

The title of today's sermon is *Spiritual Government*, and this will be *Part 2*.

In *Part 1* we established that all mankind's ways of governing are from their natural human mind, their human reasoning, and they are not based on God's word. God's government is one of being based on God's holy spirit, based on God's way of thinking.

There is only one true Church, and that has God's way of spiritual government in it, and that it is the Church of God – PKG. Now, this is difficult for many people to come to grasp this, and they would see that as a statement of arrogance. But that is the truth. There is only one true Church on this earth.

We discussed the matter of ordinations and that there is one important factor, and that important factor is that *all ordinations are of God and from God*. And this, of course, challenges the human mind.

We looked at what Lucifer decided to do, what he chose to do. He chose to rebel, lift himself up against God. He chose, along with a third of the other angels, to not yield to (not remain under) the government of God.

The purpose of this sermon series is to explore the question: What is God's government?

God's government is spiritual in nature and design. To be under God's government is to have God's holy spirit living and dwelling *in* a person. So, someone to say that they are “under government,” they would need to have God's spirit living and dwelling in them.

So now we're going to pick up the sermon in Isaiah 14, if you'd like to turn to Isaiah 14:12-15, and this is referring to the fall of Lucifer.

Isaiah 14:12 – How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, and we understand that word is “Light Bringer,” **son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground,** to the earth, **you who weakened,** and that is “turned to worship something else,” **the nations!** ...this angelic realm and also, of course, the physical realm, that Lucifer achieved this by his deception, because of his murmuring and his being unsatisfied with the direction of God's government. So he actually chose to be no longer under government.

Verse 13 – For you have said in your heart, your inner thinking, your intent, **I will,** I have decided to, **ascend into heaven, I will,** I have decided to, **exalt my throne,** my authority, which was the authority that God had given him, **above,** and that is “over or upon” **the stars,** the angels, **of God,** so the angelic realm. He was going to lift himself up and place himself over, above, the angels of God. **I will sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like,** and this word “like” there is “resemble,” **the Most High.** He was trying to lift himself up, and he rebelled with a third of the angels to be in a position of authority, and he himself decided that he wanted to be in a position and place himself *above God* in authority. Lucifer decided, chose not to remain under, not to yield to God's government.

Verse 15 – Yet you shall be brought down to the sheol, and that's a place of constraint, and we know that that points to death, **to the lowest parts of the pit**. Now, we know and understand that all pride will be destroyed by the end of 7,100-years of mankind and all pride will be destroyed. And that means the angelic realm that has rebelled against God because of *their* pride, they will be destroyed, because pride cannot live with Elohim.

Now that we *have* looked at government in the spirit realm, we will look at the events that led up to the start of the Church of God, the start of God's spiritual government in a structured way under Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. We'll look at the book of Acts. So if you'd like to be turn to Acts 1:1-26. So we understand that the book of Acts was written in 61 AD and it was about thirty years, of course, after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

There's lessons to be learned here with regards to government from its, actual, establishment. How it was established by God the Father through Jesus Christ.

Acts 1:1 – The former account I made, and that was, of course, when the book of Luke was written, **O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through, by, the holy spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom, which, He had chosen...** One of those commandments was to stay in Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Pentecost, others were about the command to go out and preach the gospel as a witness to all the world. They chose to obey. They chose to *yield* to the instructions. So here we have one aspect of government in somebody's life, which is that choosing to obey or yield to instructions. This is the same choice we have today. We can yield to the instructions provided by Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. So they had this very opportunity now to *choose* what they would do.

Verse 3 – to whom He, Christ, also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, and they are proofs which are things that cannot be denied, **being seen by them during forty days and speaking of things pertaining to the Kingdom of God**, the spiritual government of God.

Verse 4 – And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, and we understand this “Jerusalem” is one thing that symbolically can point to the Church of God, the Church, a “type” of Church. So here is an instruction, that He commanded them *not* to depart from Jerusalem, which was the location where they were, because He was going to bring forth **the promise of the Father**, which was God the Father was going to pour out His holy spirit.

Now, this for us, brethren, is we have been commanded not to depart the Church, the Church of God – PKG, that we shouldn't leave it, because the moment we depart we cut ourselves off, and therefore, the promise of the Father, the holy spirit, God's holy spirit cannot be given to us because we have disobeyed the instructions that God has given us to stay with the Church of God – PKG. That's the instructions that we have today.

...but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, Christ said, **you have heard from Me**. We have been commanded not to depart the truth, not to depart the Church, the government of God. We have been commanded to wait, wait for God and Jesus Christ to fulfill the promise of the Father. And the promise of the Father that we have is not only the holy spirit will be given to us, but the promise is the return of Jesus Christ with 144,000 to this earth on a Day of Pentecost. That's the promise that God has placed *in* His Church at this time *for* His Church.

We have been called to repentance, baptism (baptized in water and the spirit), and we also have received the promise of the Father, the first part, which is the holy spirit. This very same promise that was given to the disciples at that time was the promise of the Father, which was God's holy spirit. We have actually received it. What a great blessing that is! What a blessing that is!

We have another promise also, which is the promise of the return of Jesus Christ to this earth.

Verse 5 – for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized, and that word is “immersed” **with, in, the holy spirit not many days from now.** So they would be empowered to think like God, empowered to transform their thinking *IF* they were to yield to God's holy spirit, yield to God's government and do exactly what they have been told.

Well, we, brethren, have this same opportunity. We have this opportunity to be empowered by, transformed by, in our thinking, the power of God's holy spirit. So we can be transformed, our thinking can be transformed *IF* we yield to the government of God. And that government of God is, of course, empowered by God's holy spirit.

Verse 6 – Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, Christ, saying, Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? Well, that question, of course, the answer was that it wasn't at “that time” that it was going to happen. But the beginning of the *process* started, which was the pouring out of God's holy spirit, because to enter the Kingdom of God as a spirit being, it requires the holy spirit. Now, we are looking for a physical change in rulership at this time. We are looking for a change of government, just like they were some 2,000 years ago, looking for a change of government. So, we're looking for this same outcome, which is to “restore the Kingdom to Israel.” So we're looking at it on a spiritual level, for those to be transformed into Elohim, to be part of the 144,000, but also the establishment on this earth of God's Church over the *whole earth*, not just a small group that God has called out at this time and that Jesus Christ is working with. Because the opportunity is for the *whole earth*.

Verse 7 – And He said to them, It is not for you, the eleven disciples at that time, **to know times or seasons which the Father has put, set, in His own authority.** So it's God's power to act and when to act, when to establish the Kingdom of God on this earth. So this power of choice, God the Father has reserved for His own authority. Now, we understand that this day has been established by God and it will happen exactly as God has planned, this Day of Pentecost when Jesus Christ returns to this earth.

