

The title of today's sermon is *To Know Why – Part 3*.

We have looked in Part 1 and 2 at different aspects with regards to the truth, what God has placed *into* the Church, *into* the Body of Christ. So we do know the truth. God has revealed to those called out of this world into a relationship with Him the purpose of life, and we've looked at that. We understand the purpose of life and we also understand that the world has not been called to know or to understand the reason they were born. And if we look back, Mr. Armstrong wrote an article, "Why Were You Born?" and went into a lot of details about the aspect of why mankind existed.

To know and understand the truth on a spiritual level is something that we should never take for granted, and unfortunately, human nature, the natural carnal mind, we do tend to take things for granted. So we can be in God's Church for a short period or even a long period of time, and the danger is the longer we are in God's Church, in the Body of Christ, we tend to take our knowledge, what God has revealed to us, for granted. And that is a natural thing to do. And you'll find that within societies and within an education process of any type, people take things for granted, become familiar or over-familiar with something, and we, of course, can become over-familiar with the truth.

Now, the point of these sermons, the sermon series that we're in now, is to ensure that we don't take for granted, we don't take it lightly to the fact that God has revealed the truth to us, and it is by the power of His holy spirit that He has done it. All knowledge, all truth has come from God. We have not generated anything from our own thinking. We should never forget that we heard and learned the truth from God while *in* the Church of God, and now God's true Church is named "the Church of God – PKG," "Preparing for the Kingdom of God."

Now, we should not take for granted all of the truth that God has placed into the Church of God – PKG because it now separates us from the Churches that are scattered, who do not have the truth. They had truth to a degree when they understood it while in the Church of God, but as they have been separated and scattered away from a relationship with God, they now no longer understand truth on a spiritual level. They may know *aspects* of truth but they do not understand it on a spiritual level, and the reason is – we went through this before – the reason is that without God's spirit we cannot remain in the truth because without God's spirit we cannot understand the truth on a spiritual level. Hence, the Churches that are scattered reject what God has placed *into* His true Church. They ignore it and they don't want to hear what God has got to say.

We should never forget that it was *God* that revealed truth to us by the power of His holy spirit. So we give all the praise, all the glory to God, where it belongs, because it was God that has placed truth into His Church, and then of course with a calling has placed truth into our minds by the power of His holy spirit.

We have seen that because of this calling into the truth, life will not be easy for any of us, and we look foolish to the world. Well, that's the way that it is; we will look foolish to the world. If you consider the type of season that we're now going to enter into, which is in the Christian world that is out there, that has no true knowledge of God really, they now celebrate a season which is called Christmas, which is "Christ's Mass." So it originates from a Catholic church and the churches that were scattered out from

the Catholic church or left the Catholic church still celebrate this festival called "Christmas." So we could look at that and say, "Is it easy to prove that Christmas is not of God?" And the answer is it's very easy to prove it, and we could go through some basic statements like, do reindeers fly? The answer is no. Is there such a person as Santa Claus? The answer is no. Was Christ born on the 25th of December? Well, the answer is no. All of these things are easy to prove...easy to prove, and when you talk to people about it, they would probably, some of them, would recognize this fact and actually admit it, but *to them* it's irrelevant because of the type of season, which is one of giving and sharing and family and all these things that they make excuses for.

Well, what does God's word say about these things, these lies that have penetrated into this particular day of worship that is a religious worship. It is how they worship God or Jesus Christ is what they would say. Well, what does God's word say about this? So we don't have to go into studying it and examining it all and trying to *prove* anything in this way, in the sense of all the dates and times and all the celebrations and what does the meaning of the tree mean and all the other things. They're all irrelevant because God's word makes it very clear that this is false, and we understand it's false, and people would admit it's false, but they reject God's word because they don't have God's spirit to understand it on a spiritual level, that this is actually sin. The celebration of a Christmas is sin...it's actually sin. But they don't really understand it. They don't see it.

Let's look at it from what God says. Turn to **1 John 2:21 – I have not written to you because you do not know the truth**, so this is John writing to the Church of God saying, "Well, I'm not writing you this letter because you don't know the truth because God is the one who has revealed truth to the Church," **but because you know it**, because we have an understanding of what truth is and how truth is generated, by God through Jesus Christ to the Church. So we understand this and we know truth, and we know that truth enters the Church through an apostle. So we know these things. And John is saying here to the Church, well, he's writing this not because they don't know the truth, but because they do, **and**, now, this is the spiritual principle that comes out of it, **and that no lie is of the truth**. So nothing of a lie, nothing involving a lie could or should be used to worship God in any way. That just got rid of Christmas, Easter, Halloween, and all the other false religious worship that goes on in this world because no lie can be involved or should be involved in anything in the way that God is worshipped because the truth – which is God's word – reveals the way that God should be worshipped. So we can see from that that no lie is of the truth.

Let's look at John 17:14. Now, these are things, brethren, that we know, and always remember these things, hold them close, which is what God says about the truth – that no lie, anything that is a lie, is not of the truth, and therefore, we know how to worship God in spirit and truth. We do it in spirit, which is through the power of His holy spirit dwelling with our spirit, and we do it in truth, which is according to God's word. We worship God as God has outlined. Now, these are things we know. We know *why* we don't keep Christmas. We know *why* we don't keep Easter...because they are sin and we have nothing to do with sin. We flee sin, and we don't want to be associated with it.

John 17:14 – I have given them Your word... here it is Christ saying, "I have given them," the disciples, "Your word," which is God the Father's word, **and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world**. So here we have it where the disciples will be hated and God's word will be hated because they're not of the world. They are spiritual in nature and the world is not spiritual in its thinking. It can't because it doesn't have God's spirit. And Christ is saying, "Well, I'm not of the world either," because He had the mind of God.

Verse 15 – I do not pray that You, which is God, should take them, the disciples, out of the world, but that You, God, should keep them from the evil one, so talking about a spiritual aspect of life. The disciples are going to have to live in the world just as we're going to have to live in the world and face the world's consequences, which is the world's system, which is one of evil, but Christ says here not to keep them away from that, but to deliver them from Satan, from the evil one because Satan is the one that has set out to destroy us. Mankind doesn't understand what it's doing. Satan knows full well what he's doing, which is an effort to destroy God's people. To stop us entering into Elohim is what Satan's purpose is.

Verse 16 – They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. So, we're not of the world if God's spirit lives and dwells in us.

Verse 17 – Sanctify them by Your truth. So we are set aside. We're set aside *by* God's word by the truth. That's what separates us from this world. **Your word is truth.** Now, that is something for us to hang onto. We understand that God's word *is* truth because no lie comes from God. So we cannot worship God in any way where a lie is involved, hence, there is no point in even considering anything to do with the aspect of what would be called today, Christmas.

Verse 18 – As You sent Me into the world... this is Christ speaking... **As you, God the Father, have sent Me into the world I also have sent them into the world.** So they had instructions about what they were to do, and that was to preach the gospel, to make disciples, make followers of Jesus Christ, and preach the gospel, the good news of the Kingdom of God. And that's what God's Church still does to this very day. God's Church preaches the good news of the return of Christ, the Kingdom of God, because the Kingdom of God *is* the only hope for this world, for this system to be abolished, got rid of, and to set up a new system, God's system all based on truth, no lies.

Verse 19 – And for their sake I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. So we, brethren, are set aside by God, and we're set aside by God in truth because *we* have the truth.

