

I do have a couple of news articles. I thought every once in a while there are some things that come out that just keep us abreast of what's going on as things continue to move in a particular direction. Here are a couple from this past week. This is from 'France24'.

15 December 2012

**Iran army chief warns Turkey over Patriot missiles<sup>i</sup>**

**AFP** - Iran's armed forces chief of staff on Saturday warned Turkey over its plans to deploy US-made Patriot missiles, saying the move was part of a Western plot to "create a world war".

Had some conversations back and forth with an individual in the Middle East and he's commenting how that's just about all that people are talking about all the time right now, is a World War, because they see things in their back door, they see things that are going on, and that's what they are expecting to take place. So a different mindset over there than obviously what we have in this part of the world. But it went on to say...

"The Western countries seeking to deploy the missile batteries on the Turkey-Syria border are devising plans for a world war."

"This is very dangerous for everyone, and even for the future of Europe," he said. "A veteran military man and analyst can easily see this and predict the future."

NATO has approved Turkey's request for Patriot missiles to bolster its border defences amid tensions with the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Germany, the Netherlands and the United States have agreed to provide the missile batteries, which would come under NATO command.

But both Russia and Iran, the most powerful allies of the Assad regime, are opposed to the move.

Which, again, I know we have that news, but sometimes people don't get all that.

Another article here is entitled: "US-Iran nuclear talks fail. Iran has plutonium for 24 Nagasaki-type bombs." And they were talking about fuel rods and how that the media has overlooked an article that came out in the Wall Street Journal discussing some of those things in recent times and that actually because of something to do with the rods and reactors and whatever they can actually make that transition easily quite fast. So, anyway, interesting, again, things that continue to move in a particular direction.

Another one: "Assad's deadly agenda: First, chemicals, next Iskander 9K720". They are missiles from Russia, but this particular article... I'm just going to read most of this I guess because it's all pertinent.

Debkafile December 19, 2012

**Assad's deadly agenda: First, chemicals, next, Iskander 9K720<sup>ii</sup>**

On Dec. 5, the first American, Dutch and German Patriot missiles landed in Turkey.

Within hours, three Russian warships had put into Syria's Tartus port – the *Novocherkassk* and *Saratov* landing craft and the MB-304 supply vessel. Aboard were 300 marines. And not only fighting men. They also delivered a fearsome weapon for Assad's army and a game changer in the Syrian conflict: 24 Iskander 9K720 (NATO codenamed SS-26 Stone) cruise missile systems, designed for theater level conflicts.

While NATO unpacked the Patriots in Turkey, a dozen mobile batteries, each carrying a pair of Iskander missiles, were fixed into position opposite Turkey, and another dozen, opposite Jordan and Israel.

At all their stations, the Russian missiles pointed at US military targets.

So while the West was gripped with alarm over Assad's poison sarin gas shells and bombs and gearing up for missile attacks on Turkey, the Russians were injecting into the Syrian war field the most sophisticated weapon of death thus far.

The West and Israel have no answer for the Iskander's hypersonic speed of more than 1.3 miles per second with a 280 mile-range and a 1,500-pound warhead which destroys targets with pinpoint accuracy. It is also nuclear-capable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin promised two US presidents, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, not to let the Iskander reach the hands of Syria or Iran.

Moscow has no illusions that once in Syria, the lethal cruise missile will pretty soon reach Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Saturday, Dec. 15, Iran's chief of staff Gen. Hassan Firouzabadi warned that the Patriot missiles in Turkey portended world war. He was referring to the missile-versus-missile face-off in Syria .

By giving Assad the Iskanders, Moscow has plumped itself squarely in the Tehran-Damascus-Hizballah camp, whereas President Obama is carefully holding back from an unreserved commitment to the Syrian insurgency.

Some Western circles see Russia's military intervention in the Syrian conflict as presaging Bashar Assad's early downfall. The reality, according to debkafile's sources, is that before he falls, the Syria ruler is getting ready for desperate measures – first by unleashing chemical warfare and, after that, using the deadly Iskanders for a last throw against his enemies.

So anyway, things just continue to get heated up and sometimes you wonder where common sense is, especially in some of the major nations in some of this, primarily this one, dealing with some of these things. But anyway, it's a part of what has to come to pass.

Okay, today's sermon... Before this current sermon series we had a two part sermon series entitled 'The Season of Enticing', which obviously is very much about this season of the year and a spin off from that in what Satan has been doing for the past 6,000 years, and we then continued into this current sermon series with a new title, yet both series are directly tied together as the subject matter of this series directly concerns changes that need to be made in the Millennium, changes which are to begin, that we are to begin considering now in our personal lives.

In other words, we're to see what changes we need to begin making because it has to do with our thinking process. If we're not addressing changes in our own life then our minds can't be healed to the degree we can understand and comprehend the soundness of mind that God wants us to grasp as we focus on some of these things of where we're going and why these kinds of changes have to take place. In other words, we won't be able to understand it if we don't examine our own lives and begin making more changes now. We'll be blinded to those things, we'll not grasp the depth of those things, we'll not see the urgency of those things. So we need to be making changes in our lives where we can, understanding especially some of the things we've been talking about concerning technology. So we need to be making adjustments and changes so that we can come to better understand *why* many changes must take place... not just *why* but even begin to understand *how* and to be able to judge it properly.

So, today is *Part 2* of the new sermon series entitled *True Freedom*.

I thought it would be good to share a quote that an elder up in Pennsylvania reminded me of this week that truly goes along with the essence of this sermon series (and thought I'd mention he's associated with ginseng and fur trading and a few other things...not to tell what his name is or anything. I don't like mentioning names in sermons but I sure gave that one away.) But the quote comes from General Douglas McArthur in a radio address that he gave right up after the surrender ceremony of Japan aboard the U.S.S. Missouri on September 2, 1945. So he gave this address first aboard the ship and then after that he gave a radio address and this is the one where this quote is made. I'm not going to read the whole quote, but again, very prophetic in that respect that God gave to someone, an ability to see something like this for something like this to be said. But breaking into part of the flow here it says... And again, this is just after WWII, two nuclear weapons, bombs, had gone off in Japan, and it says here - this is most of the way or part of the way through the message. He says:

“Men since the beginning of time have sought peace.... Military alliances, balances of power, leagues of nations, all in turn failed...”

And then of course what followed that, the United Nations, which has also failed, obviously.

"...leaving the only path to be by way of the crucible of war. We have had our last chance. If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door.

And the problem is we haven't, and that's what's at the door now.

"If we do not now devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence..."

A kind of renewal after a long inactivity, is what this is talking about.

"...and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature and all material and cultural development of the past two thousand years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh."

That's amazing, because it is from God. The only thing is he hadn't known, he didn't know at that time and the world hasn't known what truly comes from God and what God's plan is. And so these things here, amazingly, go along with what is being said here because this is exactly where we are in time because man hasn't been able to fight his own battles, hasn't been able to bring about peace; and war, that kind of a war, doesn't bring about peace. The only thing that can happen is war has ended, and that's what God is going to do, and then establish peace by a right government on earth.

Awesome where we're headed and awesome where we are in time.

It was stated last Sabbath that mankind, as a whole, cannot deal with (very awkward way of saying it...) unrestraint - again, having to do with the want or freedom from restraint. The problem is, we need restraint in human life. *We need laws, we need to be shown what the boundaries are.* Human beings need that in their life, the Millennium is going to need that. And the problem is, even as I was researching a subject that will probably be in next Sabbath's sermon, that there is so much conflict out there and people are so far off base, they're so unbalanced, so unsound in mind that they take the opposite stance in so many things having to do with what we're discussing here about the use of technology and the ability to be easily enticed to sin. That's the nature of mankind. The nature of mankind resists God and fights against God's way of life. *And we need restraint, we need guidelines, we need boundaries, and man's definition, which Satan has foisted off on mankind, of freedom, is a lie.* True freedom, then, comes from God and He shows us the way, and it's that of coming out of Egypt, of being made free from sin, of not being in bondage to sin. And so that's why we're going through this particular sermon series, to begin to talk about some of those things that are affecting this world in a profound way.

I couldn't help thinking about it here this morning as I was going through some of this and thinking about next Sabbath's sermon as well: the entire society has changed in the last 200 years in a profound way - not good. Everything within families, the structure of families, how things are done, has been turned upside down as a result of technology because man can't deal with it properly, because he hasn't been shown how to deal with it properly, how to use it properly. And the reality is that it has effected everything in society, everything in civilization, everything to do with families, the core of civilization if you will, around the world, and that has to be totally turned right side up. Because before that, as a whole, the world was more of an agrarian society and lifestyle, the way people lived their lives, how life functioned, even within homes and families, was drastically different in an agrarian society compared to what it is today. Today it's totally reversed, very little is agrarian and even that is filled with technology today, so even there they have the effects of what has happened in cities and what has happened in manufacturing and on and on it goes. And it has changed the structure, but it's needed because it's a transition in time, because we're coming into a time of a greater technology explosion, if you will, of

things that are going to be on the world scene in ways that we haven't even thought of yet that man is going to be given the opportunity to accomplish.

