

## Gathering of the Harvest

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As we heard yesterday in the opening sermon God commands that we are to rejoice before Him at the Feast. At each Feast of Tabernacles we cover this instruction that God gives to us as it's during this time in God's plan that we are to rejoice more so than any other. We're to rejoice in all of God's plan, but this time here we're to even focus upon it that much more so in our lives, and so we're told that year by year by year with different messages that accompany that so that we do indeed focus upon it and seek to do it throughout the Feast of Tabernacles. And to do so we must indeed see the things and believe those things in which we are to rejoice, or else the rejoicing would simply be empty and like the protestant approach to worshipping God, by that which is fake, worked up, or not real at all.

And so it's not something we want to work up in a false way, it's something we want to do, indeed, in the way that God seeks us to do it, and wants us to do it, to learn from it, to grow in it, to focus upon the right things that cause and stir up and create the rejoicing in the first place, even as we heard about yesterday.

So again, God does not want that which is unreal but that which is true and genuine. Let's notice a couple of verses here; let's look over at Hebrews 10 and just be reminded of a couple simple, basic scriptures, of something most assuredly we always want to do but from time to time good that we be reminded of it, of how we're to approach God and how He desires us to approach Him in everything we do. Because candidly, there are just a lot of things that are just a matter of human nature that sometimes rub off on us in this world and we don't want to be like this world, and we *definitely* don't want to be like the protestant world!

**Hebrews 10:22 - Let us draw near**, speaking of drawing near to God, you know as we draw close to Him in prayer and in worship and even coming together on Holy Days is drawing near to God. Every opportunity we have, of something we do, whether it be fasting, even without food obviously, is drawing near to God. If it be a matter of being in fellowship with God's people it's drawing near to God, that desire to do it in a way that's uplifting and pleasing to God.

So it says here, **Let us draw near with a true heart**, in whatever occasion we draw near to God in. So here in Sabbath services, on this the second day of the Feast, or whenever it is, we are to have this attitude of mind, this spirit of mind as we come before God, to want to glean what we can, to want to grow in it in what way we can, to honor God in whatever way we can. I think especially of fellowship when we come together and the opportunities we have when we're able to spend time with each other, to get to know each other more, to share that which is true and honest and uplifting without division, without wrong feelings toward each other in any fashion or form, but of that which is just uplifting, and a time indeed to rejoice, especially in this Feast of Tabernacles.

So, **Let us** rejoice, we need to do that, but it says, **Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith**. What do you mean 'a full assurance'? In other words, that's being confident about what you believe, of the reasons we do what we do. It's a matter of what we believe. Faith is a matter of living what we believe, what God has given us that is true, that He's given us and convicted us of that we know to be true of a way of life, of how to live, in whatever it is we do, that there is that full assurance, that confidence, that boldness that it's being done the right way, that it comes from God. A full assurance this is from God, this is the way to honor God, to glorify God, and first it must be done with a true heart

as a matter of what we believe, of a matter of reflecting what we believe, because it's going to come out. What we are inside comes out; in time God brings everything out.

I just can't help but think of some of the things that have happened recently and some of the things that happened after we got into this final 'day', this 'Day of the Lord', this incredible period of time that we're living in from Pentecost to Pentecost, and I think how amazing it is that there were those who didn't have a true heart. And the more I've learned the more I've come to understand, which always happens when something like this takes place, that things come out that I didn't know about.

There are individuals who can speak to me in a certain way, talk to me in a certain way, and unless God just reveals it, brings something up to make it obvious, there are some things that just aren't revealed for a purpose, that there is something in it that God's going to give to the Body to learn or whatever it might be, or whatever the process is. There is always something to learn in what God does and how He does it and why He does it the way He does too.

But I think of how there are those things that come up that weren't true, things that were said that conflicted, that weren't true that later come out, that reveal a different spirit, a different mind, a different life that was being lived before the final occurrence, or the final occasion of someone who is gone.

And so God says, **Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience:** How do we do that? We're growing, we're repenting, having our hearts sprinkled. It's about our heart, it's about our mind, coming before God with a true heart and asking for God to help weed out those things that aren't true, where we're not being genuine, where we're maybe putting on or faking something because it's not quite real yet, and asking God to help it to be real, that His love be real in our life. ...to ask for help in that so that we genuinely experience it and feel it and know it - full assurance of faith. And sometimes there are things we just have to conquer in self and coming to understand some of our motives and asking God to help us that our motives be right.

**...and our bodies washed with pure water.** The truth of God that cleanses us, the way of God, especially the truth of God because it's through the truth we're cleansed, through the power of the holy spirit. 'Pure water' – that which we're able to receive into our lives to wash away that which is dirty, that which is filthy, that which is unclean, that which is not in agreement with the word of God, whether it be in relationships... most things are about relationships, things that are in the mind and so forth.

So again, this desire that God has that what is done before Him is truthful, a true heart, coming before Him for the right reasons, doing things with right motivations, never a matter of show, never a matter of pretense, never a matter of putting on something that isn't there.

1 Timothy 1; let's turn over there before we continue and before we come to the title even of the sermon. **1 Timothy 1:5 - Now the 'end'**, now it's the word that means 'the outcome' or 'the end result' of something. **Now the end of the commandment**, in other words the purpose of it, the result of it, of what is to be in our life. It's not just a matter of do's and don'ts. It's not a matter of the primary purpose of God's commandments, because we need that, we need things to regulate our lives to know what we should not do as human beings, because we see that which is not true in our hearts and our minds and that which must be repented of. But the purpose of it, the outcome of why God has given us these guidelines, this direction in our life of things we're to live by, **is charity**. The purpose, the end result is to be charity, love, a word that means 'agape'. In other words the source is God, it comes from

God, it is His; it isn't in us, we just don't have this. I think of a protestant world that reads things like this and they think they can work it up and by doing certain things they can have it, and you can't! It comes, yes, by doing certain things, by obedience, of a change in mind, of a transformation of mind, but that can't come without God's spirit and the impregnation of God's spirit and the truths of God, the reason He gives us the impregnation of His spirit and how He works with us.

So **...the end/the end result**, purpose in other words, **of God's commandments**, and what He gives us, **is charity/is love/is agape**, in how we live toward God and toward one another. **...out of a pure heart**; it's *charity*. Charity can't come out of anything but a pure heart. The word 'pure' means 'a clean, a clear' heart. That's why it says before in that one verse we read in Hebrews 10:22, our bodies washed, our minds even washed with pure water. And like it says here now, **a pure/a clean heart**, that which we want to be clean and clear before God. And so that's the only way and that's the only environment in which God's love can work, because the motive is never selfish. God's love is never selfish, it's never inward, it's always for the benefit of others; sometimes to the point, and oftentimes to the point of sacrificing in order to give it to others. Totally giving!

And it says **...and of a good conscience**, even when I think of when we give, that it's in a good conscience, it's not regretted. God's spirit can't work that way! It can't be something we do just because we have to do it and we have to be nice to someone or smile at someone or talk to someone because we kind of have to. Well sometimes... and you know, kind of... I have to back up there a little bit. To obey God sometimes you have to do it until it *does* become a part of you, and you know it's not real and so you ask God for help. That's a part of the process too, to realize you're supposed to do it no matter what and you yield to that process, and it's by doing that that you're able to see our motives aren't always pure and clean and right in these things, and we want them to be because we don't want to do something begrudgingly for a wrong reason, a wrong motive, to get something out of it or to get close to someone, to *get* close, to *get* something, to *get* something back. And sometimes we just see those impurities in our life and we have to cry out to God for help so that it is pure, so it's done for the right reasons.

So again, **of a good conscience and of faith**, what we believe, what we practice, what we live, **'unfeigned'**: a Greek word that means 'without hypocrisy' or the opposite 'to be genuine' in other words, but literally 'to be without hypocrisy'. And we don't want to be that way and so we have to be honest with God when something isn't fully done perfectly clean and clear and right, the motive isn't totally right. But we're to obey God and we're to learn from that and repent of the wrong so that it becomes more a part of us, and that's how God's spirit works in us.

So God gives us much to rejoice in as we consider the meaning of this Feast season, of the Millennium and the Kingdom of God that's about to be established, and then the greater part of God's harvest that follows when the greatest portion of mankind will be resurrected in the final hundred years, on The Last Great Day. Beautiful things that God gives us during this season of the year. Of people we have known who have died, whom we know will be in that resurrection, and we look forward to that time of being able to be there for them. We want to be in that Kingdom. We want to be in the Kingdom, by that time to literally be *in* God's Kingdom, to be there for them!

What an encouragement! You know, aunt, uncles, grandmas, grandpas, friends that we've known who have died, and I think of different ones whom I've known. I think of one friend who when I was young got shot in Vietnam, and I think what an incredible thing, one day I'll have to introduce myself to him because he definitely won't recognize me because I know I'm not going to come back looking like I was

16-17 at the time, and to be able to... I guess 17-18, right in through there, but to be able to tell him who I am and talk to him about what's happened, what happened in his life, what happened afterwards, and to be there as a strength and to be there... let him know this is what it's all about, this is where you're going. What an incredible experience we're going to have in those things!

