possibility here of a war in the area, a conflict, and so they're trying to prepare for a possibility of such a thing... and that's exactly what's going to come to pass. It goes on to say....

The Saudi units are poised with tanks, missiles, special forces and anti-air batteries to enter Jordan in two heads:

One will safeguard Jordan's King Abdullah against potential Syrian or Iranian reprisals from Syria or Iraq.

Which, I thought this was interesting. I want to read this portion here:

....

The Saudi units deployed on the Iraqi border are there to defend the kingdom against potential incursions by Iraqi Shiite militias crossing into the kingdom for reprisals. The Iraqi militias are well trained and armed and serve under officers of the Iranian Al-Quds Brigades, the Revolutionary Guards' external arm.

So again here, here are some in the southern part of Iraq who are aligned more with Iran, some of them trained by Iranians evidently from what this is talking about here, and still causing problems in Iraq and other countries around there as well. Going on....

Following the downing of a Turkish plane by Syria a week ago, Turkey continues to build up its Syrian border units with anti-aircraft guns, tanks and missiles towed by long convoys of trucks.

Think how fast this stuffs happening – since the 27th – all these things we’ve been going through, all these articles over and over and over again, even some of the news articles talking about how fast these things are moving. It’s like you can’t keep up with it anymore.

Another one here says:

WND
FROM JOSEPH FARAH'S G2 BULLETIN
More War Preparations from Israelⁱⁱⁱ
Published 06/17/2012

WASHINGTON – For the past few weeks, U.S. indications and warnings have picked up Israeli long-range strike practice and refueling, according to a report in Joseph Farah’s G2 Bulletin.

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In addition to long-range strike practice runs, sources say there also has been a recall of “key personnel” and further movement of U.S.-supplied anti-ballistic Patriot missiles.

So the whole region there is preparing for a great conflict, a stronger conflict.

The Israelis also have been doing intelligence collection flights, as well as early warning practice, which has been under way for more than a month.

Such a report comes on the heels of other recent indications and warnings about Israeli war preparations.

Those preparations include arming and fueling Israel’s nuclear-capable Jericho II missiles and the deployment of covert intelligence ships near Iran for intelligence-gathering and surveillance.

Isn’t that amazing, what they call them? The Jericho II – Israel - amazing!

I want to read some more articles here because some don’t get all these articles sent to them; some don’t have the same access so I want to read a few more here, in another part of the world and what’s taking place there. Because to me it’s an awesome thing watching Europe come together and why it’s coming together and seeing what Germany’s doing in particular in the midst of all this, things about Angela Merkel and what she is *not* doing and what... well, I’ll just read the article here.

So this is the primary driving force right now. In order to save the Euro, some understand more and more, it's becoming clearer to them, the only way to do it is not by massive bailouts or bond money, different kinds of things and throwing money at it, which they have resisted over there, but it's for these nations to draw closer together and give up their sovereignty in their own nations, to give it to a central power. And that's what some are fighting for, that's what some want in the midst of all this...and whether they want it or not that's what God says they're going to do so that's what they're drawn to because of a being that's out there as well.

Chancellor Angela Merkel used uncommonly strong language on Tuesday when she rejected the idea for common euro bonds by saying Europe would not share total debt liability "as long as I live."

Pretty strong!

But German media commentators have drawn some comfort from a blueprint (...)for a radical revamp of the euro zone's architecture presented this week by the "gang of four" European presidents: European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, Euro Group President Jean-Claude Juncker and European Central Bank President Mario Draghi.

Their ideas would entail a dramatic loss of national sovereignty through the establishment of a central authority with the power to demand changes in individual members' national budgets.

Over and over again, some of these things that are taking place over there...eventually 10 nations that will come out of it. I don't know how many of you saw the most recent... Nigel's at it again. ☺ Nigel Farage from Great Britain, I get a charge out of him. But you know, he hits the nail on the head every time when you watch some of his videos and what he's talking about. I just want to read some of the comments that are outlined here, of things he brought up in that recent video here because of the summit taking place. He says...

"And what we do at these summits... And remember this is summit number 19 since 2009..."

So, he's not too happy about all that because what's it doing? He says...

"...All we do is kick the can down the road."

So he says there's really no progress, they just keep kicking the can down the road, which he's been saying for some time. He goes on to say here:

“...Well, remember, there are seventeen countries that have mistakenly joined the Eurozone. So far, five of them have been bailed out. Nearly a third of them have needed bailing out...”

So again here, talking about the problems here of what’s happening in the southern part of Europe. He goes on to say (another point he brings out in this latest video of his)...

“...If the Italian bailout comes, there is not enough money in Europe to bail out Italy, which has the third highest level of debt in the world, exceeding 2 trillion dollars...”

Incredible what’s taking place, but it’s forcing their hand. Then behind this it says:

Zerohedge

Now Is The Time To Prepare For The (Next) French Bailout Of Their Banking System & Potential Bailout Of France^{vi}

Submitted by Reggie Middleton | 6/28/2012

So we don’t even have time to get through here with Italy and it’s already talking about France and the problems they’re having with their banks. I won’t take time to go through any more of that.

Another article here from yesterday, from Israel:

Zerohedge posted from: Sovereignman.com

Guest Post: It’s Time to Connect the Dots^{vii}

Submitted by Tyler Durden/Submitted by Simon Black – Sovereign Man Blog | 6/12/2012

I thought this was really good because it brings some things in here, it’s showing a trend of what’s taking place. It says:

Tel Aviv, Israel - This week may very well go down as ‘connect the dots’ week. Things have been moving so quickly, so let’s step back briefly and review the big picture from the week’s events:

1) After weeks... months... even years of posturing and denial, Spain and Cyprus became the fourth and fifth countries to formally request aid from Europe’s bailout funds on Monday.

I think this is interesting. He says, “Look how fast this is happening, this just happened this week,” and he says, “...where it is leading?” [paraphrased]

In doing so, these governments have officially confessed to their own insolvency and the insolvency of their respective banking systems.

And he points out that every time this happens there are denials – no problems – denial, denial, denial until *finally* they have to ask for help.

Meanwhile, Slovenia’s prime minister said that his country may soon ask for a bailout. (Humorously, Slovenia’s Finance Minister denied any such plans.)

Another one here:

Spain's 10-year bond yield jumped to over 7% again in response, and many Spanish banks were downgraded to junk status by Moody's.

....

3) JP Morgan, considered to be among the few 'good' banks remaining in the US, conceded that the \$2 billion loss they announced several weeks ago might actually be more like \$9 billion.

Another comment here...

{Last month the parent company of the Spanish bank Bankia rewrote its 2011 results from a 51 million profit to a 4.15 billion loss.} [inset from an unknown source]

So these games they keep playing.

5) Countries from Ukraine to Kazakstan to Turkey announced that they have purchased gold in recent months to bolster their growing reserves.

So here again, some are starting to buy gold. It says...

6) Chile has joined a growing list of countries that has agreed to bypass the US dollar and settle all of its trade with China in renminbi. ['ren-'min-'bē]

....

8) World banking regulators from the Bank of International Settlements to the FDIC are proposing that gold bullion be treated as a risk-free cash equivalent by commercial banks.

And so all these things are listed:

- European governments are insolvent
- European banks are insolvent
- US governments are heading in that direction
- Even the best US banks are not as strong as believed
- Foreigners are abandoning the US dollar and seeking alternatives
- Gold is money

These events are all connected, and the trend is becoming so clear that even the most casual observers are starting to wake up.

When you connect the dots, the next steps lead to what may soon be regarded as an obvious conclusion: the system, as it exists right now, is crumbling.

No amount of self-delusion can make this go away.