And so we have this little transition in time to show the need for the right use, because even with what we have we've so misused it. Mankind has totally messed up the world! And so to me it's exciting thinking about where we are and why God has allowed us to have such a taste of technology, especially the last fifty years to the degree we have, because of what's coming on the world scene and considering the God Family and things that God is leading us to - it is awesome! To become a part of Elohim, to grasp the power that's there - we can't! To grasp the responsibility of power there - we can't! And so the opportunity to learn those things is going to be far more profound, in that respect, in the Millennium and in the Great White Throne for the vast majority of mankind.

So again, talking about restraint, the need for restraint, the need for law and so forth, the need for boundaries, as it was also covered - Satan, again, has greatly deceived mankind as to the idea about freedom. He's twisted and distorted the truth about what true freedom is that can only come from God. God is the only source of it, as a result of His way of life. So for human nature mankind has to have restraints, has to have laws that reveal how mankind should live and practice life.

I wanted to just remind you of a few verses we've looked at. I think of John 8. Satan's brand or definition of freedom leads to sin, it leads to bondage, and that's where there is so much more. It's amazing how we are able to see more and more and grasp more and more things that's God has given us through time, where we're able to gain a deeper understanding of some of the most basic and simplest of verses in the Bible...and here is an example of one in John 8 that we discussed last Sabbath.

**John 8:31 - Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed on Him, If you continue in My word, if you dwell in, live in, abide in, continue in, that's how that word is translated into English... in My word, then you shall be My disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.** We just continue to build upon that understanding, of what that means and what it means to be free by God's way of life and all that's contained in that that this sermon has been discussing.

And so again, Satan's brand or definition of freedom leads to sin, it leads to bondage. And it's amazing when you go back and look at some things, Satan started this from the very beginning, and that's an example back in Genesis 3. So basic, so profound. That's why so often Mr. Armstrong, especially in the last few years of His life, so often would go back to the very beginning in Genesis because the things that happened with Adam and Eve are the very things that have carried through the past 6,000 years into the rest of the time of humanity; the problems and the basic principles that are there are the very things that man has dealt with for the past 6,000 years, it's just been *magnified* many times over. But the basic spirit of it, the basic principles are right here in Genesis in things that happened with Adam and Eve.

And here is an example, Genesis 3, the being that was there from the beginning of mankind has always been around doing the same thing. **Genesis 3:1 - Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Eternal God had made.** More cunning. He's a powerful being, far more than human beings. **And he said to the woman then, Has God indeed said you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?** So again here, there is this attitude and spirit that when you know human nature, which he did, he knew the nature that they had, yet this is the very beginning, if you will then, of sin, this is the very beginning of enticing, this is the very beginning of how Satan began to work with mankind which he would do for the rest of time. But again, it's this twisting or distorting of things and planting of ideas or

thoughts in the mind that on a normal basis, just like I mentioned with the angelic realm - the angelic realm, they didn't think of anything else but God's way of life until this being came up with a different plot and idea because he wanted something different, and because of pride and then sin went in a different direction, distorted, perverted his mind.

And this is basically what happens very quickly with human beings, because it doesn't take long with human beings. We don't know how long that took in the angelic realm for that to happen. We don't know if it was a hundred years, thousands of years, as far as earth years are concerned, millions - we don't know - God will one day reveal to us the process there. But a *much longer process* than that which deals with mankind, because it doesn't take mankind long; with human nature it's very quick to be enticed, to be *lured* to sin, to *fight* against God, to begin something that God warned against from the very beginning. But we have to go through this process.

So again, basically it was being asked by Satan - "Are you indeed not free to eat of every tree?" That's the thought that was planted in her mind. "Are you not free?" Because she hadn't thought of it in this regard, she hadn't looked at what God had said in this manner, she just accepted what God had said. But it didn't take very long for this thought to be thrown at her to speed up the process of something that would have happened in time anyway. It would have happened in time anyway, but the reason it's happening this way is to teach lessons; teach lessons first of all to us to understand that being, that he's always there, that he is the one that stirs things up, that he is at the forefront of everything to fight against God's way of life, and that we are no power against that as human beings because of our basic nature being selfish as it is, being very self-centered and base, if you will.

And so again, the thought was planted. **And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God has said you shall not eat of it nor shall you touch it lest you die.** And so she's beginning a reasoning back and forth here, the thought is there but she comes back with this response and says that God has stated that if you eat of this you're going to die.

Now, we don't know what was in her mind, whether she thought maybe it was instantaneous or whatever, but the penalty of sin is death, that's the point, it's eternal death, it doesn't mean it's something that happens to you right away. A lot of times with sin people aren't punished immediately, at least as far as something that is to do with God's law. It's something that does happen in the mind immediately and man can't recognize that as a whole, what happens to the spirit, but as far as sometimes the penalty that's paid in life, sometimes that may be a little later. So a person may think they're getting by with certain things, like we talked about last Sabbath, smoking. There are people that smoke large quantities in their life and it never bothered them in their health, lived up to be a hundred years old, gave that example last Sabbath, and they don't think about it being bad or unhealthy because it didn't bother them. And others see that example and they want to use that example and they don't talk about the ones, like I mentioned last Sabbath, that have had their throat taken out or lungs taken out and various things that take place in life and the hideous death that sometimes is associated with those things because it isn't healthy, it isn't good.

**Then the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die...** so again, this thinking that's going on, "...not free to take of everything, I'm not going to die..." and beginning to look at God in a different way, different ideas that began to flood into the mind, a beginning process of thinking for a human being but summed up in a very quick way here.

**Verse 5 - For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.** Earlier on we read the example where God said that they were taken away from the Garden of Eden because they had made themselves as God in the sense of knowing good and evil, in the sense of 'knowing', what that word means, 'to determine for themselves', judging for themselves, deciding for themselves right and wrong. In other words, God's word was no longer the standard, God wasn't the authority on it anymore, they began making *themselves* the authority, or began looking to their own reasoning and justifications of why they could do the things that *they* chose to do, and something unique began to happen in the mind, it began to be distorted. They couldn't think properly from that moment on. From that moment on the mind of Eve needed to be healed, from the very moment she started to sin healing needed to take place because she hurt her mind just as God said about Satan.

And so he said **...your eyes will be opened;** your eyes, what we talked about earlier, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes'! It goes into the mind, your thinking, it will be opened up to different ideas and different thoughts of things that God has told you you should not have. You can make yourself as God, to determine these things just like God does.

**So when the woman saw,** again, 'lust of the eyes', it entered into her mind, she began to contemplate and think about these things and to realize she wasn't free, with Satan's definition, to have every tree of the garden. **And the woman saw,** this is what entered into her mind, **that the tree was good for food** - whatever goes on sometimes in people's minds, whatever we go through sometimes to justify or to, like it is, walking through the trees and thinking that God doesn't see you or somehow blocking out God and... whatever we do in the mind to justify something that we do as human beings. This is a part of a process spiritually that was going on with her in her mind and so she began to think upon these things and dwell upon them. Dwelling upon wrong ideas and wrong thoughts and contemplating things that are different from what God says is the very thing that finally leads to the actual doing of it, the sin, 'the lust of the flesh', to gratify what we're thinking about, what we think is going to bring gratification - and it does to carnal selfish human nature because the nature is one of get, and so when they get it's not satisfied, it wants more, it wants more and more and more, whatever, of life, because it's really never fully satisfied because it isn't God's way.

**Verse 6 - So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes,** we talked about the christmas tree, it's not ugly. What a hideous thing, that children at a very young age, this is planted in the mind and it's more than a human being can deal with. If that's what you grow up with that's what you begin to think, and it's a part of you after a while, and then Satan has messed up the mind and put wrong ideas of whatever into it, supposed traditional Christianity and the babe in a manger and all the little things that go along with some of the deceptions that take place from that point on about christmas and even the time of year that people swallow hook, line and sinker, and then later on even know that it's not fully true, "But it's okay because it 'honors' God, doesn't it, it 'honors Jesus Christ', it looks to Jesus Christ as giving Him an honor and celebrating His birthday and we're thankful of that so God wouldn't be upset about that, would He? God wouldn't see that as being wrong, would He? It'd be something, surely, that's pleasing in God's sight, and giving gifts to children, isn't that a nice thing to do for your children?" And so all these deceptions. And so people are imprisoned to it until God finally starts to call us out.

