

Today, before we launch into the sermon, I actually went through some news articles, and going through some of those I thought it would be good to read a few of these just to show how things continue to move forward and how there are certain ones in the world that recognize certain things that are taking place. To me, it's an awesome thing when you have the perspective, the view and understanding of what God has given to us. But here is one, just even the titles of some of these sometimes reaches out quite a bit. This one here says:

**'''Apocalyptic winds' blowing in Mideast'''**<sup>i</sup>

**Expert: 'Gaza short war was in preparation for Iran attack'**

Published: November 28, 2012 | WND Radio

This one here was especially insightful because I'd wondered about part of this anyway and certainly sure enough some people who study into these things have said this is exactly what's taking place as far as news, as far as world events, politics, geopolitics, and so forth. But this article here I'm going to read quite a bit of because it's really quite interesting what's happening in the Middle-East. It says....

Headlines have been flying out the Middle East in recent weeks – from the Israel-Hamas fighting and cease-fire, Mohammed Morsi's attempted power grab in Egypt and special elections being called in Israel to the Palestinians trying to move toward statehood through a key vote at the United Nations.

And of course, that has passed now, part of that has passed.

But much of what we're hearing on these stories barely scratches the surface and almost always misses the heart of the story, according to Mike Evans, founder of the Evans Institute for Middle East Studies and a longtime personal friend of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Many observers, for example, were stunned to see a key Muslim Brotherhood figure like Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi play a pivotal role in the cease-fire that ended several days of fighting between Israel and Hamas. While the conventional wisdom suggests Morsi could not possibly be an objective broker, given his stated hatred for Israel, Evans said there's something that concerns Morsi even more.

“What's happened here is a Sunni caliphate coming out of Egypt, coming out of Turkey, coming out of Qatar is challenging a Shia caliphate,” Evans told WND's Greg Corombos. “The support that Gaza has got through missiles was Shia. Now the Sunnis have moved in to try to take control of Gaza.

To try to keep track of all these nations that are Sunni, different ones that are Shia and so forth, if you understand that there is a lot to understand about politics over there anyway and why certain nations cooperate or fight with each other like they do. But anyway, going on it says....

So these are two different crosswinds for caliphates that are very important to understand. You have a president in Turkey who wants to become the head of the caliphate for the whole Middle East. You have (Iranian) President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who wants to be the head of the caliphate for the Middle East for the Shia. These are apocalyptic winds that are blowing.”

Why are the two branches of Islam at such odds when it comes to their efforts to control the region?

“The Sunnis are afraid of an atomic Persia, a non-Arab state,” Evans said. “The Shia are terrified of the Sunnis because they hate each other more than they hate the Jews.”

We talked about things of religion coming toward the end-time here and what's taking place and this is very true. So there are things that go on in nations or politics at times that it's good to have these things behind the scenes because this is what drives them, the beliefs. It goes on to say....

....

The recent fighting in Gaza was a rousing success for Israel, according to Evans. He said, in addition to retaliation for the incessant rocket strikes, Israel accomplished a larger goal.

I don't know how much of this might have crossed your mind as well at the time, but going on here, what it's quoted....

“What has happened just recently with the Gaza short war was in preparation for the Iran attack,” he said. “In order for Israel to prepare themselves for the attack, they needed to shut down Iran’s infrastructure in Gaza. They did.”

....

So how can you worry about something on the side of you there when you're going up against a great nation like that, which they're going to have to do at some point in time here, to prevent them from having nuclear power/nuclear weapons. And so that was the thrust of that particular article there, certainly showing why some of those things have taken place, that they've put up with it for a long, long time and it finally came down to a point in time where they had to deal with it, because while they're engaged in something else they can't be engaged in fighting there on two fronts, so this eased their pain a lot in that.

Here is an article that was sent to me from The Netherlands. It's basically written from the comments of a woman by the name of 'Viviane Reding'.

Luxembourg Published on 26.11.12 | 17:35

**Why we now need a United States of Europe<sup>ii</sup>**

**Viviane Reding: "Now it is time to decide on the right way forward"**

I just thought I'd mention who she is - at the end of the article here it gives the full account here. "*Viviane Reding, 61, from Luxembourg, is a Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Justice and Fundamental Rights.*" Some comments she had to say as she was building up to some certain things in the article about a push forward here of what they need to do - basically a need to call on, or a need for a United States of Europe. That's what they're calling for and that's what she's calling for, agreeing with certain things that Angela Merkel has said in recent times. And I'm just going to summarize part of the article here because she makes a great case going back and forth talking about that there are basic problems of that which they have passed concerning a euro, concerning some of the things they have as far as their economy, but no government behind it, in essence, not a single government behind it. And so they're showing the problems that have existed because of this and then in the conclusion she comes down to this part here....

....

At the beginning of this year, German Chancellor Angela Merkel called for the European Commission to become a European government. I believe that this conceptual shift is right, indeed overdue. I myself have already been elected to the European Parliament five times in a row by the citizens of Luxembourg, and I would like to see the prior election of Commission members to the European Parliament become the rule rather than the exception in future. The 2014 European elections will be the next opportunity to vote on these changes.

....

But that isn't the end of the article. It goes on to show that if things were to go on with time, normal sequence of events and so forth, that that would take a length of time to even address some of these things. But there are others in Europe who are pushing this a lot more and want to push it a lot faster, and as some of these problems are mentioned concerning the economy over there it went on to say here in the article....

A key factor here will be the position adopted by the United Kingdom. In their book *This Time is Different*, the economists Kenneth Rogoff and Carmen Reinhart predict, on the basis of a detailed analysis of the financial crises of the last eight centuries, that "the pressure of the crisis may unleash a dynamism that we cannot imagine in our wildest dreams. In the end the United States of Europe may come about much faster than most people think."

....

And all this is based on the economy, because of economic conditions that are pushing them to make choices and decisions that otherwise might take several more years to conclude. And to follow up on that I just wanted to mention here a few other things that came out in this past week as well.

It says here, this article from BBC - 'Eurozone unemployment rate hits new high in October' and it talks about how that it's risen sharply now to 11.7% overall in the European union where it was 10.4% a year ago. It talked about some of the other countries like Spain, which a year ago was 22.7% unemployment is now 26.2%, and I'll mention this in a moment here but Spain is in horrible, horrible condition. Greece

had their unemployment rate at 18.4% a year ago and now it's up to 25.4%, so Spain is way past them even. Portugal was 13.7% a year ago, that's jumped to 16.3% now.

So again here, these are the kinds of things, especially for Europeans, that push them into a corner, and history has shown that they don't respond well when those things happen.

Here is an incredible article, just to show you some of the conditions in the world. It says....

11/16/2012

**Betting with Trillions  
Prison of Debt Paralyzes West<sup>iii</sup>**  
By Cordt Schnibben

I though the subheading of this was interesting. It says, 'Prison of Debt Paralyzes West'. You know, it's being in bondage, that's what they're describing throughout this article here. It's a kind of bondage that the economy of the world is under because of the system that's being used right now and how it's falling apart at its core and why and what has led into some of these things. Anyway, as a part of this it went through talking about Lehman brothers - I'm not going to read all this here - but that was just interesting from the very beginning. It's an extremely long article, I'm not going to take time to read it, but again, things that are on people's minds and the worries of the economy that are still out there.

Another one here says:

**What Really Happened When Lehman Failed... and Why a Spanish Default Will Be Exponentially Worse<sup>iv</sup>**  
Submitted by Phoenix Capital Research on 11/15/2012 | Zero Hedge

And so this article here was absolutely incredible because it goes through and talks about Lehman's, what happened with Lehman's and how this thing of derivatives, for those of you who have studied into some of this, or know what this is about, and how that they have a system of collateral that is passed along to others and others claim the collateral, and it's collateral that's magnified many times over so that if one like Lehman's defaults or goes bankrupt in this case, all the collateral that's out there that people are using, there is nothing there, and so it causes a crash on everyone else as well because it can't be supported, it can't be sustained because of how they use collateral. It's like having a dollar, passing it along and everyone else claims that collateral all through the entire system here over and over and over again. It's a Ponzi Scheme, it's really sick. But I wanted to read the end of this article here, what their conclusion was when they came down toward the end here.

It talks about this is a reality, what happened with Lehman's and what's happening in the world economy, what's happening in Spain, Italy, and Greece and some of these countries. It says...

This is the reality of what happened in 2008....

And constantly they're always going back to 2008 as a marker.

...though few know it. And this is why a default in Spain or Italy (whose €1.78 and €1.87 trillion in sovereign bonds are collateral for likely more than €100 trillion in trades)...

Meaning that if one defaults that it multiplies so many times over that there could be up to €100 trillion in things crashing in banks throughout the world, because of those who are using that collateral over and over again through the banking systems and so forth, depending on their stability. It goes on to say...

This is why I've been warning that 2008 was just a warm-up. It's why the Powers That Be in Europe are absolutely terrified of what's happening there....

You know, after a time people kind of get numb to news, and candidly, here in the United States, we really don't get much news that affects the entirety of the world, especially when it comes to geopolitics or when it comes to the economy of the world and the condition that's actually out there. And so a lot of times people don't really want to focus on those things because, candidly, those are the things that make markets go up and down or can affect them mightily and so they'd rather bury their head in the sand as to talk about it. Because if you talk about it... and you don't want to cause a panic because a panic can lead to exactly what they're fearful of in the first place.

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Let's launch into this particular sermon today. After Sabbath services last week some of us were sitting together at a table after having shared a meal together, which is our custom here, and the subject of this season of the year came up in discussion, especially how commercialized everything is for Christmas and so forth and all the music that's been out there for some time and the decorations and everything else that goes with the season of the year.

Then the subject, again, of this season's music came up and what people are having to listen to on a regular basis and how those things get so set in your mind; it doesn't take much, it's there. One elder mentioned here how that one of his children one time, some time back, asked him if he knew what it was - I don't know if he was singing it or humming it or whatever - this song was in his mind and they asked him if he knew what it was and he answered that he didn't because it was in Spanish. You probably already know the song. Matter of fact, I asked him, "Please don't mention anymore because I *don't* want it in my mind." But he didn't know what the words meant, but had been drawn to the catchiness, if you will, of the words and the tune as well; they're both very catchy, the tune, the words... I mean, when you start singing a song in Spanish because of the catchiness or some of the language there is usually quite a bit going on there as far as the enticement, if you will, being drawn to it or whatever.