I find these awesome, things we've talked about for a long time now and now it's all in the news over and over again. I think of that prophecy that says, 'How can anyone help but prophecy?' It's like whatever is coming out of their mouth, its prophecy. Ah, so many articles here. Another one:

USA Watchdog.com

The Ignorance is willful!^{viii}

By Greg Hunter's | 25 June 2012

It goes through and talks about this attitude of mind and all the banks being downgraded by Moody's and so many in different parts of the world at one time, and it talks about how it's been treated and this one individual is giving a good sum up of the whole thing, if you will, talking about the ignorance is willful, it's by design on their part.

....

Bloomberg did a story that underplayed Moody's downgrades titled "**Bank Investors Dismiss Moody's Cuts as Years Too Late.**"^{ix}

In other words, "We've already planned for this because this should have happened years ago," when they downgraded it, and so it says, "...it's all figured in the markets already," so they, the markets, actually went up. It's frustrating to watch some of this stuff sometimes. It goes on to say...

This is the same treatment the financial press gives to what I call "government sanctioned accounting fraud" that the banks use to value underwater assets on their books such as real estate and mortgage-backed securities. [end note viii continued...]

I want to read this to you because to me this is mindboggling, some of the things that have happened that sometimes people don't know, they're not aware of it.

The Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) changed the rules in 2009, and the banks can value these assets at whatever they *think* they will be worth at some fictional date in the future.

Instead of "**mark to market**" accounting where assets are valued at what they will sell for today ... you have "**mark to fantasy**" accounting where you value the assets at what you hope to get for them in the future. This is an insolvency problem so big that FASB had to change the accounting rules to make people think some banks are still solvent.

The games they play – absolutely incredible! It goes on to say....

....

...the global financial crisis is, in reality, a bank solvency crisis. The bank credit downgrades by Moody's are another signpost on the road to perdition. Things are clearly not getting better, no matter how much the MSM underplays the crisis. The "**nobody saw this coming**" excuse will not work the next time there is a financial implosion, and there will be a next time. "**The ignorance is willful.**"

So, it's amazing what you can read now-a-days in the news. And I want to take time to read one more because this is all a part of something that's still going on right now that's actually... I'll read this toward the end, some other news articles, what's happening right here in this country under our nose that sometimes we don't think about or don't know.

Revelation 12:13, going back to that. It says, **And when the dragon saw that he was cast/thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child.**

Verse 14 - And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, we're picking up now where we'd left off last week and continuing on. But again, this is a part of the process of what took place after leading up to an apostasy here because that was the culmination of it all, that was the reason for it all, that God allowed these things to take place, for Satan to be cast down, for him to be stirred up like he was, and for what had to take place within the Worldwide Church of God toward the end.

And so again here, this is what this is all leading up to and it talks about something that had happened here. **...to the woman were given wings of a great eagle**, which has to do with protection, **that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished**, taken care of by God, that's what it's talking about here, a group, that which God would continue to work with in the Church, that He would continue to feed, that He would continue to **nourish for a time, times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.**

And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, so it's showing what took place here, why this protection had to be here, why this nourishment had to be here – because of what Satan did. Says **he cast out a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood**, in other words, swept away by the flood. Satan had a desire to totally destroy the Church by the apostasy.

And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had cast out of his mouth. We've talked about this in times past, how that because we're are so small and so scattered in so many different places we didn't even come on the radar screen, and God took care of us for a period of right at 3½ years, literally. There are different definitions depending on where they're used, 'Time, Times, and a Half a Time'.

Verse 17 - And the dragon was wrath/made angry/enraged with the woman, and went to make war, so, when finally realized what had taken place, we've been in war ever since. Shortly after that 3½ years we started having wars, even within the Body, one after another, and those things were going on around us. **...he went to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony/witness of Jesus Christ.** To me these are awesome verses here, of what it's talking about, because it's talking about a remnant, it's talking about what makes them different from everyone else – because this is the way that it has to be for God's Church. This describes God's Church, of what God's Church has to be like – **'keep the commandments of God'**, to keep His way of life, to live this way of life, not just to go through the motions but that we live it because it's in us. **...and have the testimony/witness of Jesus Christ.**

I thought it would be really good today to go back to 1 John and read some of these things about what it means to be this kind of a witness and what this is talking about. These are some of the most awesome scriptures, to me, in all the Bible, but they're hard to digest because they're spiritual and so we receive

them in different levels depending on our growth, depending on where we are in our lives. But candidly, there are no more, in the essence of what you want to call spiritual, something spiritual that God gives as instruction in the Bible, than right here in 1st John. This is powerful. To understand these things, truly, in spirit and truth, you have to be filled with God's spirit, you have to continue to grow in God's spirit and understand the message that's here.

1 John 1:1 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word/the Logos of life; Now, obviously John is going back here and talking about Jesus Christ, but he's talking about more than that as well. This is a starting point; this is a part of a message that is one that is very spiritual in that respect in what is being discussed here, because as he goes through and talks about this, about the Word of life, **'that which we have seen, that which we have heard'**, the things that...because John is the last one to write. He is the last of the original disciples, the original apostles, to be writing. He wrote here and he also wrote the book of Revelation. So many of the others had been dying at various points along the way, had been killed for what they lived. Most of them were killed, that's what most through history reveals about what happened to them.

What happened to John here, going on here then as he began to talk about these things, he says...**and our hands have handled...** What do you mean, 'your hands have handled of the Word of life'? It's what we live. In other words, we have seen this, we have seen the Word that was made flesh – that's a part of what he talks about back in the book of John, the first book he wrote – he starts out the book of John about the Word of Life, about the Logos that was made flesh. And so certainly a direct tie in for what he's starting out here in 1st John, but now he's adding to this in a very powerful way saying, **'our hands have handled this'**, in other words, we have *lived* this, we have lived what He taught, we are *living* the things that we have been shown of the Word of Life that comes from God Almighty.

(For the life was manifested...) in Christ, it was revealed to him, to them, to the disciples, the Church began in 31 AD, that which was given to a Church that only individually people lived before that through time, different ones through time. Now God began to work through a Church, Jesus Christ the Head of the Church, and then he says... **(...this life was manifested and we have seen it, and we bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life...)** What's he talking about? It's more than... it goes beyond Christ because that's where it starts, the Body of Christ, this way of life, the Church, and he's going on and talking about... **(...we show unto you that eternal life...)** it's in the Logos, it's in the Word of God that's to live in us, it's about the Church and what's supposed to be living inside of us, and that's what the story John is getting ready to go into here.

He says, **(...which was with the Father...)** that *was* the Father, the *Logos*, the *Word*, the truth, the way of life to be lived, the way of peace, the way of Jerusalem, the way of Zion, what we've talked about in times past, that which God desires for His Family, and then that which God allowed to begin to happen, the warring, and the fighting, and the battling, no longer peace. So he says, **(...that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us;)** speaking of Jesus Christ; it was manifested, revealed to us in Him before the Church ever began.

So they had that period of time they were with Christ being taught by Him, not understanding the things He was teaching fully spiritually, but as soon as Pentecost came [snap – snap – snap's fingers] they started understanding because of God's spirit that was poured out in a very powerful way.

That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you, in other words, that which we have been taught, that which we have heard, that which we have seen, that which we have learned on a spiritual plane, and by this instruction and teaching that's been given to us, in essence, now we can declare it to you. That's the way the Church has been; it's been passed down through time, the word of God, the truth of God, except for when you get into and through Sardis and it began to go by the wayside and there wasn't much there, and then God raised up Mr. Armstrong for the very purpose of bringing this back into the Church but even more powerfully than it was before.

