

Today is *Part 2* of a sermon series entitled *The Present Truth*.

You don't need to turn there but I'm going to read the verse in 2nd Peter again from which this sermon title has come as it truly says so very much, especially when understood in the context of what God is giving us to understand more deeply concerning how His government works in our lives.

2 Peter 1:12 – Wherefore I will not be negligent to always put you in remembrance of those things, though you know them, and become established in the present truth, in other words, to become established, grounded, strengthened, in God's truth *as He reveals it* the present truth. And so again, we're continuing on with that to understand that verse even more fully, even more deeply, to understand that there are things in our past, things that we know of, but sometimes to be able to put it all together so that we fully see it and understand it in order to be established in the present truth is another matter. And so that's why we're going through much of this today, to even become more deeply grounded in the process of how God works with us, especially how He does so as a matter of how His government works in our life.

You know, God's law is about government, it's about our relationship with God and our relationship with one another, and that is what is to govern our lives, the law, the ways of God, and then certainly understanding that part that we spoke of yesterday, of the establishment of the ministry in the Church and what that means for us, of how God administers His government through physical human beings, and then continuing on with that with what we're discussing here now and what we discussed yesterday toward the end of the sermon.

So again, while in the human flesh we must have God's government working in us to help regulate and steer our lives along a righteous path, a righteous road, a righteous way, as we grow more in God's mind, in the Logos, in the Word of God, until we come into the unity of the faith, as we discussed yesterday, into a complete spiritual oneness with God. That's an awesome thing that God's doing in our minds and our being and this transforming, this takes place in us...into a complete spiritual oneness with God where the word 'government' will no longer have the same meaning to us as it does now. As we go forward in time and as things finally take shape, once we're at one with God – and we're not fully at one with God until we're in His Family - as long as we have this human life and the pulls of a carnal mind.

And so again, in time that word 'government' will no longer have the same meaning to us as it does now, for then we will function as a Family that is fully at one with God, and although that oneness is the way we will function it *is* the government of God in action. That term will not need to be used as that's simply going to be the way we'll live, fully in God's love. So, it's an awesome thing!

Let's pick up where we left off yesterday with a bit of a review of what we were covering toward the end of that sermon. I think it would be good to read the verses again in Matthew 16 just to be reminded of some of what was being discussed there. But again, looking at Matthew 16 and picking that up again about a tremendous power and authority that God gave to physical human beings, that it had to be structured in this manner because of the way God is working with us, God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven, not directly communicating with us as face to face as He did with Moses or with Abraham and

others through time, but as a matter of inspiration through the holy spirit and those things that are revealed to us *through* His spirit and those things that are given into the mind, and that process then of growing and living by faith.

Matthew 16:18 – **I say unto you**, so Jesus Christ was talking to Peter, and He says, **you are Peter**, in other words **a stone**, making a distinction here between two types of rock, one a small stone, a little stone; **and upon this Rock**, so He's saying on Petra, a massive rock in other words, **I will build My Church, and the gates of hell/grave shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.** And so again, **to you**, to especially Peter here as going to be the first apostle in the Church to the Jewish people, the beginning of government in the Church of God. And He says, **I'm going to give unto you**, speaking to Peter and of Peter and of the Church and to the Church, **I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.** Locked! **...and whatever you shall loosen on earth shall be loosened in heaven.** Unlocked! And there's a lot of power, a lot of authority there, if you will, of God's government, and it had to be this way, there is no other way that it could function.

So again, this is powerful because it's talking about the power to administer God's government, and as the Church would grow it learned that this meant it was to be administered in the best possible manner with a spiritual understanding and knowledge that God had given to that moment in time, according to *that* present truth. That's how we're judged. And the more one grows and the more God uses individuals, especially in His government from the top down, these things as far as a matter of making decisions and choices are more and more, as we grow, based on what we see and what we know. That's how we come to make judgement, and God wants us to grow in that, the ability to judge.

So we looked at some examples of such power to bind and loosen, or to lock and unlock, that have occurred in the past so that we could learn about the present, and we looked at a couple of examples yesterday and it would be good if we picked this up in the example about divorce and remarriage, and we'll just pick it up from there.

So if you can understand some of these changes that occurred in the Worldwide Church of God over a period of time then you will begin to see how God worked with His Church, how His government worked in leading the Church, by basing decisions of government on the present truth. Things having to do with any part of administration of God's way through the Church had to do with those decisions being based upon the present truth that God had given to that time.

So again, there were administrative matters made concerning divorce and remarriage that changed and sometimes shifted back and forth through the sixties and seventies, and that example that was mentioned early on in the matter of the need for people to separate and divorce if they had been in another marriage and that first married mate was still alive; all this having to do with administering the present truth in such a matter. So at that time, by things that were understood as far as what was said in scripture and some of the things that were really more difficult in that respect that Paul spoke of concerning these matters, it took a long time of growth and development and God continually adding more and revealing more and giving the balance and the soundness of mind and really bringing us into a oneness in the Church to better understand *why* He did the things He did, because it's the spirit of it that we have to come to understand, and that isn't just given overnight, that's something that an individual grows in. And again, that's part of the transformation, the molding and fashioning, that God is doing in the mind and teaching us.

Going back, I've known of people in times past who had to go through these things and I think of some that I knew, especially in the earlier 60's and people who had come into the Church. I didn't come in until 1969 but I knew of these individuals, worked with individuals who had gone through this, and there are people who had to separate because they'd been in a previous marriage, even if it had been.... Let's say there is a husband and a wife that are married and both are being called into the Church and just one of them, if just one of them had had a previous marriage and been divorced in that marriage and that mate was still alive – even if they had remarried – because in those situations after time people go on with their life, after something of that nature and there is not a desire to get back together as a whole with the other individual especially unless they might be called and never remarried. But the point being is that if just one individual had been in a previous marriage, then those two, being called into the Church, had to separate, they had to divorce because it wasn't recognized as a legal marriage before God.

It would be just as much today when someone is living together, which is kind of the norm now in society, especially in other nations more so than it is even here in the States, but it's becoming more the norm as time goes along, that individuals live together for a time, maybe years, and some don't even get married and they have children. And so when individuals are being called into God's Church we let them know that before they can actually enter into a *fellowship* with the Church they need to repent of sin and part of that sin is of the fact of the need to be married, legally married before God in the eyes of God and in the eyes of other people – and not to do so is to live in fornication, is to live in adultery.

And so before an individual can come along and progress in their desire to come to baptism and their desire to be in fellowship then they separate. We've had a lot of those situations happen over the past several years, where people have had to marry because there had to be a legal marriage there. And so that's the way it was back in the sixties and the fifties, that there were individuals, if they had had a previous marriage, they were expected to divorce before they could continue on then in fellowship in the Church and to work toward baptism. That was the government of God in the Church being administered. That which was loosened, that which was bound.

So there are things that are loosened and that are bound in decisions that are made through the Church that God upholds. That's what it means that they'll be loosened or bound in heaven, that they must be upheld, that there must be power and authority in that, otherwise God would have to be directly involved in those decisions, *directly* involved in guiding and telling people what they should do face to face and it would be absolutely not a matter of faith at all, not a matter of growing, not a matter of the spirit but strictly a matter of direct communication, and that hasn't been God's purpose in working with the Church through time and molding and fashioning people and helping us to grow in the things we must grow in in the mind and to change and a transformation that has to take place there. Incredible! And so if we can understand some of these things...

And then as time went along even matters of divorce and remarriage; there are times that some things kind of went back and forth for a time because some things that Paul had said would come into clearer focus but there would be some other things that were kind of grey areas, and so an adjustment would be made in one area and certain stipulations, guidelines I guess would be a better explanation, guidelines as to the spirit of what was taking place to that point in time of what was understood. And then as time went along, if Mr. Armstrong came to a point, or some had brought to his attention that there were other things that needed to be considered in this and he considered it and if he made a decision, which he did, of making some adjustments along the way. In other words, it's a matter of growing, and some of these things appeared more to go back and forth, however it was really a matter

of becoming more refined, is what the process was, but it did change some situations and some people's lives as to what they could or could not do.

It would be akin to, except what we've done now is in a smaller scale, but it's still an administrative decision that's made, that individuals as I have mentioned – I mentioned it at some point, I believe it was after the December meetings we had in 2011, ministerial meetings in the Church, that I'd made a comment to everyone that from that point forward to what we understood at that point in time, to the return of Jesus Christ on May 27th at the end of the 26th, that to that point in time that anyone who if they came to a situation where there was a divorce in their lives that they could not remarry. And that means, obviously, they couldn't date because they can't remarry, that they were to stop at that point in time as far as any kind of a relationship or any kind of a marriage relationship until these things be resolved, because of the uniqueness of the times and the situations there.