Turn to **John 4:23**. Christ is speaking again here. **But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers,** which is us, brethren. A true worshipper is somebody that has been called by God the Father and had the gift of repentance, been baptized, their sins have been forgiven to that point in time, and had the hands of a true minister of God layed on them. They are then in a position to be true worshippers because they have God's spirit living and dwelling in them. So a true worshipper is someone that has God's spirit active in their life **...will worship the Father in spirit and truth...** so the truth is the most important aspect when it comes to worshipping God, that people can't run off and just do their own thing. First of all, you have to have God's spirit, and secondly, it has to be done (worshipping God has to be done) with the truth or by the truth or *in* the truth **...for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.** This is the only way to worship God.

Verse 24 – God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. So that is the only way to worship God. So *anybody* that comes up with another way, anything that is not of the truth, well, they can't worship God, and in fact, they are *not* worshipping God as God has outlined in His word.

From that we can see that life is not going to be easy. We're going to be sent out into this world, and by being 'sent out into this world,' it's one of living God's way of life in a world that's hostile against us. They cannot see God's word. They don't understand God's word. They don't understand us, and we

shouldn't expect people to understand us because they can't. We know the why of many things in life because God has revealed it to us. They do not understand and know the why of life. They just simply don't. So much of the truth that we have, brethren, we should hold dear to ourselves, to our minds, to our hearts, to our inner thinking, and remember that people around us cannot see the truth, and the truth is foolishness to mankind, and therefore, because we live the truth, we will be foolishness to them. God's ways are foolish to mankind.

Matthew 10:16-42 – Behold, I, Jesus Christ, send you out as sheep... the implication here or the analogy or the metaphor, the sheep are basically innocent... **in the midst of wolves.** And that metaphorically is speaking, in amongst those that are greedy, destructive (as we know wolves are sneaky, destructive, and they will gang up to destroy). So this is talking about man's destructive ways and Satan's system of thinking. **Therefore be wise as serpents,** and to be "wise as a serpent" is to be cunning in the right sense, cunning in the use of the word of God. And to be "wise as a serpent" is to know when to speak, when to answer, and when not to answer. There is a proverb that says, "Answer a fool according to his folly." The same one says, "Don't answer a fool according to his folly." To know that and to understand it is being *wise*. To understand when to speak and when not to speak is the application of wisdom, to know it. So that is what it is to be "as wise as serpents" **...and harmless as doves.** To be gentle in our attitude, to be humble, to be meek, to be kind, to be spiritually awake is another way to put that. "To be harmless as doves" is that we desire no ill will to anybody, nobody in society, no one in any of our relationships, no ill will to any human being.

Verse 17 – But beware of men, and this is talking about mankind's thinking, the natural carnal mind, **for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.** They will try to destroy you. Another version of this same scripture says, "Don't be naive." Let's not be naive. Let's not use our natural carnal minds. Just remember who we are, why God has called us, and just to understand that mankind has a natural carnal mind and they cannot understand us. Some people will charge you with evil motives. Well, that's exactly what happens; people think that we are strange and they *will* impute evil motives towards us. Others will smear your reputation. Yes, people will say all sorts of things about us and they will speak lies about us because they can't understand us. Because we understand the truth and we believe the truth people are going to smear our names, people are going to speak against us – all because of being a member of the Body of Christ, being associated with the Church of God – PKG. That's exactly what's going to happen.

Verse 18 – You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, talking about Jesus Christ's sake, because of this way of life. Because we're living this way of life we're going to run into troubles, people aren't going to support us. Why? **...as a testimony.** So God will allow this. God will allow these things to happen to us in our life, within our family, within all types of environments. Because... as a witness, **as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.** Another version says, "Don't be upset when they haul you before the civil authorities; without knowing it they've done you a favour, given you a platform for preaching the good news." Because of the way we live! Because the way we would respond to an evil authority would be one of gentleness. We're as harmless as a dove. We're wise. We would speak the truth. Out of concern we will be open and honest. But what will that get us in this world? It'll get us punished because Satan's system is one of punishing; it punishes.

Verse 19 – But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. Here we have an opportunity. We're being persecuted, but we shouldn't take it to ourselves to be overly worried about that and we shouldn't worry about what we should speak; in other words, try to analyze everything to work out, "This is the way I'm going to respond," or "I'm going to do this," "I'm going to do

that,” and the reason is – because? – **For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak.** It'll be God's spirit living and dwelling in us that will do the work that is required.

We are to stay close to the truth. By staying close to the truth, by the power of God's spirit, God will work in us out to the benefit of others, and if there is a witness to be had, if there is evidence to be had of who we are, God will do it. No matter what happens the words that we are to use will be given to us by God. God will do the work.

Verse 20 – For it is not you who speak, but the spirit of your Father who speaks in you. That's amazing! *That is amazing!* To know this! To know, brethren, we shouldn't work ourselves up and get worried about environments. We should relax as much as we can because God says here that if there is any works to be done, good spiritual works (because only God can do good), if there are to be spiritual works to be done, God will do it in and through us and we're not to worry. We don't have to memorize scriptures.

I had a phone call not long ago from somebody and they were referring to various scriptures, and I said to them, "Well, I don't know exactly where all those scriptures are." I have not learned all the Bible to know exactly when somebody, like a Mormon or one of the others, may quote a scripture to me. I couldn't tell you where it exactly was. I might know some of its intent but I don't necessarily say that I would understand it all – probably normally spoken out of context anyway. But that's not the point, that's not the point at all. It's about the way we live. To understand a scripture is one thing, to implement it into our lives is another. So we may understand about certain aspects of life, but unless we're doing it, unless we're living it, it's just words. There are plenty of people out there doing certain things, but they're not motivated by God's spirit. All our actions need to be motivated by God's spirit, and that's what we desire; we desire God to live and dwell in us. So God has a plan for us. It is God that does the works. God by the power of His spirit will communicate what is needed at that time. At any time, no matter when it is, God will use us to His good for what He is achieving on this earth.

Verse 21 – Now brother will deliver brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. Now, this can be speaking on a physical level, but also on a spiritual level, that people are going to turn on us. They're not knowing what they're really doing, but they can turn on us and cause us great distress. They can desire ill will on their own flesh and blood. It's hard to believe that that is the case, but these things happen. Now, often when they happen the person doing it doesn't fully comprehend what they're doing. They actually think they're doing God a favor. And therefore, speaking against us they believe in their own thinking that they're doing good and they're not doing evil, and they may hate and despise us and say all sorts of things to us, they actually think they're trying to motivate us to leave God's Church or they believe they're motivating us to all of a sudden wake up and see good. But the truth is they are just simply being used and it's just another attack and it's about this very fact of what we're going through here. We are to beware of men, of men's thinking, of the natural carnal mind. We need to be on guard. We're aware of it. And our own family can deliver us up through words and through actions.

Yes, family will reject us *if* we live God's way of life, and *that* is a fact. Our families *will* reject us *IF* we live God's way of life. Now, not *everybody* in every family does, but unfortunately in this society, generally, family does turn against us.

Verse 22 – And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. So we are to continue in the faith. Faith will be seen by others, but they will *not* “see” what we

are doing on a spiritual level. So they will see our faith. They will see our faith as being strange and not fitting in, not being “normal.” There has been criticism in times past saying, “Well, God’s Church is small,” and the world doesn’t understand it, and people will say things like, “Well, I can’t believe that you think that you’re just part of God’s true Church! You’re so small! How can all of these others, millions of people, be wrong?” The truth is, they are, and the reason is we know why, because God didn’t call them. God did not call them into the truth and that’s why they can’t see, that’s why they make statements like, “Well, you just simply *can’t* be of God; you’re so small. You can’t tell me that *just you* and your lot alone, your small group, is of God, and all the rest of the world, they’re all wrong! They all read the Bible! They all study it and they’re all wrong?” Yes, that is true. They’re all wrong, and yes, they might read it on an academic level, but they don’t have God’s spirit; therefore, they are wrong. *They* are wrong because they can’t see the truth. Now, the only reason we see the truth is because God has called us to that. We don’t take anything to ourselves. We just simply have to endure to the end. Whatever it takes for each and every one of us, we are to continue.