As it says here... **that which we have seen and heard we declare unto you that you also may have fellowship with us**: it's about a fellowship, it's about a unity within the Church that goes beyond... it goes beyond Philadelphia, that spirit, because 'philia' is a brotherly love, it's a fraternal kind of love and John is teaching something far greater than that, than a fraternal kind of love. He's talking about a fellowship that we're able to have with one another, with God, with Jesus Christ. That's what he's talking about here; it's a spiritual thing, a spiritual relationship with God by a way of life to be lived. That's why he goes on to say **and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ**. Because it's spiritual, something that can't be taken away from you unless you *let* it be taken away.

You know, when God gives you this way of life and you begin to live it, the only thing that can take it away is by your letting down spiritually – then it can go by the wayside. You can go to sleep or worse, which has happened.

So again, this fellowship – that's why I love the words... when it talks about Passover it uses the word 'communion' which talks about it's the word 'fellowship' here, the word for 'fellowship'. It's about what we're able to have in the Body of Christ with one another because of the blood of Christ, because of what God does in sanctifying and setting us apart for special use and purpose in His...to become a part of His Family.

And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. In other words, to live a full life, to be beyond the pulls of the things of human life that pull people down and pull people away from and discourage. We go through hard things, but when we're together, when we're in a fellowship with God and with Jesus Christ, and when we're together with God's people there is a fullness of life, and as we live this in our lives, ourselves if we're able to share it with others who are part of the Body through the week, we're so blessed! There's a unique fellowship there that we're able to have with God, with Jesus Christ, and with one another, whenever we come in contact with one another wherever that is. And that adds to your life, it adds to the fullness of your life, to enjoy a fullness of life. That's what you hold onto to get through what we've always gone through in this world, waiting for the time that it's finally here.

Verse 5 - This then is the message which we have heard from Him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. And so now he's going to explain more that is spiritual in nature. Everything that comes from God is illuminating, it's light, it's able to be seen clearly; it's not done in darkness, it's not things of the dark, of the night. And so he's making this contrast between the light, that which illuminates and makes clearer - God's way, His Word, His truth makes clearer.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness...so it's how we live, it's what we're doing. He says, so if we're not living this, if we're doing some things in the darkness and somehow trying to be in the light too and have this mixture, he's making it clear here what is of God is of the light,

what is not is dark, and we have to make choices as to what we live and what we walk in, the way of life we live.

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and are not doing the truth/not living the truth: And so it's an admonition here to make sure that we're walking in the light, that we strive to walk in the truth of what God has given to us and to fight against the darkness. That's where repentance comes in!

But if we walk in the light, doesn't mean we do it perfectly, but that's what we strive to do, that's where our battle is, that's what we're addressing, and that's what we're repenting of, the things that we know are wrong. Sometimes we can get to a point where we don't even *see the dark*, in the Church. Sometimes if we live certain things and do certain things long enough we don't even see clearly what is dark anymore, things begin to be a blur to us spiritually. **But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another;** so God is telling us, to have a right relationship with Him we need to be in the light, and where we're not in the light we need to repent. That means *change!* That means to be something different, to fight against the pulls of self and whatever an individual is doing in their life and letting down and backing away from the truth – whatever is pulling a person away from whatever is true or all that's true.

And that's why it goes on to say **...and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son is cleansing us from all sin.** Because this is the focal point of it all, in being able to walk in the light; it's a willingness - not only a willingness, but a desire – to see what we need to change. What is it 'I' need to change in my life to live more the way God reveals to 'me', to walk in the light? Where am 'I' *not* walking in the light? ...and not to minimize those things then in your life but to realize those are the very things that *cut you off from the flow of God's spirit!* This is what God wants us to address at this time in our life, to make *certain* in every way that we are standing firm in this way of life, that we're *not* pulling back (for whatever reasons), that we're *not* letting down but that we're fighting the fight, because Satan will use the weaknesses to come at you. He'll use the weaknesses to come at you and you have to be strong, as it talks about in Ephesians 6, in the power of God's might. A willingness to repent. A willingness to acknowledge sin. A willingness, a desire, to even *see* sin so that we can become stronger.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and that's what we're talking about here, **and the truth is not in us.** And so if we don't acknowledge sin...especially if God shows it to us and points it out to us and reveals it to us, all the more so we have to be on our toes spiritually.

If we confess, in other words, **acknowledge our sins,** acknowledge before God where our weaknesses are. God wants to help us, to give us strength and the power of His spirit to conquer and overcome them. That's what this is all about. **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,** so it's about a relationship between us and God, a desire to go before God to repent, knowing full well that is what God has brought us to and He desires to cleanse us, to free us from that. **...to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.** The point being is we all have sin. Our desire should be to see what that is. Our desire is to *never* let down in fighting it but to constantly be repenting and fight and fight and fight against our human nature, or whatever it is that pulls us away from and distracts us from what God is offering to us. And there are a lot of things out here that distract and pull people away. Truly!

1 John 4:1 - Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world. And so again here, this word is about every one of

us. It's about every individual whom God calls into the Church because it has to do with what you're speaking, it has to do with whether or not it comes from God, whether it's inspired by God, a fellowship that we're able to have with one another and what we're able to speak with one another. This is the context of what is being discussed here; it has to do with *inspired speaking*. When we come into God's Church and we're given the truth and we're yielding to God's spirit we have a different kind of fellowship, we have something unique that's unique to the Church only because it's something that comes from God. Because the truth... you're able to understand things and have conversation with others about that truth no matter what it is – the Sabbath alone, or the Holy Days.

You're able to discuss things about the Holy Days, making plans to go the Feast of Tabernacles and sharing as a family, or whatever that might be, because of your beliefs, and this is a part of what... you're *inspired* because you have tasted... maybe you haven't had a Feast of Tabernacles yet. Once you have it, you'll have a far greater understanding and appreciation of what it's all about. But for us, we're able to share those things with each other, an excitement that God gives to us because of the truth, and it goes far, far deeper than that and far beyond that, but that's a basic example to show something we share in in fellowship that you can't share with others. You can't go share it with your boss, "I've got to tell you about the Feast of Tabernacles; I need time off!" Generally it's not even... you know... "I have to tell you I need time off for my religious beliefs..." and you start talking about the Feast of Tabernacles and they think, "Man! You are one whacky person! Never heard of this thing here...what is it, the Feast of Tabernacles?!" "Yeah, and the Last Great Day..." "Oh, the Last Great Day..." Atonement, Trumpets... whatever.

...for many false prophets, speaking of what, because of what it shows, whether we're in the Church or not in the Church, that's the point. Whether it's coming from God or not coming from God – and candidly, it's been that way through time...that we have to be careful, we have to be on guard in our own lives and sometimes because of things that pop up within the Church. I'm thankful that I see that very rarely anymore compared to what I have seen in times past. After Mr. Armstrong died it became rampant, truly.

Hereby know you the spirit of God: So that's what it's revealing here; does this come from God or is it false, is it not coming from God? What is the source? What is the speech? Are you able to share in things that are indeed of the same mind? That's why I've talked about so many times in the Church, we are to be of one mind, unity and harmony with *every truth that God has given us*. If we have fellowship with someone else and they are *not in agreement* with any of those truths – go back to verse 1 – it's a warning. It's a warning, something is not right here, something is off here, it's a caution. Sometimes it has to go beyond that where you talk to your brother alone and say, "Now, wait a minute, that's not what we teach in the Church. No, this is what we believe..." Sometimes a person has to do that. Sometimes people can't do that and that's not love. Sometimes the ministry has to be brought into a situation because people aren't of the same mind.