Verse 8 – But you shall receive power when the holy spirit has come, and that started at that time in the Day of Pentecost, 31 AD, and continues to come; that's the issue, it continues to come, **upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria, and to all the ends of the earth.** Here it is, brethren, a statement that we can understand today, that when the power of the holy spirit would be poured out it was the beginning of a process that God would continue to pour out His holy spirit on us, on His Church, *in* His Church. And the purpose was? To be a witness to Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. Well, we understand that was physical Jerusalem, but there is a witness that takes place within the Church itself as well because those that have God's spirit are a witness *in* the Church, and we see that because we see God in people within the Church.

...and all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Well, “to the end of the earth,” that's where we are, brethren. We are scattered abroad all over the earth today and we are a witness of God's

Church by the way we live. By the way we live, by the way we speak we *become* witnesses of Jesus Christ to this earth all over the earth and people see it because of the way we live. Now, they don't see it, because they don't understand it, but in time they will understand that, yes, it was Jesus Christ and God the Father *in* us that was doing the works, and that's what they saw.

If we have God's holy spirit we have the witness (or the evidence) of Christ by the way we live towards others. It should be evident that God and Christ are living in us out to the benefit of others "in Jerusalem," in the Church of God. So that's where our witness begins; it begins within the Church of God itself.

The evidence that we are under government, yielded to and submissive to God's spiritual government, is seen by our attitude towards authority. And I want to read that again because that is an important statement for us to consider in our reasoning, in our thinking, to stand back and consider this statement. The evidence, the proof, that we are under government, yielded to, and submissive to God's government (God's spiritual government) is seen by our attitudes towards authority. Now, that can be attitudes towards the authority *in the Church*, but it can also be seen by our attitude towards the authorities in the world, because there are authorities that are over us that are in the world, that we need to yield to unless they command us to break God's law. But we should be yielded to the authority over us.

Verse 9 – Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Now, this is some ten days before the Day of Pentecost.

Verse 10 – And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. Now, this is two angels, two servants of God that had chosen to remain faithful to God's spiritual government.

Verse 11 – who also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? That was the question they asked. **This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will also come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.** This points to the very return of Jesus Christ to this earth. When He returns it is to establish the government of God on this earth. God will rule this earth in and through Jesus Christ. It will be a spiritual government ruling physical humans. Mankind will have the same choice we have now, the one we have today, and that choice is: Will we yield to God, submit our thinking to, place our thinking under the spiritual government of God in Jerusalem, *in* the Church of God? Well, that's the future for mankind in the Millennium. Will they choose to submit? Will they choose to submit *to* the spiritual government of God?

Verse 12 – Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. And when they, the eleven, had entered, they went up to the upper room, now, "an upper room" in a house is the highest part of a house, the highest part of a building, where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son* of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas *the son* of James.

Verse 14 – These all continued with one accord, and that is "with one mind, one way of thinking," **in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers,** with His brethren. They were in unity of purpose, and that is important. They were in unity of purpose.

Because that's what the issue is for us, brethren. Are we in unity of purpose, the purpose of what God is doing in the Church?

Verse 15 – And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and the word “disciple” we understand is “a learner,” **(altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, Men and brethren, this scripture has been fulfilled, which the holy spirit spoke before,** which was God speaking, **by the mouth of David,** so by it saying, “which the holy spirit spoke,” it was God speaking *in* and through David. God inspired David by His holy spirit, **concerning Judas, who being a guide to those who arrested,** seized, **Jesus.** Now, we read in Part 1 about Judas betraying Christ on the very Passover night. Judas had to point Christ out and he did it by a kiss. Judas had *chosen* not to remain under his spiritual teacher, not to remain under his master.

The truth is that when we choose to lift ourselves up against a decision made by God's administration (which is not one of sin), we betray Christ just like Judas did, only our action is worse than Judas' because it is done on a spiritual level.

Verse 17 – for he, Judas, was numbered with us and obtained, and that was because of an appointment by God, **a part of this ministry.** We can view this like one that is called into a relationship with God and His people now, and then betrays them, betrays the people of God and God and Jesus Christ, because of their unfaithfulness.

Verse 18 – (Now this man purchased a field with the wages, and that is “the reward” **of iniquity; and falling down headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails,** his intestines, **gushed out. And it became known,** it became notable, **to all dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, the Field of Blood,** or Field of Blood). When someone betrays God and Jesus Christ by unrepentant sin, they disfellowship themselves. They are disfellowshipped, removed from a spiritual relationship with God and His people. It is known by God's Church. They are “a field,” a place where God's character could have grown, but now they are known as “a field of blood” (a field of death). They now face the potential of a death that will last forever because when a person sins an unrepentant sin they cut themselves off *from God*. They may not have been disfellowshipped from the Body of Christ at this point, but they do cut themselves off from God; therefore, *they* disfellowshipped *themselves* from God. And when it becomes known that they do this and it is evident (and that they choose not to repent), they are then formally disfellowshipped from God's people, from God's Church.

Verse 20 – For it is written in the Book of Psalms: Let his dwelling place be desolate, uninhabitable, **and let no one live in it; and, Let another take his office,** “visitation,” that word is, so take his place is another way of saying it. So this can happen to us on a spiritual level and this *does* happen on a spiritual level. We can choose to become uninhabitable because of our unrepentant sin. God and Christ cannot live or dwell in us because of our choices; we choose not to repent. God then will choose another to fulfill the office, the role of service. The outcome of not remaining humble, not choosing to yield to God's spiritual government in the Church or in their own lives will be one of death on a spiritual level.

So we can learn about government by what Judas did. He chose to go against his Master. He chose to lift himself up against and to betray. And we can look at that on a spiritual level, that we can lift ourselves up by holding our own opinions, our own views and going against our Master, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and God the Father, our Creator. So we can lift ourselves up by our reasoning and choose to disagree and betray God's Church, God's people, and God Himself. We can choose that because of a sin

that has developed in our mind and we choose to “hold our integrity,” just like Job did. We're going to hang on to what “we see,” the way “we see it,” our human reasoning, and we, in doing that, we sin and we betray Jesus Christ because of those thoughts and words. And if we hold on to it and just act out a role and thinking that we're getting away with it, well, the answer is we are not, because we can never get away with sin because God sees all things and knows all things. So it is time to repent if we have any of those types of thoughts in our minds.