And then, in this last meeting that we had, that was extended to, again, the return of Jesus Christ, so that anybody that would fall into that situation of coming to a point, newly divorced - it didn't involve people who were divorced long before and decisions had been made, it was new, so anyone newly divorced over the period of time until the return of Christ, it was determined that they should not be able to, obviously, date nor remarry. And so again, that's an administrative decision, of a binding and loosening decision made in the Church that has authority in it and God *binds* that in heaven, *gives* that authority and authorization that He didn't give directly, personally. There might be, obviously there are things oftentimes that are led by inspiration, but over all there are some things that are just a matter of administration that have to be bound that way to let the Church know this is the government that we are to adhere to, that we are to submit and yield our lives to. And so it was back then.

There were even situations about make-up, and this was tough, this was *hard* because of some of the spirit of what was being revealed in some of these things and what Mr. Armstrong was dealing with in the seventies and on into the eighties, some of the things that were taking place in society at that time and women's rights and there needed to be some changes in those areas in society in the world. But so often people go from one extreme to a totally different extreme, and that's what was happening and it was affecting the Church and it was affecting ministry in the Church, primarily even wives within the Church. And so he was having a battle because of society and the world around us, because of the attitudes that were creeping into the Church, and even within the ministry, within wives and husbands in the Church in the ministry.

And so a lot of people don't understand this, that more of this was happening within the ministry and his dealing with the ministry and attitudes that were there that were starting to creep into the Church as Laodicea came closer and closer in that respect, as far as time was concerned. And so again here, decisions were made about make-up, as to whether or not people should or should not wear make-up. That was, I guess, to a point of almost calling it a doctrine in one respect, a teaching, and so much so that if individuals were to do it they could be disfellowshipped from the Church, if they were going to be in rebellion to the government.

And that's really the crux of it all; it came down to a matter of government. Are we going to do, are we going to back-up no matter what's happening in the world, in society around us, or in our own lives? What are we willing to do in order to be at one with God, in order to fight the fight. And if someone tells us to turn right, we turn right; if they say to turn left, we turn left. We don't go in a different direction and do our own thing, we don't have that right! And so it was really a matter of attitude that Mr. Armstrong was dealing with within the Church and not so much a matter of the make-up, because

make-up wasn't a giant thing. There are things we learned in time that became a matter of moderation, and how we are compared to society and the world is a matter of moderation, and yet there are some extremes, some things we're not to do at all; some things that are not manly, that men should not do, period, or shouldn't wear, period. There are some things that women do and shouldn't do as far as being feminine, and some decisions that men made about various things that make those distinctions in peoples live. And it's a matter of, again, for the sake of a unity and a oneness of government within the Church.

So again here, disfellowshipment, or even reinstatement, are matters of binding and loosening decisions, about working with individuals. It *has* to be this way! There is no other way that a Body can function and govern properly and successfully with unity and oneness without this existing. And so that's why it was made this way, that's why the binding and loosening was given this way. So even disfellowshipment or even reinstatement are matters of binding and loosening decisions, and many of these are based upon decisions having to do with things like divisiveness over doctrine; people can be disfellowshipped for divisiveness over doctrine, because just like we looked at yesterday in Ephesians, we are to work toward a unity in the Church, a unity and a oneness, that's what we're to come to, and if individuals don't want to work toward that and they want to rebel against that or fight against that then this way of life isn't for them. And if they can't depart on their own and they just want to continue to do their own thing then we let them know that no, there is authority here and you are no longer in fellowship, and someone comes to repentance, that's another matter, then there can be reinstatement if they really repent, if it's deemed indeed and they are genuine in that. Obviously repentance is not only offered there, it's desired; that's what we desire of individuals.

So again, many of these are based on decisions based on divisiveness over doctrine and teachings, individuals living in a manner contrary to a godly life, that which reflects someone who is in the Church of God. In other words, sometimes refusing to repent of such things as fornication and adultery, like we mentioned earlier, or alcoholism, or so many other kinds of things that have to do with how people live their lives, and these things can lead to matters of disfellowshipment, of not being in fellowship, of not being of the Body. There are certain sins they're not addressing and not fighting against and the repentance isn't there. And so again, there are decisions that have to be made, but these are binding and loosening; in other words, if someone is separated from the Body, God has given that discernment anyway to the ministry as a whole, through time, and so again, there are just things that God backs, He supports, He has given authority for, has given authority to, if you will.

Let's turn over to Matthew 18 because it is here that, again, some of this is even spoken of and a matter of a process – matter of fact, we've had a sermon on this, or at least at this point in time I'm getting this pre-recorded before the sermons actually been given. But you're listening to this during the Feast of Tabernacles and there is going to be a sermon coming, I know God's leading in that direction, to discuss some of this context here, but for us now, if that sermon has indeed been given before the Feast of Tabernacles then we're kind of looking back and being reminded of a little of this. But let's notice the context.

Matthew 18:15 – Moreover, if your brother shall trespass, in other words, **sin against you**, and I'm not going to go into all of what that means because that should have been covered in the sermon that's been given by now, hopefully. **Moreover, if your brother**, someone in the Church, brother/sister **shall sin against you**, if there is some kind of a sin that you're definitely knowledgeable of, that you have seen, or that you have witnessed or so forth, whatever, or even that is strictly more so against you... You know, all sin hurts and is against the Body, it's against others, it's against God, but sin hurts no

matter what, no matter when it's done, how it's done. But there is something here that says you have this knowledge and it says **go and tell him his 'fault'/their 'fault'**; it's an interesting word here, this word 'fault'. It means 'to expose' or 'to convict'. And we've just looked at that in recent times as well here, this keeps popping up in sermons, this thing of 'exposing fault', becoming 'convicted of fault'. That's a process of something that God does in our life, convicting us of sin, convicting us of that which is in disagreement with Him and becoming convicted of that is so important. It has to be exposed, it has to come to the surface to be dealt with, the fault, the sin, the error, and the ability to see it then and a desire to respond to it has to do with the process of becoming convicted. So that's what this word means here.

It says, **go and tell them their fault, between you and them alone/him alone: if he shall hear you then you have gained your brother.** How do you mean 'hear'? Well, again, we've gone through that, they respond, they acknowledge what they've done, they want to change, they're sorry for what they've done, and then it says **you've gained your brother**, you've helped your brother and more so by gaining the brother, what it means here, they're continuing on in this way of life and not being cut off from the Church, not being cut off from God's spirit. Because, you know, sin just cuts us off from God's spirit and we can put ourselves out long before we actually are put out as far as fellowship, as far as government's concerned, or as far as that which has been followed through – spiritually it happens very quickly obviously, but to follow through as a part of government in the Church administration, sometimes it takes a little longer.

Verse 16 – But if he will not hear, in other words they're justifying or they don't acknowledge what they've done and you know what they have done, you have absolute knowledge of something, it's happened maybe directly to you, it says, **then take with you one or two more, so then the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.** And this, as we've gone through in the sermon recently, has to do with leadership, not just your best friends and not just others who might take your side in a matter, but others who will be known for, or are known for their fairness, their leadership, if you will, within the Church and the like.

And if he shall refuse to hear them, tell it to the Church, and it says if the individual responds then, then again, you've gained your brother, you've helped them, **and if he neglect to hear the Church...well**, anyway, it shows there first of all... I kind of went past that there...

Verse 17 – If he shall refuse to hear them; so if the two or three that are there to witness the matter and the one that stating the thing is given and the others recognize that this is something that needs to be addressed with greater authority then take it to the Church, take it to the ministry, that's what it's talking about. When you take something to the Church, when that's used in these terms throughout the New Testament it has to do with the government, the authority of the Church, which is administered through the ministry.

...and if he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto you as a 'Gentile'; that word is used meaning a 'non-believer'; that's how the word is used, because in the world of Judaism at that time they were the only ones who, in essence, to even their sad lack of knowledge at that time, but that was the analogy that was given, of something they could understand, that they knew of God and that there were things they were to live by as far as God's law, but there were those of other nations who didn't believe in God, didn't believe the one, true, Almighty Eternal God. And so it said, **let him be as one of them/as a non-believer/as a Gentile**; as far as your relationship with them they're a non-believer and we don't have

non-believers in fellowship with us, there is no point in that. We don't have an open door policy in God's Church, it doesn't work that way.