Happens every year in God's Church - there isn't a year that goes by that I don't have to be involved with, Johnny doesn't have to be involved with, different ones don't have to be involved with, someone in the ministry doesn't have to be involved with, something that's going on out here that's not in unity and harmony with the truth. Something will make it manifest, something will bring it out – because that's how God's spirit works. Sometimes it's for our own learning, sometimes it's for our own moulding and fashioning, sometimes it's our ability to learn how to judge matters and how to deal with matters and do things the way God says to do them.

Hereby know you the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is of God: I still marvel when I think back before the apostasy, in talking to one individual who had been in the ministry for a long, long, long time, and he didn't get it...this here to him was a very physical thing, it was like the protestant world believes. **...every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:** if you look at it for what it says, like the protestant world believes, it's a lie. That's not enough! To acknowledge, to say Jesus Christ lived a physical human life, then that's of God. That means the whole protestant world out here would be of God. That's not what this is talking about – and I know all of you understand, as a whole, what this is talking about. It's more like present progressive, and this word 'confesses' is how your life reflects it. It's what the word 'witness' means. To be a witness of this way of life this is what has to be in your life, that Jesus Christ has to be coming in your flesh, in your life, Jesus Christ and God the Father coming into your life. That's why Jesus Christ died, so God the Father and Jesus Christ could live and dwell within you, through you.

So, **every spirit that confesses;** everyone who is brought into the Body and their life confesses it by how they're living. It's a knowledge – it doesn't mean by words that come out of your mouth, that you say something; it does if you understand what's being said...the word here that talks about false prophets and prophets or whatever it is, 'try the spirits', because it has to do with inspired speaking, whether it's coming from God or not, is based on the truth that's in your mind and inspired then by God's spirit.

And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh, in other words your life is not reflecting this unity and oneness of spirit, it isn't reflecting that this is coming from God, that Jesus Christ... because you know what? If Jesus Christ and God the Father is in a person they will be in *agreement* with *everything* that God has given to the Church *without exception!* That's the way it works! It worked that way in the time of Mr. Armstrong. If somebody wasn't in agreement with the 21 Truths that we had at that time then we knew something was wrong! And those things happen *constantly* in the Church. I came across them *constantly* in God's Church, where individuals weren't in agreement with those things...sometimes with number 1 of the 18 – government. They didn't grasp God's government and how God's government worked from Mr. Armstrong all the rest of the way through the Church. If they could understand that one simple thing it would solve a lot of problems within the Church let alone other things that came long through time of some of the truths that God had given.

And so, someone speaks something different, not in agreement with those truths, it was a warning. It was a warning going back to verse 1 – try the spirits, ask a question, "What? What do you mean? You don't agree with what Mr. Armstrong said then about this? What do you think is true here then?" Try the spirits; see what comes out of their mouth. Say, "Now, wait a minute! I love you and I want you to know that's dead wrong! You're wrong about what you're saying here and it's not what we teach. This is dangerous; this is dangerous for the Church. If you're saying this to other people, this is harmful; you've got to get this straightened out in your mind. Are you a part? What's going on? Why are you in disagreement?" Happened into the thousands...thousands and thousands and thousands of people who went this direction. That's what happens when you become spiritually weak; these things take place in a person's life.

And every spirit that does not confesses that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God: in other words, not revealed by what they say and by what's happening – it shows whether God's there or not. Because there's a way of life that God will live in our life and there's a way that He won't live, even by *how* we live let alone by what we say. There are certain things that God won't do and there are certain things then that we shouldn't do. If God is dwelling in us and Christ is living in us there are just certain

things we shouldn't say to one another or to others in how we talk. And when those things are wrong what do we have to do? We have to repent. That's how we get back in order and back in line and back in unity and oneness with God so that we *are* of the same mind.

And every spirit that does not confesses that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-Christ; that's what's so incredible to understand, that even within the Body, within the Church, we can actually work against Christ, work against the very purpose of why He died – so that He can live in us. And if we don't live this way of life and repent when we should, when we need to, when sin is there, He'll quit dwelling there, we'll be cut off from the flow of that spirit.

...whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world. He said, so you've been told this, that this would happen, and he says it's already in the Church. Because that's what he's talking about, he's talking about the Church. It's already in the world!

You are of God, little children, we are to *be* of God. Truly, God has called us to be a part of Him, to be of Him, to bear His name, the Church of God, the called out ones of God. **...and have overcome them:** again, this 'battle'. This word is about conquering, it means 'to conquer' in the Greek language. **...and you have conquered them,** this is how we conquer, this is how we fight the fight, the war, the battle that we're in. And please understand this is more intense now than ever – truly is.

...because greater is He that is in you, than he who is in the world, speaking of Satan and that power that's out there. And so, our strength is in God and that's how this is true then, if we're truly living as we should be we will be of God and we will conquer and we will seek to overcome.

Verse 5 - They are of the world: so even within the Body through times past there has been that which has been of the world. It says, **they speak of the world and the world hears them.** So it's about this which comes out of the mouth again. What do we talk about? What comes out of us? Is it from God? Is it because it's influenced by the truth? Is it because we're in unity with the truth, or do things that come out reveal that this isn't sound, this doesn't make sense, this isn't the way God is?

We are of God: he who knows God hears us; this is a powerful thing in the ministry, always has been, powerful thing for me to understand. **We are of God: he who knows God hears us;** so when someone isn't in unity and harmony it reveals something in a very powerful way to the ministry, that there's a problem if someone doesn't... because it's a matter of whether we hear God, it's a matter if we understand how God works and how He moulds and fashions and teaches and leads us. **We are of God: he who knows God hears us; he that is not of God does not hear us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of...** the word means 'deceit'; usually because a person has deceived themselves. They've strayed from the truth. That's what the word means in the Greek, to stray from the truth, is deceived in a matter, and the desire is if they've been baptized and truly honest and truthful in those things in spirit and truth that they will repent, and the vast majority of times this is what we experience. Sometimes that doesn't happen, especially in times past.

That's why I'll just say candidly right now, everything that has happened, in a sense of what has come to the surface right now, God is bringing things to the surface so that we can address them in our life. Some are not able to address them and have gone by the wayside. It's what happens every time something like this happens within the Church, when there is something that God allows to shake the Body, and when we're tried as to what is truly inside of us, what we truly believe with all of our being, to what degree this is truly in us, what our commitment is before God. This brings those kinds of things

out, especially something we've just gone through, like what we've gone through, it brings those things to the surface as to what our true commitment is toward God and God brings those things to the surface, whether it's one of error and deceit or one that's true. It doesn't mean you don't have battles. It doesn't mean you don't go through some hard times, but you address them and you address them quickly, spiritually, before God.

And it goes on to say...**Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God/agape is of God;** I find this so awesome and so exciting when you understand why he's going...why he's saying this in the way that it is, because it's not just a matter of being in unity, which is so awesomely important, but the ability to be and remain in unity is because of how we're living. Because if we're not living this, if God isn't coming through us, if we're not loving others by God's spirit, by God's love, it reveals something very powerful here that's going on, that's going wrong and why people go astray and why people begin to fight against the purpose of Jesus Christ living within us.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love/agape is of God: and everyone who loves is born, or in other words, **begotten of God, and knows God.** And so it's showing here that if you are able to have God's love live through you toward others, the ability to forgive, the ability to have patience, the ability to have mercy, all the qualities that come from God, the characteristics that come from God, if you're able to live this toward one another in the Body – because this is where we're trained. You're not trained (well, you are) in how you deal with people in the world, and this should be there as well, how we treat others, how we think toward others, but all the more so within the Body because this is what you live day by day, people you're closest to. And so, again, this is where these things are generally first of all revealed.