But to me, this example epitomizes the very heart and core of the subject of this sermon that we're going to begin going into; it's a series. It's entitled here, *The Season of Enticing - Pt. 1*, and of course, that song was 'Feliz Navidad', it's very catchy and he didn't know what it meant and certainly the words here, part of the song that says, "I want to wish you a merry Christmas from the bottom of my heart." Now, it's already in my mind! It's powerful and it draws you to it because it is catchy! There are things like that in this world that we see, especially for this season of the year, that I was mentioning that I'm glad that I don't have to listen to that kind of stuff and don't have to be in that kind of an environment and so forth. But there are those things in this Christmas season of the year that can help us to understand much about the changes that God is about to make on this earth as He brings to an end 6,000 years of Satan's seduction upon mankind.

And I think I passed over the title of the sermon here again but it is 'The Season of Enticing'. As God is bringing to this earth a new age, as God brings an end to the long season of enticing that Satan has engaged in against mankind from the very beginning, to allure, to lure, to entice. It's the way he functions, it's the way he works, and this time of the year says much about that.

If you can understand some of that - just like lights on a tree, it's not an ugly thing, it attracts, it can draw people to it, it is not ugly, it's not something you look at and say, "That is the most ugly thing I've ever seen!" No, on the contrary, it's something that can be used as decoration, to enhance something that people are drawn to, young children are drawn to it. Add a present under the tree, how much more does that draw you to it? That's the kind of thing that is done to entice, to draw you to it, to embrace something.

Hiding eggs under a tree, getting into games at a very young age, and coloring them, and spending time together as a family - which families like to do! The things that stay in people's minds oftentimes, the things they embrace, the things they hold onto are the very things that every human being desires - is time with family, especially *good time*. There is plenty of bad time in life, but the good times, the good memories, those are the things that so often people hold onto. And so when you spend time together with children, where you take time out - because mom and dad... or dad is always gone, or mom and dad are always gone, and especially in this society today because of trying to make ends meet, and then the time that is spent with children away from everything else in the world, where there is something enjoyable per se that they can see and understand, it's very powerful! It's a very powerful thing!

And if you can begin to understand some of those things in the context of what we're talking here about, 'The Season of Enticing' and what has happened with mankind for 6,000 years, we'll be able to grasp more fully those things that lead to a conclusion in this series as we get to it. This is *Part 1* today, obviously.

But again, to grasp what we'll be covering later in this sermon series we must first be reminded of some very basic proclivities of mankind, the nature of mankind, and also how Satan misuses his understanding of man's nature against him and he entices mankind to yield to his own selfish nature, *our* selfish nature. And so he uses those things of our inherent weaknesses, of the way we were created. As we have gone through in past sermons, God made us physical for a purpose. He made us this way for a great purpose - not spirit as He did the angelic realm in the beginning - but so that we could make choices, so the mind could be worked with. The angelic mind, the angels, just to recapture some of this again, when they were created their minds were set. You used to hear Mr. Armstrong speak of how they were *set* in their way, in essence, until sin came along with some, like Lucifer and those who followed him, a third of the angelic realm who followed him and became demons. And so what happened with them is once spirit is established and chooses to go a different way than what God has given, it's set, it will not change, there is no desire to change, it's established forever that way, they have no desire to change, it is what it is because of what they're done to their own mind, the gift that God gave to them from the beginning.

With mankind it's different. What an awesome thing that God made us this way for a purpose, to be selfish, to have nature, a nature within us that from birth when we cry we know we get something, when we're uncomfortable and we let others know it, this thing of selfish, of taking care of self, of love of self that is inherent within us is for a purpose, it's by design. We have choices to make through life of good and evil, right and wrong, all the way through our life, but there is that which is a basic core of the way we are as human beings, that God made us this way for a purpose - *because*, in a nutshell, the purpose of mankind is to become a part of Elohim, a part of a God Family. That's why we're on this

earth. Not to become angelic beings, not to become something lesser than angelic beings, but something greater than angelic beings. That's why God reveals over and over again that mankind is to have the opportunity to become a part of His Family, and that means to be changed into spirit, spirit beings - again, talking about the resurrections and the things that will take place and that which is physical is only temporary, and 'this mortal must put on immortality' - those scriptures that we use over and over again, scriptures that are used oftentimes in funerals even in the world and they don't understand what it means.

But for a human being to come to that, to be able to participate in that, he has to go through a physical existence first. Amazing! ...so that we can experience what it's like to have pride - not set in it like Satan and the demons are - so we can experience what it's like to have selfishness, so we can experience those things and make choices in time that when God then intervenes to draw someone, to call someone to what is true, whether it be throughout the past 6,000 years, the few whom He's called through time, whether it be *all* who are going to have a calling then during the Millennium, or those during the hundred years after that who have an opportunity for everyone who's ever lived to be resurrected to life again, to *then* have an opportunity to learn of God's way of life. *Then* they can begin to make choices, because God made a human mind such that it can change. A spirit mind can't; once it's set, it's set, it can only choose to move away from God but it can't choose to come back, it can't embrace what it... because it doesn't want that, it's already made a choice and a decision that's permanent for life, for eternity unless God stops it.

And so for us, as human beings, God talks about, Roman's talks about, Paul speaks of the mind that can be transformed! And so when God calls us there is something to change in our thinking, to change in our mind in the way we think and how we address things of life, and literally the mind can be transformed. I love that word because it comes from the Greek word 'metamorphao' -metamorphosis, of that which becomes a butterfly, a beautiful thing that comes from this... the whole process of going from a cocoon and the 'worm' and whatever... I guess it's worm, to see those things, a caterpillar in nature and then all of a sudden something so beautiful, so awesome in life. And that is what God is showing for human beings, that there is a transformation in the way you think that can take place. We don't have to remain selfish for eternity - God won't allow it in the first place - but to become a part of His Family, to learn that which is always giving, always outgoing, always concerned... not motivated toward self but motivated to God's way of life, to giving, to love, to His kind of love is an awesome thing. And so again, that process.

So Satan knows how to *use* that which is in us against us in a very powerful way and we need to focus on a little bit of that today here to understand that we *can* change, that we are not to be like this forever, and that's the exciting part, so much about God's way of life! We don't have to be this way as far as the pulls of human nature that so control and so keep mankind in bondage - because it does.

I was thinking this morning how awesome it's going to be when Satan and the demons are no longer around, because they constantly broadcast that which is spirit in the air that communicates with the mind, because that's how God works with us, is in the mind, a spirit essence that's in the mind that He begins to work with. Well, demons work with that, Satan works with that to broadcast that which is evil to the human mind, stirs people up, stirs nations into war even, things that have happened through times past, stirred up a being like Hitler to do the things he did where he was almost demonic in his actions, in some of his tirades that he went into, the things that happen in human life. And people don't even believe there are demons in the world. Just read an article the other day here about how the Catholic church in Milan doubled the amount of priests their using for exorcisms and stuff like that, that

things are on the increase so much in this world and things are so stirred up. People don't believe they're out there but they're out there.

Jeremiah 10: very basic things that God says about mankind - all of us - just as Paul over and over again talks about the importance of acknowledging we all have sin. There is no body perfect in this world! There was only one who lived a perfect life, Jesus Christ, that's why He is the Messiah, that's why He is our Passover, that's why He is doing the job, has been doing the job He's been doing for the past 2,000 years.

So, **Jeremiah 10:23** - very basic scriptures - **O Eternal, I know that the way of man is not in himself:** in other words it isn't in mankind to know the way, the journey he is on. He doesn't know why he's created! He doesn't know why he's on this earth! God has to call you and show you why you're here! It isn't by common knowledge; no one knows! People think in the best of terms in human life that there is some kind of...every religion as a whole teaches some of this - that there is some kind of eternal life somewhere, even if you're coming back again physically again maybe as a bug or as an animal, something, but there is a reincarnation, or there are other things that you're going to do, you're going to die and you're going to be up fishing in heaven, or whatever it is, or looking upon God's face for all eternity, just sitting there looking on something for all eternity that's supposed to be somehow fulfilling! You think, "What kind of a *God* would that be?" And yet that's what people think!

But there is this concept of something that goes beyond this physical human life - and so God has to *show* us why we're on this earth. That's why so many hated what Mr. Armstrong had to say, frankly, hated what *Christ* had to say when He came along. The Jews hated it! ...that He claimed who He was, that He said what man's purpose was, that man could become god, a part of the God... not as our Father is God, but to become a part of a God Family, that that's his purpose for existence? Carnal human nature fights against that knowledge! And you think, "What an awesome thing to understand why you're on the earth!" It's not to come back as a roach or a pig, or a falcon, or whatever people think, because people think things... or as one religion has it, like there is one person we know of, of family, relative, of an individual, of people who went through some horrific war, some things of war and mass killings in the far east... well, it was the Cambodia region, and millions and millions of people that were killed in a horrible way, and this one individual in the Church has relatives still back in that region and how that one was able to cope with all the loss of family and different ones by those who were born into the family later on as though certain aunts and uncles had been, as it were, reborn into their lives - because it's a religious belief.

And you think of how people live their life with hope and the ability to cope with human life but none of them understanding, no, our purpose is to become a part of the God Family! There is to be a change take place that in time if we will yield to a transformation of our mind, because we reject this way of life and we want another and we choose God's way, that *then* He can change this mind, give it that which is permanent for all eternity, because we go through a process of trying and refining that leads us to that which can never happen again that happened in a spirit world - permanent certain mind for all eternity, being at one with God. What an awesome thing, in belief in truth, in what is right.

So he says, **Oh Eternal, I know that the way of man is not in himself;** in other words, mankind doesn't know why he's on this earth - God has to show it when it's His time. ...**it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.** In other words, he doesn't know where he's going and he doesn't know how to direct his own steps, of where he's going in life, and so that's why we have so many kinds of choices of life and so many choices of religion and so many choices, economies and governments and things that exist in



the world and nothing solid, sound, absolute that's something you can depend on forever. Every kingdom, every nation, every government that's ever existed has always collapsed in time; in time everything has come to an end and something else replaces it. That's the way of life because there is nothing permanent in human life.