How many people I've know of through time that have come into God's Church who have had difficulties addressing the subject of christmas with family, because you have to make a stand. You have to stand up and say we're not going to participate in the gift thing anymore. We're not going to keep christmas

in our home." Because sooner or later they're going to find out and sooner or later the way traditions are as whole in society, you have to tell them. And I've known of people who have had battles with some of those things in a big way because it's so hard, because you're talking about family and making a stand for something, that you don't want to look weird or different. But the truth makes you look a little weird and different, doesn't it, because nobody does it, because it's not of the world, and so you have to take a stand, we begin learning. Incredible how God molds and fashions us.

And so it's pleasant to the eyes, **and a tree desirable to make one wise**, to decide for yourself. Pride was beginning to take root here. **She took of its fruit and ate**, it happened, pride was there, 'lust of the eyes', and now 'lust of the flesh', she took it, it says, and ate it. ...**she also gave to her husband with her and he ate**. Then he blamed the woman. ☺ Didn't accept personal responsibility! He was guilty. He was guilty of his own sin and didn't want to accept the personal responsibility for what he'd done.

**Then the eyes of both of them were opened....**their minds started thinking differently, started dealing with things differently. Right then and there they corrupted their thinking process that God had given to them that was to that point perfect and clean and clear. But they corrupted their very spirit, that very portion of the mind that is so precious, that now and for all it takes time then through a process of healing to have that process begin to be taken away, until we finally become a part of the God Family and it's fully gone then.

**Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked;** isn't that amazing? Now, God showed later on He was going to give them skins and so forth, things to clothe with as populations things began to develop and grow on the earth, but here in the very beginning they decided for themselves. We don't know, God hasn't shown it all, but from the very beginning, because of Satan, perhaps thinking about God and whatever and they began to think...for whatever reason, "I'm naked. I need to be clothed."

**And so they sewed**, it says, **fig leaves together and made themselves coverings**, because they had a shame in something they shouldn't have had shame in. And so the mind of mankind from that time forward has been perverted when it comes to a right use, of understanding something that God gave between a man and a woman in marriage, and to know of a surety that God sees everything! We're all naked before our God in more ways than one, aren't we, you know? Literally He sees us, He knows us, He created us, and what a foolish thing for a human being to begin thinking in those terms, in that fashion, but something *happened* that perverted the mind.

Now, this is an amazing thing to me because the very things we've talked about already here, they summarize everything that has been the heart and core of man's biggest problems in human life, they truly do. The misuse of things, the very things that are stated here, the very things about how we're not able to see ourselves properly, the false shame that should not be there but is - it's in the human mind! I would say that every one of you has some kind of *shame* in your *mind* because of your past, because of your thinking, because of various kinds of relationships. I know that men do, okay? Absolutely without question at a very young age, it happens, because the mind does think wrong, because that's the way society is. Women, I don't know about, I haven't lived that life, but I know the mind is different there. But how much, I don't know fully, I just know there are differences, we know some of the differences, obviously. You have to judge those things amongst yourselves about to what degree, but they happen to both, the distortion, the perversion of the mind in how we think.

And so again, this is not a small thing! This is an incredible thing to grasp and comprehend, what we do to our mind, and if we can take that a step farther, that has hurt human relationships. We are talking about the very thing that has hurt... the basis of hurting all human relationships that started here and it's carried through time in society. And the more man has misused, misapplied - it isn't even a matter of applying what is true from God because man is so far away from that, and even in the protestant world I think of Victorian times and those who considered themselves to be religious, but how perverted they were concerning the subject of husband and wife, man and woman, sexual relationships. The mind has been *perverted, distorted*, and people don't grasp then how that is the heart and core of right thinking toward one another, men toward women, women toward men, women toward women, men toward men, and how people think and what they think they're free to discuss and what they're *not* free to discuss and to think. And we live in a sick, *putrid* society today because of how people are so far away from the trunk of the tree, from what God has given. When the mind can be healed then the right things can begin to come from that, right relationships, better relationships.

I so look forward to the Millennial period when people are going to be educated in right ways, when they're going to have stronger guidelines in the sense of authority and power, because there is only going to be one source teaching it all, coming from God through Jesus Christ, through the 144,000 out to the rest of the world. That's powerful! Just one way of life and people to be in harmony about that.

I think of some of the horrible perversions to the point where you think about relationships and how hard it's going to be for some to come out of some of the background they're in when they think that all they can see through is something that is a piece of cloth over the eyes, and you can't even show too much of that. Sometimes that's even shaded with other cloth to where you can't even see out of that! And you think, don't you realize that that is the very thing that shows something in a very strong way of the mind, of the perversion that's there? Not only is it something physical but it's spiritual, to know that your mind is so distorted you can't think right toward other women or toward other men - when you think that's a standard of life that God would be pleased with? That's just perverted! It's sick! ...as everything is in the world.

And if we can begin to grasp some of this, of what we're talking about in Genesis, I hope that young men, all men, but especially young men, people whom God is calling, people who are going to live into the Millennium and be the building blocks, if you will, in the Millennium, can begin to grasp and understand some of these things, that the very things that are a part of our society today are the very things that hurt true fellowship, the kind of fellowship, the kind of community, the kind of families, the kind of way we interact, that become cleaner and purer as time goes on, because the reality is our minds have been polluted from the very beginning of time, truly.

And that's why that 'great' church, great on the earth as far as numbers are concerned, that calls itself of Christianity has so perverted this subject even. Perverted it! Perverted it in its ministry, in those who supposedly can't have any kind of relationships in life, that the height of being religious before God is to never marry - you marry Christ. What a perversion of what it's saying there. That's not what it talks about when it talks about marriage to God in a relationship there that we have toward God and Christ. But to go through something that so twists and so distorts and that, yet, we find out through history and through time that didn't work too well...that didn't work too well with all the tombs of little babies they've found and all the places where some of the sickness of past history around that very area and very vicinity and things that have been uncovered and found out that have been hush-hushed, and you think...what a sick, sick, sick perversion!

But if we can begin to grasp the mind and how people have felt ashamed of things that God said you should never feel ashamed about. But the problem is it's not used in the right way so people do feel shame, and sometimes, and I'm talking about primarily when you come into God's Church - because in the world people don't even grasp that, and too many don't have any shame whatsoever because they don't feel like they're doing anything wrong, that's why they're free to do all the things they do and justify what they do that's distorted and perverted.

**So the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew**, that's what happened to the mind, **that they were naked**. Incredible! Perversion and distortion of something here that shouldn't have happened but it's happened from the very beginning. Right here in Genesis, just these few verses, show the heart and core of 'lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life' and then the fruit of it, perversion, distortion, lack of soundness of mind.

So again, *sin distorts sound thinking* as sin causes a further separation, or if you will, farther from God soundness of mind, which is the only way we have ability to grow in soundness of mind. It has to come from God to grasp even what true freedom is in these things.

And that's why I'm going to mention it again, you don't need to turn there, but Ezekiel 28:17, to understand what happens. We need to understand what happens, when God said to Satan, 'Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty', the way *you* saw things, the way you saw yourself because of that inward spirit and attitude in mind in turning away from God's way, in turning to his own ideas and what he thought was better than God's, his own beauty. He says, 'You have 'corrupted' your wisdom,' means 'to destroy' or 'to mar, to ruin'. So his mind from that point forward was ruined, it was marred, unsound, it can never be sound again. He destroyed something beautiful that God had given to him.

Thankfully for human beings we can change, God has given the ability to repent and change and for the mind to be healed. That's why I love the scriptures that talk about healing; they're awesome, they're beautiful in what they have to say. That's why God mentions it so often!

I'll just read it quickly here... Isaiah 57. Oh, we can turn there, because basically this is what God is even addressing here in Isaiah 57 toward Israel, toward mankind. **Isaiah 57:10 - You are wearied in the greatness of your way**; your beauty, your thinking, your way as opposed to God's way, **yet you have not said, there is no hope**: isn't that the way mankind... look, here they talk about the possible 'fiscal cliff' - what a joke - then the stocks go down 1% - 'woo-eee' - they should have gone down 10% because it's so close to a crash. But that's not the way man is because man is not wearied in his own ways and the false hope that he puts up there and the things he lives by... I read some stuff today about what the government has been doing about pumping up various areas, of things on the sly and on the side. You think, it's such a sickness and the world has been mesmerized by it. The media has made us numb by all these things and people are fully asleep.

**...yet you have not said, there is no hope...** in other words you wouldn't come to a point where you would actually look to God and repent because there is no hope in what you're doing. Instead you just continue to live on that and give yourself, feed yourself a false hope.