And so it says here **they are to be unto you as a non-believer and a tax collector**. That was even, back then especially in the way they were known and for how things were done back then, this was about as low as you could go – in other words they are to be ostracized, not to be a part of the fellowship, they're not to be around you, their way, their manner of life is not conducive to the Church and God's way of life whatsoever, it's the opposite.

And so in **verse 18** it goes on to say... and so it shows our attitude toward them, we want people to repent, we look forward to the time all people are able to be drawn into the Church, but we still have to live in the present, and in that present we have a fellowship that is geared toward God's way of life and unity and oneness within the Body, and that which is not in unity and oneness only causes problems. It's like the examples of what Paul said when he talked about, in the context of the Passover period and the Days of Unleavened Bread, in Corinthians there when he talked about 'even a little leaven leavens the whole lump.' It doesn't take a lot; 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump' and sadly those things have happened in the Church. You leave something around and it just festers and if it isn't dealt with, wrong attitudes, wrong spirit, sin begins to be tolerated amongst others and that's a dangerous thing, that's a horrible thing to happen, to allow to happen within the Church.

I'm going to turn over there, to **1 Corinthians 5:6 – Your glorying is not good; know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?** So our glorying, when we are lifted up with pride and don't...that's what it's talking about when he uses that word, it has to do with pride. When you lift yourself up and you think your way is better, you think your way of handling something is better than God's by your actions – you don't have to say it even. That's why some people, even going to their brother alone, they don't want to lose "a friend" by talking to them about a sin, because then they're not going to want to talk to me anymore, they're not going to want to be a friend. And you think, don't you get the point?! That's disobedience to God! That's the very reason why you're supposed to go to them! But because sometimes...and we act that way...and people have, and this has been the most common thing about going to your brother alone, that people don't want to go to their brother alone so they don't do it because it's awkward, it's uneasy, and they may not talk to you anymore and they may not have anything... And the point is you've lost your brother anyway, spiritually, if you don't go to them alone.

And so again here, by our not obeying God and doing the things the way God says to do it, and in the *spirit* in which God says to do it, then we're glorying that our way is better than God's. That's what we're doing, we're living in that. We made a choice that our way of doing it, my way of handling it by not addressing something is better than God's. There have been times I've given some, or my wife has, some things for ministers to accomplish, to do and sometimes they don't do it, they don't do it maybe in the way they're told because, well, it's awkward for them and they don't understand, they don't recognize then sometimes there are certain things that God gives His way, inspires His way from the top down, for a purpose and for a reason, because there is spiritual discernment that's there as well and it's given to someone else so they can learn spiritual discernment by *proving*, by *doing* it God's way. That's an amazing thing! But sometimes we lift ourselves up. And so, especially when it comes to sin and people begin to tolerate and allow sin into their life, that's a disgusting spirit and we all have to address that at times in our life. It's not a good thing; it's something to be repented of when it's seen and to keep fighting against it.

So he says, **don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump**; after a while your whole life can be leavened and away from the Church, away from God, or it can enter into the Church and begin to affect or *infect* others.

It says, **purge out, therefore, the old leaven**, the sin, those things of our past, the things of the mind that aren't right, that aren't in unity with God, **that you may be a new lump**; and that's how we're to live our lives so that God can work with us **...as you are unleavened**, even as people live that during the Days of Unleavened Bread, getting rid of the literal physical leaven. **...for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the Feast not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.** This is important even in what we're discussing here in this sermon, about this matter of serving God in sincerity and truth, and where we're wrong we can repent and continue then in sincerity before God, being truthful to God, not being hypocritical, not lying, but doing things because of what we see and know at any moment in time, the present truth.

So again here, a matter of sincerity and truth that God looks to, He looks to the heart, it's about the heart, it's about what's inside of us and it's to be unleavened, to get rid of the sin. And indeed, **a little leaven can leaven the whole lump.** And so again here, these things affect the Church.

Going back here to Matthew 18:17 – **If he neglect and refuse to hear the Church, let them be as a non-believer, as a tax collector.**

Verse 18 - Verily I say unto you, whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loosen on earth shall be loosened in heaven. So again, this authority that God has given having to do with whether someone is able to be in fellowship, come into fellowship, actually be removed from fellowship or to be brought back in again – all binding and loosening decisions that are given a matter of authority from God in heaven. It's bound and loosened in heaven by God if it's done here on earth through the Church, through the ministry.

So it's important to understand the power of God to plan, lead, mold, fashion events, timing, circumstances, along with the present truth given to any moment in time throughout the past 6,000 years, and then to do that on into the future. And that's why it's *so important* to remember our experiences in the context and confidence of this being *God's Church*, so that we can learn from the *evidence* and experience of *proving* these events and the timing. We can go back and look at these things and see proof of how God has worked in the Church, of how God worked through Mr. Armstrong and learn great lessons from it, the evidence that's there, the fruit of those things as well. And so we can learn from the evidence and experience of proving these events and the timing of them that have occurred to God's people over and over again.

And so it's a matter of understanding that this is like the construction of a building, of a building process that goes from the drawings of architecture to all the process that's involved in the preparation for and the work of the building itself and the building process. There is *much work* that goes on in our lives from the time we're drawn into the Church, called into the Church, and we begin to respond to God's spirit working with us and in us, a transformation of the mind that takes a lifetime of experiences and events.

As some of these events of the Church have taken place over time, sometimes God gives us immediate answers to what we're to learn and sometimes it's reserved for a future time to be revealed, as we have

found many things have had duality even for us at this end-time. I've experienced this much over time, especially in these end-times, that there are many things that God has given to us beforehand, some things in the Old Testament, some things in the Church in Worldwide, and even into Laodicea, to learn the lessons now, to come to certain truths even in the end-time as a result of those things that occurred back then to help to see more fully, to learn from those lessons, and to understand what we just read in the beginning of this sermon again, of where we receive that scripture about the present truth.

So let's go back to that example we touched upon where God was restoring truth to His Church through Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and God was revealing the Holy Days to him. Let's go back to that experience and to learn from that, something of the past, and to see and to understand how God worked with him, what happened within the Church, the proving, the experience there that we can learn from and build upon. Because there is much here! And although this example has been mentioned in times past, as Peter said, again, for you to become more fully established, grounded, strengthened in the present truth that God is giving to us, it's needful that we be reminded of these things from time to time so we can grow and become established, strengthened even more so.

Let's go back to the early 1940's when the Church was just beginning to learn about and practice obedience to observing the annual Holy Days. Now, you have to remember here that Mr. Armstrong began to, in the early 30's there, live this way of life. God revealed so much to him, him and his wife into the latter part, all the way into the latter part of the 1930's, began on their own for at least seven years he said, to observe the Holy Days on their own as God taught him meaning and understanding of what they were, what they were for, what was to be taught about them, what they meant, what the meaning was contained in them, and God began showing those things more and more as they continued to observe them by themselves. They felt that this was something they had to do, but Mr. Armstrong coming...again, the Church in Sardis, coming from such a weak stance and everything having to be revealed and built upon from the very most basic of things that were taking place there, took some time and God working with Him to help him to see and to understand these things and to build upon these things, to a point where Mr. Armstrong came to where he realized this had to be taught within the Church. But he had to be deeply convicted of it first, of the importance, of the command to teach it, to live it within the Church, and know what to teach about it. And so again, for seven years.

It wasn't until the 1940's in that respect that the Church was doing this, meeting on these occasions and learning and being taught about them and the meaning of them.

Let's go back to Leviticus 23 where we see some of these things and try to, a little bit at least, put ourselves into that period of time, late 1930's and the early 1940's, because again here, sometimes...you know, if you've read the autobiography you kind of get a little bit better sense of a transition that was taking place there and maybe because of your own experiences – but to try to place yourself where there wasn't a lot of truth in the Church, there hadn't been a lot of truth established within the Church. When it came to the time that it was finally written of Mr. Armstrong and the truths, the 18 Truths that God revealed through him, powerful and mighty in the building of the Church, those were things that came with a lot of time and a lot of work and God molding and fashioning and restoring things into the Church in a very powerful way so that the Church could become stronger and stronger and stronger through time – and it *did* through Philadelphia. From a time of Sardis where there was almost nothing left, dying out in that respect, whereby a person could grow or have any basic foundational knowledge of the truth of God until the time toward the end of Philadelphia when even then another spirit began to come in, began to come into the congregations of Laodicea, of a lukewarm spirit, of rich and

increased with goods. Because by this time so much had been given through Mr. Armstrong and there was so much knowledge out there.