I think of my grandpa and a couple of grandmas that I knew, and you think of different people that you've known that are endeared in your heart and opportunities of different ones we're going to have opportunity of seeing at different times. Some in different resurrections perhaps, but still looking forward to all those opportunities we're going to have of being able to see people and be with them again. And some, in some cases, of things that weren't always perfect and right and good, we look forward to making them perfect and right and good. What a time of freedom – the Great White Throne, and the Millennium!

And so we have a lot to rejoice in, of looking forward to those things. And certainly we think about some of that during this time and during a time when we're told to rejoice and all the meaning of these periods of time now that we're rejoicing at here at the Feast, that we're learning about here at the Feast.

So today we're going to broaden our view, our focus in what God has given us to rejoice in during this Feast season in a sermon entitled *Gathering of the Harvest*.

Let's begin by looking at some of those things that God wants us to focus upon at *this* time and build upon that with what He is revealing that is to be included in a broadened way, if you will, about our rejoicing in this Feast.

So again, an important thing that God wants us to do; we received at the beginning of the Feast a special message of some of those things of how to do it and so forth, and now even broadening that. Important to God or we wouldn't be going through this and wouldn't be addressing this in a second sermon, in that sense, adding to and building upon that. Because we're almost there! I thought about it last Feast of Tabernacles and thought we were almost there and yet how much more now – now finally in this period of time, 'the Day of the Lord', God's 'day', a time where He's going to make His people to stand, when finally all the things that have happened through the ages, 6,000 years of it that we witnessed over 3½ years – *this* is the period of time then, in this final 'day' when God rectifies it all, makes it all right, makes His people to stand, stands up for His people, everything that they suffered through and suffered for God is going to solidify and make clear and show the world indeed, "These were My people. What they said was true and this is the time of that judgment now, that it's come upon the world." And then the excitement...

You know, our ability to grasp spans of time, especially 6,000 years and way beyond that, we just can't do it. We can try to appreciate it but *we just can't do it!* And I think of the excitement God has – we can only receive just a little bit of that, and I am excited. If you're excited, I'm excited... well, I'm excited because you're excited too, but we're excited because of where we are! And the closer we get, the closer we get to where we're going... you know, we've fought so much, we've gone through so much, because we see a City whose builder and maker is God, we *long* for that City! I think of all those who have gone before us, they didn't get there, they're not there yet. Now, some will get there pretty soon, but that's what they were going for, looking for, and they didn't receive it in their lifetime, and we get to receive it in our lifetime! How blessed are we?

You know, murmuring, complaining, griping about little things, thinking things are tough or bad or hard – that’s so ridiculous! We have it made! We are *so incredibly blessed*, we truly are! And so again here, things that God is giving to us, to be excited, to rejoice in, and to be excited that there’s not much time left, that we’re almost there!

So again here, let’s turn over to Leviticus 23 and look at a part of what we’re told here as we look at these verses even in different sermons throughout the Feast, because this is what we’re observing and there are things to glean out of what is said here. But we’re going to look at something here we really haven’t looked upon in times past, in that respect, and not focused upon, which these days picture that God is adding to this year because we’re having two sermons that are geared toward a similar subject in form, about how to rejoice and something that God wants us to do, and indeed to share with Him. Because He’s rejoicing, He wants us to enter into, to share with and in what He is excited about and what He is doing, and to see ourselves as a part of that, that we’re able to share in something that is so incredibly great! And He wants us to focus more upon that, to grasp even more fully what we have, what He’s given to us and where we’ve almost come. We’re almost there! As I said yesterday in that sermon, as far as the journeying of the children of Israel in the wilderness, we’re encamped just across on the side of the Jordan, ready to cross over. We’re there! We’re encamped there! We’re almost ready to go across now!

**Leviticus 23**, with all the Holy Days listed in it and so forth here, dropping down to **verse 39 - Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month**, which was yesterday. **And in the fifteenth day of the seventh month when you have gathered in the ‘fruit’**, the word here meaning, ‘the increase’, which can mean fruit or produce. **...when you have gathered in the fruit/increase of the land, you shall keep a Feast unto the Eternal seven days: the first shall be a Sabbath**, in other words an annual Sabbath, an annual High Day, **and the eighth day shall be a Sabbath**. So He said this is an entire period of time that we come to, that we’ve taken in the increase and these are to be High Days; so the first day and then the eighth day, which is the Last Great Day.

**Verse 40 – And on the first day you shall take of the ‘boughs’**, we’ve had this is times past in sermons. That’s not what this word is in English. This word in English is the wrong word; the Hebrew word, literally is ‘fruit’. **...and you shall take fruit**, this word here in Hebrew is not a part of the tree such as the branches, it’s not the branches, it’s the fruit from fruit trees. **...and you shall take of the fruit of the best trees**, in other words, the best of the fruit from the best of trees, that’s what it’s telling us, the best of quality to the Feast of Tabernacles, to understand what God is giving, to focus upon what God is giving, to rejoice even that much more. And then it says, **branches**, or this word here means ‘palms’, **the palms of palm trees, and the ‘boughs’**, or ‘branches’ in other words in this particular case, it is, **of thick trees**; So again here, they we’re to build something and some Jewish people do that to this day. There are some that do this in one way or another, not necessarily the way God said to do it here. And it says... **and this shall be of the willows of the brook**; and they were to build a little temporary dwelling, a place that looked like... it wasn’t a dwelling in which they lived in 24/7 for 8 days, that’s not what it was, but it was a kind of booth that was symbolic of something and they were to go to it and partake of the fruit that they had there, that they’d set aside as well, that they had taken from the best and to think about what God had given. He gave them a routine to go through here to think about something. And He said, **and you shall rejoice**, it was a time to contemplate, to focus upon, to think about what God has given you. **...and you shall rejoice before the Eternal your God seven days**, speaking of the Feast itself there, those seven days.

**Verse 41 - And you shall keep it a Feast unto the Eternal seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations: and you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. You shall 'dwell',** and this word here has to do with 'inhabit' or 'sit' or 'remain', and certainly that's what they did. It was something they could actually go into and sit in. It's not something, again, that they lodged in, that they cooked their meals in and so forth. We've had sermons about this in times past at the Feast.

So **You shall sit in**, go there and dwell in it, if you will, abide there for a period during this period of time. You didn't have to stay in it, like I said, 24/7, that wasn't what God was saying. If He'd wanted them to do that He would have said that. **You shall dwell/inhabit/sit/remain**, in other words, it's to be there for a full seven days, **in booths seven days**; so these booths, these little things that were to be constructed, it says, and **all of the Israelites born shall dwell in booths**: sit in or remain in. In other words they should have them there and observe this and contemplate and think about what it means. And we're to do that on a spiritual plane that we've talked about in times past.

But going on, **verse 43 - That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths**, so they were to reflect upon what God had brought them to, that they were blessed to be in the promised land, that they were blessed to be a part of a heritage of something that God had given by taking the children of Israel out of Egypt, and all that time they dwelt in a temporary – that's what it is – it's about a temporary dwelling. It wasn't set, it wasn't settled, they weren't in the promised land yet, they were in the wilderness, they were moving, they were journeying. And it says, **remember back**, in other words, it's saying, "Look where God brought you." Think about what we did yesterday. We considered the journey. We've done that on a spiritual plane; we've thought about the journey, we've gone back and looked at what God's done with us spiritually in bringing us so that we can have a greater appreciation of where we are *now*, and that says a lot. That sums up so much of the sermon as we'll go along and you'll understand as we go along even more so.

But again here, that's what they were to do physically, to look back and see this journeying, be reminded of it and realize how blessed they are for where they are at this time. They're able to have a harvest. The children of Israel didn't, they went out and they gathered manna and they lived in places that weren't so nice and it was hot and desolate and all the things they went through, but now they're in the promised land and they can look back and think, "How blessed are we for what God has given us and where He's brought us." And so that's exactly what they were doing, they were to contemplate and reflect upon those things for that full seven days, as He said, and to have these dwellings, these places where they could sit and think about this.

And again, like prayer, you go pray someplace and you're not to be there all day, there's balance in this and God didn't expect them to stay in there, to live in there 24/7, to sit there in a weird way. It's something that was there, a temporary thing that they were just able to be reminded of.

And it says, again, **verse 43 - that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths**, a temporary place for them during the Feast, a place to dwell, to sit or remain, **when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Eternal your God**. So again, the Feast of Tabernacles is a time to rejoice in the blessing of the fruit, the increase of all the harvest through the growing season. That's what He gave it to them for, to reflect upon those things, of what He'd given to them and the fullness of life they were able to have, and it wasn't until that time... and again, all the lessons there too about God's plan and what He's doing through time with the different seasons and so forth.

So again here, the Feast was a time to rejoice for all the blessings of the fruit, or the increase, of the harvest through the growing seasons, and as the children of Israel dwelt in tents, temporary dwellings, we too, as we travel through the wilderness live in temporary dwellings. We've learned from that, we learn even greater lessons from that of how this isn't what it's all about, there's something greater – thankfully! A temporary dwelling and what the Israelites lived in, it wasn't that much fun. And you know what? Living in this temporary dwelling isn't that much fun! I mean, we have fun, there are things we do, but we carry so much with us as human beings.