Verse 21 – Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection. So now they're going to complete the number of twelve, because there is eleven and now they're going to form a “point of perfection” in government (or structure, or order), by ensuring that there is twelve. And God had established that there would be twelve (that there would be twelve), and He knew that and that's why that prophecy was written about Judas and that there *would* be somebody that would be chosen to replace Judas. God was ensuring that there was twelve disciples, which pointed to perfection in structure and order.

Verse 23 – And they proposed, or established, two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

Verse 24 – And they prayed and said, You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, and that is an important part, because God does know the hearts, the inner intent, the reasoning's and the way we think. Our motives, our intent are known by God. So this intent and inner thinking are known by God. And here they are, they're praying, saying, **O Lord, God, show us the heart, which of these two have You chosen,** so by this choice God was going to reveal the heart, the intent, within the person by choosing one, **(verse 25) to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go in to his own place. And they cast their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.** Now, this “casting of lot's” is similar to that done, of course, by the casting of lots as outlined in Leviticus 16, which we're not going to turn to today. It is God that chooses who will be selected, and that is the point. Well, basically, how did it work? Well, “a lot” was an object used in casting or drawing lots, which was similar to a pebble or a potsherd, which is a piece of pottery or a bit of wood, and “the lot” was somebody would write their name or inscribe their name on “the lot,” or the piece of wood, or the piece of a pebble, and they would write their name. So there would have been two lots. And they were often thrown into a vase or into a vessel and sometimes they were shaken and one would fall out on to the ground, and the first one to fall out that was the person's name on it, they were the one chosen. Or there would be two lots in a bag and someone would pull the lot out. That's the way they did it. They actually would draw a lot or one would fall out and that person who had written their name on the lot, that is the person that God had chosen.

Now, this process of selection now is done by inspiration. So when somebody is appointed to the role of service within the ministry it is not by lot, it is by inspiration, by the power of God's holy spirit in the mind of the person making that choice.

Now we'll go on to **Acts 2:1 – And when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord,** and that is “one mind and purpose,” **in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven,** so this is a sound that comes **as a rushing mighty wind,** so there was no wind, it was just the sound of the wind, **and it,** the sound, **filled the whole house where they were sitting.**

Verse 3 – Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as fire, and sat upon each of them. So here it is this tongue of fire, it appeared as if it was fire. It wasn't necessarily fire, but it was *as* fire. And you've seen a tongue of fire when you light a fire and you see it flashing up in the air, which is called a tongue of fire, **and they were filled**, and that is "furnished" **with the holy spirit and began to speak with other tongues**, other languages, **as the spirit gave them utterance**. Here is a demonstration of the power of God, which is the ability to speak many languages. And of course, they didn't have that ability on a human level of and by themselves, they hadn't learned a different language. Well, here it is that God is providing the power to speak many languages, and we understand that the ability to *hear* many different languages was also an ability that God gave to people on this particular Day of Pentecost.

God had provided them with His Word, His thinking. This was the start of the Church of God, the Day of Pentecost on 31 AD. This is an incredible time to remember, brethren. It's such an important time! This is the very beginning of a prophecy of Joel, which we're going to read, which was the beginning of a process; God providing His spirit to His people *in* His Church, because now the Church is going to be formed in a structured way, the way that God had established it to be formed.

God's holy spirit is what *powers* God's Church, and that's the same today. God's holy spirit is what powers God's true Church, the Church of God – PKG. Without God's spirit one cannot be *in* God's Church on a spiritual level. This was the start of an organized spiritual structure on earth. Prior to this day God had worked with individuals to achieve His will and purpose.

If you drop down to **verse 12 – So they**, the Jews in Jerusalem at that time, **were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, Whatever could this mean? Others mocking, said, They are full of new wine!** Because of this language that they were speaking – they were speaking in different languages and they were hearing different languages and they thought, "Well, this is not possible!" And so some are mocking and saying, "Well, they're all drunk!" They used human reasoning to justify their thinking. They tabled their opinion about the matter.

Now, we can learn from this, brethren, because this is all about government, about yielding to and not opening the mouth and flapping the tongue with regards to speaking things we don't know, which we looked at with what God was talking to Job about, speaking without knowledge, using human *reasoning* to justify our thinking. And we can do that because of? Pride. The fact that this speaking, or this mocking – any mocking – is a sign of *their pride*! So when somebody mocks another person, when somebody pulls another person down, when somebody gossips about another person – *any form of mocking*, because there are many forms of mocking, which is put down or belittling – it is just a sign of pride. Mocking or pulling down anyone is a sign of pride from within a person's thinking. Now, anyone can justify it and say it's not a sign of pride, but God says in His word that this thinking, this pulling down, this thinking that somebody else is wrong and mocking them and pulling them down or condemning or criticizing them in this way *is a sign of pride*. That's what's driving their thinking and intent. *They* think they're better! They think they're better! So here it is, these men were mocking the twelve apostles, and of course, they were just simply revealing their pride.

We discovered this in Part 1 when it comes to ordinations made by God in His Church. If someone is under government, under spiritual government of God, they will *not* table their opinions or justify why they have pulled down others. Now, this is one of the potentials we have, brethren, which is to justify ourselves. We can come up with this reasoning because we think we know the person, and then we can

begin to think, "Well, I'm going to speak about it." Well, when we speak about it, it is just a sure sign of our pride. What's it really showing? Pride. Pride within us.

When we lift ourselves up against a decision made by the administration of God's Church we are in fact *mocking God*! And that is something on a spiritual level to come to understand, that when we criticize the administrative decisions or any of the administration structure of God's Church – *any* minister, anyone placed in a position of service by God – we, when we criticize, mock, pull down in any way, are in fact *mocking God*, because it was God's decision to place them in authority. Now, they will make mistakes, but it's not our role to judge and condemn and pull the person down because of their mistakes, because we *all make mistakes*, we all sin, because that's the way we are. We were all born to sin, in the sense of born in sin, because that's our natural carnal mind. And the process and the beauty of it is that God grants us repentance and that we can repent.

Well, we'll find, generally, that a mocker is someone that is hard and callous and unforgiving because they want to hold their integrity, because they don't understand what God is doing. They do not understand *how* God's spirit works in God's Church.

Verse 14 – But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. Now, they could hear it in their own language – and this is the miracle that God was performing at this time – that not only had He given them the ability to speak in tongues (different languages), but also the miracle was in the hearing because people could hear in their own language. **For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day**, which is about 9:00am on the Sunday morning, using the Roman calendar there, which of course was the Day of Pentecost, the daylight portion of the Day of Pentecost on the 1st Day of the week.