Now, the word “endure” has different meanings in scripture at different times, but one of the main points that comes out about “enduring” is basically “to remain under.” “To endure to the end” is to remain under God’s government to the end, and that’s why people leave God’s Church, is because they don’t remain under government to the end. They can’t *endure* to the end. Another way of saying that is, “Don’t quit! Don’t give up on this way of life! God states that it will all be worth it in the end.” Now, we have been called, brethren, to suffer with Christ...and Christ suffered. He suffered persecution.

Verse 23 – When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. Well, now this is all based on what is the right thing to do and at what time to do it. There *is* a time to flee particular relationships. Now, each individual has to work that out for themselves. By the power of God’s spirit and staying close to God they have to work out, “Is this environment toxic? And for my own spiritual health it is time to flee.” Well, here it is. This was an instruction to the disciples, that “when they persecute you in a particular city, flee to another.” In other words, continue on enduring, move on, and continue to preach the gospel, live this way of life before others unto the end; you continue. **For assuredly, I say to you**, and this was talking to the disciples then, **you will not have gone through the cities of Israel**, which are the physical scattered nations of Israel, **before the Son of Man comes**. There is a spiritual principle here that we should consider. That is to know when to flee from certain environments that could take away our spiritual relationship with God, and that is a personal choice. And there are a lot of situations in life where it *is* time to flee, it *is* time to get out of a situation, and it could be work, it could be a lot of things, to get out of certain environments because it’s toxic, it’s something that will destroy us on a spiritual level. We should flee any environment that continually pressures us or continually encourages us to sin because that’s the issue in life.

When we are around environments where we are encouraged or the pressure to sin is around us, we should flee. Why would you go on to internet websites if there is a problem with pornography in a person’s life? They possibly shouldn’t even be on the internet because if they’re drawn to it and it’s just so easy for them to fall into it, honestly, they are better off just to get off the internet all together because they’ve got to flee it because it’s in their own spiritual interest. If you can’t control a certain situation, best to flee it. When to flee is based on an individual’s personal spiritual judgment.

Verse 24 – A disciple/student is not above his teacher, nor a student above his master. The point being made here is that we must remain teachable. To remain teachable is we must remain humble, and to be humble is to know, to know the truth of “that of and by myself,” as a human being, “I can do nothing spiritual.” I can do no good spiritually. All spiritual works are done by God the Father through the power

of His holy spirit. Now, with that knowledge, with that understanding, that we know that and we understand it, we can be humble because we don't take any credit to self. The ability to lift ourselves up is always there, but if we can always remember that if there *has* been any good done, if there *is* any good done in our life, it was God in us to the benefit of others. Now, with that comes humility because we never take credit to ourselves for any good works, and what comes out of it is humility because we understand the knowledge, we understand *why* this is so, because all good, all glory must go back to God the Father.

Verse 25 – It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. In other words, desire to follow the same example. **If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub,** and Beelzebub is of Satan. So the master of the house was Jesus Christ and they're saying, "Well, He's of Satan," **how much more will they call those of his household!** Well, we are of the household. We are the Church of God, Christ's Church, God's Church, so we are of Christ's household; therefore, we are going to run into the same problem. People are going to say that we in our conduct are of Satan, because that's what they called Christ. Another version of this said, "Be content and pleased when you, My students, get the same treatment I get." And what did they do to Christ? They persecuted Christ. "If the master gets called names, what can the student expect?" So, what do we expect, brethren? Do we expect life to go well for us, being members of the Body of Christ? Do we? Do we expect to be called names? Do we expect to be belittled? Do we expect these things? Well, we should, and we shouldn't be shocked when they happen. When people speak ill of us we should never be shocked because it happened to Christ and we are followers of Christ, we are students of Christ, we are *of* Christ, Christ is in us. Therefore, what will happen? If we live our life, walk in the truth, we're going to be ill spoken of.

Verse 26 – Therefore do not fear them, mankind. **For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.** Now, this is a promise from God. We should not fear what man can do to us because in the end everything will be revealed and nothing will be hidden. You can't hide sin from God. Nobody can hide sin from God and everyone will be held accountable for their actions.

Whatever I tell you in the dark, in this world, **speak in the light,** in the Church; **and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops.** We are not to let anyone or anything stop God's work! And God's work is? Creating Elohim! We *are* God's work! We are God's handiwork, and God's work is going to be completed and Elohim is going to be created. The matter is, are we going to endure, remain under government, until the end? That's our choice. We have that choice. We must not let anything stop God's work in transforming our thinking by the power of His holy spirit.

And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the life. Why? Because life can be resurrected by God. **But rather fear Him,** God the Father, **who is able to destroy both life,** the spirit in man, **and the body in gehenna,** which is a second death. **Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin?** That was a question Christ asked. **And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.** So God understands these things. God understands what is happening. He has total control over His creation.

Verse 30 – But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So God knows us, brethren, and we should take great encouragement from this. We know that God knows us. God was the one who called us and He knows every aspect of our inner thinking. Even though we believe that we have revealed ourselves totally to God, deep down have we? Have we really revealed all our inner thinking to God? Well, as we go deeper into time in relation to our calling we do become more open and more honest with God because the natural carnal mind deceives itself in believing and deceiving itself into its own

motives. It doesn't understand its motives. But by the power of God's holy spirit we begin to see ourselves more, and therefore, we don't limit God. We don't limit God by not revealing ourselves to Him. The more we can reveal ourselves to Him the more God can give us favor because the more we're open and honest with God, open and sincere, God can show us more love. God can love us. He can live in us more.

Verse 31 – Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. So God is aware of *everything* in our life. If God is aware a sparrow falls to the ground God is aware of everything, including our thoughts.

Verse 32 – Therefore whoever confesses Me before men... Now, how do we do that? Is it about going out and preaching Christ? Well, no, it's not. This is by a way of life. It's the way we live, by living the truth. **Him I, Christ, will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.** Now, we preach the good news of the Kingdom of God by our examples, by the way we live love towards others. Now, this is an incredible scripture in itself. "Therefore, whoever confesses Me before men," so when we "confess Christ," or God, in our life, that is proof that God lives in us. It's by the way we live! Now, we can keep the Sabbath, we can Tithe, we can give offerings, we can do these things, but if we live ill will towards our neighbour, if we live ill will or speak evil of others, towards others, how does that demonstrate us living or God living in us? Are we preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God by speaking ill of others? No, we're not, because we can preach the good news of the Kingdom of God, God's way of life, because that's what the Kingdom really is, it's about a way of life, the way God *is*. We have to be examples. We have to live love to others and that's how we confess Jesus Christ before men because they will see God living and dwelling in us, they will see the works of God *in* us, and the moment they give us credit for a good work we need to be *very careful* that we do not take it to ourselves, because we understand, we know, that we can't do good works of and by ourselves. The credit and the glory for anything good must be given back to God.

Verse 33 – But whoever denies Me before men, and this is by practicing and living sin. So we deny Christ before men by speaking ill of others, by gossip, by lying, by living sin – that's how we do it **...him I also deny before My Father who is in heaven.** So Christ has to deny us, and He denies us by the fact that He can't live in us, and God the Father can't live in us because if we are living sin and not repenting of it, God the Father and Jesus Christ cannot live in us. God cannot dwell with sin.