**...you have found the life of your hand**; what you're able to do, what you're able to accomplish, what you're able to build. "Destroy it? We're going to build it up greater!" "It's going to be *greater* than it was before!" "We're going to be *mightier* than what we were before!" Amazing, the haughtiness of mankind, **therefore you were not grieved**. The kinds of grief, the kind of sorrow, the kind of things that

can lead to repentance and change because people see the way they're going. And so God says, **you haven't been wearied in your way**, in your greatness in your mind and in your attitude.

**And of whom have you been afraid or feared, and you have lied and have not remembered Me, nor laid it to heart? Haven't I held My peace even of old, and you do not fear Me?** Don't you grasp the mercy, the grace of what I've given to you, and you still won't turn from your ways? **I will declare your righteousness and your works**; that's what God says, and that's basically where we are in time, to show mankind at the end of 6,000 years what our righteousness is like; it's not a pretty thing, it's ugly, it's selfish, it's sick, it's inward...**and your works for they will not profit you.**

**When you cry, let your companies deliver you**; let your countries, let your government, let your military, let your economy, let it all deliver you. It's not going to deliver you, God says. **...but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that puts his trust in Me shall possess the land and shall inherit My holy mountain; And shall say, Cast up, cast up**, love this verse here because we talked about that some time back, where we talked about it's like building a road, and just like you would build a road you have to make it higher so the water comes off of it and runs into ditches. And this is what it's talking about, casting up, building it higher so people can travel on it, and just like building a highway, building a road, and you build it up, you build a foundation for it and you keep adding to it to a point where you continue to go on it even though it might be bad around you. That's what this is talking about, because it's talking about traveling like a highway or a way that is made.

**Cast up, cast up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling block out of the way of My people.** So God uses that just as an example here of something of how we're to live our lives and take away the stumbling block and the thing that causes people to trip and fall down.

**For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit**, beautiful verse here because it has to do with how God can begin to have a relationship with mankind. He has to bring us into a point where He humbles us, brings us into this kind of a spirit and attitude so He can work with us, because before that He can't work with us. If there is pride... you know, pride is what keeps us from being able to receive what God is telling us, because we believe there is a different way or we don't fully agree with what God's saying to us and telling us - as an example, through what I'm saying in sermons, we don't agree with everything that God gives to us, we pick and choose and decide what we want to agree with and what we think is wrong. And I've already had feedback about some of the different things out here and about some of the things that have been said in some of this sermon series and you know, sometimes we have different ideas. Well, shame on you! God is communicating to all of us and trying to show us how to have sound minds, how to have better lives and how to change and how to grow, and it takes a humble spirit to be able to do that.

**...to revive the spirit of the humble**, to make alive, to revive, that's what it's saying here, the spirit of the humble, because God can't revive the proud because they *already know* what's right, they don't need God! They don't need God to show them, to teach them, to show them what's right or wrong.

**...and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.** God will do that, God can do that, but it takes that, that's what it takes.

**For I will not contend forever, neither will I always be filled with...** I hate this word here because it's about 'anger' or 'wroth', that's how it's translated here, but it has to do with judgment and it has to do

with what has to come on mankind: **for the spirit should fail Me, and the souls which I have made.** So God has that great mercy indeed.

**For the iniquity of his covetousness was I angry, and smote him:** In other words, there was a time for judgment. It's not the kind of anger we associate with the kind of selfish unrighteous anger that we have as human beings. Then he talked about how man just **went on frowardly in his own heart** and his own way.

**...I have seen his ways, and will heal him:** because in the midst of it all God has a plan to heal the mind, that's what it's about. It's not about physical healing, it's about the mind, it's about the spirit, it's about a transformation of how we think, of what God's going to take on into His Family. **I have seen his ways and will heal him;** God knows, He made us, He made us that we be selfish. He made us to have that kind of a life, to live selfish human lives. He purposely made us this way knowing we would be selfish, because we have to live this first in order to learn, in order to *loathe* what it does. And we can't really begin to do that until God begins to reveal to us His way.

And that's what happens to us in the Church - that's why we hate this world right now, we hate... I have never seen a time in God's Church where I can say that - and a lot of it has to do with where are in time, but a lot has to do with technology and what we see in the world today - I've never seen a time where God's people have had their *full* of this world...I mean, just burdened down with how sick and how perverted and how evil the world is. I have never known a time. And that's a good thing that God has brought us to this time, to have such a desire for His kingdom, to have such a desire to come through this, to get through this, to get away from all the filthiness that's out there.

**I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near,** this is what God begins to give to us once we begin to be drawn. He begins to show us the way to peace, He begins to lead us out of Egypt, but we're not out until we're out; until we're in the God Family we're not fully out of it. But He starts a process that starts to take us out of sin, out of Egypt, out of bondage. **Peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, says the LORD; and I will heal him.** That's what God offers.

Incredible! And that's what we're talking about here, the way of peace, the way of a sound mind; we have to go through a healing process, and so just as Satan distorted his mind, hurt his mind, that's what we do. Every time we sin we hurt the mind, we hurt the potential for what God says *can be* molded and fashioned and created in us.

And that's why we read **Jeremiah 17:9**, just as a reminder, you don't need to turn there. We read where **The human heart is deceitful and...** I don't like the term '**desperately wicked**' because even though it is wicked and works toward that, it's simply a word in the Hebrew that means 'weak, sickly, as it were, incurable'; and the mind of man is incurable. The only way it can be healed is by God's healing, by what He does through His calling. And so that's just the way we are because of sin. We're not able to see right, think right, be right in the spirit, in the mind, save that we receive that which comes from God. It isn't in us!

Anyway, last Sabbath we left off from discussing many things that need to be addressed as soon as the Millennium is established, things that we need to begin to address in our lives now, with again, a greater fervency of spirit. God is blessing us with a focus on those things, and to the degree we look at them

and seek to change in our life is to the degree that we're going to grasp and comprehend what He's offering us.

There are a lot of things that have to be changed, we talked about some of them; so much that has to do with technology and the misuse of technology and things that have to be done right, taught right, and taught right concerning its use early on from the very beginning, from the get-go. Some have misunderstood, I think, some of the things I've said concerning the internet. Just to make this clear, there *will* be an internet, there will not be the misuse of it, the perversion of it. There will be things that will never be allowed on it. Okay? It is a powerful tool of communication in a world of technology but we have to learn to use it right. Some have talked about how they are holding back from texting, and I hope you mean when you're driving down the road, but texting is fine...but again, there is a use of it that can hurt and a misuse of it that can hurt and so that's what we're talking about. We're talking about how to learn to judge things and to use things properly, because man has never had a time where we've had the ability to use things with such power. If we can understand the power of things like a nuclear weapon, and everything else we have has great power in technology, not just powers of destruction, that we see something blown up, but there are powers to destroy, that destroy the mind, that destroy human life because of misuse of things that are out here.

So again, there are things that will be there but there will be some types of programs, some types of things will be totally done away with, some will be able to be allowed but it's the use of them that will change, with regulations and restraint that will be taught.

Last week I mentioned some things about Facebook, because this is an easy one, but we don't realize sometimes how things in technology, when it's not used right, can so hurt the human mind and relationships, and that's what it's all about. God is a Family and He wants us to live by laws that regulate right relationships, and there are things that just hurt those relationships. I want to read some of these things. I said I wasn't going to last week but there are some other articles about some of the use of Facebook that I think needs to be brought out just so we can realize there are things that draw people to them, and in a wrong way that's not healthy, that's not good. And as an example here, here is an article...

**"Is Social Media The New Face of Divorce"**<sup>iii</sup>  
CBS Pittsburgh | May 28, 2012

NEW YORK (KDKA) – As millions of people get involved with social media, there are some new issues coming to light.

The sites include Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and more and the social media world continues to grow.

However, with every new user comes the opportunity for an alternative life...

One that really isn't theirs... hmmm, alternative.

...which can include secrets that may break up a relationship.

....

If you're like most people, you've probably checked out one of your former flames online.

You think, to say something like that, to think that's the proclivity of people in the world? You think, how sick that people would engage in such things, but even the way it's written it sounds like that's just kind of expected. I hope nobody in God's Church does that kind of stupidity.

This seemingly harmless behavior is going a lot further and is leading to the end of more and more marriages.

One woman, who wanted to remain anonymous, was shocked to find out that her husband had a whole other life with a handful of other women online. "I was shocked because I thought everything was great," the woman said.

"People are getting into treacherous terrain on Facebook, rekindling memories, relationships," divorce attorney Ann Carrozza said. Carrozza explained she has countless clients whose marriages have been ruined by social media.