And he goes on to say; **O Eternal, correct me with judgment; not in Your anger unless You bring me to nothing.** And so again here, a prayer here of something that he was pouring out and showing that his way, because he understood, "My way needs to be corrected; I need to be shown the path to walk in because man doesn't have the right path to walk in." Only God can show the right path of life, the right way to walk, the right way of life - because there is only one way. There are not thousands of different ways, not thousands of different beliefs. You can't pick and choose and decide what you want to believe in life, with all the different idea in Christianity itself, no one agrees with each other. God is not that way, there is one way of life, and to so many people that's haughty and obnoxious and revolting, like how can you be filled with so much pride to believe such a thing? ...to especially believe you're it! We understand that.

And so here, because of not knowing the journey and therefore not knowing where he is going, since it is not yet God's time to reveal such things, as a whole, to all of mankind, because again, as most mankind must first experience his own ways, as we mentioned earlier, or the ways of others. Because that's what we do, we experience our own ways because of how we think, or we adopt some other ideas or beliefs or we read something about someone and we choose something from their life or what something is written, and we decide that's right for us, and then we decide it's right. And all these things that go on in human life - kind of simplifying some of this but I know you understand.

Anyway, mankind is able to be more easily manipulated because of that mind, because of that mindset that's in us as human beings. Because we all think we're right! Human beings all think they're right, they all believe they're true. It doesn't matter where you are, doesn't matter what religion you have on earth, everyone as a whole, as it were in life, believes that they are right. Everyone has their own *opinion*. Who doesn't have an opinion? ...about pretty much everything! That's the way we are, and we listen to other people...that's why judgment can be so cruel sometimes, because we hear someone else and we think, "Man, they're really off the wall aren't they?" Why? Because their opinions, their ideas, the way they talk doesn't agree with the way we think, but we all think we're right. That's just a common tendency of human nature and it's a problem with human nature....and candidly, Satan uses that in a very powerful way against us, he truly does, to stir up divisions, jealousies, envying, those things that are so much a part of human life. That's how he works! It isn't that we don't have those things inherent in ourselves anyway, because we do, but he stirs them up far, far greater....far, far greater in relationships and how people live life.

And so again, Satan is able to easily manipulate - *easily manipulate* - and *entice* human beings. Look at all the different religions, opposing religions. Look at what I mentioned earlier, Shia and Sunni and why they hate each other. If you go back and read you can find out why they hate each other, started at the very beginning. You can go back to Abraham and find out why, in essence, those of Islam in large part hate Judaism, and things that happened between Sarah and Hagar and the children who were born there, Ishmael and Isaac, and the battles that started so long ago that have carried through history, through time, that are magnified now thousands and thousands of times more on the earth - opposition and people's working against each other and going to war against each other, hating each other, wanting to *destroy* each other. Some acknowledge that openly, "Our aim is to destroy..." Some speak it

openly about Israel, "To destroy Israel, that is our *objective!*" You think, where does that come from? So Satan is able to stir things up.

So this manipulation, deceit, lying, enticing, misleading, leading away from God, as much away from God's way of life as possible, and luring away from God, to follow other paths of life has been Satan's objective for the past 6,000 years! He has worked at that feverishly and has done a jam up job. That's why Paul refers to him in scripture, he is the god of this world. Not God yet, that's coming as soon as Christ returns, that's when God stops it all and establishes His Kingdom, God's Kingdom on earth, brings an end to 6,000 years of human suffering, human enslavement, because that's where mankind has been for 6,000 years - enslaved - in different systems and different ideas and different religious beliefs and God's going to free all that to show who He truly is, what man's purpose truly is, who Christ truly is, that He is the Messiah, that He is the Passover and what those things mean, truly, in truth.

So again, for 6,000 years mankind has been journeying on a path of life that in essence has been the season of enticing, Satan's enticing. That's the way it's been.

That's why we so desire this world to be freed from bondage. The way people think about women, it's a part of what he's done, it's a part of what he did from the very beginning with Adam and Eve and it's continued on through time, and a *curse* that candidly came upon mankind from the very beginning because of sin and how God desires to free mankind of that, and the inequalities of things that exist in societies. Some of the things are just totally so perverted! It's *all* perverted as a whole, but so perverted in how people see each other, especially when it comes to things of religion and ideas that people think that people should be a certain way, and the ability to be freed from all that is an awesome thing that's coming.

**Jeremiah 17:9** - speaking of all mankind - **The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:** Now, people don't think that about themselves, they don't believe their heart is deceitful. But we as human beings deceive ourselves in many things; and it's God that has to show us, God that has to reveal to us how we deceive ourselves, what our true motivations are, because when we come to understand our true motivations apart from God come from selfishness, that's the beginning. To understand why we're motivated, because we deceive ourselves, we don't think that, we think we're right, we think we're okay.

And so God says, **The heart is deceitful above all things**, in other words, easy then for Satan to deceive and to mislead, because he's more powerful. Satan is far more powerful than we are, that's why I quote that scripture in John over and over and over again, about the importance of being close to God, about the importance of repenting of sin *constantly* in our life so that that flow of God's spirit continues into our life, because as it says, 'Greater is He who is in you,' speaking of God, 'than he who is in the world,' speaking of Satan. Because no one is a match for that being. That's why he is the god of this world, that's why, in essence, Satan has been able to deceive all of mankind into so many ideas and beliefs that are all against God's way - every one of them.

I marvel at some of the most basic things. Pope came out recently here with a new book about certain things about the birth of Christ and Mary and certain things that I thought, well, is he going to admit a few things? Basically he didn't. The star? You think, just simple little things of life! People put a star on a tree. Why? Because of that star that led them to Jesus Christ, that was shining in the sky and the rays were just shooting straight down into Bethlehem. And you have to take a deep breath and sigh like I just did and think, "It's too bad people are so deceived." There is no star that has ever done such a

thing! There is nothing..... you know, stars are millions or billions of light years away, millions of light years away meaning it takes that many years for light to even get here from a star; and even the moon, when it's out there full, the light is brighter there, but nothing ever shining down to a spot. You say that can't happen? Yeah, if God wanted it to happen that way it would happen that way, but you think, "Why don't people understand some basic things about scripture - when it speaks of stars God plainly shows it's about angels, angelic beings, beings that He has sent to do things on the earth, and they were the ones who led and guided and directed them to the place where Christ was. They were the 'stars' it was speaking of, but mankind always see's things physically first!

I think of the image I had when I came into the Church - it took me time to get it out of my mind at the age of 19 even - and I didn't go to church very much at all. I didn't care about religion in this world - God had to humble me in a big way before I'd ever start listening, because I thought people were basically nuts when it came to religious beliefs, and if they wanted to believe that, fine. I kind of believed that if God used maybe matters of the physical universe, evolution and so forth, to bring things into being, so be it - science, you know. ...until He finally humbled me to understand what was true. And that's generally how God has to begin with mankind.

But I think of some of that process of things that are in people's minds and what I had to get out of my mind. I feel sorry for people who have been *deeply* immersed in religion, who go there religiously every Sunday, Christmas, Easter, all the things they are deeply immersed in on a continual basis, because it's so much harder getting certain images that are not true out of your mind. And I had this long hair effeminate being with arms outstretched on a cross as being the one... and I knew that wasn't true, I knew He didn't have long hair, I knew it was against scripture for Him to do so. Came to learn those things. Came to understand that He didn't die with His arms out here like this [arms stretched out to sides at shoulder height], He had them stretched like this on a pole [straight overhead with hand/wrists together], just like the Greek says. It doesn't use the word 'cross', but that's how mankind has translated it through time, because of certain beliefs that people have.

And you think, what a horrible thing that people don't understand the most basic things about the life of Jesus Christ and what He did and how He lived life. But it's hard to get those things out of your mind, concepts and ideas that have been planted there. Even sex is brought into it. The Catholic church has so ruined it in marital relationships... what they call it, the 'original sin'? ...having to do with things that have taken place... I can't remember the exact name, what they classify some of those things, but they're different expressions they use within the church there. But again, making certain things of a life between a husband and a wife that God meant to give to people that is beautiful and wonderful when done God's way - horrible when man doesn't live by those things the way he should. It brings hurt and pain and suffering into life. And so even those things are taught in a religious manner that have been distorted from the very beginning.

Anyway, **The heart is deceitful above all things, and 'desperately wicked'**: the word here means, 'desperately wicked', just means 'weak' literally, strictly, if you will, meaning 'weak, sickly and with the sense here of being incurable'. Until God comes along, **the heart is deceitful above all things, and sick,** weak, *weak*, until God comes along and gives strength.

**...who can know it?** The ability to even know our own motives in life. I found this throughout the Church through time that it's been a marvel, to understand how people grow and when they begin to come in and the things they begin to change in their life and their thinking that begins to change and how that they can begin to see things in their own life that is a matter of their own motivations, why

they are motivated to do the things they do. That's why so often when a sin comes to the surface, if you'll go back and see... where...? When you say something in a wrong way to somebody, when you say something spiteful or hurtful, go back in your thinking, strive, with God's help - ask God for help to go back and see where it started, because it's in the spirit, in the mind. What motivated it? When you get back to the motivations then true change can begin to take place. When you begin to understand what motivated it, where did it come from - because otherwise certain things just happen in habit of life that we've grown into, until God begins to show us how the mind works.

But anyway, going on here, **verse 10 - / the Eternal searches the heart**, God knows what's inside of us, we don't. He's the one that knows why we think the way we do, how we think, for what reasons and so forth, and only He can show us then what's inside of us. And that's what He does by the power of His spirit. Over time we begin to see things in our self that we don't like...we don't like because we realize those are the things that bring hurt and suffering in life, sorrow, whatever, jealousies, envying, lust, wrong desires. And then we can begin to address those with God's help to change, for the mind to be transformed...transformed, changed into something beautiful and wonderful that God offers.

**/ the Eternal search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.** And so God teaches us once we come into the Church, of things that we recognize there are those things that we reap because of wrong choices, and when we choose what is right we learn and we begin to experience what it is like to experience things from God, the right ways, and we're able to more easily weigh the two and make choices. Every time a person repents - *every time* a person repents of something, they're acknowledging they're wrong, they're wrong, their way is wrong and they're acknowledging God's way is right and something is happening in your mind, growing in your mind as you continue to do that, that your mind is changing, your mind is being transformed. You're growing in character, righteous character, because you're coming into greater unity and oneness and agreement with God that God is right and our way is wrong. And so this thing that continues on through life, which is so awesome to understand about the human mind.