He who loves not knows not God; for God is love. God is agape! It comes from God! And so he's saying here this is a measurement of our own lives, of looking to our own lives. What comes out of our mouth about others? How do we think about others? What do we say to others? **In this was manifested the love/the agape of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.** In other words, a willingness to sacrifice. How much are we willing to sacrifice in order to love someone else? Sometimes not too much – sometimes not too much because we want our own way.

Verse 10 - Herein is agape/God's love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. In other words, you never give up on love, you don't give up on loving others – especially people who can't see and can't understand. The ability to judge a matter and say, "They can't help it," is awesome. That's the epitome; the height of that is in Stephen and the example of Christ when He said, "Father, forgive them, they don't know what they're doing." The ability to judge like that on a regular basis in the world is a very powerful thing...if you can really judge like that. When you come across people and deal with people in the world, your first reaction may be very carnal, but you need to get a hold of that very quickly and come to this realization, "They can't help it," *you can*, and you're not to give up, you're to keep living this because you've been given this opportunity, they haven't.

Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. So if God loved us, didn't give up on us, continued to love us, then God tells us this is what we're to do. This reveals God in us, if we're able to continue to do and live this way.

No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another, again, God's love, agape, **God dwells in us,** it's the only way to have God's love in us. It reveals in a very powerful way. In other words, the simplest form of being able to understand what verse 1 is talking about here in chapter 4, of being a witness of this way of life, of being a witness, indeed, of Jesus Christ and God the Father living within us in this way of life, is how we think about each other, how we speak to each other, how we treat each other. That's why I've truly loved seeing the kind of growth that has taken place in the Church through time here, where the Body is truly the closest I've ever seen it. I don't believe I've ever seen in all the years in the Church, in being in the Church since 1969 (I know I haven't), a time when the Body is so close to each other, truly, in a very powerful way. But that doesn't mean we don't have things to work upon, it doesn't mean we don't have things to be made stronger within the Body, because we do; and especially at this time to understand there's a being out there that is so stirred up. He *knows* your buttons! He knows which buttons to push. He *knows* where you're *weak*! He knows where to come at you, and that's where you have to be alert and on guard. What are some of your weaknesses? What are some of the things where you can make a wrong choice and a wrong decision? What is it that can pull you away from...? Do you know what some of those weaknesses are? ...especially in relationships.

No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another God dwells in us and His love is perfected in us. So we yield ourselves to that and we become stronger, and that's what God desires of us right now in standing. Fight for this way of life! Fight in your relationships with one another and in the world as well, to live this way of life.

Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, in other words, there's actually a confidence you can have because you have a response that's right! You *know* it's right...and you *should know* when it's *wrong*! But as a whole, especially if you're doing this and living this constantly, continually in your life – and when not you repent of it and you tell individuals, "I'm sorry." You know, when you've said something wrong to someone else or you've done something wrong to someone else, in the world or in the Church, have the ability to quickly come to a reality and say, "I am sorry, I was wrong!" That takes growth, and it also gives an incredible confidence spiritually, which is something we *need* at a time like this.

Hereby know we that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His spirit. This *reveals* His spirit. See, that's why we talk about going back to all those truths. It's awesome to understand – if you understand all those truths and you're in agreement with them that's beautiful, that's wonderful, that's the minimum in one respect, of how we should be living our life – but what we're living day by day, *that's* what counts, that's what *reveals* whether or not we're going to be able to hold onto those truths and whether or not we truly are in unity. Because I've known many of people who thought they were in unity with some of the truths of God who didn't really understand them – not all of them – they thought they were, like number 1 of the 18, government, and they were so far away from understanding government it wasn't even funny! Even within the ministry, through time, seen that over and over again, people thinking they understand government and they didn't understand government. They understood government their way. But it goes back to how we're living as to how strong all those truths are going to be in us. It's what we live toward each other day by day.

And we have seen and do testify, that word means 'witness'. **We have seen and do witness that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.** So you realize how important this is? ...what God is saying? He's saying, because of what's reflected in your life, that you live this, that you're striving to live this, where you're wrong you repent because you want this love, this kind of mind and attitude to be inside of you in how you think toward others and how you talk about others and how you treat others, that this desire is so strong that as it grows in you and becomes stronger in you that this is the very thing

that witness, there's a witness. **And we have seen and do testify/witness that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.** In other words, it glorifies God the Father, it glorifies Jesus Christ, because they sacrificed to give us this and this is what is to be a witness in our life, of what we're living.

Whosoever shall confess, by what they're living, by what they're doing, by what they're speaking, **that Jesus is the Son of God**, it's not what you say. It's not a matter of you saying, "Jesus is the Son of God," it's this witness that you're saying He is the Son of God because it's evident in your life, the proof is in your life, the ability you have of loving each other, of being close to each other, of treating others in the Church and outside the Church in a right way, reflects this, that Jesus Christ and God the Father are in you. **Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in Him, and He in God.** This is a powerful verse in what it's talking about here. **And we have known and believed the love/the agape that God has for us. God is love. And he who dwells in love, dwells in God and God in him.** It's one of the most simplest, most beautiful things about the way of life we live. It's about our relationships.

It's not in how much prophecy we know. You can have everything perfect in your life, which we never have had perfect because God hasn't given it all to us, but we grow in perfection and that's why we have latched onto the term 'the present truth', because especially in the last period of time we've seen how those things, God gives us things, for a purpose, for growing at various times, in going forward. And so again, all these things that God has given to us – *we go forward*, we continue to learn, these things here that are to be a part of our life, reflect who we are and what we are. And so it doesn't matter how much prophecy you know. It doesn't matter how much knowledge you have of all the truths – doesn't matter if we have thousands and thousands of truths and you have them all down pat, it's what you live toward each other that counts. *That's* what's important! *That's* what it comes down to.

That brings us back to **Revelation 12:17** again - **And the dragon was wrath/angry/enraged with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed**, we are the remnant of her seed at this time, **who have the commandments of God, and have the testimony, the witness of Jesus Christ.** I hope that means more to you, to understand what it means to have the witness in our life because of how we live toward each other, how we live toward others in the world, how we think toward others in the world, what we desire for them. How much do you desire...?

I've seen a couple emails that came through recently, how excited people are about the 63,000, and the comment basically summarizing some of it is it doesn't matter how much they have to go through for that to happen they're willing to go through it for them. That's what this is about! It's having that kind of a vision. Whatever we go through to become stronger, to be made stronger, to whatever we have to go through in life, so be it, if it's a part of helping that many come back...and how much more if we have vision and understand what God is doing with us, of what we're living and what's coming to pass in this world. It's far more than that actually, but at least that gives us a focus and a hope, especially those of us who know so many of those that are part of the 63,000 people out there.

I have a few things written down I want to make comment here before we go on.

"Satan, the dragon, is angry with God's Church, has been for a long, long time, but right now that's intensified. And that anger, again, has only increased as we've drawn closer to Christ's coming. It becomes stronger in his life, in his mind. Indeed, there's been a great war being fought all around us and we need to be sobered to that reality and do as we are being encouraged in this particular sermon series. We are to become stronger in the power of God's might. We are to wear the armour – not just read the verses..."

Not just go through the vision and say, boy those are nice verses, to put on this, to put on that. Go back and read them again and pray to God for help to do exactly what it's saying in Ephesians 6. *Ask God* for help in every one of those things you're reading there, to put those things into practice more and more in your life, of what it means to put on that armour.

"We're to become stronger in the power of God's might. We're to wear the armour of the spiritual war and we're to wage battle!"