In other words, it's just enabled a faster deterioration of the right relationship that should be there, but it's helped to destroy it faster than normal in more powerful ways. It goes on to say....

....

The behavior is so common, there's even a website called FacebookCheating.com.

....

Anyway, another one, from the UK....

### **Does Facebook Wreck Marriages?<sup>iv</sup>**

May 21, 2012, 1:54 PM

By Quentin Fottrell

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg changed his status to "married" Saturday [this goes back a ways] and received over one million "likes" from his followers.

Amazing! And who do you think those were from? In this world, it could have been from anyone.

But the site he founded isn't always so marriage-friendly. In fact, lawyers say the social network contributes to an increasing number of marriage breakups.

More than a third of divorce filings last year contained the word Facebook, according to a U.K. survey by Divorce Online, a legal services firm.

....

“Affairs happen with a lightning speed on Facebook,” says K. Jason Krafsky, who authored the book “Facebook and Your Marriage” with his wife Kelli. In the real world, he says, office romances and out-of-town trysts can take months or even years to develop. “On Facebook,” he says, “they happen in just a few clicks.”

See, power! Something that under normal conditions and situations in an office environment, a business environment might take months or years to... still shows that things happen like that and they happen, obviously, way, way too much, but now it's made so much easier, there is so much power to happen quickly and that's what it's showing here, because people tend to let down barriers, think things are done in secret more and are willing to do more.

These are the kinds of pulls that people in God's Church have in different areas of life because of human nature! These are the kinds of things that you have to fight against. Does that happen? Absolutely it happens! People being called out of that kind of a world? Yeah, it's already out there. Whatever you're called out of is the very thing you have to work to change. Anyway, it goes on to say....

The social network is different from most social networks or dating sites in that it both re-connects old flames and allows people to “friend” someone they may only meet once in passing. “It puts temptation (see, entice) in the path of people who would never in a million years risk having an affair,” he says. Facebook declined to comment.

Isn't that sick? A misuse of something that supposedly in secret that human beings are drawn to do. That's why these things are so bad, so wrong. There are some things that can't be allowed, period! But again, you can't control human behavior; but with right teaching, with right education of use of things people are going to come to understand what they must fight. That's why Mr. Armstrong said it's going to take 3-4 generations to get out of the cesspool and to have clear minds and clear lives and more the kind of family that God intends for mankind to have in the best of conditions in this world. Because the reality is we still have human nature, but it's going to take that long to get a lot of things cleaned up, because candidly, things are just passed down - habits, things that people have in their life, parents, the way children are reared, and then it can get better and better through time, and that's a beautiful thing when we see that happening. And that's what parents who truly love God's way of life love to see, to see their children doing better, growing and maturing and having a closer relationship with God and conquering and overcoming many of these difficult tasks, difficult things of life, of human life. Because these are big things in a time of technology the world has never known to this degree.

Another article here.

### **"Social networking a big contributor to divorce"**

By: Sandra Haros/KTAR

Originally published: May 24, 2012

....

"Some data started coming out in 2009 and 2010, that said one in five divorce petitions in the United States literally named Facebook as one of the reasons to the downfall of the marriage," said Mike Lindstrom .....

According to the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, over 80 percent of divorce attorneys said they have seen an increase in the number of divorces cases involving social networking.

Lindstrom said Facebook and other social media sites puts temptation right at your fingertips because it's very easy to reconnect with (supposed) past loves or flings. It's a way to relive good times (supposedly) in your past....

People have this distortion of what was a 'better time' and you find out when they were in it it was just as bad as what they have now, but the human mind tends to deceive itself.

...It's a good way to relive good times in your past and when your current relationship is on shaky ground, that it could be a very dangerous situation.

Another one here....

**"Facebook named in a third of all divorce filings in 2011"<sup>vi</sup>**

By Lindsay Goldwert / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

*Published: Thursday, May 24, 2012, 12:23 PM*

....

The social network was implicated in a third of all divorce filings last year, according to Divorce-Online, a survey by a British legal service.

So before it was one in five and this is now 2011...I'm sorry, in 2009 and 2010 it was one in five, now it says here 2011.

The social network...

Shows how quickly it's growing, how fast it's mushrooming!

The social network was implicated in a third of all divorce filings last year.

Before it was one in five, now it's in the third.

Now an affair is just a click away and the consequences -- what happens online, cannot be erased from online -- can be permanent and devastating.

....

“People feel bolder behind a screen than in person,” the couple wrote on their blog.

“People type and press ‘Send’ faster than common sense can kick in....

It reminds me of that Proverb we read, to stop and think. Today, people don't stop and think, they just do and do it more quickly.

...faster than common sense can kick in, and people feed off the rush....

Human nature, easy to be... you know a rush that sometimes people get, a rush in sin, rush to defy God, a rush to do something that's not right, a distorted rush. Isn't that sick? It's like a drug.

...that they're feeling rather than rationally thinking about what they're doing.'

Still, just because Facebook is named in a divorce doesn't mean it caused the marriage to fall apart.

That's obvious, but it just shows a tool to enable things to happen quicker and more often in society than what it was before. That's the kind of world we live in, because everything is so misused things are happening quicker and what's happening in the mind and man not able to use it because there is no guidance and direction and teaching out here...and a matter of fact, some of it is just absolutely the opposite of what it should be.

Another one here. I thought this was interesting. We were talking last Sabbath after services about this article that discusses managers and people who are hiring.

### **"Hiring Managers Admit to Surfing Job Seekers' Social Media Profiles"<sup>vii</sup>**

By Vicki Salemi on April 24, 2012 5:17 PM

Sure, this may sound pretty obvious but in a recent survey, hiring managers admitted to browsing job seekers' social media profiles.

According to a new survey conducted by CareerBuilder, approximately 37 percent of companies surveyed said they research job candidates on various social networking sites. Although 11 percent indicated they don't currently check out online identities, they're going to start.

....

What exactly are they looking to find? It sounds like they want to evaluate a job seeker's character and personality outside the interview room. In other words, they want to figure out what they're really like. They're relying on Facebook and LinkedIn; a small percentage relies on Twitter.

People are stupid. People are just plain stupid on some of these in what they do and how they use it. It's because their mind isn't right and they don't think right and you think...what is it you're trying to portray? ...that you're seeking a job and they can go onto your site and say, "Man, you're sick! I don't want you in this company!"

An individual was telling me that there was a very well known professional that someone was going to hire recently and they went on their site, and because of that they weren't going to hire them because they saw what they were like on Facebook. Isn't that amazing?

Results in the survey showed that 65 percent of the hiring managers wanted to see if the candidate presented him or herself professionally.

And that's asking a lot now a days.

As for why others took to the various sites to find out more information? More than half wanted to find out if the job seeker is culturally a fit and approximately 35 percent wanted to find out if the candidate is well-rounded. ....one-third of the hiring managers ended up finding information that was less than flattering and resulted in not moving forward with a candidate.

People do the *dumbest things* that hurt potential in life in the job market in the world! They don't even know how to present themselves sometimes in some of these cases, and that's another story that we're going to get into later here, how that technology has *hurt* society and young people and people going into a work force. It has had a devastating affect on a human mind and how people think about themselves, how they think about jobs and work and so forth...and those things need to be addressed, because in the last two months I have heard so many stories of things that need to be changed in the environment of God's Church, and it has to be addressed. So whether we get to some of that today or next Sabbath, it's coming, because this is a direct spin-off of the technology we have today that has *hurt the minds* of people in how certain things are seen and understood in life and what life is supposed to be like from God's vantage point, what He tells us how to live, and what we have slumbered into that is not healthy. These things are going to change in the Millennium in a *very powerful way*.

Going on this article says....

Examples included posting inappropriate photos, information about a candidate drinking or using drugs...

You know, how *dumb* can you be? But people are dumb! ...not a lot of smarts in using some of the things out here. That's why I really shouldn't have ever had to say, "Don't use Facebook for the sake of protection of people in the Church," because of what it does. That's simple in itself, let alone all the other garbage out here, the things that can be misused and so forth. We should have been able to see those things, but that depends on your mind and where you are and how you're thinking about the use of things in society. But that's how we learn, we have to be shown because we get caught up in it, we become prisoner to it, in bondage to it and we don't even know what happens until after we've gone through it and we're able to look back and say, "Man, that was really dumb and I murmured about it." Remember the Israelites murmuring? We're like that. "Who does he think he is telling us, 'Get off Facebook'? I don't agree with that! I just don't think that's right! I don't think it's harmful. I don't think it hurts. I'm not misusing it, no!" Duh-duh-duh! You just don't know it, do you? You don't realize what it does to your mind. You can't see what you can't see until your mind is healed, until you start practicing the *right things*, and that's the point of the sermon series in large part. Until we start practicing more the right things and fighting against the battles that are there you're not going to be able to see what God wants you to see. You're not going to be able to grasp in a more profound way *the things that must be changed and why*, to understand the *spirit* of it. Though it has a strong hold on you in life there are battles you have to fight, there are battles you have to *choose* to fight.