The more we see spiritually the more we recognize the battles of the human mind and the need for change, and we see the sufferings of people, we see selfishness, we learn the things that must be gotten rid of and we look forward to, with great anticipation, with great desire, a permanent body, one that is spirit, one that is totally unselfish, one that is totally giving, a mind that has gone through what it needs to go through, transformed so that it can be given a spirit body and spirit life forevermore, for God to *always* dwell in us and we in Him.

So in addition we have always understood that the harvest seasons are reflective of the great harvest of God in His seasons for salvation. As with the early part of the harvest being reflective of the firstfruits of God from the early period of harvesting. The 144,000 firstfruits are actually those who are *first ripe*, because all the harvest, just some of the first ripe were taken, not all. This has to do with the first ripe that God brings into His Family. So it's not about all the harvest yet, some of that's going to be on the last... a lot, well the majority is going to be in the Last Great Day.

And so again, the 144,000 firstfruits are those who are first ripe out of the first 6,000 years of mankind, and that's what's pictured by that which goes up to the time of Pentecost. And we understand that the greater harvest of salvation is through the Millennium and on through the Last Great Day when all the rest of mankind will be able to become truly ripe, and we rejoice in all that understanding and eventual fulfillment. It's exciting! It's inspiring! I'm excited for those who get to live into the Millennium. I'm so *grateful* for all who are coming back who were once a part in the Church, who are going to come back and have that opportunity to live on into the Millennium and have the opportunity of being changed before the Great White Throne, of being in the God Family *before* the Great White Throne. And I'm so looking forward to all the world, to mankind – you don't have to look very far and there is so much suffering in this world; South America, Africa, Asia.

There are parts of the world that have been very blessed, places where Israel has traveled as far as that which is physical, but even in the midst of all that there is incredible suffering in the midst of this all in this world, and those people who are just abandoned in life. People have such incredible struggles and are held in such bondage – drugs, alcohol, sex, of things that are wrong, that are done wrong, and greed, and all the things that have man so entangled. I so look forward to people being freed from all that.

And so we rejoice that we're almost there and that the world is going to be able to experience that and we're going to have a great part in helping the world to learn that. We're going to help be a part of the foundation of that and leading of that. But let's build upon all this and broaden our understanding in those things that God wants us to rejoice, in that which He wants us to rejoice even more, for God is adding to our understanding and appreciation of *His* work – and indeed, we're to rejoice all the more in this Feast, *especially* this Feast. We're almost there! God is rejoicing and He wants to share that with us, and by being able to understand more, to see more, to reflect upon more, our ability to rejoice will be enhanced and strengthened.

So let's read verse 39 again and see what else we should learn or what we need to focus upon in the context of this particular sermon. **Leviticus 23:39 – And in the fifteenth day of the seventh month when/after you have gathered/collected/received**, that's what it means there; once you have gathered, means you collect it, you receive it, you bring it in, **of the fruit**, the Hebrew here again which simply means 'to in the increase'. It can be anything that's of the increase which is a matter of fruit or produce of any kind, grain and so forth, **of the land. You shall keep a Feast unto the Eternal seven days. The first day shall be a Sabbath and the eighth day a Sabbath.** So it's important to focus on these words and their meaning, as 'gather', again, think about it – is about that which you indeed gather, collect, receive, that which *you* gather, collect, receive, of the fruit or the *increase* of what God has blessed you to receive.

Now, this is stated a little more directly in Deuteronomy 16, so let's turn over to **Deuteronomy 16:13 – You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days after you have gathered**, again here, **after you have collected and received of your...** it's not the word for 'corn' at all, it's a word that means 'threshing floor'. So a threshing floor is where you take what you have cut; when you've brought it in... you go out in the field (done a little bit differently today, they have combines), back then you'd go out and you'd cut stalks, the bottom, let's say wheat, whatever it is, as an example, of various grains – whatever it is – but a threshing floor is a little more specific because it has to do with grains and that which you're going to knock out of the heads of the grain, like a wheat head. And so you gather these together, you bundle them up, and you carry them, you bring them.

So a lot of work involved here of cutting it, of harvesting, of bringing it in, finally, and then bringing it in and getting the grain out of it and knocking the grain out of the heads. And so there's a lot of work involved, especially back then. Today they have these air conditioned combines and they're inside a little cage, a little booth like being in a car and you can see everything around you down below. It's not like it was in the old days. They have it nice today, they have air conditioning and all that kind of stuff, but tons and tons that they can bring in and thresh grain. But back then there was a lot more work involved, there were no shortcuts, it was just a lot of work to bring in a harvest, and so you worked hard day and night. You put a lot into it throughout the harvest season and you bring it into the threshing floor.

So again, it says here, **after you have done this...** it's time to rejoice. There's a lot of work that goes into it. Now you can stop and enjoy it. Now you can pause and reflect upon it, think about all that you were able to bring in, all that work and now the reward of it, and you can really rejoice in what you have and be excited about how much you've been blessed.

**...and your wine**, this word here is the word for 'winepresses'. So again here, it's not just a matter of the wine in the container, it's the work that went into it. That's why these words are used, the threshing floor, the winepresses, because the words are reflective of work that is involved with getting the product, and the hard labour that went into the harvest. A lot of work goes into the harvest and they had to participate. You know, God can bless them with great crops, but they had to *work hard*. There's a *great lesson* in that! They were blessed by God with an *incredible* harvest, they could have *abundance* of grains and various things, and fruit and so forth, abundance of grapes, as an example here, the two words that are primarily used. And so it uses two words to get across a specific fact, a specific reality to reflect upon. You're not just reflecting upon the stored grain that's there all of a sudden and looking upon that. You're not just to reflect upon the wine that's in the container now fermenting or whatever it is, or the juice that might be there. You're not just to look at those things! God uses words to remind you of the *hard work* that went into this. He says, *the threshing floor and the winepresses*, and the *hard*



work that went into getting the product – and *then* seeing the product and *rejoicing* in the *hard work* to get it!

So God blesses us mightily but we have a lot of work to do too. He doesn't do it for us. Awesome! The lessons to be learned from that! And they rejoiced. In **verse 14** it says **and you shall rejoice in your Feast**, you know, in the final product! Here you are, you can come together now and rest, rest from your work, rest from your labor and enjoy the fruit, the increase of what God has given to you. Now is the time to reflect upon that and to be thankful for that. *Awesome!*

**And you shall rejoice in your Feast, you and your son, your daughter, and your man servant, and your maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your gates.** In other words, together with you, everyone together, whomever God brings together with you, a time of being together, a time that's greater than Family, it goes beyond Family because everyone is a part of the Family, that's what they should be looked upon as.

And you know, that's the way it is in God's Church; we're Family. It doesn't matter what anyone's background is, it doesn't matter where anybody came from, we are a Family – no prejudices, no things that delineate various states of life that people *think* they have sometimes or know that they don't have or think they don't have, whatever it might be that messes up the minds of people in relationships, the haughtiness and pride that can come in then. No, just rest and rejoicing and being grateful for each other and the ability to share all this together. That's why God wants to share *this* message and what we're receiving from it with us, because of His rejoicing in the work that's taken place to get where we are today, candidly.

**Verse 15 – Seven days shall you keep a solemn Feast unto the Eternal your God in the place which the Eternal shall choose: because the Eternal your God shall bless you in all YOUR increase, *your increase*, and in all the works of YOUR hands; therefore you shall surely rejoice.** There is a time to rejoice in the work that's been done. There's a time to rejoice in the *increase* from the work that's been done. It isn't easy. That kind of a harvest was *never* easy; there's a lot of toil, a lot of sweat, a lot of hard work, a lot of sleepless nights to get to where they were going, to be able to do this at this particular time, and God gave them then that opportunity to do so, to rejoice in the harvest. That's something very physical that they understood very well.

So what have you gathered in the time of harvest? Are you a part of God's harvest? Perhaps you're a part of the first ripe, or you're a part of the beginnings of the greater harvest that will now follow on into the Millennium; and in this, your season for being harvest by God – this is your season. So that's what we need to understand! And in this, your season for being harvested, so that you become fully ripe during *your* time for growth and development. What have *your* hands worked to increase? What has God blessed you with in your *increase* as a result of the work of *your* hands?

See, by understanding this and by seeing it, by *grasping* what it is that God has taken us on, the journey and what has been produced, and *all* the work that's gone into it. He says now at the Feast is the time to rejoice...a time to rejoice before God, a time to rejoice with one another, to be ever so thankful *we are here* and to reflect. It's a time to do some reflection when you're in prayer, when you're somewhere alone with God, whether it be walking, driving, on your knees. There are different moments at different times we can come before God in prayer alone and reflect upon some of these things. And the more you see and the more you reflect upon, the more in a true spirit and a true heart before God, can rejoice

before Him and be so thankful and rejoice in the thankfulness and rejoice in the increase.... rejoice in the increase – something that God wants us to meditate upon and to see.

So let's look at how this applies to us in our spiritual growth once God calls us to His time for harvest and how this is very much about the blessings we begin to reap once we begin to produce fruit in our lives. First, let's notice this process of what happens with those whom God calls.