Let's turn over to Genesis 3 and see what happened from the very beginning, of what God addressed at the very beginning. And again, please understand that most of the time these things are read from a physical perspective, that's why I love the book of John, because our normal response to things we read in the Bible is physical first and then as we grow, as God calls us, we can begin to see what is spiritual, what God is truly showing us on a spiritual plane, I use that example over and over again, like the woman who came to the well and Christ was there and he talked about giving her living water and she thought this was great because she wouldn't have to come back and forth from the well every day. She didn't understand because she took it physical. Over and over again, there are the things, just like when He told the disciples there that you have to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, and it talked about how many disciples from that point forward quit following Him because they couldn't take that, because a good Jew knows you can't eat human blood and you can't eat human flesh, that's cannibalism - because all they could see was physical. They didn't understand what that meant about the Passover that God revealed later on, about the wine you take, the participation in, the fellowship and the suffering and the death of Jesus Christ and what it means for us, so that we can be forgiven of sin. So, those things come later.

But here is something that started very early on, Genesis 3:22, after Adam and Eve had done what they did and God separated them and took blessings away from them and they had to begin... everything was taken care of for them in a *physical* Garden of Eden as it were, where they didn't have to till the ground, they didn't have to go out and work like a farmer does, like an agrarian society basically has been for

almost 6,000 years until technology came along and now occupations and things vary so much, but most of it in the beginning, in the first 5,000 plus, 5,800 years was an agrarian society more than anything else. People had to work the soil, people had to go out and work constantly; it's just like food and preparations of foods and so forth. It's not like we have today where you have an oven, they had to work a long time just to have fires burning and the ability to cook their foods and to prepare their foods, not like we do today. You can take a duck now, frozen, put it in a NuWave frozen and come back how long later? 2 hours later and it's finished, from frozen to cooked - awesome! And it tastes so great, not like microwaves that kind of mess up meat, but it's a different type of cooking, any of you that have NuWaves. And that wasn't an advertisement for NuWave either, but anyway.

But we have it so easy today compared to people in the past, and nowadays people go out and they've gotten accustomed to fast food here, fast food there, and that's why we have a lot of the problems we do too. ..but anyway...

**Genesis 3:22 - And the Eternal God said, Behold, the man has become as one of us,** now He wasn't saying that man is becoming God, but you read on here...**to know good and evil** in the sense of deciding for himself. That's what God was saying, because only God determines what is good and evil. Only God can show what is truly good and right to His way of life and everything else that is evil. But when mankind began to choose for himself, when mankind first began to sin he made himself, as it were, like God in the sense of being able to determine for himself what is right and wrong...and man doesn't have that prerogative, man must look to God to ask, because we're created beings, we don't know what's right and wrong, we don't understand our own heart and our own motivations. We don't understand how we exist and how the mind works, but God can show us. He can show us the things we're talking about here today and reveal to us things that help us to understand so we can have a better life, so we can live a life that is full and rich, richer as physical human beings than on our own by ourselves going our own way.

And so He said, **man has become as one of us to know good and evil**, in other words in determining good and evil, to decide, to know for themselves what is right and wrong, just like Adam and Eve did and all the things they decided for themselves. They listened to a being on the sidelines and followed his ideas but they didn't follow God. And so He said, **he's made himself...** that's what idolatry is, it's this simple. Idolatry is mankind deciding for himself what is right and wrong, because basically what is happening here is that mankind is making decisions contrary to God. It's one thing if you're in agreement with God about what is right and wrong but if you start deciding, knowing for yourself, deciding for yourself what is right and wrong, that's what spiritual idolatry is, because you're lifting something else - that's what pride is - lifting something else above God, making yourself above God, like God but above God, because you're not going to listen to Him about what is right and wrong, you're going to decide for yourself.

**...and now, unless he put forth his hand and take also of the Tree of Life and eat and live forever:** now, He's not talking about a physical tree, okay? He's talking about a source and a power, showing why mankind from the very beginning was cut off from God's spirit, cut off from God's spirit, couldn't have access to learn the truths from God anymore unless God were to work with them individually as He did for the first 4,000 years. God literally... that's why there are so few mentioned in the first 4,000 years in the Bible, until you get to the book of Matthew in the New Testament. But everyone in the Old Testament, God worked with every individual on an individual basis, not with a Church, not with large numbers of people, just a few. That's an awesome thing to understand! In this book here there aren't that many mentioned in many respects, of individuals who are here that are going to be in that first

resurrection called in the first 4,000 years. Most are going to be in the Church through time, in the last 2,000 years, and then there are not that many because that's a part of God's plan and God's purpose of how He's working this out, this whole process.

And so again, from the very beginning man was cut off, in other words wasn't going to be allowed access to God - that's all it's talking about - not going to have access to the power of God's spirit. So God is just showing something here that started from the very beginning, that mankind made choices, God knowing they would, that mankind made choices that separated himself from God, but unless God was specifically working with them and drawing them out of that they couldn't change, they were in bondage, they were enslaved to their own way or to the way of Satan, if you will, because Satan came along, Satan started there in the very beginning with Adam and Eve, that he is the one that led them astray, or responsible for that in the very beginning, but they followed.

And so, **unless he put forth his hand and take also of the Tree of Life and eat and live forever**, in other words, God's showing that that isn't going to happen, that isn't how it works; **Therefore the Eternal God sent him forth from the garden of Eden**, physically? Yes, in *part*, but spiritually what this means is that he didn't have access. You remember how he talked about that Satan was in the garden of Eden, in God's very presence, before His very throne, that's what it's talking about, everything.... that is synonymous with everything being provided for you, everything will be given to you, everything that you need, but now it's not...but God's going to bring us back around to that in time, everything to be provided for eternity. And it talks about here then... **to till the ground from whence he was taken**. So he had to work to take care of himself. So a physical analogy here along with a spiritual, both have purpose and meaning here.

**Verse 24 - So He drove out/cast out/separated**, we understand that, what sin does, separates you from God, separates you from the presence of God; that's why it's so important to repent when sin takes place, to repent quickly, because God shows just like the umbilical cord to a child we are impregnated with God's spirit when baptized but we're not yet *born* into His Family, we're not yet *born* into the Kingdom of God, we're, as it were, in this state, in embryo waiting for a birth to take place. And so we grow in that state, and just as much as in a mother, the umbilical cord being tightened down and blood flow not getting there, in time a fetus would die. And so it is - God gives us that analogy for something that's spiritual that you can't live without His spirit, you can't live spiritually, in other words, you can't grow spiritually without His spirit continually coming into your life. And God shows us over and over again - that's why we've had so many sermons about the subject - that when we sin we cut off the flow of God's spirit, and then you can't grow anymore spiritually. What happens is eventually you fall asleep, that starts the process of cutting it off, and after a while you can die, you can choose a different way.

So, it says, **He drove out/cast out/separated the man and the woman, mankind; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life**. In other words that which reflects that which is spiritual, that there are those things that are required by God in order to have access to His throne. It's not about some little place over here in the world, someplace where the garden of Eden is and these cherubim are out here protecting it and nobody can come in and out of it. It's not a physical location it's talking about here. All symbolic for learning things about how God works, how we're able to have access to His throne and what interferes with that.

**Mark 7:14 - And when He/Jesus had called all the people unto Him, He said to them, Listen to Me everyone and understand: There is nothing from without a man that entering into him can defile him,**

in other words, make him unclean, **but the things which come out of him**, in other words He's giving a bit of a parable here, **but the things which come out of him, those are the things that make the man unclean**. Now, they took this as physical and yet that isn't what He was talking about at all, that's why He has to explain it later and that's why people have trouble understanding what is being given here in the first place.

He went on to say, **If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when He had entered into the house away from the people His disciples asked Him concerning the parable**. Because they had questions about what He'd just said - because they were thinking physically, they couldn't help it, because they didn't have His spirit yet so they were thinking on physical lines and "What does He mean that there is nothing entering into him that defiles him but what comes out of him defiles him?" And so they were thinking about eating and what goes into you and they were thinking about pork, that certainly defiles you and makes you unclean if you disobey God, and that which comes out of you...so what's He talking about here?

**Verse 18 - And He said to them, Are you so without understanding also? Don't you perceive that whatever thing from without**, in other words, the body, outside the body, **that enters into a man, it cannot defile him; because it does not enter into his heart but into his belly**, so He's saying here, "You're thinking about food," and this is not what He's talking about, but He's saying here, in essence, when you eat, and what do you eat, you eat that which is clean. There are some in some churches that try to teach that this shows that it's okay to eat unclean food. That isn't what it's talking about, it isn't saying that *whatsoever*, because it goes on to show here, He says, **it does not enter into his heart**, so there is something about the heart here He wants them to grasp and comprehend that isn't about what you eat physically that goes into your belly, because He goes on to explain, **and goes out into the waste, purging/expelling all food?** The word is food. In other words here, that isn't what defiles you, I'm not talking about physical food here, because what goes into you goes through the stomach and it goes out in waste, and what goes out in waste isn't what defiles you. That's the analogy He's showing here. But it shows you the perversion of the world sometimes in saying, "Well see, because it's clean and it goes out in waste and you can flush it, it's okay to eat anything you want!" That's not what He said, He's giving an analogy here.

**Verse 20 - And He said, That which comes out of the man, that makes the man unclean; for from within**, He's not talking about something that goes into, He's talking about what comes out of him is what makes you unclean. He says, **from within, out of the heart of men**, and what is the heart? 'The heart is deceitful above all things and sick/weak!' That's what God says about our heart, the way we are as human beings, the way we think, **for from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders**: sometimes when it uses some of these words they don't even know the spiritual intent of it, 'murders', God makes it very clear, that someone who doesn't love a brother the way God says you can love someone else, if you say something to them in a wrong way, in a hurtful way, even in words, that as far as God is concerned that's murder, that's the spirit of murder. You know, when Jesus Christ came along He *magnified* the physical law to show the spiritual intent of it, that it goes *way beyond* the actual physical doing of something that's wrong, it's what happens in the mind! If you commit certain things in your heart already you've already broken the law, God says, it doesn't have to happen in the outward physical act itself, it starts in the *mind* where the sin originates. And so do murders.