That's what God wants us to do! He doesn't want us just to put it on, but it's to put it on for a purpose, to understand we are to wage war, if you will, to engage in battle just like we read about back there in Ephesians 6.

So again...

"Do you grasp the seriousness, the danger of the time in which we live..."

Because that's what the message is about in these two sermons that we've had to this point.

"...because of an adversary who has such power in this world?"

He's a powerful being! He's far more powerful than we are. We don't begin to comprehend the kind of power that being has! That's why 1 John is so important, 'because greater is He that's in you', if we yield ourselves and do the things God tells us to do, 'than he that's in the world'.

So again, a very powerful being and real battles that are being fought in a spiritual realm that are taking place. So again, a desire here to be sobered by grasping more deeply the battle that we're in.

"So indeed, we are to stand, to stand firm, to stand fast, but to do so we must also understand that this means to move forward, and to do so, to move forward, it must be with the understanding that you are in a great war, that you are in a great battle, that you are to fight!"

That we're not just to let time pass us by. I feel that happened too much leading up to May 26th, that it was too much of a desire to just let time pass and as things weren't happening in the world in the way we felt and thought and if God's going to mush it together at a quick, quick time then that's just even that much better. But we kind of let time pass, I feel, a little too much, and we didn't engage ourselves in war and battle to the degree we really should have and needed to; but God has brought us to that point to realize we need to now more than ever, we truly do, to take these things soberly, to take them to heart, to realize God wants us not just to pass time but to make sure that we are involved in a war, to have understanding.

Ask God to help you to understand what that war is. Do you know what a lot of that war is? It's in your own mind... it's in your own mind, it's how you think. And a lot of that has to do with how you think toward others because that determines how you *respond* to others, how you *react* to others. And when you're wrong, repent quickly and ask God for help, because in doing so the more you do that the more God will remould and refashion your thinking and help you...especially the traits of mercy.

There are times that I have been bowled over during the past year, of times when I've seen people that aren't very merciful to each other in God's Church...and candidly, it hurts when I see that because that's

a great trait of God, it comes from God. The ability to be merciful. To not be merciful to someone else, which sometimes is a matter of being forgiving toward someone else, to me it's like some of the parables Jesus Christ gave. The one that comes to mind right now is the example of an individual that was forgiven of a certain amount of large debt, and then he was owed something by others, far, far less, and he was not merciful, he was not forgiving. He was condemned because of that attitude and that spirit, "Look how much you were..." That's the attitude of mind – do we *grasp* what God has given to us? If we grasp how God has worked with us, how God has been merciful to us, then how can we not be that way to others? And that's the point, that's what God wants us to learn.

Sometimes we don't grasp the depth of what God has done with us in our life and how merciful He's been, how *patient* He's been. The more we see that, the more powerful it is in our relationships then with others, because if that isn't then lived in us we're horrible hypocrites! That's what we become if we're not careful! But that's a matter of growth and even in that God's patient, isn't He? Because we have hypocrisy in our lives that God is weeding out. If you don't think that you have some hypocrisy in your life you're sadly mistaken. You do. It's something you have to fight and conquer. Hopefully you don't have as much as you had last year, or the year before that, or the year before that, that there's growth in that. But that's a part of human nature, it truly is. And so always a desire to grow and grow closer to God, become stronger, and this is the time to do some of those things. God wants us to go forward because He wants to give us more.

What God is getting ready to do in the world, we're going to share in a very powerful way in the glory, in the awesomeness of it all and what's going to take place. Because you've fought for a long, long time, and when God begins to raise up people, something I've always seen in God's Church, so often what happens is the person will take it to themselves, it'll go to the head. God doesn't want that in His Church, He wants us to have a humble spirit, sackcloth all the way to the end.

To understand if you get to share in something from God, to where all of a sudden something is being reversed of your being attacked, of your being maligned, of your being looked down upon, of your being made fun of, of all the things you've gone through since you've been in God's Church for living this way of life, and all of a sudden that begins to do a flip-flop and people begin to look at you through different eyes – which they will do – you have to be so on guard that you don't take it to yourself. I hope you understand what I'm talking about because there's great danger in that, because if that happens then God can't use you...and I have seen that happen over and over again.

So this is why we're being given these sermons and why God is telling us this is the time to stand, this is the time to focus on the things that have been given to us, because as I went through these news articles, *things are going so fast* right now, they truly are. Things are happening so quickly around the world and they're just going to increase in acceleration, they're going to increase in magnitude. That's the day we're in, that's the time we're living through right now, what we thought we would be living for the past 3½ years, now it's starting to happen more and more and we have to be able to deal with it, to handle it.

Let's turn over to Hebrews 11. You think your battles are great? ...and you think you need some time to relax, time to rest from all the troubles around you? ...time to kind of pull back and kind of go into a cocoon? Don't let it happen! Don't let it happen! This is the time to fight! This is a time to move forward...and a time, sometimes, to put things in perspective, to realize *how blessed* we truly are, how much God has given to us.

This is talking about the people who've lived by faith, who've gone before us. I think of things that others have done that I receive strength from because of what they've gone through. I realize I haven't gone through anything compared to them, and so if I ever begin to feel a little bit bad about some of the things I'm carrying I look back at some of these, truly, and realize... Can you imagine in the future and talking to some of them and they ask you, "Well, what did you do? What happened to you?" "Uh, I had air conditioning. I drove in cars. I flew in airplanes from one place to another. We had it really easy!" And we have had. We have the battles that go on in the mind, in the fighting and the stuff and the warring but we have it so easy compared to what they had to go through.

Hebrews 11:32 - And what more can I say? There isn't enough time for me to tell you of Gideon, and of Barak, Samson, Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: so he's writing a letter here and he'd have to rewrite all those things and he didn't have time to do all that in this letter.

Who through faith subdued, Greek word here means 'struggled against'. Battles! Fighting! **Who through faith**, because of what they believed, what God gave to them and they believed it, they **subdued/struggled against kingdoms**, powers that exist in this world around us. You look back in times past at different ones and what they lived and you think of the kingdoms, literally. Think of Moses – kingdom of Egypt. You think of Daniel – *two* great kingdoms in time. He was in two different kingdoms through his lifetime. Awesome! He was in a time of transition between one kingdom and another. Individuals and the battles they fought.

They worked righteousness, it's a struggle to work righteousness, to live this way of life in this world, but you do it, you work righteousness; some of the things we've talked about, about love and how you love others and how you treat others. You don't treat them like the world does, you don't respond back like the world so often responds. We're to respond differently.

...obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword: How easy do you have it? Sometimes you think you have it tough, you think you have it hard... **out of weakness were made strong**, now this is the main one that we can relate to. Because you know what? There are times when things get so great in your life because of the mental battles, no matter what period you live in, those are the great things, the battles you have in relationships and whatever it might be, the things that happen in your life and sometimes the things that happen around you, whatever they might be, that cause some of those mental battles, some of the transition, some of the battles you've had since May 27th – **but out of weakness were made strong:** What does that mean? Sometimes God reveals to you how *small you are*, how *little we are*, and those are the times that are really good for us. You may not feel like it at the time but those are the things that oftentimes then make you drop to your knees more; the times of struggle, the times of hardship, are those not the times you cry out to God more? Are those not the times then you're made stronger because you *are* brought to your knees more often? Absolutely! Those are the times we can make the greatest growth in our life.

...waxed, or as it means here, **to become/became valiant**, word means **strong** or **mighty in fight**, the word means **war/battle**, so that's what God wants of us, to become stronger in this war, in this fight, in this battle we're in in this final 'day'.