Let's turn over to **John 4:30 - Then they**, speaking of the people who were seeking Christ (jumping into the midst of this)... It says, **And they went out of the city and came unto Him/came unto Christ**, looking for Him, and this is where their objective was and that's what they eventually did. But it says in **verse 31 - Meanwhile**, while some of this was taking place, while they were doing this, **His disciples urged Him saying, Rabbi/Master**, in other words, **Teacher, eat something**. And so they were concerned that He's just go-go-go and He hadn't eaten. **And He said to them, I have meat to eat that you're not aware**; and so this puzzled them. I enjoy stories like this because so often it just... constantly there are these stories, especially here in the book of John; the book of John brings out story after story after story of this process of things that they could only see physically, because they didn't have God's spirit dwelling in them yet. And because of that they always saw things first on a physical plane, and it wasn't until later on that they could really go back and see what all these things meant and understand and appreciate all the things that Jesus had said to them. And so here is one of those examples.

And so He's telling them something spiritual but they're taking it physical and they're having a conversation over it. And we can kind of laugh at this, but you know sometimes we do the same things. We can't help it; first we start physically – that's just where we start - and then we begin to see that which is spiritual. A little bit like even this sermon; until God brings us to the point to see, no, this applies to you too, this applies to me, this applies to everybody and we need to understand how it applies to us spiritually, we just take it physically as those Israelites and they were just rejoicing in all the fruit of the land and what they brought in that year and whatever, how ever much harvest there was, when in reality they were to focus on something very specific about the harvest – the work! ...the work of gleaning, the work of the threshing floor, the work of the winepresses, the work of getting the stuff there and then getting it done and *then* being able to see the finished product and indeed rejoicing...but remembering the work it took to get there. And then the rest that God was giving, to be able to appreciate it and to be able to rejoice in Him for all that He has given.

**Verse 32 – But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that you are not aware.**

**Verse 33 – Therefore the disciples said to one another**, so here they have this conversation because they don't see it, **Has someone brought Him something to eat and we didn't see it?**

**Verse 34 – Then Jesus said to them, My meat/My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.** Beautiful! Beautiful-beautiful-beautiful, truly, so inspiring, these words and what Christ said. And that should be our food, what feeds us, what motivates us, what strengthens us, to do God's work. We're all a part of God's work and we have to yield to it, and part of God's work is what's reflected in this Feast of Tabernacles. The very thing we're doing right now is looking back and seeing the work of God and remembering and looking at what He's done in us and what we've yielded to and the work we've put into it and the work He's put into it and the work that's been going on here. And Christ said, My work, My meat, in essence, is to finish this work. That's means there are things He had to do; and there are things we do.

That's why it's so important when we have opportunity to share with brethren, to be with brethren, especially on Sabbath! It still blows my mind that not everyone just comes together on the Sabbath when they have opportunity...and they *rob themselves*. Now, if you can't you can't, and there are so many people out there who talk about that, that they have only occasional opportunities and times because they have to travel so far and the cost involved and the excitement and the joy they have of those opportunities and times, and yet sometimes people who've been around for a long time, if you're not careful, you can begin to take it for granted. And it should be a shame when those things happen, but they happen. And some listening right now, this happens, this happens to you, some who just don't yearn for and long for and desire to be where God's people are. And you think, that's where you receive greater strength as well and determination and focus upon what you are doing, and not just going through the motions but you *need* people, you *need* one another, you need one another in the Body. And if you don't think you do then I fear for you, I truly do.

**And so Jesus said unto them, My meat/My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me.** What is God's will? Those are things we have to think about from time to time. I just mentioned a part of it as far as fellowship is concerned. I know that's God's will, and those who don't yield to that process of God's will aren't blessed in this area and they don't have fruit in that area either and they can't have increase in that because they're not working, they don't put any effort into it, they don't put any effort into doing God's will in this matter of fellowship and being together with other people; and sometimes maybe even going above and beyond to try to do that on occasion, to go above and beyond... and other things of living this way of life.

So whatever it is we have to do in our growth, whatever effort, whatever is involved, the listening of sermons and the digesting of sermons during the following six and three-quarter days, whatever it is, until the next sermon is given, and so we seek to digest those sermons. We don't just go to Sabbath services and hear it but we pray about and we think about those things we have heard and what we can do to change and have more fruit produced in our life, more grain, more whatever it is, more increase. So we have to hear it and have to listen and make changes and seek to repent so that we can have something happen that's produced in our life, so that whatever we're living that we make some changes in our life in what we're living. What is this all about? That's what it's all about. It's about some changes we're making in our life. If we just go through the motions then we coast. If we just go through the motions like was beginning to happen more and more, it's reflected to me as Laodicea. Laodicea coming upon the Church, and thinking about that spirit and that attitude of just kind of coasting and not applying, and we just can't have that going on right now in our lives.

And so the more we produce, the more we work at this, the more we seek to change and grow and become something different and stand for this way of life regardless of what anybody...and fight those battles and fight that fight, God will bless us and you know what? We'll grow in character. Sometimes people just give into the battles and don't want to fight anymore and give way to those who oppose it, whoever they might be, and you can't do that. You've got to stand up for this way on the Sabbath and the Holy Days and whenever it comes down to the truth or whatever it is that you need to live and how you need to live.

And so again here, He said, **My meat/My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.** That's what we've been doing our whole journey – it's about *finishing His work*, finishing His work at the end of an age, finishing His work since the apostasy, since the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal was opened by Jesus Christ and as He's blessed us to be a part of that...and the fruit in our lives because of that. I rejoice in that journey. I rejoice in the harvest, in the increase of that journey, of where we have gone. And that's why

we had *that* sermon yesterday, so we can meditate and think upon some of that and our participation in that, wherever it was we came into the journey, and so we can recognize the value and the importance of that and where we're going and that now we're almost to the end of that journey, we're camped by the River Jordan. That's where we are in time.

God told Joshua, "Tell the people in three days we're crossing over." We're getting ready to cross over to the other side and God's going to be there powerfully so, awesomely do, dumbfoundingly so. And so we look back and we rejoice. I rejoice in that journey. I rejoice in the struggles, the hardships, even the pain and the suffering, because that's how I grew, that's where my increase came from. That's how the increase in my family came, they experienced things, they grew in things, they have things in them that couldn't be there but by any other way – spiritual insight and understanding of things that are there because of what they have experienced. Increase! I think of others then who have come through these things through time, the increase in their life, what I've seen in their life, the character, the mind, the growth.

There are some big changes that have taken place through that journey – truly! And even over the past year, in many people's lives, save where there was maybe some coasting and that needed to be repented of and those things have been done, so that's increase. Whatever you've been able to do. If you come to the point of May 26<sup>th</sup>, May 27<sup>th</sup> and that month, week following, several weeks following, whatever it is, and the repentance and then the increase of something you value, you gain from, then you've taken something of great value because there's *increase* there that you can rejoice in and thank God for what you've learned and what you've grown in, the conviction of spirit that's there. So we can go forward with greater determination than ever before, and a greater confidence, thankfully, in what's ahead. That's what's exciting too – that's an increase! To have a better vision, a better focus, a better appreciation of, a greater thankfulness for where it is we're heading – what an awesome thing!

All these things, all the hard work – it's not easy! That's why you can't coast! If you're coasting and it's easy for you, you better repent, you better be concerned and *worried*, but if you're yielding yourself to the process you know it's not been easy, you know there's been a lot of hard work and the battles you've had to face and the adjustments – especially after May 26<sup>th</sup> – and if it hasn't been done yet in a right spirit, then pray God forgive and get the spirit right and the attitude right. But as a whole for everybody... you know people have gone through those things and they've addressed those things, finances, everything that's so drastically affected *all of our lives* and we move forward, and some to the point that over and over again, they talk about they just laugh about it, this is what pickle I got myself into and I'm moving forward. We're moving forward and we've increased, we've been blessed. We've been blessed, and so God wants us to focus upon those things, *to see Him*, to see what He's doing in our lives, to see the increase and the beauty of that, of whatever it is we glean and whatever it is we've taken and been able to receive from all this, because God wants us to receive. There are things He wants us to receive, to take, to work at in order to have.

**Verse 35 – Don't say that there are yet four months and then the harvest will come. But look, as I tell you, to lift up your eyes and see the fields, that they are white, ready to harvest.** I think of now, we're so far beyond that and yet we're there and not beyond that, and it's greater than ever before. It's never been whiter. The time for harvest...God is preparing the world. He's preparing 63,000 and He's preparing millions to come into a new age and we're going to be a part of that, an awesome harvest, a new stage of harvest, and we have, every one of us, has opportunity to share in that in awesome ways, of things we don't even grasp and comprehend yet. And we've been working toward that all along,

we've been preparing ourselves, preparing, preparing, 'Preparing for the Kingdom of God', and now we're almost there. And so Christ told them even at that time to look.

And He goes on to say in **verse 36 – He who reaps receives 'wages,'** not the word for 'wages'. It's the word for 'reward', meaning for their work, having to do with their work. And so **He who reaps,** you know, if you're a part of that, you go out and work, there's reward in that. **He who reaps receives reward and gathers fruit unto eternal life/life eternal.** So we gather and we're getting closer and closer and it's all about becoming a part of the God Family, to being a part with God. We gather fruit, we're able to have increase, we're able to grow in character.