And so again, incredible times that we have gone through, things that God has taught us and we have learned from through time.

Leviticus 23:4 - These are the feasts/appointed times of the Eternal; now we haven't known those things until after...basically until after the apostasy. I remember a minister referring to some of this the first time it had ever been taught in the Church and hearing some of this discussed, and then I was inspired to go into more study of it and learn what some of these words meant and how they were used. We have focused then mightily upon them and built upon these things throughout the period of the Church, of the time of that which God was restoring to us and building within us.

And so it says, **These are the feasts/appointed times of the Eternal;** and this was still looked upon as Feasts, the word Feast. Most people in the Church would read this and that's what they read, 'the Feasts', and yet that's not what it's about yet. It gets to the Feasts in a moment. But even here, things that were not known that we kind of take for granted sometimes that have always been known and understood to the depth that they are today, and that's just not the case.

It says, **even holy convocations/commanded assemblies, which you shall proclaim in their seasons.** So even those things, 'a commanded assembly', it took time before that conviction was there, the conviction to teach. You have to be deeply convicted, especially if it's something that you have not known and you know this is God's Church, these are God's people; you have to be deeply convicted, you want to be certain! And Mr. Armstrong was that way! You want to be *absolutely certain* that something is from God, that it is true, that it is provable, that it is able to be seen, and that you *know* it's from God, whatever that is, that you have to have that conviction in your mind before it's ever taught. Not a matter of opinion, not a matter of 'the way I think I see it', or 'this is what I think it means', or just coming up with our own ideas about it. A person, indeed, must be deeply convicted, when in this position especially, that this is from God.

And so again, **these are the feasts of the Eternal, appointed times, even holy convocations/commanded assemblies;** so in time it was commanded for all the Church to observe these times. **You shall proclaim them in their,** not just 'seasons' but **in their appointed times. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Eternal's Passover.** And so again, God's plan starting with a Passover. And so Mr. Armstrong was being given understanding of Passover and how it should be observed and what should be done within the Church and then coming to convictions of the things that Paul had to say later on there, to come to understand, you know, we're supposed to be doing this in the Church, taking the Passover and keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

It says then, **On the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast,** and this is the word for 'Feast', of **Unleavened Bread unto the Eternal. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.** And so again, learning these things, separating... because this had to be a part of the process, of what is required in the Old Testament, do we do it today? The sacrificial system was done away with. The Levitical system was done away with. Many of the physical things of the Old Testament have been done away with. So are we supposed to do this now since the time of Christ? ...since the Church began on Pentecost of 31 A.D.? And these are certainly questions that would come to mind. And so it took time to build upon these things, things we just kind of take for granted now and we don't recognize sometimes the growing

process then when this is *not* around and all of a sudden it's to be restored and come back into the Church. It doesn't just happen overnight!

So the present truth, at any given moment in time there, was changing, even over the same seven years that Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong [were] observing these times. Things were changing as they went forward as to what they understood and how they would base decisions of what they would do...and then finally to be given to the whole Church. It finally was beginning to be taught to the Church, so the present truth at that time was now, "We are to observe these times! We are to come together on these times as much as we do the weekly Sabbath." Before that...before that that wasn't held against them. The fact that they weren't *observing*... You know, people in the Church, that they were not observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, all the High Days, Trumpets, Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, the Last Great Day – the fact that people during that seven years were not observing those things at that time was not counted against them, those who were being drawn into the Church, because of the present truth. They had the present truth about the weekly Sabbath to that point in time and whatever other knowledge they were coming to this point in time here was sparse until Mr. Armstrong began to teach it. And then that government, that authority that existed in the Church then they were held accountable then, for what was given then to that point in time, to the present truth!

There is *a lot to learn* from these things that sometimes we take for granted and don't recognize how God judges us, how God works in our life, and the process we live through. And if we understand that process really well we're going to understand powerfully the things we've gone through in the last four years and how awesome confidence and boldness, excitement, of the soundness in mind, the ability to judge and discern things to this scale in this manner... in an unwavering manner – just bold and confident because it's so powerful, so powerful and real in our minds that we see it so clearly, the conviction is so deep.

So jumping ahead here to **verse 23** it says **And the Eternal spoke unto Moses saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, in the seventh month, in the first day of the month, you shall have a Sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.** And so again here, things that were, especially in the beginning when these things aren't known – what do you mean? What is the fifteenth day of the first month when the Feast of Unleavened Bread is to begin? What is the first day of the seventh month? How do you find out about these things in a world that you've grown up in and realizing here that this has to do with things of Judaism and Hebrew and the Hebrew calendar and learning those things, not having knowledge of those things. Just like the vast majority of us have had no understanding that there is a Hebrew calendar. We go by a Roman calendar! And to learn that there are specific months of different times and how God counted time and how He gave to us to count time and to keep track of Holy Days...so where do you go to learn about them? Well, you go to Judaism.

Now there's a balance in this. As time went along some in the Church relied too heavily upon matters of Judaism, of so called 'expertise' of rabbi's and the like – and candidly there were a lot of things, not until later on, that we came to more fully grasp and comprehend the dangers of going to so called 'authorities', because *God* is the authority. The *Church* is the authority. And things that were established through Mr. Armstrong, that was the authority. And yet sometimes people looked in other places for authority, so much so that they even went to protestant ministers and works of theologians, so called, to try to learn more. It's one thing to pick up some things in history or to delve into various words, of what they might mean in Greek and Hebrew and see the sense in some of those things as they're translated in different translations, and to get a better understanding as work is done on words

and so forth, but to believe their doctrine? ...to believe their slant? Never! ...to believe their ideas and where they come from? Never!

So again, where do you go to find out these things? Well, Judaism. That's what he did. And they were the only ones, obviously, at that time who had decent knowledge of such things about the calendar and when the seventh month is. Not only that but this matter of the calendar was no small thing, and was not in the Church of God at times, but it was no small thing because there was great dissension amongst scholars, and sometimes people would go out and read, whether they be ministers, which happened, or whether they be individuals in the Church who did some reading on their own; they thought they had come to knowledge of a better way of counting time and how to count the new moons and how to start with Trumpets and when Trumpets was and when it was not, and the postponements and everything else that they thought they were better at doing.

You know, Mr. Armstrong was led by God's spirit to make a *binding decision* for the Church, which He came to understand *was the truth* based on scripture, of how things were. It was a matter of a truth that began to be followed then in the Church, and whether a person fully understood it or not Mr. Armstrong made it a binding decision by what he said - we don't have to fully understand sometimes some of those things if it's a binding decision - that we're going to go by the Jewish Calendar, the Hebrew Calendar, and basically that's what he did. It was the seventeenth truth – twenty overall, but seventeenth. And I'll just read it to you, what it says:

20 (17) The authority of the sacred calendar preserved by the Jews.

Mr. Armstrong came to understand that there were certain things given to the Jewish people, Hebrew, as far as the passing along of scripture, being faithful in making certain that everything in the Old Testament... they were meticulous about copying copies and copying the Old Testament scriptures. And they were also, a matter of something that was given to them, that was spoken of in scripture, about those who sit in Moses seat, well, speaking of the Sanhedrin and certain decisions made there, but even things that were still a matter given to the Jewish peoples, of counting of time, of something they would never lose. They would never lose track of when the Sabbath day was. They would never lose of how, when the seventh month would come and how to count it and what that first day was when the basic of timing begins there as far as real counting is concerned, and those things that would give counting through time.

20 (17) The authority of the sacred calendar preserved by the Jews. Through Herbert W. Armstrong, the Church understands the authority God gave to the Jews to preserve the weekly and yearly calendar.

So again here, they've never lost track of when the seventh day was. They have not lost track of when Trumpets is and when that seventh month is and the first day of that month. Now, they haven't always understood the right time to observe things, like Passover - and Pentecost, I might add - there are things they've gone astray in but they know the days of the week and the months and so forth. And so again, that authority of something that was given to the Church after these things came to a point in time of being recognized this is when we are going to do it as a Church and why, and based upon certain spiritual or certain principles in this case here, various scriptures that God gave him discernment of.