Verse 16 – But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

Verse 17 – And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out My spirit on all flesh, and now this was the beginning here, and it began with the Church and would have had an ongoing fulfillment until it is completely fulfilled. That's what the word actually means. It means that it starts here, but it would continue and it is completely fulfilled at the very end. So this is the word used here, is an ongoing fulfillment. **Your sons and your daughters**, and that is generations going to follow them from that point in time, from Pentecost 31 AD, **shall prophesy**, and that is “to be inspired to understand God's word,” **your young men shall see visions**, they will “see” the truth! **Your old men shall dream dreams**. Now, this is not about a *new* truth but they'll actually “see” the truth, they will come to understand the truth, they will come to *know* the truth that is being placed into God's Church by the power of God's holy spirit dwelling in them that would empower them to “see” the truth on a spiritual level. And *that* is what has happened to us. This is a prophecy that has been fulfilled. We are some of these people being tabled here in this prophecy. We *are* these people! We *are* the generations to follow from 31 AD, and “sons and daughters,” we are the generations that have followed. And we, brethren, are those people that this prophecy – and we can look at it and say we are part of prophecy. Well, we're part of prophecy not only in this scripture but in many other scriptures. We are spoken of *in* God's word because we are God's Church at the end-time.

Verse 18 – And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. We shall speak with spiritual knowledge and understanding, and that's what

takes place within God's Church, brethren. When we have conversations with each other it's about spiritual knowledge and understanding. We have inspired speaking because it is God doing the works in and through us. Isn't that amazing to come to understand?

Verse 19 – Now it's referring to the end-time. God states, **I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire, vapour and smoke.** And they point to death.

Verse 20 – **The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood,** so it will look like blood. It's not actually going to *be* blood; it will look like blood because it'll be a reddish colour, **before the coming and great and awesome,** which is “notable” **day of the LORD.** We have lived the spiritual “Day of the LORD” which covered a full year from Pentecost to Pentecost. So we have lived that on a spiritual level, and it was a testing and trying time. There was a five-month-period in there where it was a time of great spiritual testing. We now look to the outcome of the next “Day of the LORD”, the return of Jesus Christ to this earth before the final day of “the Day of the LORD” – in other words, during “the Day of the LORD,” the one year, there is a final day – these events will take place on a physical level. So before this very last day there is going to be this “blood, fire, and vapour of smoke.” That's what God has said in His word, but it will happen during the one year period of “the Day of the LORD.”

Verse 21 – **And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.** Now, the protestant world takes this and twists it, thinking that somebody can just call out to God, and therefore, and say, "I'm sorry," and therefore, they'll be forgiven. Well, that's not what it's about.

Those that are called by God – and that's the point, they have to be called by God first – given the opportunity to repent, will be saved from physical death and from the potential of a spiritual death. They will have the potential to be saved in the future on a spiritual level. To be saved spiritually we must continue to call on God's name (the name of God) for *His* mercy and for *His* holy spirit. We must choose to repent. We must choose to yield. So to “call on the name of the LORD” to be saved, we must choose to repent and we must choose to *yield*, because we can only be saved if we yield (remain under) the government of God, choose to submit to God's spiritual government *in* our life.

Drop down to **verse 32** – **This Jesus, God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.** They had the evidence. They *are* the evidence. Well, brethren, we should be the evidence as well, that God has raised us up by a calling and given us His holy spirit. Well, here they're saying it's, "This Jesus that God had raised up, of which we are all witnesses." So they are the evidence and they were going to give it, but they are actually the evidence because of the way they live. **Therefore, being exalted,** talking about Christ, **to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the holy spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.** So here is the *evidence*. They can now “see” it and they can actually hear it, because of the different languages.

Verse 34 – **For David did not ascend into the heavens but he says himself: “The LORD, God, says to my Lord,** and that's David's Lord, David's Messiah, the Christ, **“Sit at My right hand,”** which is to sit in authority. So here it is God the Father saying to Jesus Christ, "Sit at My right hand. I'm going to give You this authority."

Verse 35 – **“Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”** Now, we automatically think physically, but this is speaking spiritually. God has placed all authority in Christ's hands. God through Christ will bring all authority physically and spiritually into subjection (submission) to God's way of life. If we do not yield,

choose to submit, choose to remain under God's spiritual government in our life we are considered enemies. Because God says here that He's going to put all enemies under Christ. Well, if we *are* enemies we won't be *under* God's authority, we won't be *under* Jesus Christ in authority because we'll have raised ourselves up.

In the end, all enemies will be destroyed as they can have no part with or in Elohim. And that's why it's important, brethren, that we remain *under* God's government in our life.

Verse 36 – Therefore let all the house of Israel, “type” of the Church, know assuredly that God has made, and this word “made” is “to bring forth” this Jesus, whom you staked on a pole, both Lord and Christ, the anointed Messiah. God created and provided a way for us to be saved from what we are. It is only through Christ that anyone can be saved on a spiritual level. The only way to be saved is to yield to (remain under) God's government both in our life and in the Church. So there's two aspects to that because we have to be yielding to God's spirit in our life, which means we have to be making those personal choices when to yield. We should be yielding to God's spirit.

Now, there are times when we don't yield to God's spirit in our life and we sin. Well, the beauty is we can repent. But we also need to choose to yield (remain under) the government *in the Church* because the decisions that come out from within the Church from God's spirit, allowed to come into God's Church by God's spirit, we have to then choose to yield to those as well.

Verse 37 – Now when they had heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, their inner thinking. They accepted their guilt in killing Jesus Christ because of their sins. So they realized it. God empowered this for them to see that they were guilty of the transgression of God's law and that they were guilty of sin; therefore, they were guilty of killing Jesus Christ **...and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?** Now, this is a question for us, brethren. If we have sinned, if we have raised ourselves up against government, if we have disagreed with God in the sense of His appointing people into roles of service as ordinations, if we have disagreed with God by raising ourselves up in any way by sin, what shall we do?

Well, Peter said, **verse 38 – Then Peter said to them, Repent,** and that's as basic as it gets brethren. *Think differently!* We are to repent! We are to think differently. And the way we repent is? We go before God the Father and repent and we do it all in the name of Jesus Christ. So we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. We accept His Passover sacrifice for us so that our sins can be covered. So what did Peter say? We are to repent. And that's what we do today. Any sin can be repented of; we have to choose to repent. Once sin has been revealed to us by the power of God's holy spirit because that's the only way we really “see” sin, is by the power of God's holy spirit, we are to repent.