...turned to flight the armies of the foreigners. By standing, by doing as God directed them. **Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured**, there's a mixture of things that happen in life at times, of things that people experience, **and others were tortured, not accepting**

deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: When is the last time you were tortured? Amazing! You think about what people have gone through and how easy we have it – it’s good sometimes, it’s healthy sometimes to look back and read about some of those stories and think about what people went through before you – because if we’re not careful what happens, sometimes, is we tend to turn inward and begin to feel sorry for self, begin to think “Woe is me!” Those are dangerous things, they truly are, and Satan uses those. You can’t let those things happen. There is no ‘woe is me’, it’s ‘how blessed I am’! How blessed I am no matter how bad it gets or were to get.

...others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mocking, the word ‘cruel’ isn’t there but I think it’s appropriate because when you’re mocked, it’s cruel, generally done in a cruel manner. It’s not meant to be kind. **...and afflictions,** so some of you – you receive a lot of those things, family members, people at work, co-workers, whatever it might be.

...others have trial of cruel mockings and afflictions, yes, moreover of being bound and imprisoned: They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were put to test, and were slain with the sword: Amazing! What have we gone through? **...they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins;** wasn’t easy for everyone. Our sheepskin or goatskin might be on our car seat. No, really; amazing! How hard do we have it? **...being destitute, afflicted, tormented;** you can talk about physical things like that, being without. It’s always inspiring when you’ve gone back and see some of the things Mr. Armstrong went through in the beginning when there was nothing, when he went through a very difficult time in his life, kept doing it, kept living it because of faith, what he believed; not big, very small, putting cardboard in his shoes so that his feet wouldn’t be touching the ground. Amazing things that happened in his life if you go back and read some of those things...in this age, in that particular age there, especially considering what he had before that, because of what he gave up to do what he was doing, if you go back and read the story. But you go back and you read about other people throughout scripture and throughout time – incredible things they went through; **being destitute, afflicted, tormented.**

(Of whom the world was not worthy:) *awesome* how God says it. It is; when He calls us to be a part, the world is not worthy, its Satan’s world, this isn’t what it’s all about. This is a means to an end. Most of it is going to be in the Great White Throne, that’s the end, that’s the purpose for them in time. But for us, it’s different; it’s going into a millennial period, especially for us now at this age! That’s why I think of the 7,100 years to live, this is the most awesome! It really is! This is the most awesome period of time a human being could be blessed to live, and if you don’t grasp that and don’t believe that you’re missing out, you truly are... you truly are. We are so incredibly blessed! And then if you realize how blessed you are, what sufferings, as it talks about in Romans, what can be compared to what we really have? Do we grasp the value sometimes then, really, of what we have?

...they wandered in deserts, in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth. Not too easy, different ones, what they had to experience. All you have to do is go back and look a little ways and realize you don’t really have it too tough. The kind of blessings we have to live in this nation? *Awesome!* To be able to experience God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of physical blessings that were going to happen to the very end of this age, of the greatest nation the earth has ever known, the most wealth the earth has ever known in one place – about to come to an end because God said that too.

Verse 40 – God, having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Then it goes on in **Hebrews 12:1** and it says - **Therefore seeing we also are surrounded about by so great a cloud of witnesses**, what they lived, what their life reflected, that they sacrificed and did what they did for a greater purpose because of a vision they had, they *believed* what God said, they looked *forward* to a new age but they didn't receive it. And some quit, some quit because they didn't get it on a certain day, because they couldn't go one more 'day' – which was a year – but they couldn't do it, they couldn't go through it. Think, "Give me a break! What did we really believe then? What truth did we really believe? What truth were we in agreement with?" I don't care if it goes on fifty or a hundred years – are you in it because it's a way of life to live? ...or are you going to only give so much time to God and that's it, and if He asks for more, for whatever the purpose is, if He says, "Can you go a little farther with Me? Can you stay awake a little bit longer? Can you fight a little bit longer? ...because there's a greater purpose being worked out here?"

I was thinking this morning when I was thinking about some of this, thinking about during harvest time, of being told when you're on a combine and you're tired because it's been cutting wheat day after day after day, long, long hours, very little sleep, hot, hot, hot, days like this out there too – you don't quit just because it gets hot – and that's before they had air conditioning in cabs, and you're told, "Well, tonight we're probably going to quit about 9:00, 9:30, 10:00 tonight...and then all of a sudden out in the west there's some clouds and the landowner comes around (because you've been hired to cut his wheat for him on the land there) and in order to gain more crop, glean more crop coming in, you're asked to stay longer. "Could you please keep cutting tonight?" You know how long you cut? You cut as long as you can until there's too much moisture in the grain, because if moisture starts coming in, the dew starts coming in in the evening there, whatever it is in some of these places you had to cut in, then you have to stop cutting because they can't take wet grain. They actually test the grain at the elevators; they have a probe that they put down into it and they test the wheat to see how much moisture there is in it and they have to go to a lot more expense to try to dry it then and they don't want it and so they reject it. So you cut as long as you have to. If you cut up to 12:00 or 1:00am and the boss comes around and says, "Sorry – the sky..." "I understand..." And we understand it, you're a farmer, you want to get your crop in, possibly going to be high winds, hail... What do you do? You cut to bring in more grain so you stay up to 12:00 or 1:00 am or 2:00 am cutting wheat. How much more are you willing to do? Do you want to do it? No, you don't want to do it but you do it for the grain.

How much are we willing to do for the crop that's out there? No, really. Because that's what God has told us – go one more 'day', go one more year because of the crop I have out there, 63,000 – them alone – let alone the whole world. How much more are you willing to sacrifice and give? Doesn't mean you enjoy it. Doesn't mean you want to do it...but you're willing to do it, and for somebody else. Amazing!

I go back in those times and think about some of those things. I think about the analogy God gave about harvest and so forth and what are we willing to do? It's not a light thing that some have just quit, they've given up tremendous reward and blessing of what they could have had. Now, they could still be saved and they can still live into a millennial period if they repent, but they're not going to receive – and that shouldn't be the only reason you do it – but to know that... But if you understand the reward carries with it opportunity to serve others, shouldn't our desire be that we be able to serve as many as we can? That's what it's about. The more you're able to help because of a right spirit, because of God giving you more power; because God gives the power to do the job.

That's why in 2005 when I had the heart attack, we had Johnny here, Terry was here, different ones were here, Ralph was here; we had discussions, my wife and I discussed it. "If I die, the Church goes on. God gives the power to His people to be taught, to be moulded and fashioned. God doesn't quit. God

doesn't depend on any one of us, or all of us; it depends on God, we're God's. So regardless of what happens the Church goes on and God takes care of His people and we yield to that process. The desire then should be in each one of us that no matter what happens in time that the desire should be to help as many as we possibly can, and the point is that God will give you... if you're thrust into a place, into a spot - if I weren't here, somebody else would be, and God would be giving them power and strength to do the job to help more and more people. So why give up something like that if in the future you have opportunity, of something waiting for you – this is a position, this is a place, a reward for your labours – if you understand that that reward is a matter of helping more people and receiving more of the strength and the power of God.

Now, for the 144,000 that's a given, but for those who live on into a new age, the opportunities that await you...it's a matter of service, it's a matter of opportunity, and individuals, if they give up on that they give up on that reward – which is not a matter of what you *get* it's a matter of what you're able to *give* that's greater and the excitement and the joy of it.

There is no greater joy... the more and more people, as I've grown in my ministry through the years in service within the Church, it's become greater and greater through time, and the more you're able to do, the more you're able to accomplish, the more rewarding, the more exciting it is – and that's what we should have a desire for in the future – more and more people to help. That's a beautiful thing, a powerful thing where God can use you more and more. But to give that up *blows my mind* because I know what I've been given through time, I know what others have been given through time, and I think, "Why throw it away?! Why give up on it? *Fight* for it!" That's what God wants us to do. How much do you want this? Then *fight* for it!