Now, let's go back here a little bit in Leviticus 23 and let's notice **verse 15 – And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave**

offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete; Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath you shall number fifty days and you shall offer a new meat offering unto the Eternal.

Verse 21 – And you shall proclaim on the selfsame day, in other words, after counting the fifty days, **that it may be a holy convocation unto you and you shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout all your generations.** And so here it is about Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits, or the Feast of Weeks as it's referred to in different locations. But with this Holy Day there has been disagreement in Judaism of when it should be observed. Many simply came to a set day of Sivan 6th, and for some they give a two day period in there of observance and celebration, but again, Sivan 6th, and yet Mr. Armstrong understood there was a need to count. So why count if it's on a specific month of the Hebrew calendar on a specific day? But again here, the Jewish people haven't always obeyed God in that which they were given charge to do, as far as the calendar and the accurate keeping of time and those things that were given for them to preserve, and the words of the Old Testament in Hebrew - they have done a very good job, it's just a matter of obedience in how they have lived that has gone astray and those things that Christ condemned them of even 2,000 years ago.

So again, so many of them observe Sivan 6th, yet the Church knew it had to be counted and could not be a set day of the month. So very basic. Now, where do you go for understanding of these things, about the count and how to count it? Well, you try to glean it from scripture, indeed, and what it's saying, understanding that there are certain things here having to do with Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, but these things have never been established in the Church and so decisions and choices had to be made as to what was able to be understood to that point in time. Unless God just comes down, like He did with Moses and gives it face to face, then there is that which you are led by through the spirit, through time and through molding and fashioning, building a little here and a little there, but you don't have all the building at one time – God doesn't work that way, and there are great reasons why He doesn't. He leads and we follow and we learn to make choices and decisions based upon that which He has given to that point in time, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little – some will mock that scripture – but there is that which is true there.

That's what we have to do, and to look to God's spirit in leading and guiding and seeking to have spiritual wisdom and discernment in those things and basing things on the word of God and making judgements according to what we have to any specific moment in time, and as God reveals more then we grow more, but what we know at any moment in time also changes and it changes then judgements and decisions that are made, and that's important to understand. Because God judges what's inside of us, what's in our heart and what's in our mind, what's in our spirit as we follow, as we make choices and decisions and that we strive to do those things faithfully with what we know at the time – and we're tried and tested in those things as well.

So Mr. Armstrong arrived at a method of counting that led to the observance always being on a Monday, because of the interpretation of when to begin the count. And there was a time I would sit down, I would have sat down with you, or anybody else would have in the Church, and gone through these verses and told you something different about what was being said because of a different interpretation.

Verse 15 – And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, and so this is how it was read, **you shall count it;** and a lot of this has to do with the King James as well and the awkwardness of words and how they're translated, but it says, **And you shall count unto you from the morrow after the**

Sabbath. So what was taken here was meaning it's not the Sabbath but from the morrow, which the tomorrow after the Sabbath is Sunday and so you start counting from that Sunday, not counting Sunday but from Sunday. And if you start counting from Sunday and you start counting seven weeks you're going to come to another Sunday and the next day (I'm sorry I think I said 'from' or 'after' that. You do start counting after that but it's not from the Saturday mark, it's from the Sabbath mark, you're actually using the Sunday mark) – and so literally by the time you start counting after that, after that day, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, you come to seven days, so you come up to a Sunday and fulfill a seven day cycle there and you keep counting like that because you start counting after that moment in time and then you add a day at the end after seven weeks like it says to do, you're always going to come out on a Monday. And that's how we did it, not understanding what these words were in the Hebrew, and not understanding things that we came to understand later on about the wave sheaf and when the wave sheaf was waved before God during the Days of Unleavened Bread, or during that period of time and what Sabbath it was to count from. Because it was always to be done from the weekly Sabbath.

And so again, much learning through time, but here a little, there a little, building and building and adding to the building and the greater the building becomes the more refined the more perfected we become. Perfection doesn't come in one fell swoop. Which, wouldn't it be great if it was that easy, but it's not! God could have just created holy righteous character in us but it doesn't work that way, it's through a process of time.

Going back to this process. The only thing that might have clouded some of this at that particular time, possibly the things in the Catholic church that were still there in Europe, also in Europe, because they also counted to Pentecost with an ending that's always to be observed on a Monday, and so when they counted the Pentecost, even to this day, Pentecost is observed in Europe, in many countries. It's just a holiday, it's not in that respect a religious thing, but with the Catholic church it's still stated as a religious thing, when the holy spirit was given to the apostles. That's how most protestants and the Catholic church have viewed it.

So if you go through history, most references of the history of Pentecost show things, what Judaism observed, they have a celebration in that respect, of the giving on the law in Sinai, that's what they celebrate, the giving of the law on Sinai. And we understand, indeed, that it was during Pentecost that God gave His law, but He also gave His holy spirit on Pentecost that reveals the ability to live that law, the ability to have it become a part of our being and our thinking in our mind.

But for Christianity, again, it was the commemoration of the descent of the holy spirit upon the apostles. And again, for them, what they do, how they do it, their ability to count or the way they count is from Easter Sunday and go forward fifty days. Pentecost is a holiday for them that is celebrated fifty days after Easter Sunday, and so in Europe there, most of the times we've been over there at Pentecost, a little bit longer weekend because we observe Pentecost on Sunday but in Europe then Monday also is a holiday and that's the period of time they have a big weekend celebration and carnivals and different kinds of things of celebration over there, of partying, and that's kind of how it's observed over there, just kind of a holiday and a time off work and a time to party.

But again here, we had to grow in these things through time. Mr. Armstrong had to grow in these things in time; and so why it remained clouded, why it wasn't able to be fully seen or fully understood? There are just certain things that God has a plan... When He has a plan and how He's going to do things everything is mapped out, and there are major events as well throughout time that are mapped out and

things in the Church that are mapped out as a part of a process of teaching us, of convicting us, of helping us to come more deeply, spiritually, if you will, in tune with God, at one with God in unison and harmony with God in the spirit of God and to have those things become a part of our mind. It's a molding and fashioning that takes time and can't just be given to us because of experiences and then in judgements that go along with that, and then sometimes being tried and tested in some of these things as to where we are and what takes place. But, God ever revealing more and more to us, and it's only because we went through the apostasy and all the things that took place there that there was that ability because of the experiences that God added so much more to us and gave us so many truths.

It's just like one led into another, some rapid building has taken place since the apostasy, but it's because of the maturing process that God gave the Church, and if that process hadn't taken place through Mr. Armstrong and those eighteen very powerful foundational truths given through Him at that time, we wouldn't have had that growth, we would still have been struggling to learn some of the most basic foundational things in many respects and learning to build upon them that would take a long period of time to become more refined. But then we were able to accelerate mightily because of what we went through.

And so again, going back in time, throughout the 1940's, the 50's and the 60's and up through 1973, Pentecost in the Church of God was always observed on a Monday. For nearly *forty years* Mr. Armstrong understood and believed that he and his wife, and then later the Church, should always observe Pentecost *on a Monday*. That was *the present truth* for God's Church throughout those years – *nearly forty years!* Now, that's awesome to understand, indeed! To observe it at any other time *through those years* would have been rebellion against God's government, against the unity and the oneness of the Church. It would have been rebellion! It would not have been following what was given to that point in time, what was understood to that point in time, although it was in error! So again, it would have been sin!

And I know that there are people, and I think of the scattered Church, that if you ask about...they wouldn't have any idea how that could have happened and how it could have been God's Church, and how it could have been sin at one time and not in another, because before 1974 it wasn't counted as sin against the Church. Let's go on.

So, what do you believe is more important to God when observing His Holy Day of Pentecost during those years? Through the 30's and 40's and 50's and 60's and on into through 1973, was it the *day* of the week which was actually the wrong day? Is that what was most important to God? Well the evidence proves otherwise. What we see that God did, because God did it, what we see happened in the Church reveals otherwise, and then spiritual principles we have been learning since that time period and what God has been building and molding and fashioning within us? Or.... so again, was it the day of the week that was the most important thing to God? ...or was it the spirit in which it was observed more important to God? That God could work with that! ...that God works with that! That we were able to learn, that people were able to learn.