Now, here is a statement that we can understand, to know *why* our families can turn against us. So this is why it will happen, and this is the fact that Christ said it that it's going to happen. **Verse 34 – Do not think that I, Christ, came to bring peace on earth.** Now, this is what the world says, that Jesus Christ came to bring peace to all men. Well, that's not true because Christ said here: **I did not come to bring peace on earth... I did not come to bring peace but a sword.** Beg your pardon? What do you mean, came to bring a sword? Well, this is exactly what happens when a person is called because a sword is symbolic of war or ill will. So Christ came to divide, to cut asunder, to separate.

For I have come to set, and that is "to set at variance," **a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law...** So Christ has come not to bring peace in families, but because of a calling, He's saying, there is going to be a variance. Man is going to turn against each other, mother against mother-in-law, daughter against father. All of those things are going to happen in our life because of a calling, because of a way of life, because of what God has revealed to us, which is the truth. So the *truth* will cause division in people's lives, because that's what Christ said, that that's exactly what's going to happen.

Verse 36 ...and a man's enemies will be those of his own household. Now, we understand why might that be. Now, what would cause a loved one to turn on a family member? What would do it? How would that be? How is that all possible? Well, it's because they live the truth. They begin to live God's way of life. And the first thing that comes up, maybe it's a married couple, just a husband and a wife, and one of them is called and the other one isn't...and what happens? Well, one of the big things that enters into it is of course, money. Money rules this world and when the other person starts to tithe, giving 1st Tithe, the other person turns around and thinks, "What do you mean you're giving 10% of *our money* to a Church?" And then they hear about 2nd Tithe and they start to think, "What do you mean you're saving 2nd Tithe? You're saving another 10% to go away on your annual Holy Day," or holiday, that's the way they view it, "...the annual holiday that you're taking. You're going away for eight days? That doesn't ring true with *our money*." And then suddenly they understand that you're giving offerings, and then the other person thinks, "What do you mean you're giving away *our money*?" Well, of course that's the problem. It's in the thinking. It's not *our money*. These things are what God says to do. God says to give 1st Tithe, God says to save 2nd Tithe, and God says to give an offering on the High Days. So this is what God has said. So it causes division. Money causes division.

An attitude may come from that, which is because of the keeping of the Sabbath, the keeping of the annual Holy Days, the keeping of Passover, all of these things can cause problems, and they turn around and they can say, "You love the Church more than you love me!" And that's the attitude that develops. There is a jealousy that enters because they can see this dedication, they can see this commitment (which is really God's spirit in a person), but they cannot relate to it. They can't identify it because it's an attitude. It's a priority. God is first in our life and the other person looks at it and says, "Well, I'm second!" And guess what? That is actually true. But they sense it. They feel it. So we should be aware of those things if we're in that environment, that people do feel these things and there *are* ways to communicate our love for God and our love for our family and do it in a balanced way and an open and honest way. But it is simply about priorities. We set our priorities as God first and they cannot understand it. They see us as putting them second.

People may turn around in a marriage and say, "Well, you're not the person I married!" Because some people are called in their relationship and they might have been married for 1 or 5 or 10 years, and then all of a sudden the person's called and the other person says, "Well, this isn't the person I married! This is not what you were like! You've become really weird!" And therefore, it can cause stress and distress. It can cause division within a relationship because they see this shift in priority. They may turn around and say, "Well, you're not the person I married. You're being brainwashed! Can't you see that you're going in a different direction?" And of course, with zeal we tend to be unbalanced often in the way that we approach these things and it's over time that we learn that we need to show more balance and we can still show the love to God that is commanded, and that we should have, which is God's spirit flowing *in* us out to the benefit of others, but we should also make sure that we do reveal love to our family, but in it there has to be an understanding that God will always be first in our life.

And people can say, "Well, you've joined a cult!" Well, wasn't that what they called Christ and His disciples, that He was a bit of a cult, really? Wasn't it only Christ and 12 others that were the main bunch and the churches of the world were out there and the religions of the world were out there, the worship of Baal and all the other things in the Roman Empire, that was all there? But they would all say, "Well, they can't all be wrong! But Christ was wrong and the disciples were wrong, obviously." Well, same as us, brethren, we're going to be called a cult. We should accept it. We don't have to try to defend it. We're not a cult. We are just simply disciples or students of Christ, and Christ has outlined clearly in His

word here that we're going through that. That's exactly what would happen to us. They say, "Look how small a group you are!" That *proves* that we're not of God! And the answer is, we are the same as Christ. He walked the earth with 12 and then afterwards a few more, but it was always small. God's Church has always been small. And that is proof in itself that we are God's Church because Christ said that the Church would always be small.

To know *why* we must place God first in all our decisions is a great blessing, so just to know this, to *know* how to have a priority, that God will be first, to *know* that others around us in our families *will* be turned against us because Christ said that's what He came to do, and He came to do it because when He calls one person and not someone else in a family there is going to be problems. Well, brethren, we know this. It's still hard to live it. It's hard to go through it, but that's what we've been called to. We must put God first as our highest priority in life.

Verse 37 – He who loves father or mother more than Me, more than Christ, more than this way of life, more than God, **is not worthy of Me**, not worthy of Christ. So it *is* about a priority. It's about establishing a clear priority in our thinking, what we will and won't do. **And he who loves son or daughter more than Me**, more than Christ, more than God's way of life, **is not worthy of Me**, not worthy of Christ. God must be first in our thinking.

Verse 38 – And he who does not take up his stake, his burden that is placed on us, that God has placed on us, and really, a calling can be seen as a burden because it's a big responsibility. We have to carry this weight. We have to carry the responsibility of making right choices, of striving to obey God so God can live in us **...and follow after Me**, follow after Christ, follow this way of life, this way of living, following the truth, **is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life**, and this is someone who is reliant on the physical, **will lose it**, will lose it on a spiritual level because the focus will be physical. We will start to make decisions to please others rather than pleasing God, and *this* is a big danger within marriage or within a family when one person is called and someone else isn't. We will try to find our life. We'll become self-reliant and we'll try to please the other people in our family, or the other person, and if we do and we put God second we will lose our spiritual life **...and he who loses his life**, and this is talking about on a spiritual level, gives His life to God and sacrifices the selfish desires, puts God first, **for My sake**, for Christ's sake, **will find it**, will find it on a spiritual level – God in us and we in Him. Truth will remain in us. So this is all about a priority.

I remember when I had one particular job. What I did was – because I was reasonably experienced in God's Church and I had learned to handle various questions with relation to Sabbath and Holy Days – what I used to do to ensure that I stayed focus and that I would not compromise in relation to Sabbath or Holy Days or High Days or Passover, I used to get a yearly calendar and I used to put it up on the board. And so I would put this calendar up and it had every day of the year on it – and it was a retail calendar – and on that calendar I would put a cross across the Sabbath, on every Saturday and all the High Days and Passover day, because I wanted to make sure I had that day off, my own personal choice, and I wanted to have that day off. I would put it up there and I would just put a line through it and put a 'not available,' "N/A" on it, and sometimes someone would come in and say, "What are all those days?" And I used to put "A" for Atonement or "F" for Feast days and "P" for Pentecost. And they'd look at it and say, "Why have you got that up there?" And I'd say, "Well, those are days I'm not available." And they'd say, "Well, what do you mean you're not available?" And I'd say, "I've got an appointment on those days." Of course they don't understand the High Days and the Sabbath are appointments, they're appointed times, they're an appointment with God, and *who am I* to refuse to attend an appointment?