The very way we go through trials is the very way we grow through character. The awesome thing that I think of from time to time, and mention quite often, is about repentance, that *every time you repent* you're growing in character, you're acknowledging you are wrong and God is right, and that's being strengthened in you, so that you will *always* do so, that will become your mind...the ability to repent, not to put it off but to do it quicker and quicker, on the spot, to gather in fruit, to grow, to grow in increase, and every time you're blessed to repent that you see something.

People don't grow at times because there are times they become stagnant and kind of level off because they really don't see what needs to be repented of, and that's not good. And so if you're seeing things that need to be repented of then repent and understand that you're growing in character and that that is fruit you're gathering in; there is increase in that, the mind is being transformed. Plus many other forms of gathering in that we do in our lives as we grow in conviction, as we grow in faith, as we grow in a greater conviction and belief of the truths that God has given to us. All these things that God has given us to gather in.

I think of how God *so encourages us* by giving a like example between Elijah and Elisha, because we *needed it*, we needed to know, we needed to be able to see that there's not just one or two truths and have doubts then when trials came along. No, God gave us 36 more... *36 more!* He gave us a *double portion* so we could be encouraged by that, so we could have greater boldness because of that, and we've had increase. We have been so blessed! Those in Philadelphia didn't know the things that you know. Those during the early apostles, there are things that we have that they have never known, that one day they're going to receive here – for them when they're resurrected. But how blessed are you? How much can you reflect upon at this stage? ...at this Feast of Tabernacles before this 'day' is fulfilled? That's what God is giving us the opportunity to do. He's saying, "Here you are. Here we are, we're up to the very end here..." and though we thought we were there a year ago we had lessons to learn and more yet ahead of us so we could learn from that as well, so we could even reap more, so we could gather in more, so we could increase *even more!* Has it been easy? Not all the way, has it? There have been trials, there have been hardships, but when responding to it properly, *growth, increase – awesome increase!*

I have seen some incredible things in people, responses in growth just because of what we've gone through. I've primarily seen it in emails and phone calls and various things there because I haven't had the opportunity to see it face to face, but I will.

So it says, **Both he who sows,** going on here, **and gathers fruit unto life eternal, so that both, he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.** That's what God desires to share in this rejoicing, that we can share in this together, rejoice together. God's rejoicing, He wants us to rejoice, but He wants us to rejoice in the same thing that He is. It's the journey we've gone through, it's the work that's gone

into it, the struggle along the way, the sweat, the toil, and the *increase* of what we've gained as a result of it, that now we're on the River Jordan, ready to cross over to the other side...and God is thankful and excited and rejoicing in all who have responded to Him, in all whom He lives through and that live in Him and in His Son and the Son in them. We're all blessed to dwell in God and God in us. And so this process of this life we have is so powerful and so awesome, at a time when God is indeed excited and rejoicing. Although things are getting ready to be poured out on this world in a powerful way – it's a time to rejoice of where we've almost arrived and we've been prepared. We have been working on...our name pictures it, our name reflects it, our name says it, 'Preparing for the Kingdom of God', and *now* we're almost there; the Kingdom of God being established on this earth. Work, labor, fruit, increase that has brought us to this point in time.

So again here, **and gathers fruit to eternal life, so that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.** So God sows and others whom He calls can also help in the sowing, and then those who also reap and are a part of that in what we reap. Because we reap, if we're a part of what God sows in our life and what He does in us, and so we're able to reap into our life and gather in fruit and increase and various things that we do in character and so forth.

**Verse 37 – And herein is the saying true, One sows and another reaps. I sent you to reap,** and again, the reaping takes work, but notice the rest, **I sent you to reap from that which you hadn't labored upon,** which they had not exerted hard work in the sowing. That's what God did, and so they were going to be a part of reaping of something else as well. **...others labored,** in other words, did that hard work, **and you have now entered into their labors,** hard work. And so whether it be in the family or with God or whatever, we're able to share in the rejoicing, in the increase, together, but to understand there's a lot of work done by a lot. God works! Jesus Christ works! It's not just work we're doing; they have a lot of patience in working with me and working with you – they do! They have a lot of patience, *awesome love*, beautiful love. That's how we grow in love, because we come to see it and understand it and then we respond to it and it becomes more a part of our thinking.

Let's turn over to **1 Peter 2:1 – Wherefore laying aside,** in other words, putting off or putting away, **all evil ways.** So that's a part of the process, it's a part of the work, it's a part of the labor involved and it's a part of the repenting process, and so we're told to do this, **put off, put away all evil ways.** You know, we can't just get to a point where we kind of settle in and don't fight the fight. You might fight a fight for years and years and years, just have to keep fighting. There are certain ways in the way our mind is, what our mind is, we're all different. But there are different things that sometimes are just proclivities, they're in the mind or things we've inherited as a part of life and differences in peoples and so forth. And there are things there that you can battle all your life, but you must indeed battle them. That's how you grow in character, and seeking to put away everything that is evil and everything that is wrong and anything that goes against God and God's way.

**And wherefore laying aside all evil ways and all deceit,** in other words learning to live honestly and truthfully before God. He knows us! He knows our mind; He knows the thoughts, the thinking. He does! He knows the thoughts – because there's a spirit essence in the mind; God put it there and God knows what's in it. It says, **and all deceit and hypocrisy.** So there are things we've got to get rid of. There are things we've got to battle against. **...and envying, jealousy;** I've seen a lot of that this past year in people's lives and things that people have to come to grips with at times, in *many* people's lives throughout the Church, and when we let down in various things in our life sometimes these things get in the way, and we have to *keep fighting them* and make sure that there is fruit, that there is increase and strength and growth and conviction and blessings of being able to fight these things and change, that we

repent of those things when they're wrong – not wanting something that isn't ours, hasn't been given to us. Not lusting after something else, whatever it might be, a position... whatever. Sometimes in the human mind and things we go through, or what we think someone else has and we're envious of that. And because of that sometimes then people are treated in a wrong way and they don't even know it - because of prejudices and stuff – and so we have to *keep fighting*, and that takes work! It's not going to just happen! Increase won't come unless we enter into the work.

You know, the field can be growing out there but if we don't go out there and work to bring it in and then do the threshing later and then put the grain away and protect it... you know, it's got to be done from beginning to end, and that's where we have to fight and work and labor. But now is the time to look back on those things where we have labored and we have grown and to be encouraged in that to *do more* in what follows after the Feast, that we go forward in doing it, and frankly even try to apply some of it more at the Feast in relationships.

So again, **Wherefore laying aside/putting away/putting off all evil ways and all deceit**, in other words, learning to live honestly and truthfully, **and hypocrisy, and envying/jealousy, and all evil speech**, even the things we say, we have to be careful what comes out of our mouth and what we say to others and so we're able to look back and see where there's been growth in those things and increase in those things and sometimes just a matter of repentance that there's that matter of character we can be confident we're growing in.

So God blesses us and we reap from living a better life as we change the way we lived before and we become new – especially when you come into the Church. Just think about that process. A lot of you are new and you don't have too many years to look back; some maybe a year, two years, three years – look back, that's what God says here, and look at what changes took place in your life in all of these things where there have been things you've been able to lay aside. Perfect yet? No, not by any means. There is a lot of work going on but you're still whittling away at it, putting away some of the practices you had before of the way of life you lived, the kind of environment you lived in, the kind of things you allowed into your mind, the kind of speech you might have had and the kind of words you used in your life and the kind of environment of people you were around. And so many of those things changed so drastically. God says, just like right now, this is the time to rejoice in your increase and where you've come – and some of those things have taken work and effort and battle and choices and decisions that have not always been easy.

And so we've gone through those things, perhaps things about work and so forth out here and things you've suffered through because of the Sabbath and not working at certain times, but you've increased. Sometimes we might have suffered through that but we have increase because we've grown in character, we've grown in a strength and a power that God has given to us for holding onto what is right! You can't put a value, a price on that; it's priceless!

**Verse 2 – As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, so that you may 'grow'**, it's a Greek word that means 'increase by it'. So whether we be new or not, a desire here and to always realize we're not born yet, we're not in God's Family yet, and so even an example here, to recognize that there is that which we can grow in and always have a humble spirit, not to think we're too old, too far beyond this for this to apply to 'me'. No, these things *always* apply to us, to have the attitude of a little child, as God said even, sometimes be reminded... Sometimes it's good for babes to remind themselves they are babes – you've got a long way to go, don't let yourself be lifted up, recognize there is a lot to learn, and

recognize **there is desire of the sincere milk of the word**, and we should always desire that, every bit that we can receive from God, **that we may increase by it**.

And so the more you learn, the more you grow in Sabbath by Sabbath, the increase that you... Think about that, go back and look at the sermons you've received in the past year, or think about those things you've learned since you've come in, think of the truths that we have and recognize the awesomeness of the increase you have. Don't just take it for granted! There is a time God said build your booth, put your fruit there and partake of it and think about where you're come from, what you've traveled through to get to where you are. Understand how blessed you are! The clearer that picture is in your mind of what you have, of what you've received, the more God says you can rejoice. The more you see the increase, the more you see the blessings, the more you see the result of the hard work, indeed, a time to rejoice even more *before God*, and with one another.