Therefore seeing we also are surrounded about by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, every weight. I go back to Isaiah 58, I think about that, the one on fasting, and it talks about the weight, the pointing of the finger and the weight, what we weigh ourselves down with, what we can weigh other people's lives down with by judgment and how we judge. And so, **laying aside every weight**, is what we carry that we're not supposed to carry, things that aren't meant to be there; **and the sin**, as it goes on to say, in other words it's the **error**, things that are wrong in our life, **and the sin which does so easily entangle us**, sin which entangles a person, the mind, the thinking, **and let us run with patience the race that is set before us**, patience.

...**looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy**, I love this verse and what it's talking about. In other words, the word means **the delight**, the **excitement that was set before Him**, that's what I'm talking about here. If you *see* the Millennium, if you *see* what God has called you to, the excitement of a new age and the excitement to be a part of that in the sense of the foundational part of it, in the sense of those who are going to have opportunity of great service – because that's what we're called for! That's what you're called for! Opportunities! ...for whatever it is where God is going to plug you in, to give you benefit and opportunity. And so, **for the delight, the excitement of that**, of a new age and an opportunity to serve others and help others in a greater way, and with a right mind of humility.

...**that was set before Him endured the stake**, endured being impaled on a stake, **despising**, the Greek word here means 'to think little of', '**to think lightly of the shame**, it wasn't a big thing. To think lightly of, in other words, just to kind of discard it, the shame and how others see it... the shame to be impaled on a stake, to die as a criminal – because that's how He was marked – He was beside two criminals and that's how people looked upon Him. He was judged as being a criminal, as being one who is subversive,

one who was against Rome, against the government. And that isn't what was important in His eyes, so the disgrace, in other words in other's eyes, that's what this means, the shame or the disgrace in others eyes.

Are you looked down upon by other people? The shame, the disgrace? There are people who are embarrassed in you. There are people who are embarrassed in me and my wife. We're an embarrassment to them, especially if they have a past in the Church. We're an embarrassment to them! "Two witnesses...*Oh, this isn't a message that's good to us!*" ...you know, to say such a thing. And for you, "You're such a.... I don't understand this; you're still following *that man*?! What's wrong with you?!" And it's like water off a duck's back... or not. Some have left for that reason, because they can't take that anymore from their relatives, from their friends, from their mates, whoever it might be, and they've quit because of the pressures. I *know* why they've quit in some cases. Because you see, that mind wasn't here [in these scriptures], to think little of, to think lightly; on the contrary, they think too highly of it and put too much value in what others think of them, family members and so forth... "Well, I went up to this date and it didn't happen so, yeah, you're probably right, they're just nuttier than a... (you know), and they're out in left field and... Yet, you were right all along." ...because it's easier, they can give into it now. Whatever! I don't know what goes on all the time... I know what goes on but I don't have time to talk about it.

Despising the shame/disgrace, in other words, in others eyes: What does that mean to you? Is it important to you that you're looked down upon, that you're 'the scum of the earth' in other people's eyes? You're beyond words you're so bad sometimes to relatives or to friends or people in the world; you're just sick. Do we react like Christ? ...that that doesn't mean a whole lot to us, what other people think, because we have something greater in our minds and our hearts that we know is true?

...and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Because we see what's coming, because we realize what's ahead for us as being able to serve in the Family of God, in the Church of God, to continue on, that we're the foundation of the Family of God, those who continue on, and others who are going to be part of the 144,000 that's already set.

Verse 3 - For consider Him who endured such contradiction, the word means 'hostility and opposition' of sinners against Himself: Do you go through that? Endure such hostility and opposition because of who you are? ...because of what *you* stand for? ...because of what *you* believe? *Absolutely!* And that's just been intensified in the last few weeks, even more so, and so you should be stronger, you should stand stronger knowing what God has given you and set before you.

For consider Him who endured such hostility/opposition of sinners against Himself, lest you be wearied, because you see, that can happen, you get tired of the fight. "Well, it's the 26th and it didn't happen (sigh)... I just can't... I can't do this anymore." You ever feel worn out? I've felt worn out. I felt worn out the last couple of weeks in ways that I never knew I could feel worn out, but you don't quit and you don't give up and you don't feel sorry for yourself and you don't have 'woe is me'. You go forward! You fight! You continue to do what God has given you to do because you see something that's greater – truly! It doesn't matter *what you have to go through* to get to where you're going, does it? You just keep fighting, because now we're in the last part of the battle, we're in the last part of the race! What a *horrible time* to become wearied to the point of giving up – that's what the next word means – because that's what can happen if you become wearied. You can feel a little worn out. You can get quite tired of the battle. You can get to where you don't sleep well at nights. You can get to where

you've just totally had it physically as far as your body is concerned and your mind is concerned, but you don't stop and you don't give up what God has given to you. You don't give up!

That's what this is talking about because this is what happens to people; this is what has happened to some who have quit! They have become wearied of the battle, they don't want to fight anymore, they don't want to stand fast, they don't want to stand firm in this anymore. I feel sorry for them; they don't know what they've given up.

...lest you be weary and faint/give up in your minds. That's where it happens, in your thinking. Don't start coasting! Because this has been hard, don't pull back! Don't try to coast along right now. That's not an answer! Be *involved*! I love it when I hear people going from here to there and visiting different ones in the Church, being together! That's what we need to do! You need to be involved with the brethren! Be involved in the Church - whatever that means!

Verse 4 - You have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. We talked about that when Christ, because it was so real in His mind and perspiration and droplets of blood, because it was so real in Him. **And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children, My son, do not despise,** the word means 'to lightly regard' or **to esteem lightly the chastening of the Lord,** things we go through. Because when you go through difficult things they're not meant to be easy. There are some things that happen that are meant for our growth, for our maturity, but sometimes people fight against that and so much so they just give up. I think, that's the exact opposite of what we're supposed to do!

...the chastening of the Lord, nor faint/give up when you are rebuked, I love this word because 'rebuke' isn't really the word to be used here, it's a word in the Greek that means 'to be reproved' or 'convicted'. In other words, something can happen in your life that God uses to mould and fashion you which is a matter of reproving something in your life, to help you see something that is being done wrong or has been done wrong. It's to convict you (the word means 'to convict' in the Greek), **when you are convicted of Him:** of some truth that you didn't know before or become stronger in a truth that you had. It's like what we've just gone through – God is using that to more deeply convict you of this way of life, of a desire to stand, of a desire to fight, of a desire to go to battle, of a desire to put on Ephesians 6, as it talks about. It's all a part of the process.

And so you went through a hard time – we all went through a difficult time, a difficult phase – but it's how we respond to that and go forward that determines whether or not we're more deeply convicted than ever. And that's what I read Sabbath after Sabbath in the beginning, conviction, of people who are more deeply convicted than they were before they went into it. *That's* what it's all about! That's what this verse is all about.

For whom the Lord loves He chastens/disciplines, that's what the word means. That means to mould; it has to do with moulding. Something has to change in our life to become stronger. Sometimes you go through hardships and then you have to analyze and examine certain things to become more deeply convicted of something that needs to be stronger in our life. That's what we've experienced. And as a whole, that's how the Body has responded. But in it, as a part of this process, there's a warning there – Don't let down. Don't let up. Don't start coasting either.

To take these things to heart - very obviously here talking about a 'day of war' in the last two sermons here. Be sobered. Be vigilant! Talked about Satan – that's *exactly* what we need to take to heart.

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