In the world, someone makes an appointment. They strive to turn up on time. They strive to present themselves in the best possible light, to be on time, to be there at the appointed time, which is an appointment for business. And it's very rude to turn up late, and if you missed the appointment you'd ring up and you'd be so apologetic because you knew there was an impact, the way the person was going to respond to you in the future. You're obviously not that keen about attending the appointment; therefore, you really don't care. You're really revealing that you don't care much because you didn't turn up to the appointment.

Well, how much more, brethren for us? *God's* appointed times, that we turn up for Sabbath appointments! *These* are commanded assemblies in the sense of appearing before God. This is an appointed time! We set it aside. It's holy time; therefore, I would mark it up on the calendar and I was open and honest about the times that I was not available. And sometimes I've had different bosses come in and look at the calendar and say, "Oh, that particular day that you've got a point up there, ah, there is a really important event coming up," and "this" and "that" and there was this particular sale and, "Oh, it's going to be really difficult without you!" And I used to say, "Well, I'm not going to... I'm not available. I don't know what you're going to do!" And I would try to shift it back on to the person even if it was a boss above me. It didn't really matter, because I'd say, "Ah, it's going to be difficult, but never mind, you'll manage!" They'd say, "Well, look, you know, you've got to be around because you've got to do 'this,' you've got to do 'that,' and you've got to do 'this.'" I'd say, "Well, I'll plan everything I can, but I'm not available, my phone will be off, and therefore, I'm sure you'll manage."

And do you know all these years that I was in retail business, some thirty-odd years, there was never one occasion that there was an emergency that I was needed at – *ever!* In all those years, never, because the world keeps going on, business keeps going on, everything keeps going on, and yes, there are times when there might have been an advantage to be there, but I wasn't, because I had an appointment with my Creator. I had an appointment with God. God was the priority of my life, and therefore, I put that calendar up so that it would remind me, so that I could plan *my* time, so that I didn't affect God's time. I wanted to hold those appointments with God. And that's something I did and it always worked for me. It's been an advantage to me. I'm not in any way suggesting that's what anybody should do. It's just that that's just what I did and that's what helped me and it helped to explain to others when they asked a question why I wasn't available. "Well, I was at an appointment," and if they ever pushed me a bit too far I would say, "Well, I'm actually going to church."

When we were in New Zealand – it's interesting when you get into various conversations with people – we were actually all on a train with the New Zealand brethren and we were heading into Wellington, if I remember rightly, and there was a particular gentleman there and we were in a group on the train and there was a conductor there and he turned around and he looked at us and we were all talking and being very joyous, etcetera, and he turned around and asked a direct question, and that question was, "Well, where have you all been?" And of course, it all went very quiet because this was mid-week and my wife turned around and said, "We've been to church." And the conductor he sort of looked blank and everyone looked and nobody said anything and then he just moved on. Because being truthful, being honest, people are uncomfortable with the truth, they really are. They don't like the truth, anything religious, and when it comes to the truth people generally would rather avoid it, hence, putting God's Holy Days and the High Days up on a calendar. People generally, once they knew roughly what it was about, did not want to go into a conversation to understand why because they're not really interested in God's way of life. They don't want to know why. That helped me to ensure that I had a priority and it was clear in my life my priority was God and I wanted to put God first.

Verse 40 – He who receives you, the disciples, and that is “receives” is “accepts or listens to you,” treats a disciple or a follower of Christ with a Godly respect and in humility, **receives Me,** receives Christ. So they accept or listen to Christ because the disciples were followers of Christ. They were students of Christ. The disciples received Christ, **and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me,** God the Father. Now, this is a principle for us to always remember. If we treat God's people with respect and without judgment or ill will it is like treating Christ and God the Father in the same way. So a member of the Body of Christ who has God living and dwelling in them, we should treat them with a lot of respect. We should treat them with love, with no judgment, no hard judgment, no ill will to them, because this is God's dwelling place, God lives in them, and therefore, we need to be very careful how we handle brethren in the sense of a relationship, what relationships we have with people. So this scripture really is outlining *if* anybody accepts us for who we are, if we have God's spirit, it's like them treating Christ, it's like accepting God the Father. So for us on a spiritual level, we need to be on guard, we need to be careful the way we treat the brethren. This is about having *one* spirit, having the same thinking, the same mind, to be in unity on a spiritual level. Anyone who accepts what a disciple does accepts Christ, the one who sent them. Isn't that incredible? Anyone who accepts what Christ did accepts the Father.

Verse 41 – He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, and we know that Christ was a prophet of God, **shall receive a prophet's reward. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.** This all comes down to the way we think towards others, the way we treat others in our words and our actions. If we treat a prophet of God with spiritual respect due to the office, we will receive the reward of a prophet. The principle is if we accept a messenger of God it is as good as being God's messenger. I want to repeat that. Accepting a messenger of God, in spirit and truth, is as good as being God's messenger because we're treating the office, we're fulfilling the role which is God living and dwelling in us, which is righteousness, the flow of righteousness out to the benefit of others. Accepting someone's help is as good as giving someone help. So brethren, if we accept somebody's help – a member of the Body of Christ's help – it's the same as giving help, because it's all about God's spirit living and dwelling in us.

Verse 42 – And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, a student or a follower of Christ, **assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.** Because we're going back to that principle about how we treat a brother, a spiritual brother in Christ, and if we treat a brother with love, with mercy, it's the same as treating Jesus Christ with love and with mercy.

The smallest act of giving or receiving makes us a true disciple of God.

Psalms 27:1-14 – This is a psalm of David. **The LORD is my light,** and the light is whatever gives direction. Light shows the way. And we understand that light is truth, that God says His truth reveals the way to live, it shows a direction. Well, it's the same as light; it shows direction. It shows the way to walk, how to walk, where to walk **...and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?** Says David. David is saying, "Well, whom shall I fear, because God is my direction, God is my light, God is my protector, my provider. He is my salvation." **The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?** God provided Christ as our way of salvation. That's what God has done for us. God provided Jesus Christ as our Passover sacrifice. He is the way of salvation. It's only through Christ, which is the light, the light of men, that can show us the way to salvation. We are being saved from ourselves. And we've been through sermons covering that, about the natural carnal mind, what it is. It's hostile against God, and we are being saved *from* ourselves, from the way we are, and that is God's great plan for us. We should never fear what man can do to us, because what can they do, it's only physical. There is nothing to fear because God is with us.

God is with us and God is for us, so we shouldn't fear what man can do. We should fear to go against God by the way of sin. Now, what we really should fear is our *own thinking* that leads us, and reasoning that leads us away from truth, that leads us into sin. That's what we should fear. We should fear those thoughts that come into our mind that we don't deal with because they are the things that can destroy us. If we stop the battle, we stop the fight. They are the things we should be afraid of because they *will* destroy us on a spiritual level.

Not repenting of sin is going against God's desire for us. God's desire is *for us*. God desires that we change, and the way we change is to repent. We desire to repent before God. Now, that's our motive, that's what we should cry out for. We should ask God for the gift of repentance and that God does not take that gift of repentance from us.

So if we look at repentance, repentance is when God reveals sin to our minds so that we can see that we have made an error, we have erred, we have gone against God's way of life. Now, we desire to be in unity with God, to have God live and dwell in us, so it is by that repentance, by that tabling the sin before God and coming before God and asking for the forgiveness of sin. And God says that if we are genuine and sincere and don't hold ill will to others that He *will* forgive us of that sin, and therefore, we can walk anew.

God desires to live love towards His creation in and through us. Now, this is something incredible to know! We know *why* God desires to live in us. God desires to live in us for the benefit of His creation. Now, it can happen on this earth at this time by God living and dwelling in His people, but also in Elohim. It's the same outcome. It's about His creation, that God can live in and through Elohim to the benefit of all His creation...and that's what God is doing in us. Now, we know this. We know why God desires to live in us. He desires to do good works in us out to the benefit of others. That is amazing knowledge to have. Now, the world doesn't have this knowledge, brethren, and we should not take it for granted. We should *not* take it for granted.