When I came into the Church I was able to learn much about Pentecost, inspired by things that happened in the Old Testament, then what happened in the New when the holy spirit was poured out upon the Church and the importance of understanding. That's an awesome thing to understand, that you can't live God's way of life unless you have His help, unless you have His spirit. Israel was evidence of that. Their lives *proved* that! Those are awesome lessons contained in the observance of Pentecost! And then understanding of how that fit into God's plan about an early harvest, when you look at

salvation and the firstfruits of God's harvest and those who are going to come with Jesus Christ – all these things fitting together in a very powerful picture. But the day of the week, Sunday and Monday? That wasn't the primary thing! God wanted us to understand the *spirit* of that occasion, what it *taught*, what we could be *inspired* by. I was inspired by those sermons because God's spirit was in them!

And then in time...*then in time* God chose *and planned* to reveal more of it at a specific moment in time. So we have learned or at least have had the ability to learn, in God's Church anyway, what all this meant. So again, all the tens of thousands who observed Pentecost on a Monday for decades observed Pentecost in spirit and in the present truth before God, and *that's* how they were judged, not the fact that there was some error in it. And the fact that there was some error in it did not *prove*, as some would like to think, that Mr. Armstrong wasn't an apostle or to somehow *prove* that it wasn't God's Church! That's folly! That's foolishness! That's insane! That's insanity! And those who seek to find fault and those who seek to find an error or a problem to justify something they do that is wrong, especially in the leaving of God's Church, then you're never going to convince them otherwise, they're not going to see the spirit of it in the first place.

I'm in awe of this! All the tens of thousands who observed Pentecost on a Monday for decades observed Pentecost in spirit and in the present truth before God. It was observed in *faith*! That's right – *faith* - to that moment in time, belief, that they believed, that they lived by it, that's why they went on Monday and didn't go on a Sunday, because they believed that. But what they believed, what they came to understand that was most important to God was the spirit of it, was what was the meaning of the time period, what was contained in the education and the truths that were being revealed in the Church, of lessons we could learn from, profound lessons about how God's spirit works in our life and how it does not work.

So again, it was observed in faith, *in belief* that it should be done so on a Monday. They were wrong but their spirit was true, and once shown the error of what they had believed to be the present truth, they changed; everyone changed once shown the error. There was not a need to repent of that error because there was nothing maliciously done in spirit, it was done with the present truth. It wasn't done with a wrong spirit of rebellion so there was no need to repent of the error, except for to change with the change of understanding and to thank God for better understanding and for clarification. So again, only a change to change it and to make it correct was required, for they had followed *in spirit and in truth, faithfully yielding* to all that God had revealed to them *to that time*!

That's how God works in our lives and judges, according to what we have at any moment in time! He's done that for 6,000 years! Abel was judged according to what he was given to that time. Moses was judged for what he was given to that time. *Abraham* was judged for what he was given to that time. Moses was, and Moses learned as he went along and he changed as he went along, and all through time, and then finally the Church, when Jesus Christ came along and began to teach the things that He did, and then the great changes that began to take place even more so for those with whom God worked – as people made changes - being judged all along the way in an ever growing process of a revelation of truth through time, but they were only judged according to what they knew to that moment in time, until something more was given, and then they would change and yield to whatever God gave.

That's a beautiful thing to understand that's worked in the Church, worked in our lives in how God works with us spiritually. This happened for primarily two great reasons in the Church as God always plans and organizes things in a specific manner. He planned, purposed when He would do this. He

could have revealed the day much, much earlier. He could have given it to Loma and Mr. Armstrong, to him and his wife there at the very beginning, from the outset, but He didn't, and could have inspired, led, guided and directed Mr. Armstrong to it, but He didn't. And again, there are reasons for that. That primary reason for the Church at that time was to put to the test, to try the Church, to refine the brethren in that respect, the Church at that particular time. It was given for a specific purpose.

God has given things at different times to refine, and by refining I mean that there are things that we have gone through – if you look through the history of the Church, if you know of some of the things of the history of the Church, through Philadelphia, through Laodicea, up to this time - there are those moments in time that refine. And by refining, what happens when refining? The gold is heated up, as an example, the impurities are brought to the surface so they can be gotten rid of, so they can be seen.

And I have seen this over and over and over again in God's Church and I've had to be a part of administering this at different times, that when certain things came along, individuals who are not living right, individuals who are deceitful, individuals who in essence had a lying spirit within them and were not living faithfully before God, and yet hidden in amongst the Church, that there are things that God has brought along to bring them to the surface. They might even be talking to others and others in the same group and talking things that are not right amongst themselves, but being hidden. But there are things that God has brought along so that they can't be hidden anymore and so that something... it all just comes to the surface.

That happened in a very powerful way when Mr. Armstrong went through Pentecost. There were a lot of people on different sections - they weren't even all in agreement with each other - that went in different directions, of cleaning up the Church, of refining the Church, of helping the Church. And so God has...that's a blessing! When the Church can become refined and become more at one and work together in greater unity and harmony, the greater peace that exists there in the Body and how it's able to function and that there aren't parts of the Body that are dragging it down and hurting it and causing problems. It's just a marvelous blessing when God gives us a refining process.

And so that was a major portion of this, just as so many different things that have happened through time to try, to test, and to refine. Those things are wonderful, exciting, and blessed times; they really are for God's Church. They're not fun to go through, you don't like to see people go by the wayside, you don't like to see people make wrong choices. But before they leave, before division comes out in full force and is seen and recognized, there are already things going on behind the scene that had been for some time, it doesn't just happen overnight. And so it's a refining process for the Church and a growing process for the Church as well. And so a time to grow, a time to be refined.

And number two, another reason in a very powerful way, it was given to help the Church in the end-time, in these times, to come to greater spiritual understanding of how God works in our lives to mold and fashion His righteous spirit *in us*! Powerful! Some things you go through that you can't have happen in any other way but through the experience and the proving process and the refining process and the revelation, the revealing process that God gives and how we act upon what He gives us then that tries us sometimes to the core of our being to convict us more deeply of things in our life, to expose, to convict, like that one word we looked at.

So from the beginning of God's Church we're shown that God's spirit leads us into all truth. *Leads us!* We don't have it all at once! We *then* are to faithfully follow; that's our choice. And we are *never* to go backward to that which is false, untrue, and proven to be false or untrue. Mr. Armstrong didn't go

backward, he didn't go back to Monday or back to something else that was so obviously wrong. It's always growing closer and closer to God, being able to draw closer and going in a particular direction that leads us more and more in the right way, on a right path, on a refined path – and just becoming purer and purer, if you will, as far as the product is concerned, of our lives, that which is produced in our lives.

I think of John 16. Let's turn over to John 16; some things that Jesus Christ had to say at that particular time. This was on the night of the Passover and some of the teaching He was giving and He gave to the Church at that particular time before He was going to die in the following day there. So this was in the night time period.

John 16:12 – I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. So even that, there are things that they had to grow in. They didn't even have God's spirit yet and He had already given them so much, and after Pentecost so many of these things would begin to come back to them but there were many more things, there were things that *could not be given*, they weren't ready, they couldn't receive it yet. And that's a part of the growing process. There are things in Philadelphia that couldn't be given yet about this time, that were reserved for this time as well. And so again, it's a building process of things that were not be seen then, that could not be seen then on a spiritual plane of how, in that respect, of how God works with us.

There is far too much to be given. We're going to have things to learn through time! We can't take it, we can't receive yet, but God will give us even in the Millennium and even in the Great White Throne...and they can't be given all at once, but *only through time*.

And then it goes on to say then in **verse 13 – Howbeit when**, and really it's better stated in the actual Greek word, '**Whenever**'... **Howbeit whenever the spirit of truth comes**, so it's not a matter of when it first begins to come. The spirit of truth; God's spirit always works with us, leads and guides us, strengthens us and so forth, but when it has to do with that which is a matter of truth, a spirit of truth in the sense of, and the respect of that which is revealing truth and giving truth, **Whenever the spirit of truth comes**, because it happens when we're first being drawn, obviously, God's spirit working with us giving us truth, convicting us of it, but when truth comes into the Church to be given to all at the same time, something new or better understood or refined, when it does come it will 'guide'. The word in the Greek here meaning, 'to teach', 'to lead' **you into all truth**, so it's not given all at once, it's to guide, to lead us *into* all truth.

So there is much truth and we can't receive it all at one time, that's what Christ was showing them. Not all at once but to lead and guide us into it. **For it shall not speak of itself but whatever**, in other words this word here even, it means 'how much' or 'how many'. So, **whatever or how much it shall hear**, whatever it is that's to be given at a specific moment in time, of whatever it is, ever how much. In other words that's something determined by God's spirit and then that spirit then goes out and is given *in* the Church *to* the Church **and whatever it shall have that it shall hear, it shall speak**, in other words, communicate. It's a matter of what it receives in order to communicate, it's the process whereby God communicates with us, **and it will show you things to come**. Again, everything comes to us in and through Christ in God's time – that's the bottom line.