... and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission, the forgiveness, of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the holy spirit. We understand also, brethren, that upon repentance, that when our sin is *covered* we then have access to God's holy spirit once again. So we've been through this process of baptism and receiving the holy spirit, but every time we sin we cut ourselves off from God's holy spirit. Well, when we repent God will say that we can now receive the gift of the holy spirit again. It can *continue* to flow (it's an ongoing process), continue to flow into our life out to the benefit of others.

Verse 39 – For the promise – And what is the promise? Of life as a spirit being in Elohim – **is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.** To those who will receive Him. So if we will receive God, if we are called and then we will receive God, well, this is the promise to us.

So, brethren, if we have had wrong thinking towards others, wrong thinking towards any administrative decision made by God's Church, wrong thinking towards God's ministry – which is wrong thinking towards *God* – what shall we do? Repent. *Think differently.* And the first part of that is to remember that God is in charge of His Church. It is God's Church! So we are to repent. We're to think differently so that God and Christ can live in us once again by the power of God's holy spirit.

Verse 40 – And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation. Be rescued and separated spiritually from this sinful age. "Come out of her, My people." Well, this same instruction is for us, brethren. We are to continue to come out of this perverse generation for the purpose of being saved, saved from it! We're going to be saved from ourselves, from our own perverted thinking. The natural carnal mind is perverted thinking. So we are to come out of this world because we are to separate. Because how do we do it? We do it by thinking differently.

Verse 41 – Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day were about three thousand lives were added to them. Well, brethren, if we just look back at that statement, we are to "Come out of her, My people," to think differently and to separate ourselves from this world. People in the world will not understand aspects of this sermon because they cannot "see" that we have to remain under spiritual authority, remain under God and submit our will, and that we're not to raise our opinions and views up *against others*. They can't "see" that. They will say that everyone has a right to an opinion. Well, that's not true. We only have a right to an opinion if it agrees with God. We do not have a right to an opinion if it disagrees with God; therefore, we are to remain under authority, submit our wills and not raise up our opinions.

We're going to read Truth #10 at this point. Truth #10 is to know why God established the Church, really. This is what it's about.

10 (7) The Church is only the first fruits. The Church is only the first fruits for the beginning of God's plan of salvation. God is not yet trying to save the whole world.

Because that starts in the Millennium. So if we look at that first statement, "The Church is about the first fruits," now, we know that God has been working from Pentecost to Pentecost, that there *is* a time that God was working to develop 144,000 to fulfill that role. Now, we understand out of the 144,000 that there were some that were *before* the very first Day of Pentecost 31 AD when God poured out His holy spirit on that day, that there were some that were part of the 144,000. But the purpose of the Church was for the creation of the first part of God's plan of salvation, which was the first fruits, the 144,000 that now have been finalized, set, and sealed as God's plan being achieved.

"God is not yet trying to save the whole world." Well, that's what the world thinks. They think you can go out there and they sent out people that proselyte, to save the world, "to bring them to Jesus," is what they would say. But they don't understand God's word because they haven't been called to it.

The first fruits are those who have been tried and trained to become part of God's government, in His Kingdom, when Jesus Christ returns as King of kings in the Millennium.

Now, we understand that the 144,000 has been completed and have been sealed in May of 2012, that that has been achieved and fulfilled.

Those who are converted during the Millennium, along with the first fruits, will become kings, priests and teachers for the rest of the world that will be resurrected after the end of the Millennium.

So this is that process of the pouring out of God's holy spirit, that it started in 31 AD and has continued, the sons and daughters. We are, brethren, part of that process of the fulfilling of this promise of the Father, because it is going to continue. It has started with 31 AD with a group of twelve, and then 120, and then we know there was about 3,000 later on, that that continued to grow and then they were persecuted, and God's Church has always continued during this whole period, and now we get to this point of time where we have been through what is called "a spiritual tribulation." We have been through that part, we've been through a "Day of the LORD" on a spiritual level, and now we are heading towards the very return of Jesus Christ as King of kings.

Now, during the Millennium this process of *conversion* continues. So those that are all converted during the Millennium, they will be changed at the end of the Millennium to be in Elohim, to be kings and priests and teachers for the rest of the world during the period of the Last Great Day, that last hundred years. So that's an exciting part of *why* the Church was established because it's all part of God's plan. Now, everybody going forward is going to have to do exactly as what we have had to do, which is exactly as what everybody has had to do since 31 AD, which is yield to, submit to, place ourselves under the spiritual government of God. And that comes into this aspect of binding and loosening, which we're going to get into in this sermon and also possibly in the next sermon, *Part 3*.

11 (8) The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God. The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God but it is the embryo that will become the Kingdom of God.

...because the Church today is *not* spiritual in the sense of *in Elohim*, because when we are *in* the Kingdom of God we are then changed to spirit. We *are* actually the embryo. So here we are, we haven't been born yet *into* the Kingdom of God. It's just the Church of God in embryo. So we're being formed, we're being developed *into* the opportunity to be given birth, to be given life. We're going to be given life *in* Elohim. We're going to be *born* again *into* Elohim. So that's how we are "born again," because it's a change from physical to spirit.

A false gospel in traditional Christianity teaches that the church on earth is the Kingdom of God.

Well, that's not true.

Mr. Armstrong clearly saw that the coming literal Kingdom of God is the message Christ brought from the Father.

...which is the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and that's what Jesus Christ taught. He taught about a *literal* government of God, Kingdom of God, and it is composed of spirit beings. So the Millennium is *not* the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God rules *over* mankind *in* and during the Millennium.

Truth #46... Now, these are wonderful truths to know, brethren, because they're all about spiritual government. And the more that we can grasp spiritual government the more we will be submitting and yielding ourselves and choosing to yield to God.

46 (25) The Church of God- PKG is the only physical organization God is working with in this end-time.

So, this is it, brethren, the Church of God – PKG is the *only physical organization* God is dwelling, God is working with at this end-time, during this end-time, *in* this end-time.

God has always worked through a hierarchical method of government, especially at this end-time.

Now, people really struggle with this in the world, because they see it as a dictatorship. They don't see it as one person governing using God's holy spirit. They think it's one person in a hierarchical form being a dictator and they'll turn around and say, "Well, you're all just brainwashed!" But what they don't understand is that it's God's spirit and that we have chosen to *yield* to God's spirit, we have chosen to remain under, place our thoughts under the government of God, which is a hierarchical system. Because God has appointed an apostle at this end-time to lead His Church under Jesus Christ. Well, they would just see that as one man leading the church in a dictatorship. Well, it requires God's spirit to fully comprehend and understand what this is all about. This is about spiritual government. This is about submitting ourselves, our will, our opinions, our views to God's way, to the way that God says it should be, to God's way of life.