.... Other major no-no's for social media profiles include bad mouthing former employers....

That's going to make you want to hire somebody isn't it? Look at this trend here, blah-blah-blah-blah. It's like people who have been divorced five or six times and they've cheated each time to go with somebody else and then how the sixth one can think, "They'll never cheat on me." How dumb can we be as human beings? And then it happens, they cheat....*Oh*, they're devastated. You think, *psheew*... written on the wall in a big hand.

Other major no-no's for social media profiles include bad mouthing former employers, making discriminatory comments, and lying about his or her qualifications.

On the other side of the coin, almost one-third of hiring managers indicated they found something online that was ultimately positive and pushed them to extending the job offer.

It's like how you might present yourself when you go to an employer, you know, you don't go with freaked out hair and a t-shirt when you're going to apply for a job in a nice place, and go to a manager and talk to him and you come in kind of smelly and unclean. It's just that stupid, to misuse social media like this - that's how stupid it is, and people don't seem to understand that how you present yourself has some meaning to people in the world because... Anyway, there is some job ethic and job sense there and there are certain things you will go the extra mile to do in order to do it. It goes on to say....

Almost 60 percent got a really good sense for the candidate's personality and almost the same percentage mentioned a professional image was also a reason to hire.

So again, some people haven't been as stupid, basically, is what they're saying. Still a bad media to use.

That's just one example of something we've seen in this time, but there are so many more of things that are just misused, things that young people have to be taught about what you put out there and the stupidity sometimes. The pull of human life, say starting in teenage years when a change begins to take place in your life and the attraction between two people begins to be drawn there, and sometimes the temptation by things that are said because people are all alone and they're willing to say something in a freer way on the telephone than they would face to face, and then if you add to that...what are some of these - Skype - where you can actually see a picture, things that people are tempted to do and *do* engage in that are so stupid and foolish and can hurt themselves for life. It's so... so bad! And so there is the need for so much education to take place in a right way and to show people the results and to teach the end-results of doing those things. And I'm thankful those things are coming because the reality is we're going to have technology there that we're not going to do away with. The ability to have things like that is a very beautiful and powerful tool when used properly, but to be able to have access as a young person, totally at your own, 24 hours a day...?

You know what, it's kind of what God gave the responsibility to parents in the first place. The reason that, basically, a parent has responsibility over a person until around the age of 18, they're just a little bit on either side, but basically around that area, is because the reality is they need to be told, "No" many times in their life. Because you know what? They're not ready! They can't handle everything yet! And just like mankind not being able to fully handle technology, and the reality is that young people, it's like this thing... we've had different things about Sabbath services and whether a child... and I don't want to

get into all this because sometimes through counsel it is good to be able to tell someone no, that because of that kind of conduct and whatever, "You shouldn't bring them to services." But as a whole, giving young people an opportunity at 12-13-14-15 to decide themselves whether or not they're going to play games on Friday night or play something on the Sabbath...that's why they need a parent, because you can tell them as a parent, "I'm making the decision for you because I know the decision you're going to make. You're going to make the wrong one." If you're pulled in that direction, that's the decision you're going to make. That's why a parent is there.

And so it is with various gadgets and things that people have, and the reality is there needs to be more restraint, there needs to be a greater control. How to do all that? I don't have all the answers because there is so much stuff out there! Thankfully there is going to be 144,000 who have far sharper minds and are going to know *exactly* what needs to be done and be able to educate and teach people how to do it who will go out and teach others in a right way, in a better way. And then families are going to learn how to *properly* do things...and then children are going to learn what they're doing and what they're being shown, "...and that's better for me, that's healthier for me," and there's a respect there and a communication that as a whole we don't have in the world.

So again, there are so many things that we can address, but that's just one of many. Some things have to be totally done away with, totally revamped, totally reworked. Other things are going to continue on, it's just the use of them that has to be taught. There has to be so much more education. It's just not available in the world today at all.

There is one example that I want to mention here that helps in learning how to judge things and it concerns a particular subject here that I think can put some people to the test, because I think even within the Church, because although I have mentioned it to the ministry I haven't mentioned it in the Church, whereas I probably should have at one point or at least put something on the FAQ, but I didn't. It's on the subject of gambling. We have some people in God's Church who have problems with that, and you talk about hurting your finances, the things that are done there when those things happen, it's horrible! It's like alcoholism, it's like taking a drug or whatever, there are some things that happen... It's like sex addictions and so forth, it's all a matter of enticement and being drawn to it and everybody has different things that work in their minds and in their lives to where things can be done improperly, in a wrong way.

And I think this one here is good because it *can stir you* by thinking it through, "What does God say?" Because see, we've had this careening from ditch to ditch in different subjects in times past, because it's a matter of a maturing process.

We've had it with make-up; we've had it with the subject of make-up throughout the years. Make-up got changed back and forth several times...on/off, wax on/wax off. ☺ And there were battles because of that because it tests the attitude and spirit of people, and that was revealing in itself, it revealed things about our nature and whether we're at one with the government of God because things administratively do and can change and some try and test us.

But there were some things that went along with that that weren't... we just weren't there yet, we didn't grasp and understand, so there were some things... there were scriptures that were used to support, to back up when we shouldn't have it, when it shouldn't be used. One example is Jezebel. She wore bright make-up and different things, and so make-up is bad. It wasn't that Jezebel was bad, it was about make-up and the use of it, it's just bad and wrong because if a pagan does something then it's

wrong. You know, we've gone through some of those in times past. I hope you understand what I'm saying...some of you who are older in the Church you know what I'm talking about, some of you younger don't. But there used to be some things that would come across almost like, well, if the *pagans* used to do it then we shouldn't. Did they go to the bathroom? Don't do it! No, anyway, that's about how bad it was! It's like certain styles or.... I think of the paisley tie! I heard... and what was this shoe, this shoe that has the holes? What is that design? Wingtip. Even wingtip shoes, the pagans used that as designs so we shouldn't use them in the Church. You think, "Give me a break!" Just because they lit a fire to cook their food...

Anyway... so there was balance we didn't always...that's how we learn balance. You learn balance by going back and forth in some things in life. The best we have is when we're in the center of the road, and then we're careening over to the other side from the far right to the far left. Don't wear it/wear it, don't wear it/wear it...and the answer was in the middle, moderation. That's what the real answer was. Because there is no scripture that you could look to that condemns the use of it. It *is* the use of it, like with everything. It's like alcohol, there are religious organizations that believe that alcohol is wrong, you shouldn't have it. There are those of Islam who believe it's just wrong to have - it's good they don't have alcoholism in their society, they don't have drunk drivers in their society. I was going to say Russians... anyway...

So there are things that are just misused, man tends to misuse things, and as it is with alcohol, God shows that alcohol... There are groups that will quote you scriptures and tell you why it's wrong to have, and you quote things about Christ and they try to say, "Oh, no, no, no, and then the 'wine' you take, that's grape juice and it's not fermented at all." And all the ramifications that people get into in some of these things. And the reality is, no, alcohol is... And there are some people who have been a part of God's Church who say it's wrong to eat meat because of things they've been taught in the past. No, it's not, God makes it very clear it's fine to eat meat. But again, something like that should be done in moderation. We've become a very unhealthy society, especially in this part of the western world because of an abuse of it or misuse of it or overeating of certain things. We don't tend to do things in balance. And it's like a farmer, "Just steak and potatoes, that's all I want, steak, potatoes and corn, three meals a day...well, I'll have eggs in the morning, we'll skip the potatoes in the morning." That's not healthy for you. Anyway, moderation, balance, there are things we learn through time.

But again, the subject of gambling. Something to ask about. Some people will come out and say, "Oh, any form of gambling, because you use money, is just wrong!" And I've told the ministry, no, it isn't. No, it isn't. You can't find anything like that scripturally. Where can you find it. How much different... what is different in *that* than if, IF a person has something in moderation, as an example, that they spend a certain amount for entertainment. How much does it cost to go to a football game? You have some people with you, you have hot dogs, whatever else that's there, depending on where you get your seats...how much does it cost to go to some kind of a show of some sort? I'm not talking just about a movie theater, a movie theater is now getting more and more, now you can sit up higher and you can have them come and serve you a full meal as well, which is fine if that's what you want to spend, if you have the money for entertainment.