Verse 14 – It shall glorify Me, for it shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you. And so again, it comes from God, comes through Jesus Christ and is given to the Church.

Verse 15 – All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that it shall take of Mine and shall show it unto you. So again, this is a matter of government, order, oneness, and being led and tested in that, which God gives to us in and through His Son Jesus Christ.

So, Pentecost was revealed as a command to be observed and revealed its meaning, which again is spiritual in nature, and its purpose, having to do with the law, the spirit that's given and how we're able to keep it, the firstfruits, those things that were given to us as the primary foundational spiritual things that God wanted us to see, but the timing being a day earlier in observance was not given until later, much later. The timing as to the day of the week is not even close to the importance of the spirit of its meaning and its purpose that God wanted us to grasp so that we could grow in it. You don't grow in that one there, especially with it being on a specific day of the week, except for understanding of something that really didn't change even about the wave sheaf and some of those things. Because that was still there but that became more important as we became more refined in understanding the day.

We still receive the understanding and the inspiration then about things about the wave sheaf, even then. There are certain things, like the Sabbath, the seventh day; that has *powerful* meaning in it because it's about a seven thousand year plan and so those things are very powerful and foundational that God gave to us early on...but something like this, it can wait, it can wait, and be tried and tested as to what we will do and how we will do it as He reveals all of it to us. And we've even grown more in recent time about Pentecost, and there is much more that we still don't know. There are things we *just don't know* until the time that God gives it, and God is the one responsible for giving it. That's what I marvel at sometimes, about people who go off on tangents and get all flustered (and I understand why) because of things that come along. It's like, "You're a prophet and you should know *everything!* You should know these things and if you don't and you say something then how can you be a prophet?" And I think, "You don't understand! It's not *my* responsibility as to what truths and things we're given at any moment in time, it's God's and His Son's, and we just yield ourselves to it." And if a change must take place and we need to make a shift, then we do it when God gives it to us at *that* time.

Now let's go back to the beginning of this sermon series to what we were focusing upon at that time concerning a conflict that we came to after the spring of 2008. Up to this time we understood the overall spiritual meaning and purpose of both Pentecost and Trumpets. I've just explained those things about Pentecost, and then even not keeping it on the right day, and Trumpets. But God was not through leading us into greater truth about those Holy Days, there was something else to be refined in concerning those days. So indeed there was error contained in the Trumpets sermon of 2007 in which the title stated, 'Trumpets and its Fulfillment in Four Years'. God later revealed that this was not true, the matter of the four years and that Christ would *not* return on Trumpets of 2011.

Then on Passover of the following year when we were in Jerusalem in 2008, for Passover, that day a sermon was given announcing who the second witness was and that was true, but the title of the sermon was not true because it was this, 'It has Begun – 1260 Days'. Well, it *hadn't* begun, but that was the present truth that we had to that moment in time.

Do you remember our history? Do you know why these dates had been targeted and how at that time we believed this to be true and we lived by that faith? First, it needs to be understood that up to that time we understood the spiritual meaning of the Feast of Trumpets and *all* that can be learned about Trumpets regarding how we follow God on a spiritual plane and how Trumpets is very much about the coming of the Son of God as King of kings in God's Kingdom; you know, the announcing, the trumpeting of that, the announcing, that's what it's about, announcing the return of His Son and heralding Him as a

King. Although it wasn't stated dogmatically on which day Christ would return, in times past in Worldwide and so forth, it did come to be believed and taught in the Church that it would be Trumpets. But why did we focus on Trumpets of 2011 being the time for the return of Jesus Christ? You can say, "Well, it's because I was told so." Yes, but where did that decision, how did that decision come about in the Church, in the government? How did I come about that decision? Why was it stated this way?

It was solely because of the book that God had given me to write, '2008 – God's Final Witness'. I experienced that, I lived that, as unlike the first book where I knew where things were going and planned accordingly and wrote accordingly the way was given as I wrote, as I went along, and sometimes not knowing where it was going and changing because God was showing me something different. And so it was something that was revealed and I experienced that. I don't know how to describe that except it was an experience of something that was very unique and different as to how God had worked, and very powerful spiritually.

And so again, it was written, '2008 – God's Final Witness'. Indeed, God had given that this was the beginning of the final countdown for the end-time, a final witness, God's final witness to mankind. That meant that if the 1260 days of God's two witnesses – because that's what it was about, very much about as well, the two witnesses who fit into a part of the book about God's final witness to this earth, and 2008 was a focal point of time that God was giving – that meant that in 1260 days of God's two witnesses that their work, that that would begin in 2008, then the climatic event to which these days were leading would be fulfilled on a Holy Day because of the Holy Days and the meaning of the Holy Days.

So if it was to start in 2008... so the present truth to that time of 2007 and early 2008 was that the Holy Day Christ would return would have to be Trumpets of 2011, and that was our present truth. But by Pentecost of 2008 God was beginning to reveal to me that the final 1260 days *had not begun*, because the *undeniable truth* of the wave loaves concerning Pentecost was being revealed. God had revealed *very powerfully* in my mind, in my being, and in the teaching and so forth about the wave sheaf, of the incredible importance of the timing of that and how that so powerfully fits into God's plan. That led to - just like things about Passover and the counting of various things there early on in the Church led us to deeper understanding about the timing of things in Pentecost, and this happened here too - about Pentecost then, of understanding something very important about the wave sheaf and the timing involved.

God was revealing to me the greater significance of the importance of the wave loaves, the undeniable truth of the wave loaves concerning Pentecost, the importance of the wave loaves being about the firstfruits and their *acceptance* before God as the wave sheaf was of Christ before, being accepted by God in a specific moment in time; and now the wave loaves being about the firstfruits and their acceptance before God and that they must be waved for acceptance before God *on that day*, on a *Pentecost*, and no other Holy Day...and they return with Jesus Christ! ...when they're resurrected and the acceptance is there of all the 144,000, and when that is revealed...and that led to the understanding of Pentecost.

Well, that changed things didn't it? That changed things.

So all of this is what led up to the 50th Truth. God was also revealing to me at this time that this truth was to be given on Trumpets of 2008, the day that would herald the coming of His Son as King of kings. Trumpets 2008 would be the beginning of a prophetic countdown of the 1335 days spoken of in the

book of Daniel. And it was because of that then we began to understand all kinds of timing and things that were involved concerning Trumpets of that year and various things that were to follow and various things that preceded it and how the mathematics and the things that were there were just dumbfounding. But before that they didn't fit into that because it wasn't there – but now they were fitting into place and popping up – God was giving much more to give us reinforcement and strength and boldness and confidence to continue to move forward. Because things like this aren't always easy for the Church! *This* wasn't easy for the Church, so much so that thankfully God blessed me in being able to give it in, I believe it was early July then, because of knowing where we were going, knowing the change that was taking place, a shift in time.

And so anyway, this revealed that 2008 was still the beginning of God's final witness to mankind about mankind and that Christ would begin His return on Pentecost then of 2012. That became the new present truth, which *still* was not the full truth, was it? But nevertheless it *was* the present truth for which we were to *live by faith in spirit and in truth*, being truthful spiritually before God of *how* we would live.

So again, so awesome and so powerful in how God works with us in such matters.

Let's conclude today with a chapter in the Bible that's come to mean much to God's Church through this end-time. It's in 2nd Thessalonians 2, and this is what God gives as an admonition to His Church for what would be a needful focus following the apostasy. We're not going to read just fully about the apostasy at the beginning, we know it's about the apostasy, but what follows is so important and so important to us at this particular time and to understand the things that we were admonished in and that has been given to us after the apostasy.

But again, what an awesome thing to understand, to have a better understanding of how God works in our lives, of how He molds and fashions us as He does. It truly is so awesome and so inspiring to be a part, to see how this works, to experience that and to become more deeply convicted of what is true and right...and to be tried at times, and to be refined at times so that we can become a stronger Body. And we are a *much* stronger Body.