There was one end-time apostle during the era of Philadelphia, and this apostle led the only physical organization that God worked through for His Church. Likewise, there is one apostle who leads God's Church today.

...at the end-time. The Church of God is not Ron Weinland's Church. Now, this is what people struggle with. They would see it, the Church of God – PKG today, as Ron Weinland's Church. People cannot understand why the Church of God – PKG continues after all this current persecution! It's very hard for them to comprehend that when they have done what they have done to God's apostle, that the Church of God would continue *stronger* than it ever has been before! They *can't understand it!* Because they generally would say, "You would cut off the head and the body will just fall over." But they don't understand, you can *never* cut off the Head of God's Church! It's impossible! Because the *Head* of God's Church is *Jesus Christ*, and this *is* God's Church, and therefore, will *always* continue. And no matter what persecution or no matter what is done to it, *it will continue*. It continues and will continue with or without the two witnesses. It will continue without *anyone* that is existing today, because it is *God's Church* and God's Church can *never fail*. So no matter what is done, God's Church will continue because it is *God's Church* and the Head of God's Church is *Jesus Christ!*

Now, this is very difficult for the natural carnal mind to understand. That God's Church will continue, no matter what happens to *anybody* that is in God's Church...*anybody* in God's Church. It will continue. God's Church will continue and it will *never fail* because that's what God said; God said it will never fail.

When sermons are given by current speakers each Sabbath it is the same voice – it's the words of God – it's just via a different speaker or sound system. God's spirit empowers God's Church and *nothing* can stop it! Isn't that incredible to know? To believe? To understand? *Nothing* can stop God's Church no matter what happens to any individual within God's Church – *any individual* in God's Church. It makes no difference, God's Church will continue.

Matthew 16:13 – When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, talking about Himself, the Son of Man, am? So it's a fair question. "Who do people say that I am?" Well, they didn't understand, really, that the question really was about who do *they* think Jesus Christ was.

Verse 14 – So they said, Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. And Christ said, **He said to them, Who do you say that I am?**

Verse 16 – Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

Verse 17 – Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven. So this word "revealed" there that Christ uses here, it's actually "to uncover." **Blessed are you,** "blessed are you," blessed are *we*, brethren, because it wasn't true flesh and blood, it wasn't from our *own* human reasoning, it wasn't from our own human intellect that this truth of God and God's way of life was uncovered to us, but it was God the Father who is in heaven. God placed it *into* his mind, into Peter's mind, and into his thinking so he could "see" spiritually. How blessed are we to know and to "see spiritually," to "see" the truth? We "see" spiritual matters because God empowers it. We "see" the need to yield, the need to choose God's way of life and place our will under His. Isn't that incredible to "see" it?

Now, *why* can we "see" it? Why can we "see" this aspect of the need to be under spiritual government? Well, it was all because of a gift, the mercy of God towards us. And that's why. Well, this is what happened to Peter – well, it's happened to us. Isn't that an incredible miracle? That we can compare ourselves to this and say, "Well, yes, it wasn't through flesh and blood; it was God that did it! It was the *living God* that revealed it to us through a calling and through the power of His holy spirit."

Verse 18 – And I, Christ, also say to you that you are Peter, and that word is "Petros," "a rock or a stone." It's a smaller version of a stone, **and on this Rock,** now, this is a "Petra," which is "a large rock," referring to Christ, Himself. So Peter, the word there was "Petros," which was smaller, but this one is referring to "Petra," which is "the large Rock," referring to Christ, Himself. **I will build My Church,** not a building but an assembly of *called-out ones*, because we are God's Church, *we* make up God's Church. What is God's Church? It consists of called-out ones and they are the Church. So it is not a physical building. It's not a structure that way. It's actually a *spiritual building*. And this is where people really struggle to understand, when you talk to them and say, "Yeah, well, we have a Church." And they say, "Where is it?" And we say, "Well, we don't have buildings. We hire halls." And people can't understand

that. They say, "What do you mean you've got a Church, but you don't have a building?" Because it's very difficult to explain that *we are* the Church. *Individuals* make up the Church, the Body of Christ.

Going on there in **verse 18... and the gates of Hades**, which is the grave or death, **shall not prevail against it**. Death will not be *superior*! The Church of God will not die out. Nothing or no one can win victory over or destroy God's Church! Because? God said it, Jesus Christ promised it, so it's going to be impossible. So no matter what happens in God's Church going forward as of today, it makes no difference because it is God's Church, and we as individuals since the Day of Pentecost 31 AD (if you look at it), all of those people lived and they all died. From 31 AD to this very day, people have lived and died. And that's what God's Church is about. And guess what going forward? People are going to live and they're going to die. Some are going to be changed to *spirit* and will not have to actually experience the physical aspect of death, although they do die in the sense of being changed instantly, but many of us may have to actually physically die and be placed in the ground. But that doesn't matter because nothing can win victory over or destroy God's true Church. The *name* can change...the name can change, because it has been called, "The Radio Church of God," it's been called "the Worldwide Church of God," and it's been called, "the Church of God – PKG," so the name doesn't matter. It's not about the name. It will always be God's Church because of God's spirit. So God's Church is where God's spirit is. The name can change but they've got, always have God's spirit *in* it because it is about the people – *in its people* – in the *brethren*. And that's how God's Church is.

Now, these things are spiritual in nature and can be confusing for people in the world. And they, of course, can't understand it because they don't have God's spirit. But that's what Christ was saying, that He was going to build His Church based on His name. It's going to be the Church of God and *nothing* can prevail against it. Nothing can destroy it. Nothing can stop it. And any physical death of *anybody*, it makes no difference, because God's Church will *always* continue because it's going to be powered by God through the power of God's holy spirit.

Verse 19 – And I will give you, he's talking about the chief apostle on a physical level, as far as the head of the Church on earth, He was going to give that, ever who the apostle was or the physical head, talking physically there, not Jesus Christ **...the keys**, and that is the power, **of the Kingdom of Heaven**, so this person who was appointed by God to lead God's Church on earth was going to be given a level of power and authority, administrative authority *in* the Church, *in* the ministry, **and whatever you bind**, and that word is "to lock" **on earth**, so anything that is bound on earth **will be bound**, locked, **in heaven**, so this is an authority of Christ and God the Father. It's the same authority. For what is spoken will be held, people are going to be held accountable to this binding and loosening, **and whatever you loose**, unlock, **on earth will be loosed**, unlocked, **in heaven**. So this is about binding and loosening. This is about binding decisions and loosening decisions. So there are going to be decisions that are binding on God's people because it's a matter of the spirit. That's what it's all about. It's a matter of the spirit and a matter of loosening, because again, it's about a matter of the spirit.