That's why it's *wrong to hurt people*! That's why it's *wrong* to say hateful things to people. That's why it's *wrong* to offend people without care, without concern of certain things that are said sometimes. But

we do that as human beings, human beings hurt each other by the words that are spoken oftentimes, offend people, cause people hurt and pain. It's just the way human beings are and they don't understand, people get upset because their life isn't going well or they're upset or they didn't have their morning coffee or whatever, and people can be nasty; human beings, we can be nasty, hurtful in what we say not realizing how serious that is with God, negligence in how we speak, without care and concern about someone else's feelings and their life.

...**thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit**, this is what we're being told by Christ that comes out of the heart of mankind! And yet most people will say, "Oh no, that doesn't come out of me, I'm not like that. I'm so thankful I'm not like that." ...**thefts, covetousness, wickedness**, that's where the battle is, to fight against these things, **deceit, lustful desire, envy, slander, pride, foolishness**: Christ mentioned all these things come out of the heart of man. And He said, **All these evil things come from within, and make a person unclean**. So He was letting them know, "I wasn't talking about food, I was talking about what comes out of a man, out of mankind that ends up making him unclean, and it's what comes out of his heart that makes him unclean." That's why God has called us to repentance and change. Jesus Christ wouldn't have had to die if we could live a right life and not offend and not sin in life - but yet we do. Paul makes it clear we do *constantly* in life and we have to *grow* in righteousness, we have to *change* through time. So again, spiritually this is about the heart, the mind, if you will, the *nature* of mankind, the human nature that we have that's within us. And these are the things that come out of the heart, of the mind, because of the element of selfishness that's inherent in us. That's the way we are.

It's not a bad thing to begin to acknowledge that 'my' nature is selfish, it's a beginning of wisdom, it's a beginning of change, an opportunity to change, to become something different, because otherwise a person, if they think they're right about things they will not change, they will not repent, they'll not seek repentance, not understand why Jesus Christ died for them and the need for that.

So, with this kind of base nature Satan has a field day. He's had a field day for 6,000 years of meddling with mankind, of twisting and distorting, misleading mankind, enticing mankind farther and farther and farther away from God. What an awesome thing to understand! What an incredible thing to understand, how he's slowly but surely pulled mankind farther and farther away through time - we've gone through some things recently about how that ... You think about how God worked with physical Israel and physical Judah; Israel was taken captive into northern Europe and it says they became known as the lost ten tribes, they didn't even know where they were, they don't even know where they are in the world today because they're into the multiple millions of people, they don't understand this country here is a part of Israel, and on and on it goes, and Great Britain is a part of Israel, part of one of the tribes of Israel, and that.... I think of how simple some of these things are and about the rulership, the throne is Jewish because of a promise that God gave that it's going to come down through David and Christ's going to return to take back that throne.

All those things that are there as a part of history, and yet you think of what happened here very early on - we talked about that recently in a series, talking about Diocletian and the one who followed him, Constantine, how that Constantine and the Roman Empire began to embrace certain things of Christianity, primarily because of his mother, and that desire that he had, and began to recognize certain things that he was seeing, whatever they were that happened to him where he began to use certain signs on some of his armor for his soldiers and flags and so forth and began to win battles and began...won over the entire Roman Empire, the east and the west, and declared, before there was even a great church that had even started, declared the Roman Empire basically to be Christian and that they were to observe Sunday as a *law*, as a 'venerable day of the sun'. Because he brought in a part of that



which was known mostly in the Roman Empire before, they worshipped the different pagan gods, and so he brought that into Christianity starting at that time. He is the one who called for the Nicene Council in 325 AD, two years after he united the kingdom, east and west, and the Roman Empire. What an awesome history of things!

But look at the subtleties of Satan, to turn a kingdom against Judaism because they kept the Sabbath and the Passover, and they wanted to erase everything to do with Judaism and the Church, because there were those things that still were being taught out there that were still rumbling through a part of the Empire here and there. Think about what Paul did in Rome itself and going before the leaders there, and when he was imprisoned for the time that he was and the very things that he taught and the things that were known at that time that stirred people up in life, in Judaism as well. But what an awesome thing in the sense of a 'wonder'. We talked about 'power, signs, and lying wonders' of Satan, and you look back and you think about some of those things and you think, to pull mankind farther and farther away, calling something Christianity that adopts Sunday, the day of the sun rather than the Sabbath, the day that God said mankind should keep, and at that Nicene Council adopting Easter and saying that no one should keep Passover again. Amazing! But up until that period of time, of 325 AD, there was still Passover, some were still observing Passover even within some of the different ideas of so called Christianity at that time and they were still keeping the seventh day Sabbath, but when Constantine came along he put an end to that *by law*, and a great church began. Incredible!

You think about how Satan's whole purpose has been to move mankind farther and farther and farther away from anything to do with God. I think of something that a couple of people have sent me here in the last week about Paul Harvey - what was it 47 years ago or so had a broadcast and said, "If I were Satan, this is what I would do." It's really amazing because he's basically told what we are today in the world, what would come to pass, if you were Satan what you'd allow to be a part of society. Which 47 years ago, when people heard that, it was like, "You've got to be kidding! That's not going to happen. That won't happen to this country. That won't happen in religion. That won't happen to people's lives." And yet it's there, all the ugliness and evil of it, but as we live it we don't see sometimes the drastic changes.

There was a time when Elvis got up and wiggled the pelvis that some TV wouldn't even show the pelvis, because they knew what that meant! People were appalled by it, that here... was it the Ed Sullivan show or was that the Beatles? Probably both. Anyway, but back then it was such a shock in society. Today - pfttt - it's ... young people today you... "People would be upset about something as simple and basic as something like Elvis?!" But people were! It was a *shock*! It was a shock when the Beatles came over and had the kind of hair they had, and really if you look back at some of their pictures now it's pretty mild. But society has changed so much... it's like the frog in the water, a little bit here and a little bit there and through time after a while people don't even know who they are anymore, in the world.

We're going to address some things in this series that really have... it's really motivated by and what God is showing us here is what must be addressed as soon as Christ returns, the things that must begin to be changed, why certain things in the world and society have to be changed totally. The reason being is because man can't deal with it, the nature of man can't.

There are some things that just *have* to be changed; because of our nature in society and the way certain things are that must be changed and there is going to be some whiplash in it for some people in life because people have never experienced other life separate from the things we have today and they don't understand the things that are of good value and what it does to the mind in relationships and

friendships. Today, young people growing up, it's harder for them to *speak* to each other, it's harder for them to *converse* with each other, it's easier to do it in the dark, in secret, or you know, texting, but not to have a verbal conversation with each other, to be able to vocalize and to be able to... it's affecting people in all kinds of situations in life - in employment and jobs and society and ability to get along with others because they don't know how to communicate. It's becoming a lost art, as it were, just in that area of communication alone! It's easier to use a computer and to sometimes never even come into contact with different ones, it's done through *cyberspace*. Amazing what's happened to the world - and Paul Harvey never saw that one coming! And I think he had some help there to see and be able to speak on something like that to that degree. It was kind of a prophetic thing in one respect that's been happening, that this world has been living through, that this country has been living through.

But that's the kind of thing we're talking about here; there are things in this world that just must be changed, that aren't healthy, that aren't good, that take away from family, that take away from real relationships, good relationships, uplifting relationships, that take away from marriage and family, the things that are so basic. That's why God is a Family, He wants us to learn things that are *true* family values and that make life enjoyable and rich, without regret, without hurt, pain, and suffering. There is just so much of that in the world today and that's what God desires for us to be able to get rid of.

I hope we're beginning to see a little bit here, how Satan is able to use then our basic nature against us, so much so, because we have enough bad proclivities, that's where this sermon is headed, to show that there are some things in the Millennium that just must be changed. Because even with Satan - because Satan is not going to be around; what an awesome thing, just to know that he and the demons will not be around for a thousand years on this earth. They can't mislead, entice mankind anymore! What an awesome thing! There will be one government, one religion; no more confusion about religion, no more wondering if you're going to come back as a cricket or an ant or an elephant, you know - you might like to be an elephant so you can step on the ants, whatever, you know, I don't know, but you don't have to worry about those things. Freedom of ignorance. Freedom from ignorance of knowing whether your loved uncle or parent went 'down there' and they're being run around right now with some kind of a being that has some kind of a hot pitchfork sticking you in the rear-end as you're leaping over different flames! What insane things to believe, that there would be a place like that for life, for eternity, that God would be so... that there would be a loving God that would be so fiendish and so *perverted* in His mind to want to see mankind suffer for all eternity for being disobedient! That's just *sick*! And yet, look, that's what Satan's done. Why? Because he knows about himself and certain things then he wants man to fear about God and have all kinds of perverted ideas about God.

Satan has done everything in the world to mock and make fun of God. When it talks about God being in the north, and you think about some of the things and the angelic beings who are faithful to him - and this time of year, this enticing time of the year and this great big fat man that comes out of the north to give presents to people if they're good and if they're nice, and if they're not they don't get the presents, and all these loyal little elves up there and so forth - and just mocking things about God. That's what they are! That's what he does! Sick! *Sick*! Getting mankind, in a perverted way, to make more fun of things that are supposed to be beautiful and good and right.

And so you teach children very early about things that are lies! That's not God's way, to teach things that are lies, that there is going to be some kind of a being that's really too fat to get down the chimney but he's going to come down your chimney and he's going to put things under the tree for you tonight and he's going to do this all over the world because he's just super fast and either that or there are going to be eggs out there under trees or hidden in certain areas and you can go out and you can search for

them and these rabbits are the ones that laid the eggs. And so it doesn't take very long, by the age of six or seven, they come to see, "I've been lied to! There's no Easter rabbit, rabbits don't lay eggs, and they're sure not colored! And that big, fat man, you mean he's not real? You mean you..." And so what does that do? And people begin to question their religious beliefs, what is right, what is wrong, don't pay too much close attention. And that's what happens and people don't realize you start with children - that's what Satan did. Amazing! Sick-sick-sick-sick world!