Verse 2 – When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and my foes, they stumbled and fell. Why? Well, they stumbled and fell on a physical level because God was involved in David's life just as He *is* involved in our life. So God is with us, God is working with us, and things will work out on a spiritual level for us as long as we never give up the fight.

Though an army may encamp against me, and he was talking here on a physical level. Well, we can look at it on a spiritual level. **Though an army,** an evil army, an army of demonic spirit beings, **may encamp against us,** which they have, they've set their minds against us, **my heart,** my inner thinking, **shall not fear...** So we don't fear what Satan can do because we know God is for us and we are for God, we desire God to live and dwell in us, we desire to fight against *any* evil thoughts, those arrows that come from Satan and His demons trying to destroy us.

Though war should rise against me, in this I may be confident. One thing I have desired of the LORD, that I will seek... What is that one thing that he's desired? **That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Eternal and to inquire in His temple.** The one thing we desire, the one thing we seek, is to have God dwell in us so that we can in the future dwell in the house of God, the Family of God, all the days of our spirit life. Now, we can look at this on a physical level and a spiritual level. We desire now to dwell in the house of the LORD; the Church of God—PKG is where God dwells. God dwells in His people, and we desire that all the days of our life! That's what we desire. We desire God to live in us and we desire to stay connected to the vine. We desire to have a relationship

with God and God's people our whole life. And "...to behold the beauty of the LORD," well, what's the beauty of the LORD within the Church? Well, it's the truth! It's God's nature. What God *reveals* to us is the beauty of the LORD. And when God lives out to the benefit of us through people to us that is God's beauty. "...and to inquire in His Temple," within the Church! We desire to have a relationship with God and with God's people.

Now, on a spiritual level, it's talking about something in the future, which is when we are changed to spirit. We desire to live in God's House for life everlasting, to behold the beauty of the Lord, God's ways and the beautiful things of God, and to inquire in His Temple, in the Temple of God, the Church of God, the Temple of God, the *Kingdom* of God, God's House. That's what we desire. We desire "to behold the beauty of God," to have His character, His mind in us, "and to inquire in His Temple," His House, the Kingdom of Elohim.

Verse 5 – For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the Church. So the protection that we need, brethren, is in God's Church. The protection is in the truth. We've got to hold onto that truth ...**in the secret place of His Tabernacle He shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock.** Well, this is talking on a physical level, but we look at it on a spiritual level. When David was being protected here he's saying he is set up high on a rock. Well, the reason we're high up on a rock is so that you can look out over your enemy, so you can see what's going on. So we've been set up on a high Rock. Which is? Jesus Christ is the Rock. He is our foundation and He will guide and protect and look after us. We have the protection of God.

Verse 6 – And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Why? Because he's high up on this Rock ...**therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His Tabernacle. I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.** These sacrifices of joy is what we can offer, brethren, and they are done through giving all the credit and glory to God, giving *all* the credit to God. And that is the joyous thing. We can rejoice that we understand the truth. We can offer the sacrifice, which is, means, we can give praises, take the time to put the self down, and take the time to meditate and give credit to God, where it all belongs. They are sacrifices of joy, of rejoicing, by giving all the glory, all the credit to God.

Verse 7 – Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice! And we do that in prayer. **Have mercy upon me,** forgive my sin **and answer me.** Now, we know that upon repentance we can draw back close to God, that God will live in us, God will be with us, and then we can table our heart, open and honest, about our true situation on a physical and a spiritual level.

Verse 8 – When You said, Seek My face, my heart said to You, Your face, O LORD, I will seek. Now, this is a spiritual attitude of desiring to please God, desiring to put God first in all things. Now, we are going to be tested in these matters. Our temptations and tests aren't going away. They're going to continue, and our role is to stay close to the truth, stay close to God, have that relationship with God, and when we are under distress or distressed or tested, make sure we turn to God because He is our High Tower, He is our protection, He is the only one that can get us through this. We will seek to discipline our natural mind, to put God first ahead of our own selfishness. Well, that is the battle. That is the fight. That's when we are in the fight.

Verse 9 - Do not hide Your face from me; do not turn Your servant away in anger; You, God, have been my help; do not leave me or forsake me, O God of my salvation. Now, in life we are going to face tragedies in human life. We're going to face them on a physical level. The greatest disaster that could happen to any human that has been called by God, granted the gift of repentance and is in unity with

the truth, in God...the greatest disaster that can happen to us is that we lose God's spirit, we lose access to God, we lose that relationship that we have with God. That is the greatest disaster.

When God takes His holy spirit from someone, that is a tragedy! Now, when we leave God or forsake God and we try to stand on our own feet by ourselves without God, that is a tragedy because we are sinning. Self-reliance is sin. Now, we can repent of this sin, of self-reliance, by turning to God and admitting that without God we can't do anything.

Verse 10 – When my father and my mother forsake me, and that's talking on a physical level, then the LORD will take care of me. So we're never abandoned. We may feel that people in our families turn against us and we are forsaken, in other words, we're cut off and we can no longer communicate with them. Well, God says He is there. He will always take care of us on a spiritual level as long as we stay close to Him on a spiritual level.

Verse 11 – Teach me Your way, O LORD, and lead me in the smooth path, and that “smooth path” is in the truth, **because of my enemies.**

Verse 12 – Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and such as breathe out violence. Now, this can happen within a family environment because we are disciples of God, we're disciples of Christ, and they can “breathe out violence” just because of the words they say, the ill will that they speak. Now, we need to remember that much of what is said they will one day regret saying it because they don't understand what they're saying; they don't understand what God has called us to. Now, *this* is a great privilege and an honour, and we know why we were called. We know *why* this is a privilege and an honour, because we are pioneers. We are pioneers for the future. There have been thousands of people – 144,000 – that have been before us, so they have done what God has required, which is endured to the end. Now, our role in life is to endure to the end, to remain under the government of God, God's spirit living and dwelling in us.

Verse 13 – I should have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. Well, we can take encouragement of that as well. We are going to see the return of Jesus Christ to this earth, to the land of the living. Jesus Christ is coming back with the 144,000 to set up a government; it's the Government of God.

Verse 14 – Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, your inner thinking. So let's wait on God, let's draw close to God and let's be of good courage. Let's not let down. It's not a time to let down. It's a time to be strengthened in our inner thinking. We are to, **Wait, I say, on the LORD!** Let's wait on God. Let's learn to trust and wait on God.

I wanted to cover Truth 19, and Truth 19 is the annual Festivals. So to know and to understand Truth 19 separates us from the world. This is a *major* truth to understand! We're only going to cover it in brief, but it is something that when understood on a spiritual level it reveals God's plan. So, Truth 19 is...

19 (16) The annual festivals. The plan of God, as shown through the Holy Days, (and they are High Days), was revealed to the Church of God only through Herbert W. Armstrong.

So God used Mr. Armstrong as an apostle, one sent forth, and He revealed the purpose of the Holy Days as outlined in Leviticus 23. The first one that was outlined, of course, we see not as a High Day but as an appointed time, was the seventh-day weekly Sabbath. Then, of course, Passover was revealed. Now, the real meaning of Passover is about fellowship.