This is about an attitude that we *choose*. Because binding and loosening really is about attitudes we *choose* towards the decision.

Now, we're going to look at the example of makeup because makeup is actually a classic example of this binding and loosening. But we'll just finish this verse first and then we'll go into it in a little bit more detail and discuss the matter so that we can see it on a spiritual level. Because that's what it's about. Makeup was not about makeup; it was actually a *spiritual matter*. It was a matter of binding and

loosening. The issue is one of our spiritual response. Are we under the spiritual government of God? That's the point. The point is, are we under the spiritual government of God? The point is, it does not matter if we agree or disagree with an administrative decision. We are called to yield to, place ourselves under God's authority in the Church. Or, will we lift ourselves up against the government of God like Lucifer did? And that's about as simple as it gets.

Verse 20 – Then He commanded His disciples that they should not tell one that He was Jesus the Christ. Now, that very last one you can read over that very quickly and most people do. **Verse 20 – And He commanded,** so He's given these instructions to His disciples, **that they should not tell no one,** tell anybody, **that He,** that Christ, Himself, **was the anointed Messiah, Jesus the Christ.** Now, *this* was something that had been given to them as someone in authority. Now, if they were submitting to (yielding to with God's spirit) and choosing, they had a choice now to submit to the authority. So this is like that binding and loosening. Here is an instruction given. Now, they're either going to follow it or they're not, or they're going to raise themselves up and tell others about it, or will they submit to the authority, Jesus Christ, and not tell anyone about Jesus Christ as He had said, as He's commanded here.

Well, this is the same for us, brethren. There are choices to be made. This is about administrative authority that tests people. Now, the disciples here were being tested, really, because they were given an instruction. Whether they would do it or not would be a matter of what they would choose in their spirit, in their attitude.

So let's look at makeup as a classic example of this binding and loosening. I want to read from the post under "Spiritual Government," and the posts were from "True Fellowship" [Part 1] postings.

As a person begins to yield to a transformation in their thinking, they make more and more changes in their life as to "how" they live it.

So we have these choices. So as we transform our thinking, as God works with us with the power of His holy spirit, we begin to have to *choose* the way we live. And that's what we do. We have to make decisions about what we're going to do in life because God's spirit comes into our life. Now we have to make a choice about what we're going to do.

To be in the Family of God – Elohim – we must grasp the magnitude of the importance of coming into absolute unity and oneness with God and His one and only true way of life (into full unity with the Word). It is "His way" alone that will give true and everlasting peace – spiritual Jerusalem. Unity with God is the bond that holds true "peace" together.

So now this refers to the aspect of coming into unity of thinking because the only true absolute way of peace is to be in unity and oneness with God and to use God's spirit. So if we have to come into unity means we're going to have to agree with the decisions of the binding and loosening, what is placed *into* the Church as far as binding and loosening, because that is unity. That is what unity is about; it's about submitting our will, our reasoning, our thinking *to God*. So to be in *complete* unity with God is to be in full unity with the Word, God's Word, His way of life.

Unity

To grow in such unity, one must fight against pride and learn to embrace humility (wearing sackcloth).

...which is “the submitting to.”

If that is not practiced continually then pride will “raise up” (idolatry) some other idea, belief, perceived understanding, and/or selfish interest or desire above what God teaches as true. To grow in unity, one must become teachable (meek) and fight against “the way I see it” or “the way that seems right.” To grow in unity, one must be patient and wait upon God’s timing to reveal to us what we need when we need it. Impatience only leads to taking things into one’s own hands and/or simply acting rashly in life. These three traits of humility, meekness, and patience must also be practiced in our relationship and interaction with others.

....

If any “thinking” other than that which is in unity and oneness with the mind of Christ, as well as any conduct or conversation that follows, will only produce discord, division, rebellion, hurt, pain, and suffering – the opposite of peace and what it produces. True fellowship with God, Christ, and the Church can only be experienced through a consistent unity and oneness with God as a result of a continuing and abiding supply of God’s spirit dwelling in a person.

Now to one of the headings... “True Fellowship – Part 2.”

Makeup: A Lesson of Where We Place Value

Believe it or not, but thousands turned against Herbert W. Armstrong and God’s true Church over a very small matter – whether or not women should wear makeup. Many ministers and their wives were among those who became divisive and murmured against the decisions that were made at that time.

So these decisions that were made, they caused people to have to choose an attitude.

Those who were filled with such bitterness and anger over such a small matter in life failed to grasp that these accounts actually tried and tested their faithfulness to follow God – to upholding and supporting Him and His government over them.

.....

Although some believed there was scriptural evidence to give credibility for the forbidding of makeup, it didn’t truly exist, but was being “read into” passages and concluded this was the case. Regardless, many people simply missed that the primary matter was not whether or not it was forbidden in scripture, but that it had been decided (judged) by God’s apostle that it should not be worn. This was an administrative decision and had everything to do with **how** God’s government works.

And that's the point of this sermon series, brethren, it's about how God's government works, how God works in His Church.

As the Church became more uncertain as to the scriptural instruction on the matter, someone still had to make a decision about how it should be addressed as there was controversy regarding it within the ministry. It then became a simple matter (as it was all along) of government alone.

If something is not a matter of sin and an administrative decision is made that people should adhere to certain behavior for the sake of unity and order, then whether a person is faithful and supportive to God's government becomes the issue.

And that's the point.

Then it indeed becomes sin for anyone who creates division, who condemns or slanders others through their own judgment of what they believe is right or wrong, and who is unfaithful to work for unity and peace.

This decision concerning makeup was switched back and forth a couple of times as God was beginning to bring the Church to a higher level of maturity in its transformation. Through this process the Church would be forced to begin addressing such matters from a perspective of what is truly "spiritual" in judgment of the weightier matters of God's law.

So let's just look quickly, and we'll just talk about this aspect of makeup. Because there is more in the post that needs to be read and meditated on and prayed about, because it refers mainly to the aspect of women, but there was an aspect of men, about men and men's attitudes, what *they* chose. So let's just look at "the men aspect" of it.

Now, there were men in God's Church that believed that makeup was wrong, and they had their opinion, their view, and because of that they would then view outwardly and make discernments about women that wore makeup. So if they were against it, they viewed women a particular way. Then there were those that were *for* makeup and they viewed women a certain way. So let's just look at those two aspects of the way they view it.