You know, to teach women that when they're out in public they've got to look between a slit, cover up their entire body in *black*, of all things, and have a slit that you can look out of, between, just a little bit here to see others, so others can't see you and how they think that's right in society and takes care of, gets rid of lusts and perversion and other things and how that this is something that's supposed to be honorable to God. Again, what kind of a God would that be? Amazing! But that perverts the mind, it perverts the mind about right relationships and what they should be like and what life should be like and what relationships should be like. You hurt for people!

**Proverbs 16:25 - There is a way that seems right to a man, in other words, to a person, **but the end thereof are the ways of death.** Very basic scripture. That's why everybody, there is a way that seems right to everybody and everybody believes they're right, whether you're Buddhist, whether you're Hindu, traditional Christianity, Catholic, Jewish, everybody has ideas about *their* way, that they're right, that there is a way that seems right to them, and really, everybody else seems pretty wrong - if you really have strong beliefs about something. And even in parties, Republican and Democrat, they don't get along because they know what seems right to them and they know that the others are just wrong. Look at what we're coming... they talk about the 'fiscal cliff' and all the fighting going on because people think they're right, that their way is right, and they know that others are wrong - it's just a part of human nature. Amazing! It says, **but the end thereof are the ways of death**, especially when it comes to the way of life to live. That's what God is showing here.**

Let's turn over to the book of 1 John 2:15, the admonition... I marvel at the life of John, because a lot of the disciples had already been killed for what they believed, they'd already been tortured in some cases, killed, put to death. John was the one who continued to live on and by tradition, by things, because there are just some things that are just not recorded well because of a church that came long and destroyed a lot of literature or doesn't allow certain ones to be read. But anyway, John came along and by this time, by the time you get up into the 80's, 90's AD he had lived the longest and God began to reveal more things to him about Himself, about love, as a matter of fact, things about love and about the Church and what was happening in the Church that John was able to show when he used the word 'anti-Christ' and what that means - not like the world thinks - and anyway, a marvelous thing here that began to happen as John matured. The rest of them died earlier on - Paul, all of them were dead by this time, and John was continuing on and evidently died of an old age, one of the first in essence to die of an old age.

But in verse 15 here he talks a lot about love. There are things that God gave him to understand about God's love and about human relationships and stuff that are in very simple terms spiritually that the Church hadn't come to yet. Because candidly, they didn't have the book of John back in the early days of Paul or Peter in some of the things they wrote. This was a maturing Church by this time, things that God had given - progressive revelation - to the Church and these are awesome things that He was revealing here.

**1 John 2:15 - Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world.** In other words, that shouldn't be your desire of life, that this is what you're holding onto, the way of the world, the way of things you see in the world, the way mankind is, because there is that which is so far beyond that that has to do with God's way of life. **If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.** So he's saying you can't love the way of the world and love God, they don't mix, because the way of the world is full of deceit and deception, wrong... everything is wrong, whether it be with government or economic systems, everything is wrong from beginning to end. It's not God's! It's not God's economics, it's not God's truth in religion, it's not God's way of governing and all the things that have to do with society let alone with the way people live life! It isn't from God, the source isn't God, God isn't the one that they look to to see how to set up various things of life, of entertainment. They don't look to God to see how things of entertainment should be in the world or things of music. Do you think people are looking to God to see how things of music should be? ...or of dress? ...or whatever? No! And so that's why he says, 'Don't love the world!' It's the mind of man, and candidly, the enticing of Satan when it gets right down to the bottom of it because Satan inspires many of these things and uses as much as he can of his influence to get mankind farther and farther away from anything to do with morality that's true and right from God.

So, that's why he said these things; **do not love the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him;** it doesn't mix with God's spirit.

**For all that *is* in the world, *this* is the world, this is the way of mankind apart from God, this is what he's showing, this is the way of *all* mankind, this is something, this is where the battle is of human nature. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, that's the way of mankind. Now, that's a hard thing for people to come to acknowledge in themselves, that this is what they're filled with, **the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...**and to understand what it means too. But it says, **this is not of the Father,** the source doesn't come from God, **but is of the world.****

**Verse 17 - And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he who does the will of God abides forever.** In other words, we can change, man can change, man doesn't have to stay the way of the world. When God begins to draw and begins to call, a transformation, a change can take place. That's why the words that have to do with repent and to be converted, the change that has to take place. Repent, you know what repent means in the Greek language? Think differently. To think differently. Something has to happen to our thinking. To repent means we have to think differently than the way we normally do by human nature, and God will help us to learn to think differently and to change, to be converted from our way to God's way. Awesome what these things mean!

**And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he who does the will of God abides forever.** So we can learn the will of God, we can learn God's purpose and begin to say, "Yes, that's what I want." Make choices - "Yes, that's what I want" - and fight for it! And not only do you have to make the choices, you have to fight for it, because you've got to fight against what you are inside, the normal carnal part of you, and desire what God offers and fight for it - it doesn't just happen, you've got to work at it, you've got to cry out to God, you've got to pray about it, you've got to constantly be repenting of things that come into the mind or things that are said or whatever is done and wrong in life...and so much of it has to do with relationships and how people think about each other and judge each other and what they say to each other. And so often those are the things that have to be repented of day by day by day.

So, what are these three things, 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'? Sometimes we may not fully understand a part of what's being spoken of here. I think to better understand some of this I want to start with number three, 'the pride of life'.

'The pride of life' - we've had many sermons about some of these things and what it means - we already did when we talked about 'that man has become as one of us, to know good and evil', that's 'the pride of life', that's deciding for yourself what is right and wrong and not looking to *God* as the authority. Man doesn't go out here and really look to God as the authority in anything. Who goes to God to look as the authority in society, in the world? We wouldn't have the kind of television we have today if man did that. We wouldn't have the kind of movies we have. We wouldn't have the kind of music we have. We wouldn't have the kind of social places where people come together if that were the case. We wouldn't have a lot of the literature that's out here. We wouldn't have the internet like it is today either. We can have the internet, but not the way it's structured today, if people were really looking to God of how things should be done! But people don't know where God is and they have different ideas about where God is and what should be out there and what shouldn't be out there and that's where the confusion comes in. Again, a part of Satan's way, confusion.

So 'the pride of life', that really goes to the heart of the verse we just read up here in Proverbs 16:25, 'There is a way that seems right to a man, but the ends...' because it's not God's way, '...the end thereof is the way of death.' That's what we have to repent of and change because it's wrong. So as a basic part of human nature, again, we already mentioned this, we believe that we are right in nearly all things that we believe as human beings. That's just the way we are until we come to understand what *is* right, and then we have to fight for it because we have to fight against our own nature because our nature doesn't agree with God's spirit, there is a battle that goes on there (and we'll get to some of those verses later on here), there is literally a battle of life that you have to enter into when you choose God's way, because that transformation, that change doesn't take place overnight.

That's where the matter of *opinion* becomes so strong and is so telling, if you understand opinions and where we get opinions. In this spirit there is the natural tendency to judge most everything through how 'I' see it, 'my' opinion. And so we judge things, we judge things constantly, but I love the way Christ put it. He talked about it in two different ways, how He judges, basically says He judges no man, then in another place He talks about 'and if I judge My judgment is just', it's right, because He doesn't judge from His own will but from the Father, in other words, what is right, what comes from God. And that's how we have to learn how to judge, what God says is right, we can judge from that perspective, but not from our own motivation, not from our own viewpoint of what *we* think. That's why it's so important for us so often in life and when we're judging situations is to try to understand God in the issue, God in the matter, what is God teaching, what does God say...not how we *think* God is but what does God literally teach us and what does God say? And that's something we ever grow in because we find out so often, even in those things we find we're not fully balanced. We grow in balance, we grow in maturity.

So again, that 'pride of life' where we think we're right, where we judge for ourselves what we believe is right and wrong and we have to get rid of that and look to God as the source of being the judge, righteous judge, because it has to be based on what He says is right and wrong and not what we think.

'Lust of the eyes' - well, this has to do with really what is the window into our mind, to see that which we desire that is not a right desire to exercise. In other words, lust has to do with that which is not a right desire and candidly it's something that when it says here, 'lust of the eyes', it's something that enters through your eyes. It's not just talking about something you see and you lust for, it's something

that's a window into your mind, it communicates...this is the way you're able to get things... it's just showing another method by, whether it come through the ears or the eyes, of something that the mind begins to see and if you see it, if you understand that, how do we use the word 'see' sometimes? What you 'see' spiritually, what you're able to 'see'. This is a part of what it's talking about here. It has to do with the mind and what's in the mind.

And so it's a wrong desire for something that we do not have and yet want, 'lust of the eyes'. A wrong desire for something that we want or don't have and yet want - sometimes just to go our way. Where does that come from? Something to go our way, a 'lust of the eyes', something we see in the mind in a certain way and we want everything to fit into that, we don't want anything to be contrary to that, and something that gets into the way of that, because we have this great selfishness as human nature, of a perspective that we have that if it doesn't go along with that it can lead to a lot of different things in life. It can lead to envy. It can lead to jealousy. It can lead to anger. It can lead to bitterness. It can lead to wrong words being spoken. All the things that can happen that have to do with 'the lust of the eyes', because of something we 'see' in a certain way.

And so again, those are the kinds of things where jealousy is born, where envy is born and so forth, of that which comes into the mind. And candidly, here is where the beginning of so many battles should be fought - it's in the mind, it's the way we see things. There is a way that seems right - that's the beginning of wisdom, to understand that we should question those things and make sure, or ask, does this agree with God, is this in agreement with God, is this what God says - especially in things that are spoken, things that come out of our mouth.

So I know this is rather broad, but again, it's a beginning to grasp and comprehend some of the things about the way we see things or the way we *think* we see things.

'Lust of the flesh' - this takes it a step farther. 'Lust of the eyes', again, the way we see things and so forth, has to do more with the mind and what begins there and what comes from that. But 'lust of the flesh', this is very much about anything in which one enters into literal action. You don't just think about it anymore in the way you see it and the way you're going to judge a matter or deal with a matter, but it's literally what comes out of you because you're going to fulfill it now, you're going to accomplish it now, the fulfillment of it, the 'lust of the flesh', to fulfill the wrong desire or the wrong want. That's what this lust is about, that one has already begun through a process in the mind, to embrace it in the mind through 'the lust of the eyes'. And candidly, 'the pride of life' has to do with both of these.