Farther down in verse 9 it says...which God even mentioned to the children of Israel if you remember the story, a part of what He's going to do but it wasn't at that time for them, just a few, a handful, but this has primarily been for the Church and it's even more so for the Millennial period and the Great White Throne, because it's still the Church. **Verse 9 – For you are a chosen generation**, a special people before God, a chosen people. God has to call us, choose us out of this world. How blessed are we? It's something to rejoice in; nothing we've deserved, ever deserved, but we have such an opportunity and God has given it to us. Increase! Increase of things we received of grace, of mercy, of forgiveness, of truth, of power, and increase! And God says this is the time to reflect upon some of those things.

**...a royal priesthood, a royal priesthood**, something indeed special before God, something indeed... to think that God dwells in us, that we're blessed to dwell in Him in a spiritual plane. Ah, that's something to reflect upon, it's not something easily grasped and comprehended but a reality of an increase in our life that we've never experienced before and something that will take us all the way into an eternal relationship, an age lasting relationship with God.

And so again here **...a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a special people**; holy because God is in it, because God is in us, in a people, in a Church, in a Body. Increase! Beautiful increase! Sometimes just increase in different ones, enjoying different ones that God has brought into the Body and looking forward to even more that God's going to give the increase of, that we're right there, we're right there at such a *drastic* change for the world that these days picture. **...a special**, it says 'peculiar', but it's about a special people, special before God, special because we have God dwelling in us, special because we have the truth, special because we have a mind that's changing, special because it is of God and that strength and that life. And we go through various things to learn and be transformed and we're almost to a point in time where He's going to make us stand in such a powerful way before the world.

**...that you should show forth the praises**...this is such a beautiful scripture, it truly is. Because of God dwelling in us, because He has chosen us out of the world and we're able to be a part of the harvest, this is His time for harvest. We're in His harvest right now and so we can yield ourselves to that, we're a part of that work, He labors, His Son labors in our life, we labor. We all labor together, we work together and there is fruit, there is increase.

And so it says, **that you should show forth the praises**, and I love this word because it has to do with 'the virtues', 'the moral excellence', 'the character' of Him who has called you. That's what it's telling us. In other words there is something that can actually begin to be reflected through our lives – something different than what we were before, an increase. And as we grow there is more and more



increase, and as we share this together there is more and more increase in the Body. It's a beautiful picture. It's a beautiful process. And to think that we could have some of the virtue? Agape? If that is able to come through you, the ability to love someone else without expecting anything back, the ability to love someone sometimes, the ability just to forgive and to overlook faults or weaknesses, to see them as dear friends no matter what and how they might react in a certain thing, and hope and pray, even within sin, that they are able to repent of and change and grow because we want them to share with us – but understanding that must be held there too, that they *must* change, because it's done out of love, God's love.

Again here, **that we should show forth the praises/the virtues/the moral excellence/the very character....**begin to show some of the things of the mind of God, of what God is like. You know, when we have conversation with family who's not in the Church there is something there that they should grasp, they don't understand it, that's different. You act different, what you believe is different, what you uphold is different. You uphold a way of life, a way of thinking that is different, of how people should be treated, of how people should talk.

There are some of you that have experienced this in great ways when you aren't running around with some of your friends in the past, you come across them and you don't talk the same way anymore, because it's something you're reflecting in your life. It's not because you're looking down upon them, it's not because you feel that you're righteous before them and you're looking down upon them. Not at all. They sometimes might feel that and they might feel condemned or whatever because you won't do the same thing that they do, or speak in the same way, and so you become a 'Mr. Goody-two-shoes', or 'Miss. Goody-to-shoes', or whatever it is, too good for them. They don't understand that but they do see something and they're supposed to see something that's different than what you were before. Increase! And *one day* they're going to understand that, and God even says that.

So it says here, **that you should show forth the virtues/the moral excellence/the character of Him/of God, who had called you out of darkness into His marvelous/His amazing life.** That's what the word means! It's kind of like the children of Israel in the wilderness. They had that light to lead them, to guide them along the way, never in darkness, always a light there for them. And we have that light and God has called us. How blessed, the increase we have in our life, that we have such opportunity.

**Verse 10 – Who in times past were not a people,** so we're to remember the past, we're to remember what we came from, **but are now the people of God who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.** In other words, we can have a relationship with God, the world doesn't yet, and they've got to go through a lot in order to get to that point – and we're going to suffer with them (that's agape), to get them to that point, willingly so, whatever it is we have to go through we're willing to do it so that we can all be there, so that we can all share in this together.

**...but now have obtained mercy.** So again here, mercy that all of us have received from God – undeserved...undeserved mercy, favor, kindnesses, forgiveness. So, fruit? Increase? Blessing of harvest? *Absolutely! Much* to rejoice in!

And so it says here, **Dearly beloved, I urge you as foreigners and 'pilgrims'**, in other words 'journeying in a strange place', as the Greek word here means, for pilgrims. You're journeying in a strange place, our journey through the wilderness. We're different from others. I think of the scripture where it talks about that we're ambassadors for Christ; because we live this way of life we're to reflect God's way of life, and the world doesn't understand. They don't appreciate it. That's what the 1260 days pictured.

The world doesn't appreciate it. Some do, some like that they're treated right. Some people appreciate friendliness and being down to earth and acceptance of all without prejudices and they see some of those things depending on how they know you and to what degree they know you and there are those who can appreciate some of those differences. Sometimes those who really know us well or know us better, sometimes those things aren't received well because they don't like what it stands for, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, this Church, on and on it goes.

So again here, God says this is the way we are. He urges us then as people who are like foreigners in this world – it doesn't embrace us...thank God that it doesn't. That's what Christ said. If the world loves you something is wrong, but if the world hates you then something is right.

So He says it's like being foreigners, pilgrims journeying in a strange place, **to abstain from fleshly lusts**, not to be like the world, to keep away from those things indeed, to continue to be like foreigners and pilgrims and journeying in a strange land, because we're not going to be a part of that. **...which war against your life**; the battles that go on in the mind. **Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles**, meaning non-believers. It's not just conversation, it's a word that has to do with conduct, but oftentimes and so often it does come out in conversation. That's generally how it manifests itself.

So **having your conduct honest**, how you act around and especially things you say around others, that it's reflective of that which is honest among those who don't believe this way of life. And you continue to live what it is no matter what they say about it, no matter what they accuse you of. **...so that although they will speak against you as evil doers**, to try to find fault, to try to twist and distort. It's amazing what people will go to...what they did with Christ, what they've done with the prophets, what they did with the apostles, and through time of what those will... how far people will go because they so *hate* in this world this way of life. And the more they know about it the more they hate it. The more they know about the doctrines the more they hate it, it's just just repulsive to them, it's just something that they have to vomit to get out of them it's so repulsive to them, they're so indignant by it and so mortified that anyone could be like you are, like I am, and they don't understand. But God says we're to uphold this – fruit that's being produced in our lives by standing like this. Character that's being produced and confidence, and understanding of what God has gone through, put up with mankind *for 6,000 years* rejecting Him and His way of life.

So, **having your conduct honest among the Gentiles so that although they may speak against you as evil doers**, in other words they can go that far to where they just look at you as being an evil doer and will find fault and speak of things and twist and distort, that look so ugly and sound so hideous. **...that they may by your good works**, in time... in time. Not right now, sometimes even right now, in other words, being part of the harvest requires work, it's not easy. And so you continue to live and respond and treat people in a way God says that it should be done – not to revile back, to watch how we treat people, to understand people are in bondage, that they're in captivity, not to be harsh to the world, not to be demanding of the world, not to be ugly to the world, but to be kind, to be gentle, to be patient, to be understanding. Fruit. Increase. ...and what we're to be like. Because in time here it's going to produce something very good and these are good works.

It says, **that they might by your good works**, in other words, by your right response, by your living this way of life, by the good works, the increase in your life the more you've been able to live this way toward others. It says, **which they shall look upon, glorify God in the day of visitation**; so everything has meaning of what you do and what you live...and a lot of it isn't for now, a lot of it is for the Great White Throne, in their day of visitation. Now, for a lot of people right now that's a little different,

because it used to be that was the only option, in essence, for the past 2,000 years; 'and in their day of visitation', it means a time that they're able to participate in the harvest, when it's come for them, when the harvest time is for them in their time. And for the vast majority of the world that's in the Great White Throne.

But for us it's different...for so many now, because so many of those whom you know are going to have opportunity to live into a new age, and when they come to see and understand, when they see you stand with God, before God, that God has made you to stand before them, that you were right in everything you lived and everything you've said, and some of that right that has maybe even helped them to get through the final time that they have to go through, to help them to understand what *is* going on; '2008 – God's Final Witness' so they understand why things are happening and what's happening to them, why it's happening in the world to them, to give them a hope that this is not going to be long, that we're almost through it, that we can make it, and what's at the other end is so awesome. And then once they have arrived it says **to glorify God in the day of their visitation**. That's what it's talking about.

And they'll be so thankful. You talk about the relationship they're going to have with you, the way they're going to feel toward you – we don't grasp that yet. People you know. And so it's so important, so expedient that we live right, that we live properly toward everyone indeed in a very powerful way.