Let's look at **1 Corinthians 11:27**. We're going through this last part of what was outlined here to the Corinthians with regards to Passover and some of its purpose. **Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.** So this is involving sin. This is about an attitude of taking the Passover, and that attitude is about understanding the purpose of Passover. And we're not to take it in an unworthy manner, and that is all about an attitude towards God and God's people and God's sacrifice. So we need to come into fellowship with God and we need to come into fellowship with God's people. So it *is* about a relationship that we have to have, and the best way to handle this, of course, goes on in **verse 28 – But let a man examine himself**, so we're to examine our self. We are to *judge ourselves*, not others, look at ourselves **and so let him eat that bread and drink of that cup**. So we're not to take the Passover *in* the wrong attitude. If there is any ill will towards anybody in the Body and outside of the Body you shouldn't be taking Passover. We're to examine ourselves first to make sure that we take it in a worthy manner.

For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. So we need to be very careful about what thinking we have when we go into Passover.

Verse 30 – For this reason many are weak and sick, spiritually, among you, and many sleep, on a spiritual level. Because this is all about fellowship; it's all about a relationship. Now, to have fellowship, to have a relationship with one another and with God, which means we're going to have God's spirit living and dwelling in us.

Verse 31 – For if we would judge ourselves, if we were to examine ourselves, examine our own attitudes, our own words, what are we thinking, why are we thinking it, **we should not be judged**, we won't be judged by God because we are setting out every day to discipline the self and judge ourselves, to examine our thoughts, our words, look at our attitudes. Are we in true fellowship with God? Are we in true fellowship with one another? Do we have ill will toward each other or anybody? They are the things we should examine. And if we can do that we then can understand why God gave us the Passover, why God gave us Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for our sins, and when we understand that the beauty of Passover comes to life....comes to life.

Now, the first annual Holy Day, High Day of God's plan, is Unleavened Bread. And what's Unleavened Bread about? The first day and the seventh day are High Days. Unleavened Bread is about coming out of sin, not to be leavened, not to be puffed up. Being unleavened is the purpose of our life because by nature we are leavened, and we understand what Pentecost pictures. Pentecost pictures the very return of Jesus Christ to this earth, firstfruits will be harvested, 144,000. The other Holy Days all outline God's plan, and of course, in due season all of those will be covered in great detail. But the Holy Days also cover God's great mercy. They reveal God's great mercy to mankind.

One of the greatest blessings that we can have on a spiritual level is to understand and know that we are soon to cross over into the Promised Land, the Millennium. To know *why* is to understand God's will and purpose for mankind. The return of Jesus Christ is to intervene and remove Satan. *That* knowledge is incredible! Now, we have it. Now the world today doesn't even believe that there is a spirit world led by

Lucifer, Satan. They just simply don't believe it. There are a few that understand aspects, there are a few religions that will give credit that there is an evil spirit world, but the reality is generally mankind does not know what the purpose of the evil angelic realm is, whereas we understand that.

Deuteronomy 31:1-8 – Then Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said to them: I am one hundred and twenty years old today. I can no longer go out or come in. So he'd aged and he was not able to be mobile, to move around a lot, and he was virtually saying that he was getting to the point where he was going to die. **Also the LORD has said to me, You shall not cross over this Jordan.** Well, that's very interesting in the sense of that he wasn't granted by God, he wasn't granted to go over into the Promised Land. Well, a lot of this goes back to what he had done, of course, which was taking credit to himself. So even in his older age, and if you remember back what actually happened was that he stood before the rock and he struck the rock and he said, "Do I have to bring water for you people?!" basically, and of course he was taking credit to himself, whereas the glory and the credit for what was provided should have been given to God – but he took credit to himself, a moment of weakness, and because of that, because of that sin of taking credit to himself, God had said to him that he would not cross over to the Jordan. In other words, he wouldn't go over *into* the Promised Land. Well there are, brethren, people that will not go into the Millennium, they will not go into the Promised Land, and that is God's decision of who will not enter.

Verse 3 – The LORD your God Himself crosses over before you, so God was going to go over with the people. Do we believe God is with us and that God is going to help us to go over into the Promised Land, the spiritual Promised Land? Because without God, we can't. The truth of the matter is that without God we cannot go *into* the Promised Land, the spiritual Promised Land. It's not possible.

He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall possess them. Joshua himself crosses over before you, just as the LORD has said. Now, on a spiritual level it is God that pulls down and destroys wrong thinking, the strongholds in our thinking. We can pull down the wrong attitudes because God will destroy them before us *if* we desire it with our whole being. So when we look at this, how do we go forward? How do we move forward into a Promised Land? Well, the Promised Land can only be entered if God is with us. God is leading and guiding and directing us. Now, we can do it by entering in the battle and allowing God to *conquer* the wrong thinking, allow God to *live* in us, to *change* our thinking, the strongholds, the things that we have wrong in our mind, the sin. God can conquer it, and if He does, He will be with us, and therefore, we *can* enter the Promised Land.

Verse 4 – And the LORD will do to them as He did to Sihon and Og and the kings of the Amorites and their land when He destroyed them. So it's God that does the works. It's God that does the destroying of sin in our life. We must not limit God. It is His great power *over* His creation that enables overcoming. By our own human reasoning we have a tendency to limit God. By our own human reasoning we have a tendency to limit God, believing that God can't conquer. But God can. God is all mighty. God is all-powerful.

This *is* God's Church and it *is* His will that God's Church enters into a thousand-year-reign of Jesus Christ, and it *will be done*. Nothing can stand against God's way. God is for His people and it *will* happen as God has promised.

Verse 5 – The LORD will give them over to you that you may do to them according to every commandment which I have commanded you.

Now, this is Moses encouraging Joshua. **Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them**, of anyone in the future. No matter what happens we're not to be afraid of family. We're not to be afraid of authorities. It doesn't matter. God is for us ...**for the LORD your God, He is the one who goes with you**. So God is with us. **He will not leave you nor forsake you**. That is a promise from God to His Church. God does not leave us. We leave God because of unrepented sin.

Verse 7 – Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of good courage. This is a command! This is not just a suggestion. This is about being strong because of God, God in us. "...and of good courage," we can be bold and confident no matter what is said or what is done to us ...**for you must go with this people to the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them**, so God is going to do it, **and you shall cause them to inherit it**. God will do and fulfill His promise *in us*. We shall inherit a spiritual Promised Land in God's time.

Verse 8 – And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. So it's God going before us. It's God that creates the environment that is about to come, and it is God that brings it all to a conclusion. **He will be with you, He will not leave you or forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.** So there are things coming on this world, brethren, that mankind is not aware of, and we're going to look at that. Now, we *know this*. We know this truth. We understand this truth about what God is going to do. This is about us continuing on in the truth.

We know why the "Day of the Lord" must take place. This day *must* happen to humble mankind. So we know it. Now, the world won't know it. When things start to happen the world will *not* understand why it's happening. We do. We know *why* and what God is doing.

Isaiah 2:5. Now, often this is read during the Feast, and we're going to pick it up in verse 5 and continue through some of these verses. **Isaiah 2:5** – this covers the nations, modern day nations of Israel today. **O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light**, let's walk in the truth, **of the Eternal**. This is a time looking to the Millennium, that Israel, which are those called out of this world into a relationship with God into His Church, referring to Jacob, referring to Israel, the Church of God in the Millennium. **Let's walk in the light**, let's walk in the truth **of the Eternal**. Now, that's what we've been commanded to do, is to walk in the truth.

Verse 6 – For You/God have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob, because they are filled with eastern ways, so they worshipped other gods. They used their human reasoning, their carnal minds to worship sun gods. **They are soothsayers like the Philistines**. They observe times, practice soothsaying, or spiritism. They conjure up magic, witchcraft. All of those things exist in today's world. **And they are pleased with the children of foreigners**. In other words, they are into relationships that are not lawful in the sense of relationships with false religion and what they do.