We are at a time, at a pinnacle, of the strongest God's Church has been, period, just before the return of Jesus Christ, having been prepared for that return. We have been so blessed to share in this, to share in the kind of strength and power, insight, growth, knowledge, faith that God has given to us. It is truly a marvel to live this, to be a part of this, and hopefully we have that kind of gratitude and thankfulness as well, that which we have brought to this Feast in the sense of what we have been able to reap of, to benefit of, that we can rejoice in at this Feast of Tabernacles.

II Thessalonians 2:8 – And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth; in other words, God is going to be the one who deals with it, concerning the man of sin, the son of perdition. **...and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming;** so we came to learn, we came to understand that the apostasy and the death of this individual indeed was a revealing, the brightness of Christ's coming, it was the matter of the beginning of the countdown. We didn't understand the full countdown yet, we hadn't really come to understand the exact full number of the days, and to marvel at that which would lead up to the final 'Day of the Lord' until just recent time. And we've been very blessed in grasping those things! That's a 'spiritual day', a 'prophetic spiritual day' if you will, 'the Day of the Lord' and the time of those things that lead up, or have led up to the 26th are

still... that's *exactly* what they are, because it led up to that final 'day', a 'day' that's in progress, 'between the two evenings' – Pentecost to Pentecost.

And so again here, all of this that's given here where it talks about, **to the brightness of His coming**; it's what revealed that, the beginning of the apostasy that we began to learn from, which was the opening of the 1st Seal of Revelation leading up to a death that took place 280 days later to the hour. Again, teaching us very powerfully a process of judgement here.

Verse 9 – Even him, **whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders**. And I've given sermons on that before in times past, especially earlier on talking about that which swept through the Church, the power of a false spirit world, of a deceitful spirit world and the signs of things that we saw, that we witnessed, of how that swept through the Church – lying wonders, wondering how, a wonder indeed; how could someone change from one day to another? It was just so incredible the change that took place in the mind and the spirit of people.

Verse 10 – **And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness**; sometimes those things that happened before the event actually happened, things that are already taking place well ahead of time before it's finally brought to the surface and seen for what it is. Sometimes for weeks, months, and years, before an actual occurrence takes place. **And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them who perish, because they did not receive the agape/the love/God's love, of the truth**. And so that means we have to be very close to God, filled with God's spirit to love His truth. If you love His truth it comes from God. The ability to love God's truth, the ability to see the truth, the ability to be inspired by it comes from God, and then that love of it, because it fills our life, inspires us and excites us and motivates us, just like what we're covering right now about the present truth. That should be an inspiring thing to everyone who is going through this sermon! If not, something is wrong with you spiritually, if you're not being lifted up by this and strengthened by this and you see greater things that are more inspiring...then something's *wrong*! And so as a whole I know we see, we are encouraged by and stirred up by, and have a love of the truth, but that hasn't always been the case through times past, obviously, and even in recent times we've had some who haven't had a love of the truth, something else has been going on.

...that they might be saved; that's how we're saved, through the truth, that's what sets us apart, sanctifies us where God can work in us and continue to work in us.

And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion; it's amazing how fast someone's mind can switch from one thing to another and lose what they had. **...that they should believe a lie** – that still... I have to admit, the apostasy and things that happened then, I witnessed, I saw, I understand the weakness and so forth and how people were able to go off on different tangents; but of recent time, to have individuals who have been with us for some time and I know, believed so many of the different truths that were there and some very powerful ones, to go now in an opposite direction and to not believe these things anymore...that is a scary thing indeed that can happen in the mind! It's a sobering thing! And again, it's an encouraging thing to all who seek to do what is right because it stirs us up in spirit and it helps us to recognize a greater need to cry out to God, to draw closer to God, to drop to our knees, to strengthen our prayer life, to strengthen our resolve to put on the whole armour of God and those things that are so necessary in our life.

Verse 12 – **that they all might be condemned who do not believe the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness**; had pleasure in it, pleasure in doing something different, pleasure in going a different direction, for whatever that is, pleasure because they don't like, they don't agree with, or whatever it

might be, of how things are being administered and done, and yet it's being done from God and judgements that God has given in authority and power that has been blessed through time to come into greater unity and oneness with Him; marked especially in these end-times with a greater measure of mercy that God has blessed us with experiencing and having within the Church, because it hasn't always been that way in how some things were administered.

Verse 13 – But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you; I think of the first part of this sermon series when we went through Ephesians talking about walking in a worthy manner to the calling wherewith we're called, that calling that we receive from God Almighty. And when God has chosen to call us and then we are to respond, it's up to us to how we respond and what we do with that calling. **That God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification**, this is the process, this is how it works, being set apart... **through sanctification**, set apart for holy use and purpose, in other words so that God can even dwell in us. That's sanctification all right! **...and by the truth, by the Word, and by/of the spirit and belief of the truth.** That's what Jesus Christ said that we just read earlier on the night of the Passover, some things in John 16, but all the way through 14, 15, 16, 17, in through there and the things that Jesus Christ spoke of and talked about as well then, how we're sanctified. We're sanctified, set apart *by the truth* that God gives us. And candidly, the present truth, because that's how we're judged. We're judged by, set apart by, that God dwells in us by the present truth of how we live and how we respond to that truth to any moment in time.

...through sanctification of/by the spirit and belief of the truth; so God gives us the ability to see and to believe the truth, then again, we're to make the choice to *live* by the truth, literally, to live by that present truth, **whereunto He called you by our gospel.** So He's showing a part of the ministry in the Church in this, **by our good news**, in other words that which has been given to us in the Church, **that which we have taught.** And so again here, emphasised an importance factor here, Paul did, that this is where you received it. You didn't receive it through someone else's so called 'good news' but from ours! This is how your mind was opened up! And I think of all those who have come in at this end-time, it's by this which God has given to us!

...to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So again, this is following the apostasy and showing the focus and what we need to be focused upon and to understand and to grasp and to respond to.

Verse 15 – Therefore, brethren, stand fast; isn't that amazing? This has been the message from the beginning in this 'Day of the Lord', what God wants us to do, to stand fast, to move forward in His way of life, and to hold... notice what else He says here, **and hold**, we talk about standing fast, hold fast, hold strong. **...and hold the 'traditions'**, now, that Greek word here is a word that literally means 'to be handed down', 'to hand it over', which has always been the present truth. Whatever has been handed down at any moment in time is the present truth in the Church, that's what we're given; so again, that's what it's speaking of here. It's not talking about some traditions just in how certain things are done. There are certain words for 'traditions' here that literally are translated 'traditions' that have to do with the commands, in other words that which is commanded within the Body, within the Church, but here there is that which has been handed down, **which you have been taught;** in other words, from Sabbath to Sabbath, that which has been handed down, *handed over to you*, that God has granted you to hold onto, to hold fast and to stand fast in.

...whether by Word, Logos here, that which comes from God; again, a matter of government, that which is spoken either in sermons or directly in council or whatever it might be. ...or **our epistle**; and so again, he's making it clear, where did you get it? Where did you receive it? And that's...we've become so much stronger in that now and so much more focused about God's Church and the strength and the power and the boldness that we should have in that that's made us so very strong to stand against anything that's out there, indeed standing firm, holding fast in God's truth and God's way.

And when he said, '**our epistle**', literally that which became books of the Bible, the epistles that were sent out and the Word of God. So that's how strong and how powerful it is, that which is handed down, handed over to the Thessalonians, in this particular case, and to those in the Church.

So as stated toward the beginning of this sermon series, one of the most powerful methods of Jesus Christ leading us and continually revealing more and more to us has consisted of this process of God blessing us to see where we have been so that we can grasp more fully where we are, and as a result of that then a clearer vision of where we are going. So beautiful and so powerful to witness, to experience, to live this.

It was also stated early on that we are *all* to grow in perfection as we do not have it, and God expects us to *act upon whatever truth we have at any given moment in time, whatever* the present truth is that *He* has given, and it is from this that we *will* make mistakes, but we will also learn lessons that can be learned by *No Other Process*. We are indeed judged according to the truth that God has given to us up to any specific moment in time, and it's through this process that we are actually sharpened in our ability to judge and grow in a far greater depth of spiritual understanding and we can even be tested and tried as to our true spirit of unity and oneness with God during those times...in *how* we respond to God's government, to how *He* and His Son lead us and mold and fashion us.

Yes, brethren, we are *so blessed* with all that God has poured out upon us, with all that we've been able to bring to us to this Feast this year, in all the fruit, in all that we've gleaned, in all that we've been able to take in that God *wants* us to take in of the harvest that we're a part of. *We Are So Blessed* ...in the present truth.

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