Going on from here, let's go on to Colossians 1 and see what we're admonished here in, beginning in verse 9. **Colossians 1:9 - For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will**, so again here, Paul is speaking to the Colossians and telling them his desire for them, that they **might be filled with the knowledge of His will**, of the will of God. So this is a desire we should have for each other, but especially as Paul is teaching them, that they come to understand what He's teaching, that they're able to come to this knowledge, **that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will**; increase. Every Sabbath, things we grow in. We're constantly growing. God *constantly* gives us things that are *new* and *deeper* and *greater understanding*, to help us to grow so that we can increase, so that we're not stagnant. We are so blessed! God has blessed us with so much, He truly does. Sabbath by Sabbath by Sabbath He continues to add more – *always!* It's not a matter of going back and repeating things and going back over things...and sometimes when some parts are it's for the purpose of adding even more.

That's what Mr. Armstrong used to do in talking about the two trees and yet there were people who were so messed up and so weak they just shut him off. They'd hear him start talking; he'd start talking at the beginning of the sermon about the two trees and they just shut him off, because they didn't know each time he was leaving them with something more. God was giving something more to build upon – all that was contained there, there was so much to learn but there were those who just... and really a lot, who just shut him off and didn't ever receive what God wanted them to receive. That's one thing about God, He wants us to receive, that's part of what harvest is about, about what it says to gather, to receive, to glean, to take it in. That's what God wants us to do to receive what He's giving to us. And when we don't, we don't put any work into it, we don't meditate upon, we don't think about, we don't pray about what we hear, then we don't grow and we don't receive and we don't make increase in our life.

And so, as a whole that's what God wants us to do, and that's exciting, because I see people doing that, I've seen that over and over again throughout the years here – the increase because of people drinking it in and receiving it.

**...that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;**

What a beautiful thing! I love it when those breakthroughs do take place in people's lives and it's not a matter of just knowledge. You know, knowledge is one thing, but the next step, that's a biggie, when through experience you begin to understand, when certain things happen in your life and you're able to put to practice some of the things you hear and you begin to *understand* then why God says things in a certain way, why He tells us to do things in a certain way – and all of a sudden this light goes on and we begin to understand. Perhaps we begin to understand more about our journey, like we talked about yesterday. Perhaps we begin to understand more about how God works with us. We're going to talk about that through the Feast here. To me, it's exciting, things about government and things about the organization, how God has worked with human beings, weak human beings, and yet there is so much to learn from that process, and God just continues to add to our *knowledge*, and then if we can apply it and learn from it as we see it in action and when we begin to understand it we're coming into greater agreement with God.

You know, when you just have knowledge... I've known so many people through time that I've known in the Church from when I was first called, that had knowledge of the Sabbath and had that knowledge for years and years and years, but *never fully deeply understood it spiritually*, what it was all about, what the primary purpose of it was all about. And it is that way with so many things in our life. Knowledge is a great thing to have but that isn't yet in oneness and unity with God, just to obey by knowledge, but to do it because we understand it, because we are coming into agreement with it, that's an awesome thing. And then you know what the next step is? It's knowledge, understanding, and then wisdom. Wisdom is the result of living by the understanding; because we understand it, it's just us then, we just live it, and that's a matter of wisdom on our part. We *live* what God has given because it's us now, it's in our mind, it is our being, we're at one with God, our mind has been transformed in those things. Increase? Absolutely!

As I go through and think about these things I think about the awesome increase that God has just given over and over as we grow, in how we grow, and this is a time to reflect upon that, a time to rest from all of our labors. Isn't that a beautiful thing? We're not to bring our work with us, we're not to stay back at work – God says, "Get away. Be together, dwell together for a period of time." You might have to do it at home even, but you get away from everything else and you focus eight days on what He's giving; primarily that's what you do, you focus for eight days on what He's giving. You're away from all the labors, you're cut off from the world, and that's a good thing because it's a time to rest, to enter into a time period of resting from everything and being able to focus then and think upon all these things, a time to rest from all the labors of the harvest. God's given us a Feast of Tabernacles to do that. It's always been a unique time through every year, eight days, Sabbath to Holy Day, day by day, because we have generally a weekly Sabbath in there and this year here, certainly, it's that way. We have a Holy Day and a Sabbath in the midst, and a Holy Day and we have all the day in between and sermons always on every day...a time to reflect, a time to think about, a time to see, a time to rejoice before God and for everything He's given to us, for us to be here at this Feast.

**Verse 9 - For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, so that you might walk; in other works, that you might be able to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,** and so the more we become of the mind of God, to understand His will, to have knowledge of His will and understanding of that and live it, then this is what is pleasing to God more and more.

**...so that we might, you might be able to walk worthy**, in a worthy manner, in other words, because we're not worthy but it's the manner in which we walk, in other words how we live, **of the Lord unto all pleasing**, that which is pleasing before God because the change has taken place, because we've shared in this together. God rejoices in you, in those things that you've changed and responded to Him in, the love that He has for you, and the love you have for Him and that you're growing in that and for His Son, and you understand how this is working in your life in this relationship that is growing stronger. That increase in your life, the changes in your life, the fruit in your life, the fruit that's being produced in your life more and more, and this that's pleasing to God because this is very pleasing to God, He rejoices in it and He wants us to rejoice together with Him in how we've been blessed to be able to share in this together as a Family, Him as our Father, Jesus Christ as our elder brother.

**...being fruitful in every good work**, being fruitful in every *good* work. That which we learn to do that's good, that's right before God in how we speak and how we conduct ourselves and things we do and things we don't do. Good work. What we speak, what we say, what we're in unity with, what we grow in. **...and increasing in the knowledge of God**; and *you have!* How blessed are you that you've been able to increase in the knowledge of God?! You know, that's a part of the process of one of the Thunders. You've been blessed to grow in that, in a stronger more powerful revelation of God and His Son. You have grown in that! The ability to see and understand God and grow in that in a powerful way, and you're going to be able to share that more with people in the future. And shortly, in time here, the world is going to begin to receive that in measure – but not to the degree you have – it's going to take them some time to learn all that, to grow in that, just as it took you time to grow in that. But you'll always be, as a whole, out ahead, helping them to come along, growing.

It's like children in a family, as a whole... a little bit different when the 63,000 come. Some of them are going to... it's going to be a little whiplash as they do some of the things they're going to do and have the opportunity – but all of us doing it together because there's a purpose that God's working with everyone in that part of the Body.

**...being fruitful unto every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God: Strengthened with all might**: Who's might? God's might! He's the one who strengthens us, **with all might according to His glorious power**, and where is that power again, as we mentioned yesterday? *It's in the truth!* That's where the power is that He gives to us, that He communicates to us, that He puts into your mind or offers at least that to be in your mind, and the more you're at one – not just a matter of knowledge of those 57 Truths but it's a matter of understanding them, of being in agreement with them and living them in your life then.

**Verse 11 - Strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with rejoicing**: that's what this means, '**joyfulness**'; with rejoicing. So again here, to understand those things, the patience, the suffering, the work that's involved in that, **with rejoicing**, because that's the fruit of part of it as well, the ability to rejoice, to be able to see beyond the suffering, to be able to see the fruit, to be able to grasp the change and the necessity of it and to be thankful for it. Thankfulness has a great deal to do with being able to rejoice. So if we're thankful for these things indeed we will rejoice more and more before God – verse 12...that's what it says, I didn't think about that...

**Verse 12 – Giving thanks unto the Father, who has made us able to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints**, along with all the saints. More and more the Family just gets bigger and bigger, **in light**. So we are *so blessed* to be able to have such fellowship with one another! *So blessed!* We need to value

each other, cherish each other, the opportunities to fellowship, the opportunities to share at God's table indeed.

**Verse 13 – Who has delivered us from the power of darkness**, think of all the world still in darkness and you're not. Sometimes we forget...and not now, we're to sit in the booth at this Feast of Booths, Feast of Tabernacles, and think about and consider these things, indeed, to be thankful that we have been **translated from the power of darkness**, as he says here, **and translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son**. As far as God's concerned we're there...we're there. As far as God's concerned that's the case.

God works with us, He molds and fashions us, He gives us so much, and He translates us into the Kingdom of His dear Son. We're in His hands and He's living in us, we're blessed to be able to be forgiven of sin through Him because we've been baptized into the Body of Christ. That's the beginning of it. I love the way Mr. Armstrong used to talk about it; once we're begotten we're the Kingdom of God in embryo. It's not yet born but it's started in us and for some it's going to be born, the time of birth is the return of Jesus Christ, for some it's the end of a thousand years, another birth, a resurrection taking place at that time – again, to be born at that time, to be *in* the Kingdom of God at that time.

Let's continue on here, **verse 14 – In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins**. How much have you repented over the past year? It's not something to hold your head down about. It might be at the time you repent, but the fact that you're able to repent and grow in character and acknowledge that God is right and you're wrong and understand the value of that – understand the ability to be able to be forgiven of sin, of how awesome it is that God has brought you to this time where you can indeed have your sins forgiven. They're not held against you anymore, they're gone. Blessings? Increase? A time to gather in, to think about these things. This is it, a time to rejoice.

**Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creation**, over all creation. It's not a 'creature' but it's over **creation**. And so again here, that great plan of God and the things He's given us to understand about Jesus Christ, the firstborn, and the awesomeness then of being a part and sharing in this. **For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones, dominions, principalities, powers: all things were created by**, in other words, **through Him and for Him**, speaking of that which is about Christ. God focused everything to be built upon His Son, the one who would become Melchizedek for real, in essence, to live into eternity; that one who would be after the office of Melchizedek, in other words, to fulfill what God had given in times past. An awesome, *awesome* role and responsibility through time, to bring everything, to reconcile everything to God, and it's all based upon...and that's what this is talking about, these things that you see, you understand, and the world doesn't. Increase? Fruit? Blessings? Absolutely!

**Verse 17 – And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist**, or are established, or are made to stand, in other words, and that's how God is working. The fact that you understand that, the fact that you know that – not just knowing it but the understanding of it – what an awesome thing to be able to grasp such things and the power of such things and what God is doing and why. And looking forward to people being freed of this idea they have of a long haired effeminate Christ. What a blessing when they can just be freed from that and recognize the marvel and the awesomeness of, indeed, our Saviour, our High Priest.

**Verse 18 – And He is the head of the Body, the Church**; God has given to Him to be the head over it all on a spiritual plane, indeed above everything – in other words, not directly here on this earth yet until He returns. **...who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead**; things we should have seen... well, we

couldn't. We can't see it until God gives it. What an awesome thing, that you've lived in a time, many of you, or at least you've been able to come into a time, where you've come to understand He is indeed the firstborn from the dead from any human being. And of anyone who's lived a human life, He is the firstborn – no life before, no eternal life before, but one that began after this. **...the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.** Not because He was God before, but because He became a part of the God Family after, because of what He did. And for people to go back to the other? To have seen the light, to see the truth and then to go back? Blows my mind!

**Verse 19 – For it pleased the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell, His own Son, and having made peace through the blood of His being impaled, His impalement, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.** So again here, this process of how we're brought in, and it says, **by him, I say, whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven. And you, who were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has He reconciled.** Blessings? Increase? What an awesome thing you're no longer in the world! And sometimes some of you who've been around the longest? Don't forget this! Don't forget what it's like, the difference of being in the world and the difference of being *in* God's Church.

**...in the body of His flesh through death to present you holy and unblamable and unproveable in His sight.** How God justifies us, cleanses us – through our Passover. **If, and here it is...again, IF you continue in the faith...** be thankful that you're here at the Feast of Tabernacles; you're continuing. Something to rejoice in? Fruit? Increase? Absolutely! You're here! **If you continue in the faith grounded and settled;** sometimes we go through things in order to become 'settled', to move forward always wherever God leads us. Thankful? Increase? Blessed? Thank God, rejoice. **...and be moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard and which was preached to every creature under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.**

**Verse 24 – Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you** – even in sufferings, Paul said. Sometimes we go through things, and understand sometimes we go through things and others learn from it in the Body. You know, whenever anyone suffers others in the Body should learn from it. There are lessons to be learned there – if not right now, even later – there are things that people learn by what each of us goes through. We're a Family and there are things we learn and things we share. **Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church:** understanding the sacrifice of things that are there in our lives and how important it is that we give encouragement and strength to each other by example and by words that come out of our mouth, only to build up and to encourage, never to hurt.

**Where for I am made a minister according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God.** And so God gives us opportunities in the Body and we have different things that He gives at different times within the Body...and be thankful for where you are in the Body, what God has given to you, the opportunity of fellowship in whatever area you're in, and if God has given to you more, be thankful for that and respond to that and *yield* to that and do the job and do the work that's necessary.

**Verse 26 – Even the mystery which has been hid from ages, from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints.** So again here, over and over and over again, the world can't see but we can. How blessed are we and how much have you taken in? How much... what is your increase since you've been called? What has been your increase over the past year alone? What has been your increase over the last 3½ years? Those seven truths, what do they mean to you? What kind of changes have taken

place in your life? Have there been? Do you think differently about relationships, men and women, with each other now, to understand these truths? Because there has been some resistance along the way and we've had to learn things. Some have had to learn things about themselves and are still learning and still don't understand it fully – not even very much in some cases, but there's growth, and whatever growth there is, that's a blessing!

**...to whom God would make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.** Even that, to understand what it means. Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh, living and dwelling in us. I don't know how people deal with that when they can't believe that one anymore. How do you just get rid of those things that are in your mind and go back to believing something that wasn't there before? How do you do that? Amazing!

Let's take the time, again, to read what we read in the beginning, **Deuteronomy 16:13 – You shall observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days, after you have gathered/collected/received** – so God wants us to collect, He wants us to receive – **of your threshing floor, of your work, and your winepresses**; so everything that has to do with what you have put yourself, the work you have done. We've all had a lot of work over this past year. We've had a lot of things to address and to deal with and that has come out along the way, and especially to fulfill the final part of the witness of 1260 days. Our work's still going on, I mean, there are things still going on in our lives, but the primary part of that, the witness itself was established during that period of time, and we go on, we move on, there are things we still do and things we're growing in and we have a lot in front of us of how we're going to be able to help and work with the world.

And so again here, things to consider, as it says here **...and you shall rejoice in your Feast, because the Eternal your God shall bless you in all your increase.** To see the blessings He's given us in our increase, to be thankful **...and all the works of your hands, therefore you shall surely rejoice.** So again here, over and over and over again.

Finally, John 15 – these are *awesome* scriptures, they truly are. I have gone through these before, we go through this during Passover. Let's go through it now in the context of this again, just to add this, just to be reminded of and be thankful to God for it. These are beautiful, they really are, and what God has given to us. And so it says here, **John 15:1 – I am the true vine**, Jesus Christ said, **and My Father is the vinedresser.** Just like the winepresses, to recognize the work that goes on and what's to happen. This explains it in great depth. **Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away**, and God has taken some away. I have lived through many cleansings of the vine, I truly have; some of you have as well. But going back to 1969 I have seen a lot of times of the branches being cut off the vine and the Body being made better each time because of it – and we've gone through it again here toward the very end. Sad, but we learn from it.

It says, **every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that bears, or produces fruit**; so we're to produce fruit! There *is* to be increase and we need to be able to see what it is and be thankful for it and therein rejoice more and more before God. It says, **He 'prunes' it**; it's a word that means 'to cleanse it'. So that's not always an easy process, to have some pruning done on you, to have some cleansing done, because it means that there are things we have to look at to get rid of so we can do better, so we can grow better, so we can produce more fruit. And that's a process of repentance, **that it may bring forth more fruit.** So where have those things happened in our life and do we see the product, the result of what God has done? It doesn't mean it's always easy, but this is a time to look back on the work and be thankful to God for the work, because it produces fruit, and if it hadn't



been there and those things hadn't happened – if May 26<sup>th</sup> hadn't happened we wouldn't be able to produce as much fruit later on! That's a reality! That's the truth! And to think about that and though it be hard, and though it was difficult, there was growth and fruit and things that are going to be produced even more later on.

**Now you are clean/cleansed through the Word, I love this, the Logos, the truth, which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me.** And so again, that's a process and there is work involved in that. It doesn't just happen, it doesn't just happen because we go to services or listen to sermons, it's what we live. **Abide in Me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, and no more can you except you abide in Me.** I think of, I remember the story yesterday of the journeying through the wilderness and the occasion of the spies sent out to see what each individual could see in the promised land. Remember that? The abundance of God's promises was in large part reflected in a very symbolic act, of this *incredible* lush cluster of grapes that had to be carried between two people on a pole. And before we actually enter the promised land we're blessed to reap of the fruit of God's Kingdom while in embryo, while begotten.

So I think of this very example here, of that which went through there and what we are and what God has given to us and what we're blessed to reap of, and it's that symbolic example there, of what came out of the promised land, of what we have, of what God has given to us. We are *so blessed*, and the blessing of being able to produce fruit, of having fruit in our life because God dwells in us.

**I am the vine, you are the branches, he who abides in Me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing.** So always a sober admonition along the way to remember what hinders or what gets in the way, and yet that which produces fruit, of how it's accomplished, by God in us and we in God. **If a man does not abide in Me, he is cast forth, in other words, put away, as a branch and then withers, and men gather them and cast them in the fire and they are burned.** So again, always going back and forth here showing that there are choices along the way and you are here because you're yielding to those right choices in your life and making right decisions and fighting the fight, a time to rejoice before God, to where He's brought you to.

**If you abide in Me and My words abide in you then you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you – those things that are spiritual for growth and so forth – Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear/that you produce/that you bring forth much fruit; and so shall you be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me so I have loved you: continue, same word, abide in/dwell in My love, in My agape.** It's how we live our lives; that's what's important. It's the way of life we live toward each other and toward the world.

**If you keep My commandments then you shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Fathers commandments and abide in His love. I have spoken these things to you so that My joy might remain/dwell in/live in/abide in you, and that your joy/your rejoicing might be full.**

Well, hopefully brethren, here at this Feast, indeed our rejoicing will be full and to understand the importance of why God has given us two great admonitions here at this Feast of Tabernacles to rejoice. It's so important to God because He wants to share this exciting time with us, that we look upon the things to be thankful for, to be thankful for each other, to be thankful we're here, to be thankful we're camping at the River Jordan ready to cross over now so very, very soon.

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