But there is a problem there, as with alcohol, there is a basic nature of man that is weak - as with alcohol - and because of the way society is geared, like in bars, like in gatherings, the misuse of it is what is taught by society, the abuse of it is what is taught by society, the overuse of it is what is taught by society, to where people can get into a habit of drinking much because it's just the norm. People get together after work and they have 4-5-6 whatever drinks, which is not only *expensive* and hurts your

finances for your home but it intoxicates and then people get in a vehicle and they kill people. Stupid things that human beings do sometimes without thought of responsibility.

And so, how do we judge matters in life? It's by what is moderate and what isn't moderate, it's by things that either God says as a guideline or a boundary, certain things that should not be allowed at all, certain things that are. It's the use of things.

It's like the sexual relationship; God created it to be a beautiful thing between a man and a woman in marriage, period, that's it! From there on its sin! Now, man hasn't done too well with that one, has he? That's the most highly abused one of all, misused one, because there is a powerful pull in the human mind. That's why there is so much ability on the internet for it to be abused and misused, because everything imaginable is out there. You can be doing a search on the most basic of things sometimes of life and all of a sudden garbage pops up. You have to be very careful because there is so much advertising that's done on the systems out there. And for too many, especially too many men, those can be popped onto and after a while...and then after a bit longer... and then the repetition of it grows. And I *know* those are powerful pulls in human life; they are!

But as with everything we must learn to control everything we have. Those are just physical things, how much more technology and how fast paced things are, and things you can do in private. That's what we're talking about here, where all the barriers that normally, under normal society would be barriers or things that people wouldn't broach, as we read in the articles here, that people wouldn't normally do, as it said, in a million years, because of technology it's broken down those barriers and so it's easier for people to sin.

We must truly learn to use technology and understand the dangers of misusing it. And again, a lot of this is going to be a matter of education.

So again here, I want to go back to this matter of - I should have followed through on some of my notes here because I had it all written out about asking it, because again, what we have to ask first of all about certain things - what are the guidelines that God gives in scripture? What comes from God's judgment, because the reality is, you're not supposed to decide on your own! You're not supposed to judge by what *you* think is right or wrong!

There are people who think that, in times past, in various religions, that any kind of dancing would be wrong, and it's not. There are some kinds that is wrong...again, it's this right use of certain things and what is being done by it, what is being shown by it, what is its purpose. Same thing with music and on and on it goes. But again, we have to look at each thing and seek to ask, "What does God say about it?" There are people who, religious groups who have believed, especially going back and coming out of Victorian times, and there are religious groups who believed that you shouldn't play cards, shouldn't use dice...and then they'll use scriptures in the Old Testament and that's not...it has nothing to do with...it's not used in the same, it's has nothing to do with some of those things. It's like the make-up thing - because Jezebel wore that... can anybody else think of some other scriptures that were used about some things about make-up? Yeah, the Egyptians, those shameful Egyptians! ☺ Those pagans! But that's what was said, the Egyptians did it and so we're not to look like them. Well, yeah, there were things that were abused and misused.

I've even mentioned how that even in advertisements there is a look in the eyes and the darkness of certain things that are done to lure - that's what even the look... I don't even know how to describe the

look! It's that wanton look, "I want you and I know you want me." That's the way... it's in the eyes! And that can be accentuated and that's just wrong....and so on and on it goes.

Clothing! How to dress! Standards of life. Again, so often the term 'moderation' keeps coming back because basically so much is...that's what God teaches. There can be many different styles, as there are around the world, of things that people can wear that are a matter of something in their national background that are beautiful in their setting, in their life. One thing I hope is changed quick is this thing with ties. It's choking us! But again, moderation.

Women have to come to understand love toward men in a right way, not in a distorted way. *Why?* What is the purpose of wearing something that goes so low and shows so much of the breast? What is the purpose in style of that? Why is it that someone wants to hike their dress up to where if they sit down they've got to squeeze their legs so close together? Why are those things out there in life? Why do people want to portray such an image, and they don't understand they're just cheapening themselves...they're cheapening themselves. When your mind is clean, when your mind is cleaned up and you see something like that you see it for what it is, see? You see it for being cheap! They don't have any self-respect like they should have, they don't have an understanding of an image, a right kind of image that they really want to portray. Do you want to portray one that you're easily to be used and misused, and those things have to be taught at a young age to children as they grow up, things of dress and things of... And it goes back to moderation but it also has a lot to do with understanding the human mind.

And we have to understand where designs of things have come from, they've come from distorted minds that have a different purpose in life and distortions of what they're teaching. Because it's a matter of teaching oftentimes. And it's amazing to me how human beings don't want to be different, and because there is such a strong desire, we want to be like others, we don't want to be looked down upon, we don't want to be looked at as strange or different, especially in schools. That's such a hard thing sometimes for parents. And so thankfully we're getting out of this age so those pressures aren't on people in families and parents anymore, so that we can have things in moderation and teach things and the proper use of them that are good...and so there won't be any strong things that work in young people's minds that they have to be like someone else to be liked, to be loved, to be looked up to, to be befriended, to have friends...and on and on it goes.

So again, there are a lot of things that God hasn't mapped out at every turn in life where we have volumes and volumes of things written, of do's and don'ts, He wants us to learn how to judge. There are principles of life, that especially as our minds are being healed, that we can learn how to judge more perfectly, with a clearer mind.

I've mentioned some of those things. I think of things that have come up in the past, and those of you who are older in the Church... things like birthdays. Here we go again, it's like make-up, the pagans did it! Job's family did it and they were killed by a tornado... don't do birthdays! I'm just making a little fun of some of these because we went to certain scriptures that just didn't prove something was right or wrong, it's the *use* of something. The way the world does something is not healthy, the way things in the world are celebrated is not healthy. We learn moderation.

I think one of the worst things in life in some respects, in a family, would be to say a mother and father cannot recognize, cannot remember, cannot speak about their own children's birthday, the one that they gave life to - especially the wife, the mother. To think you couldn't talk to your children about the

day their children were born and remember that with a great fondness because of what it means, that they have life. But it's how far do you go? And that's where moderation comes in again.

So again, does it come from our own thinking, like Adam and Eve and all of a sudden, "We're naked!" ...because of what comes into your mind and how you think you're supposed to judge things? Or is it because it *really comes from what God says and what God teaches*, that it *agrees* with the *soundness of mind* that comes from God. Because only God can give soundness of mind and so we have to look to God for help in right judgment of things...and you can't have that kind of a mind or entertain that kind of a mind in certain areas of life until you get rid of or are working at getting rid of some of the distortion and perversion!

If you have a problem with smoking you're never going to grasp and understand some of the things I've said about it until you have fought the fight more and gotten to the point where you've conquered it. You just can't live in that, as some seem to think they can do in God's Church! That's not going to be around in the future.

The misuse of alcohol, as much has been said.

But see, those are battle of the human mind sometimes...but you really can't grasp and comprehend fully what's being said, what God is saying until you start cleaning up your mind and your life in some of those areas, and then you begin to grasp. Just like with smoking, like I mentioned, you can't even... until you're cleaned up you can't grasp how obnoxious it smells. It's a sick smell! When your lungs and your nasal passages are clean and they don't have fibers, because of your fibers in your nose and the nostrils and everything else, smoked up like car windows. You go by a car sometimes and they don't even clean their cars, it's just a filmy brownish color... I'm sorry, we've got to clean up our lives so we can see what is right before God.

It's like a young person being taught to live in cleanliness. You can't appreciate it nor understand it until you do it. If your car is a rolling garbage can you're really not going to grasp what it is to take care of things, what it means to keep things clean and to appreciate cleanliness. You know, God appreciates cleanliness. There are things that God shows us in life that are basic about *clean lives*, but if we don't grasp that He wants *the mind* to be cleaned...but we have to learn physically what it means to be clean and He starts showing us by cleanly laws and laws of foods, cleanly laws, and so forth.

And so that is a good example to begin to understand something of the spirit, of the mind, that you have to clean up the garbage can sometimes or clean out the garbage before you can really begin to see things in a beautiful light the way God has given it. And that's an awesome thing to understand, it's a part of the healing that can take place in the human mind.

So again, I'll just be open, blunt about some of this. I think about games like blackjack or poker. What is wrong? The Bible doesn't say much about cards does it? So to say there are scriptures against it... So what do you look to? Well, you look to God, things that you can do and things that you shouldn't do. And so I gave the example here, the big problem comes in because people can't go into something as a matter of entertainment, because there is nothing different in entertainment between playing a game like that at a table with other people if the environment is right. But you know what? Today's environment is not right and it won't be that way in the world tomorrow either. There aren't going to be giant casino's like there are today. There aren't going to be, just like I mentioned last Sabbath, there aren't going to be places where you go to bars and have a lot of bars either.