Verse 7 – Their land is also full of silver and gold, so there is great wealth and that is their dependency. That's what they rely on, that's what they trust in, and that's what they worship, **and there is no end to their treasures**, so their asset rich. They have plenty of wealth on a physical level. **Their land is also full of horses and there is no end to their chariots**. So it can be military, that they have strong military or they've got lots of transport as well. All this came from God because of a promise to Abraham. They have learned to trust in the physical for protection and for their strength. They are rich and increased with goods. They have self-reliance. They are motivated by pride. What does that sound like? It sounds like Revelation doesn't it, about Laodicea, just like the Church in Laodicea. The Laodicean's, the

Laodicean era, did this on a spiritual level. They trusted in themselves. They became lifted up with the *knowledge* that they had and they took that knowledge as strength. But it wasn't; it was knowledge! They didn't have the spiritual understanding. They didn't stay close to God. They didn't stay close to the truth. They didn't remember where the truth came from and how truth comes to a person, how truth dwells in a person. All the credit goes to God. God does it all. But the Laodicean's, that Laodicean era, that *attitude* that anyone can still have – cause they were lessons for mankind – this attitude that can come in the Millennium, that can happen to us now, is that we take credit for knowledge, we take credit for spiritual works to ourselves. And what will that lead to? We will leave fellowship with God. We'll leave fellowship of God's people because we've become self-reliant because we have taken knowledge and spiritual credit to ourselves rather than giving all the glory to God.

Verse 8 – Their land is also full of idols, so everything is placed before God. This is about a priority, which we've covered before. God is not first in all their decision-making, and therefore, if God is not first everything else that we put before God is an idol, and that is something to burn into our thinking. *Anything* that is placed before God is an idol; therefore, if God is not first in every decision we make, the way we live our life, whatever it is that we have put before God, whether it's somebody else or a relationship that we may have or anything, work, can be anything, *is an idol!* So we could look out now, brethren, and try to find what is our idol. What is it that we're putting before God? What is it that we're putting as a priority ahead of our prayer life, or ahead of our relationship with God? What is it? Well, that is our idol and that needs to be pulled down and destroyed. We need to put God first in our life!

Well, mankind has filled the earth with idols and it's all in their thinking. It's not necessarily an object or an image; it's actually in their thinking. An idol is *anything* that is put before God as a priority. **They worship the work of their hands**, so this is now going about something physical that they do. What they produce is their god. So they produce their wealth, their money, well, that's their idol, that's their god. They may have their own work, the amount of time they spend at work. Well, that's before God. That is their idol. Sports. They put sports before God on a Sabbath, so that is their idol, sport is. Their family, they will put their family before putting God first. Their religion, they put their own religion, their own ideas before what God says; that is their idol. Their self-confidence, being confident in self is an idol. What's the idol? *Self* is the idol. *Human reasoning* can be the idol because we're not listening to what God says is true. We're working out for ourselves what *we* think is true. Going on in **verse 8...That which their own fingers have made.**

Verse 9 – People bow down, they serve, **each man humbles himself**. In other words, they set as a priority something else, **therefore do not forgive them**. Well, this is saying here don't forgive them because they've set their minds so firmly on what they want to do. Their wealth and their prosperity is their life.

Verse 10 – Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, in other words, protect yourself, **from the terror of the Eternal and the glory of His majesty. The lofty looks of men shall be humbled**. This is what is actually going to happen, “the lofty looks,” this human reasoning, everything that is put before God is going to be brought down. It's going to be humbled. **The haughtiness, the highness of men** in their thinking **shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day**. The thinking of mankind is going to be brought low. They shall be filled with fear and dread. Mankind will come to see that his own strength is not strength at all; there is no strength, but the strength of God living in a person. They're going to have to come to see that in time. They won't see it on this “Day of the Lord” and during this period of one year and the actual last Day of the Lord, they will not see it. They won't see it. It takes time to understand this on a spiritual level.

God will humble mankind for the purpose of salvation. And now we know *why* this “Day of the Lord” is going to take place. It's for the purpose of *saving* mankind. It's a process that God is going to use to bring them to Elohim. God can work with the humble, with a humble mind, but He resists. He cannot work with *the proud*, and that's a spiritual principle, and mankind will come to see that in time. Now, we understand this. We *understand* that God cannot work with the proud, those who have pride; therefore, if we've got pride, God can't work with us. We need to remain humble and the way to remain humble is to stay close to God in that relationship with God, putting God first *at all costs!* At *any* cost, God must be first, and therefore, stay close to the truth, and therefore, we will be humble because God's granted us that humility.

Therefore, in His mercy He will humble mankind because He desires to dwell in them, *live* in them, to give them spirit life. And that's the purpose of what is happening here.

Verse 12 – For the day of the LORD of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up, anything lifted up in pride, in its thinking—and it shall be brought low. It will be humbled. This has already been planned out and it will happen *exactly* as God has said. We have an opportunity to humble ourselves *now* so that *we* do not have to *suffer* with the rest of mankind to the same *extent* that mankind will suffer. This suffering that is coming on the earth, we can avoid aspects of it because we are God's people. We will be affected by it because it's going to come on the whole earth, but we're worried about the spiritual implications of the tribulation that is to come on mankind, because if we stay close to the truth we will stay close to a relationship with God and with His people.

Verse 13 – Upon all the cedars of Lebanon, which is symbolic of strong things, that are high and lifted up, upon all the oaks of Bashan; upon all the high mountains, which are all the governments, and upon all the hills, all the small governments of the world, that are lifted up, and they are lifted up because of their natural carnal mind that they have because of their control that they have and the authority that they assume that they have. And this “Day of the Lord” is going to come upon every high tower, in other words, upon every fortified wall... everything that is trusted in for protection on a physical level and on a spiritual level is going to be brought down ...upon all the ships of Tarshish, which is the world trade and economy, upon all the beautiful sloops, things designed for the future. So all of these things are going to be pulled down.

Verse 17 – The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day... We say, "Bring that day on, God!" We want that day to come because we *want* mankind to be humbled so that they can come into a spiritual relationship with God. That's what we yearn for. That's what we look forward to.

Verse 18 – But the idols He shall utterly abolish. He'll bring them to an end. **They shall go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth from the terror of the Eternal and the glory of His majesty when He arises to shake the earth mightily.** So God is going to humble mankind.

Verse 20 – In that day a man shall cast away his idols of silver and his idols of gold which they have made, each for himself to worship. So what is going to happen is they're no longer going to trust in *anything* else. They're going to learn to put God *first*. It says here **...to the moles and the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, so that's where they used to put them, and into the crags and the rugged rocks, from the terror of the Eternal and the glory of His majesty when He arises to shake the earth mightily. Sever yourselves from such a man,** so anyone with pride, anyone that's trusting in themselves, anyone

that's putting God *second*, we should avoid them, brethren, because there is going to be problems in their life. **Whose breath is in his nostrils; for of what account is he?** In other words, it's saying here, "Can't you see there is nothing in mankind that is worth *anything*? And there is nothing in mankind that is worth hanging on to. There is nothing within mankind's society, anything man can do, that should be *esteemed* above God," because pride is going to be destroyed.

We know *why* pride in mankind must be destroyed. Isn't that incredible truth to understand? We know *why* pride in mankind must be destroyed. The reason is because *pride* cannot have any part in Elohim, and *pride* cannot have any part in God, and *pride* cannot exist in God's Church. And when pride lifts itself up within God's Church, God will bring it down.

So, brethren, we will conclude the sermon series, *To Know Why*, and we will pick up a sermon in the future, God willing.

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