But again, it's important to understand where the battle begins, and it begins in the spirit in the mind, in where we are, and then it can literally come out and be fulfilled by 'the lust of the flesh' or we're going to bring... not... you know when you see something like 'lust of the flesh' people just normally think of something maybe of *sex*, 'lust of the flesh', that 'lust of the eyes'. Certainly that's a beginning to understand it, a misuse of something that God says is to be used in a right way, but that's not by any measure all that's entailed here. There is so much more! 'Lust of the flesh' has to do with the physical - it's talking about the physical part of it, the flesh, the physical desire, the physical things, to accomplish it physically, to receive it physically into your life, the action that goes into something that actually happens physically.

It's one thing to think, to have something come into the mind - jealousy, envy - but once that's a lust... that's a lust of carnal human nature and it has to do with selfishness. If we can begin to see things in that light! And then the *fulfillment* of it, because it's not enough, we want *more* and we want

satisfaction, or whatever, and so we speak something out of that 'lust of the eyes' or of the mind, what we see, we want a certain response, a certain way things should be, and so we don't get it and so we respond in anger because we're not getting what we want. 'Lust of the flesh'! Lust of the physical then - so we carry it a step farther! That's what this is talking about, taking something from one step to another, but it's all 'the pride of life', it's all about 'the pride of life', of raising that up above God, of deciding for ourselves right and wrong and not looking to God.

John is making it very clear here about certain things that are of the world, the way the world is, and for us so much wisdom comes when we come to a point where we begin to understand that's the way 'I' am, those are 'my' battles, 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life'. That sums up everything that has to do with what leads to sin or that leads to those things that resist God, that fight against God and God's way of life. And those are the things that must be conquered and overcome through time.

So again, the point being is - how hard a job is it for Satan by his power in a spirit world to magnify those things in the human mind? Because that's what they do, they broadcast, spirit, attitude. If you have an attitude of something working in your mind of anger, of bitterness, of jealousy, of being offended...how often in life sometimes are those things just being stirred up, and especially when they start coming out? And how often have you seen this in life where people go beyond that which seems normal in the way they respond? Sometimes a spirit world stirs those things up to be far greater than what they would normally be. It's bad enough the way we are as human beings, but a spirit world seeks to press those buttons - especially if people are deceived. That's why we're unique in a lot of ways, because in a spirit world, sadly, God's people are the ones who have been attacked from the beginning of time, they're the ones they go after, because God's people aren't deceived, and so the battles become really more spiritual for God's people, the Bible is filled with those examples from beginning to end.

Because that which is already deceived as far as the world is concerned, Satan still stirs up things and works at things, but his focus, as we talked about in recent sermon here and many sermons, his focus is always to destroy what God has put out there, what God is working at, what God... He was there to try to destroy Christ in the very beginning when He was born, as it talks about, and then he thought he'd succeeded once He was placed on the stake and impaled on the stake like He was and died there, the victory he thought he had. He didn't understand God's plan, he didn't understand what God was doing fully. And all the way through time and how different ones have gone through what they've had to go through to get where they're going. So the battle has been harder, obviously, for God's people, because there is a battle involved there that enters into a spiritual realm.

Let's turn over to Proverbs 5. So as we're going through what so much of what the Bible has to say about base human nature hopefully you are also grasping a deeper sense of how easy it is for Satan to use these weaknesses - because they are weaknesses - against us, against mankind, and has enabled him to entice or to seduce, to mislead, to lie. Look at what happened with Constantine and how the world was seduced into following that because he gave support to and began to build great churches and gave power and authority to people that never had that kind of authority and power in a great church, and things that began to happen to deceive the world even more so in order to keep mankind in spiritual bondage. That's the way Satan has lived through time.

We need to go on now and build upon this even more and that's what we're looking at here in Proverbs 5, hopefully so we can come to understand the battle that's before us even more so and the process

that takes place here and why certain things have to be changed in a great way as soon as Christ returns - it's going to begin to be changed mightily in this world - and what those things are.

**Proverbs 5:1 - My son, attend/pay attention unto My Wisdom** and so again here, we've spoken of in Proverbs about this use of the word 'wisdom', that it's of God, that it is God, that it's God speaking to mankind in another way to express some... just like He did in John 1 when He spoke about the Word, the mind, the being of God Almighty that was placed in a man to become the Son of God, to be the Son of God, Jesus Christ. And that's why He's called then 'the Word of God'. It's showing that the Word is the revelatory thought of God, it reveals everything about the will, the mind, the being of God, the purpose of God. Wisdom is similar. We've talked about in times past of how we're to live and what we're to look at, and there are certain things here being spoken of then in the sense of wisdom, true wisdom, not man's wisdom but the wisdom that comes from God.

So it says, **pay attention unto My Wisdom and bow your ear to My understanding:** and so that means that we have to listen to what God gives us. That's why God gives us the Sabbath. That's why the world has counterfeits of those things; they sometimes meet on Friday or they meet on Monday or they meet on Sunday to learn about what their religious beliefs and ideas are. And God tells us when we're to meet, but it says you have to **bow your ear to understanding;** we have to look to God and cry out to God. It doesn't just come to us naturally, it's something we have to work at, it's something we have to pray about, it's something we have to focus upon, and so we do.

**Verse 2 - So that you might regard discretion;** so that you might regard discretion, in the sense to fully think things through before acting; in other words that's what God wants us to do, to understand our base human nature, to understand our base motivations of human life and to *pause* and to give refrain, to back away from that, to not just respond *naturally* like we would. In God's Church He begins to show us that we pull back from the natural response we might have grown up with or have learned through life to realize something needs to be different in our response, and that doesn't just happen so we need to think it through. And that's what God is encouraging us to do by this term 'wisdom' here, to be careful before you act, to think before you act in certain things in life...candidly, in most things in life.

**So that you might regard discretion and that your lips might keep knowledge.** What knowledge? The knowledge that comes from God, the right way of life to live, to know how to respond, to know how to build right relationships, to know the things that enhance life and make life better where you can be blessed, where God can bless you. God wants to bless people...primarily, obviously, understanding that it's with those with whom He calls, because His purpose hasn't been to save the world yet. That's the false concept that man has, that God is madly out here trying to save mankind - send missionaries all over the world so that we can save all of mankind, and that's not what God is doing, this isn't that time yet, it isn't God's world yet. It isn't *God's* world yet, it's still been given to Satan - he is the god of this world. God inspired that to be told to mankind through Paul. Satan is the god of this world. That's why he said, 'Don't let *the world* be a part of you.' Don't take in the world because the world is not of the Father', because it's not God's yet - that's coming - and it's a contrast God is going to give all mankind in time, to be able to look at 1,000 years of what God has done with one world, with one government, with one religious truth through time, and everybody having access to God's spirit, and 6,000 years of man going his own way and doing his own thing, showing that there is no comparison. Which do you want? That's what's going to be offered to all those who are resurrected in the Great White Throne, billions of people who are resurrected back to physical life a second time.



**So that you might regard discretion, that your lips might keep knowledge;** lips that speak, because a lot of our conduct comes out of what we say, and so before it comes out, to keep knowledge, to keep the right way in what we speak. We want to be in unity and oneness with God so that what comes out of our mouth, what comes across our lips is right, is spoken properly.

**For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb,** now it's using something very physical here and enticing to human beings, primarily to men, because God created us this way. God created men and women differently, as a whole, it's just a fact of life. And so this is an example here to learn from, to understand from - **for the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb,** and so if you have that which is physical in your mind, which is the example, a part of what is given here, but it's an analogy for *life*, because there is a being who is as 'a strange woman' and the words that come out of *his* mouth, the things that are *enticing*, the kind of music, the kind of world that *he* promotes, the kind of ideas in religion that *he* promotes from youth up. And people embrace those things because what a person normally grows up with is what they embrace, and so he entices them with different things in their own belief, in their own whatever it might be.

And in society he does this through music; that's why it talks about and speaks of in scripture those things that God created in him that gave him great ability. And a great ability he has - always been speculated, which I believe it's true, by how it states it there in the Old Testament - that he has a power of music unprecedented in the angelic realm. Power. And for him to misuse that he has misused it mightily upon mankind. Music... to sway attitudes, to sway feelings, to seduce, to draw people into various things. Even in religion, music. This is something we've seen with the scattered Church and what happened and things that are in religion in the world and things that people latch a hold of and have this *feeling* that they experience certain things by. Anyway, I don't want to get into that. But Satan is a powerful being and there are things he can do through music in a very powerful way. That's why he is the master of it, he is the one who can inspire; he can *inspire* music, *does* inspire music in people's minds, in people's lives.

**For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb;** in other words, a need to recognize what entices and allures, what is it? There are reasons why, just in a physical thing alone if you want to look at... when it says 'strange woman' it's talking about a harlot, basically, and it's talking about that which seduces a man, okay? ...that causes the man to turn his eyes. And usually that begins with dress or the lack of it. That's reality! That's where it starts! It is what it is. And that does something in the male mind more than it does in a females mind, okay, because that's the way God created mankind. And so mankind has to learn how to deal with the differences and seek to obey what God says is right in a right way. But there are those things that are natural within us, that if they're not kept into check according to God's law and God's way of life then it will be abused and misused. And we'll talk more about that in this sermon series.

But here is a beginning, that God begins to show something from a physical vantage point to help us to understand things that happen on a spiritual plane in the world, that there are those things that draw you to it that aren't right in life. All around us! That you have to say, "No, I will not participate, I do not want to be a part of..." and we have to set certain boundaries in our life. And just like in anything in life, because we don't want to be a part of what we read from John, that John wrote, we don't want to be a part of the world so we want to reject *it's* way, the things that aren't based on things that are proper and right from God. And so we want to hold onto - not in a sanctimonious, not in a self-righteous way, but just because it's right! Because sometimes people embrace certain things and they have this air of haughtiness and pride and "I'm better than you and I'm righteous..." and that's not what it's about. It's

about a down to earth life and you seek to live a right life, not because you're lifted up by how you're able to live what is right but because you *want* to do it because it's right.