There was one time on a harvest run we were up in one part of the country, up in Montana, and the downtown area, about every third building was a bar - the whole downtown! Cause everybody went there at night, that was their life...and what were they doing? I can tell you right now they were drinking a lot, *every night* and especially on the weekend! But that's the way the world has become. And people think they have to do that. You go to a restaurant and a lot of them have separate areas for just bars. Now, there is nothing wrong with that per se unless if you're not educated properly, that isn't just where you go and spend your whole time there. To go there to have a drink before you maybe have your meal, there is nothing wrong with that...but discipline, guidelines, boundaries, we have to learn to practice those in our life and we have to teach them a lot more, obviously. And again, looking forward to those changes that have to take place, but there is not going to be any luring to sin like there is today.

The reality is with things like gambling, just to make it blunt, is that people lack control, especially in those areas. It's like a bar area, it can't be there if that's all that's there and society believes that by that environment, by young people or whatever it is in going to a certain area...and I don't even know where people go today, but I know they do. They did in my day and I just don't know what's out there fully today, but you know, people go to various kinds of places to meet other people - they may be doing it less because of the internet today - but to go there in that environment where over-drinking is encouraged and even drugs is encouraged - obviously those things are going to, even the drug part obviously, is going to come to a screeching halt anyway - but it's the environment, the environment of a lot of things has to be changed drastically. And it's not that specific things are individually wrong if there are boundaries.

I think of this thing of gambling again because I know that some people in the Church have had big battles with some of this through times past and have misused those things profoundly so because there is that enticement to keep putting more money... if you get caught up in some of those things like people do with alcohol, and especially in that environment, if they're drinking alcohol they can be enticed to keep... because they want something quick and big, they see someone win big. That's not right. Those kinds of things should never be there.

So to have the game, that's one thing, but to do it in the way that man does it today has to be changed, because the reality is *people can't handle it*. I've seen it over and over again in people's lives, they get caught up in something and they don't have the control, the power to say, "No!" ...because there is an alluring thing, a powerful thing there that pulls at too many people and they can't control themselves then and then after a while they're throwing more money into something, they're drinking... Why do you think they come around and give people booze like they do? It's so that you lose control and so you get trapped into something, and it becomes a vicious thing for people.

We have to be careful how we judge things and to realize that anything that has to do with luring people to sin, luring people to not have control has to be stopped totally, without exception. So, I'm not sure how Las Vegas can be used. I've had some designs for it, there are some beautiful buildings out there that by the time you go in and take out all those tables and all those slot machines that they would be great places to have Feasts. But I don't know that we can do that, but I can see... You know how we used to have Embassy Suites, we used Embassy Suites a lot because you could set up a lot of tables and have people meet out there and the ability to get along, to converse and fellowship is what I'm talking about, is so much better when you have areas for that. So who knows! ☺

But there are so many things about entertainment that have to be changed from top to bottom; movie industry, music, sporting events, everything is so messed up today, and some people are going to have

withdrawals from that, they really are. Some people are going to have withdrawals from some of those things when God lets you know, "No, they are not going to be allowed. No, you can't have it anymore. Yes, we are changing things, we're not going to have some of the kinds of things in sports that we have today." Some of you are going to have withdrawals! It's not going to be the same. It's not going to be these multi-billion dollar owners or multi-million dollar owners, or whatever it is, paying out multiple millions of dollars to people just so they can squash someone else and invite 80,000 people to their arenas to have a great whatever.

Let's go back here to Proverbs 5. I've thrown some things out there just to get you to thinking, just so we start to think about certain areas. And if you have battles in some of these things, these are the things you've got to fight! Because I know these battles are out there, I've heard too many individuals, too many comments, too many young people have written me, and I'm very thankful they've been very candid and very open in some cases about battles they're fighting and things that are real out here. And I know if it exists there I know it exists a lot more, of individuals who *can't* bring themselves to say those things...trouble with pornography, okay? ...continued trouble with alcohol. ...trouble with gambling...and on and on it goes.

God did not call us out of a world, us being perfect, He called us as being very imperfect, but we're to change and we're to grow and we're to conquer and we're to overcome and we're to fight these battles...and fight them we must. And you just continue to go before God and continue to fight. If you don't fight it you're not going to conquer it. If you don't keep at fighting it and keep going before God and asking for forgiveness of the sins nothing will change. You've got to constantly fight until you've conquered it. In some cases you will never conquer some things in your life, but every time you sin or are drawn back to it you must fight it again, whatever your weakness, whatever it is your battle is in life, indeed you must fight it. That is the process whereby your mind is healed where God can give you more soundness of mind that comes from Him. It's a beautiful thing, soundness of mind that comes from God.

So again, this principle here in Proverbs 5, we talked about it from the very beginning because it has to do with everything in life. It's like some of the stupidity right now about gun control. You know, it should be a simple one. There is nothing wrong with hunting, having a shotgun, having a rifle to kill, if you're hunting and killing deer and using the meat of it and storing it in your freezer. Just go out and kill for sport for no purpose at all is stupid, but for a purpose, for something you can enjoy and the sport as well. Sport isn't getting a salt lick for deer and then standing back 50 yards and waiting for them to come. So there are things about sports that are good and things that aren't so good. The point being is that to have an assault rifle though, to where you can have multiple rounds, how dumb is that? They're trying to outlaw it to where you can't have more than ten rounds. Who needs ten rounds of anything? Whenever I've been deer hunting if I don't get the first shot I might as well just have a gun that has one bullet in it, because if I don't get the first shot the stupid thing is not going to stand there being stupid while stupid me gets another bullet reloaded in there. Now I have done that where I have gotten a couple and close together. It was a one-timer in my life. But there is no need for more!

So how hard is it to have a law even in today's world? You think, why do you need something that shoots more than two or three shells at one time in anything? What is the purpose of having something so powerful? What is good about that? And they debate it back and forth and there is no soundness of mind in something so simple and so basic! Blows my mind! Why is it that someone needs to go out there and shoot something that'd blow up a car?

**Proverbs 5:1 - My son, attend/pay attention unto My Wisdom:** we look to God in judgment, we look to God to guide and direct and lead us and help mold and fashion our mind, to help heal our mind, to help recognize there are boundaries and restrictions and restraints that we need to have as human beings, especially with the powerful use of technology out there today.

...and bow your ear to My understanding: that means you've got to work, you've got to really focus and concentrate. It's like sometimes we want to make sure we're hearing what's being said, we almost lean forward a little bit more. ...**bow the head so that you might regard discretion**, in other words, in this sense, to fully think things through before acting, like we talked about earlier, the internet, you push a button, you don't think, and people get into habits and they don't think and they just do it quickly and then get pulled into it where... anyway...**so that you might regard discretion and your lips might keep knowledge**. Thankfully we're entering a period of time where it's not going to be lost.

I don't know how *thankful* you are but to me that's exhilarating, to think about an age where only one thing is taught, where everything is going to be taught in family all the way through - one way! Knowledge is going to be there in front of people, the right knowledge, the truth.

**For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb**, so it uses something very physical here again to teach about a weakness that we have as human beings, to not yield yourself to things that entice, to go beyond boundaries that God gives, because you hurt your mind, you ruin your mind, and then you make the battles worse! To be in bondage to something means you don't have power over it, it has power over you. That's why the internet has power over too many people. TV can have power over you if you misuse it. And if you use a lot of electronic things today it *really* hurts your mind, it can *really hurt you mightily* making you slumber, making you sleep, hurting you deeply in your being. That's what technology can do if you don't use it right. If that's all you have a diet of, is technology in your life, you go from one thing to another in technology and nothing in the world that you have part of, in essence, and you kind of go off in hibernation, you so destroy your mind, you hurt your mind. Don't let those things happen to you, fight against those pulls, because they're there.

**For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb;** these things just lure you in, they want to keep you in bondage. You've got to learn to be in control, and the only way you can is with God's help. It's the only way you *can* be in control of your life.

I was going to go into some other scriptures here but... I'm going to go ahead and mention this, take the time to do it... how the misuse of technology, it's what I was just talking about here, allures, entices people to become lazy, unproductive, complacent in mind and spirit and turning more inward. That is not a healthy thing. I think I'll save that for next Sabbath. I was going to go into some scriptures in Proverbs but let's just wait.

So we have to fight on every front because technology can be so abused and so misused and so hurt every facet of society indeed. So again here, I think that pretty much summarizes and settles it all.

Look to God for soundness of mind, to be able to judge things His way, the right way, and not from our ideas, of things from our past or things maybe we've even heard in the Church in times past, because we're ever growing and we're ever maturing and we need to learn how to judge things rightly by what God says and the guidelines and direction He gives.

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