And so here is an example being given, something that drips like honey off the lips. Honey is something that's sweet and so it's something that that's what the enticement is here, showing that there is an enticement here, it's something that can draw you to it. And so, like I said, when it's talking about 'the strange woman' here, just looking at it physically and things that are spoken, things that are said, the way something supposedly in a 'sexy' tone, or whatever, in advertisements sometimes, in commercials, the way sometimes people talk it makes you want to puke. Thinking that there is a certain way of talking and speaking that... and people practice things like that.

You know, people practice the way.... *there is a look* of the eyes, and that's why some things of make-up can go too far, that's why we teach moderation in all things. It's fine to have but it's something that the Church has sought to seek balance in through time, through Mr. Armstrong's time and later on. But there is that which has been used since the time of the Egyptians to allure, because there is a look that can be used by certain darkness or highlighting of certain things and a look of wantonness, "I want you! You're the man!" And it's out there!

Most poses that are done, most posing that is done in advertisements by women, it's that alluring look, the honey on the lips, and sadly we are made as human beings in a certain way that for a man if he focuses on that... It's one thing to see it, by knowledge you reject it, but if you keep focusing on it there is an alluring power there, it's just a reality, it will draw you to it.

That's why there are so many things in this world that need to be changed, things that are just wrong in society in the world that shouldn't be there that Satan has done in a very powerful way to hurt people. Because it hurts relationships. Incredible! So basic and yet it's a battle in life, throughout life, because it's not just about a woman, it's about all of the world is this way, to allure you to it, of that which disagrees with God, of that which is not right...which it's pretty much all that way...and the battle that must be there then of seeking discipline in life, to be in unity and oneness with God, to strive to do things the way God says to do it. And yet as human beings people stumble in things that we're allured to in life. And we'll talk about some of those things as we go into this sermon series deeper.

But this is just using something very physical here to start the thinking, the understanding of where the battles lie and how Satan works. Because this is how Satan works! He doesn't make things ugly. He didn't go out and say, "Okay, go out in the woods and light a match to the tree and then take in the burned part because of the flames of fire you need to be in fear, so put that up at Christmas and hang some bats on it." Of course, some people do go that far in some things in life when it comes to Halloween, so there are both perversions, both sides. But you understand what I'm saying, he doesn't make things ugly in life, he tries to make it where it draws and pulls at human nature and to be a part of it, to blend in, to... anyway, I don't want to go too far because I want to go into some of this in some of the sermon later on.

**For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil:** It's seeing it and then being drawn to it more, more the focus, in other words. So here is something where the focus begins, where the eyes latch a hold of something and then it begins to work in the mind and after a while you're drawn to the smoothness of the oil. What's that all about? ...whatever, in the arms, or whatever it is that takes place here, and it just shows how easy it is to be drawn in the world by that which allures. Satan works that way, and if people can grasp and comprehend some of the things that

are around them, how Satan works at the weaknesses of mankind - because it's rampant through society, from one end to the other.

So the example used at the beginning of the sermon I think helps to show how Satan uses enticement in a very powerful manner, just like in the catchiness of 'Feliz Navidad'. I'll just tell you, he's the source, okay? He's the source! He's the source of Christmas carols, Christmas singing, religious songs - he's the source of so many of them. Some are not wrong and some are not bad, but mankind has so misused them. Like 'Amazing Grace', it says some amazing things in it if you understand what true grace is, but the world misunderstands what grace is and so it's kind of been perverted, but it can be some very beautiful music and it can mean the right thing with the truth.

So again, some of these things become battles - what was that other song we were talking about the other day... 'O Holy Night' - what an awesome thing, to think of the story, but man has misused that about Christ and His birth, but it's still an awesomely beautiful song with the truth and knowing the truth, and in that respect, really nothing wrong with it, but there are others that lead into false doctrine and false ideas or some that are used just in the wrong season and man has so misused it that we, as a whole, strive to get away from some things that are too much like the protestant world because we don't want to have people get the wrong impression when they have various ideas about the protestant world, to call each other 'brother' or 'sister so-and-so', we don't do that in the Church. There are certain things we don't do that sometimes are done in the world around us, get in circles and hold hands when we pray. We don't do things like that - not that something like that would be wrong per se by itself divorced of the way the world is, as a family or something, a closeness. But we strive to be different from that because people are coming out of various things in the world, it's too easy to bring Protestantism into the Church so we divorce ourselves of those things that have any likeness of some of that. That's why we do some of those things from time to time.

So, again, we strive to be fully different from what is a part of the world, because just like Christ said, when you pray, as a whole - and that can become repetitious then, it's just what people do, they go out to eat or they eat at home and they pray a prayer that is always the same, never changes, that has no meaning. It has no meaning between them. That's why Jesus Christ said, when you pray, go in your closet alone - in other words, go into a private place alone between you and God because it's private, you're conversing with your Father, you're conversing with God Almighty about private matters of your life and you're repenting of various things and praying for people about various things and it's not to be a public show. Because, see, with mankind when something is a public show, when it's shown openly it's about self, it's about what others see. "Oh, you're pretty righteous." "Oh, you dress like that." "Oh, you're over there by the pillar at the airport bobbing your head back and forth against the wall, you must really be... You must really be a righteous person to have all these things hanging down from you and your hair in these certain things." I'm not trying to make fun of religion, I'm just showing that people get into these ideas about what's religious, but so often it's about them then, it's about what they portray. And God shows that in the Bible, He shows that in scripture; the chief priests, they want to be seen, they want the highest places, the highest seats, different people and how human nature is. And that's not good for human nature.

That's why I've given the example so often about the difference in spirit of a man who led the Church away from doctrines in the Church, who when he was before thousands of people he would have them applaud, and one place we were at one time - which I heard he did the same thing in different places - he said, "Now wait a minute, you can do better than that!" So they had them cheer again for him being on the stage. That's not right! Mr. Armstrong would get upset when people would do that - you know,

at the Feast of Tabernacles when you'd have 14-15,000 people gathered together in one location and people started clapping and applauding. He'd say, "No, no, no!" Sometimes I saw him get a little upset over it because he said, "That isn't right, that isn't good, you shouldn't be applauding for me." Totally different spirit because he knew it wasn't good for human beings, because after a while people are going to be doing that for ministers in congregations and... which has happened in times past. Had to tell people, "No, that isn't right, don't do it! That's not right for your mind and it's not right for the person's mind." It's not about show! Anyway, you understand what I'm talking about there.

Let's finish this Proverb here... I think about some of these things I was just talking about here, some of the power of Satan to seduce and so forth and these are just the beginning of understanding of some things in this season of the year, this season of enticement, what he's done for the period of time that he has.

But again, sex has always been a big part of things in enticement, and that's why this example in Proverbs is being used, so that people can come to grasp certain things. There is the Song of Solomon that is about between two people, a relationship, and yet there are things there about a relationship with God and the Church and so forth and how people think. It's not just about a physical relationship of and by itself, but again, sex is oftentimes mentioned, even in scripture and in life because it's so much a part of human life and it has so affected or infected at times, depending on how people have received it, the misuse of something so basic that God has given to human beings. I'll get farther into this in another sermon.

But again, I just think about in advertising; I don't care where you look. So using this example here about the honey off the lips and the strange woman with the mouth smoother than oil, and I think about advertisements out here. I don't care where you look - clothing, it's kind of understood, the influence there of things that use, candidly, barely dressed people at times in various clothing advertisements and try to bring sex into it and so forth, and it's just getting worse and worse. I don't care what it is, tools, alcohol, beer, bottled water, computers, food, vegetables, fruit, some of the most perverse sick things out there sometimes, an innuendo of certain things that are advertised. Motorcycles, cars, sports, sports equipment, on and on... I don't care where you turn! What does buying a car have to do with a woman draped over the top of it? ...certain things that have happened in times past. Does that make the car run better or something, you know? And a woman who's in a bikini, or whatever, on a motorcycle - I've never seen anybody going down the highway like that, especially on a real hot day! You know what that does to the skin? They're smarter than that, they wear leather chaps oftentimes. So what's that got to do with a good running of a motorcycle? Things that are used about sex so often in everything that's out there in a perverse way - Satan does those kinds of things and it's in society. But it's in everything in life, things that allure people to move away from the truth of God.

**Verse 4 - But her end is bitter as wormwood**, in other words, if you follow that which allures, to that which is not in agreement with God it's showing the end of it. You need to think things through, that's what it said in the beginning isn't it, that you should 'regard discretion', don't just act, think things through in life. Before we act we need to make sure, and so often we have to react later on and repent because we've done something wrong or said something wrong to someone. **But her end is as bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on 'hell'**, in other words the word is 'grave'; it's 'hell' here, it's what it is. And so again, it leads to death and those things that have to do with judgment that can come upon human beings unless they repent.

**Lest you should ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable**, in other words, there is a being who doesn't want you to ponder the paths of life, he doesn't want you to think too much about it, he just wants you to act and react to being allured, to being lured, to being enticed. That's the way of the world, to just react; learning it from a young child and just growing that way, that's how we do as human beings as a whole and basically here that if you don't ponder the paths of life here, it talks about 'her ways', the way of this strange woman, **her ways are moveable**, in other words move you out of place or off the path - in other words, to keep you from pondering the path of life, of the way you really should live. And so there is that which is always pulling at human beings to keep them off the right path, to keep them away from the things that have to do with morality and how God said people should live.

And as it goes on to say, **so that you cannot not know them**; to keep you in deception, to keep you in bondage, that's the purpose that Satan has with his enticing, that's his control. Sin is his power, that's what Paul reveals, that through his enticing and just through man's own nature it is sin that gives Satan power. That's what gives him power and power over bondage of mankind to keep mankind in bondage.

**Hear me now therefore, O children, and do not depart from the words of My mouth. Remember your way far from her, and do not come near the door of her house.** So again here, so often the example is when one has eaten of something which is forbidden more is the desire and the power of alluring that becomes actually stronger in life. That's something that the human mind doesn't grasp but God tries to warn people, to show people, that once you indulge in certain things in life and they capture you, if you start something it becomes worse and worse and worse, the power of control becomes greater and greater and greater, of whatever you look at in life, especially in the bad things of life, those things are so true. And we'll go there, start there next Sabbath talking about some of that because it encompasses so many things in society and life today.

So again, the season of enticing - thank God it's almost come to an end, we don't have long to go.

~~~end

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