So here is a man that views that makeup is wrong. He believes in his thinking that it is wrong. Then Mr. Armstrong comes out and says that women *can* wear makeup. Now, the man is then challenged to view it, he has to now submit himself to the government, but he has this view. But the point is we have to yield to – it's not about *our* opinion, it's about God's government – we're to yield to and believe God, what God is allowing to happen, this process that He is allowing to happen. Now, the man could rise up against God's Church, God's authority, God's ministry, and speak against the decision – and that's what happened. In many examples that's exactly what happened. But hidden behind that also is another element, and that is the way the man viewed the woman wearing the makeup! Because now he had in his thinking that he *looked down on*, he viewed the woman *differently*! Because, before he agreed with the woman not wearing makeup – that was easy – now he says, "Well, they're wearing makeup," so how does he now *treat* that woman that is wearing makeup versus the woman that's not.

Because when that happened there were women that "held their integrity" and wouldn't wear makeup, never ever put it on and went to Sabbath services never wearing it. Others wore it. So then the women that didn't wear makeup were making discernments and judgments and looking out and condemning and judging the women that *were*! Well, the men were just as bad – in actual fact, possibly worse

because they were holding on to their pride in their decision. They viewed the women wearing makeup as “less than,” and they put them into a category of being in the world and judge them as *sinning*. That's what they did. They judged them as sinning, and therefore, they would have held them in a different view than what they thought in their own eyes of women that were not wearing makeup, whom they would have considered as being righteous and doing the right thing. Well, they missed the point altogether!

The point was this was a binding and loosening decision. What is bound on earth – so what decision an apostle made as the leader of God's Church on a physical level – this is what God would bind in heaven. So it is all about attitudes. It's about spirit, what we will do with whatever happens when the decision comes. So in one way, whether we agree or disagree *isn't* the point, it's got nothing to do with that, because it's not about *us* in the sense of what *we think*, it's about what *God* thinks, it's about what *God* establishes. And if God allows a decision to come into the Church, we have “to yield to.” It's revealed by our attitudes, the way we view it...the way we view it.

So now you have the other aspect, of the men who had always thought in their mind that makeup was okay...makeup was okay. So when they saw that women were allowed to wear makeup they then felt *justified* in their view, the way *they* saw it! "Well, yes, finally Mr. Armstrong is allowing something that I have always believed!" Well, they then looked at women that wore makeup as normal and those that didn't wear it, well, what did they see? Well, they thought, "Well, those people are *wrong*, because Mr. Armstrong has said that they *could* wear it and they're not wearing it; therefore, what's wrong with them!"

So you can see that men had the bigger issue as well with this whole matter of makeup being bound or loosened. Then when the decision was that there was no makeup, well, you had decisions from the men again. The men then had to think about it again. They had the same problem! They had to now think and adjust. The women would take it off, they wouldn't wear makeup anymore, and therefore, the men had decisions to make.

Well, during that period there was lots of testing going on. Well, that's what this binding and loosening is mainly about – decisions that are made. And makeup was just one example. Because it is only an example because there were women that never wore makeup ever during the whole time of the period of being allowed, being bound or loosened, didn't matter, didn't make any difference to them. They just simply didn't wear it. Others who wanted it, they would wear it and they were allowed to. When the decision was made not to wear makeup some of them struggled with it because they wouldn't wear it to Sabbath services but during the week they would wear it. And then, of course, with all things in human nature there are degrees. There are people that will wear very little makeup. There were some that will wear it in moderation. Then there are others that will “cake their faces.” *Everyone is different*. Everyone has decisions to make in their *own personal life*, and this is all a matter of finding balance in the matter and finding whether or not it's about the *inner* person and whether there is sin involved. Why are we doing what we're doing? What is the real motive behind what we're doing? And that's the key point. This is all an aspect of this binding and loosening.

Other things that have happened in God's Church are under the same heading of “binding and loosening.” “Whatever is bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what is loosened on the earth is loosened in heaven.” Well, we use makeup as an example because it is a good example because it triggers ways to think. It makes people think, and in particular, *men* and what they can do and how they

view women, which God has begun that process of changing men's thinking by the truths that He has entered into God's Church.

Well, another area that we could look at this binding and loosening was the keeping of the Feast for eight days but four were to be kept in our own homes. Now, that was a matter of binding and loosening. Well, how did we handle that, brethren? What did we think? How did we handle that in our minds? What *attitude*, what *spirit* did we choose? Did we think it was wrong and that we should have just been keeping all eight days at an organized Feast site? Is that what we thought? Or did we agree with God's apostle? Did we say, "Yes, I will submit this." We may not *understand* the decision – and this is the point about binding and loosening – we may not understand the decision, we may not understand because we don't have all the facts. And guess what? We probably *won't* ever have all the facts – we simply will not have it – because we're not in that position to know, to make that decision. But did we agree with it or did we disagree? What spirit did we choose?

Ordinations, which have just been covered of late in the posts – same thing. What are we thinking? What are we deciding? What spirit will we *choose*? Did we speak out against ordinations? Did we speak out against the eight days of the Feast? Did we speak out about makeup at the time when it happened? Because there are some still around that lived during that era that made decisions in their life.

Well, we have that same problem today, brethren. When administrative decisions come on to the Church or in the Church, we have to choose a spirit. And that's the purpose of this sermon series about *Spiritual Government*. Because ordinations, use of 1st Tithe, use of 2nd Tithes, all of these things test the spirit, selection of a Feast site – are all administrative decisions, and therefore, we have a spirit to choose, we have an attitude to choose.

We'll turn now to Church structure in **Ephesians 4:1**. And the heading of my Bible here, New King James Version, is "Walk in Unity." **I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord**, and referring here to the way that he is responding to his calling, and that is to be a prisoner of the Lord is, of course, is to be in obedience to God because we are submitting our will to God, **beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called**, so this is an invitation. We've been called by God the Father, now we are being encouraged here to walk worthy. And "to walk worthy" is to be submissive, to place ourselves *under* the government of God **...with all lowliness, gentleness, and longsuffering, forbearing one another in love**, in God's spirit, of course, it requires **...endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace**. Now that is what is required, brethren. We are to strive to keep "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." That's what's got to motivate it. And that can all be done through the power of God's holy spirit.

So we're to walk in lowliness. We're not to raise ourselves up *against* what God has said. We're not to do that. We're to "walk in gentleness," because that requires God's spirit. "With longsuffering," we are to be patient with the process. Now, binding and loosening requires us to walk with longsuffering, to endure, "bearing with one another in love," having outgoing concern for the welfare of others in *any* issue or matter of binding and loosening. And if we do that "we should be endeavouring," we should be *striving* to – because it's going to require effort, because we're going to have to choose – "to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." That's how it happens. Because we're going to strive to be in unity of the spirit, to be of this one mind, to be in unity with the decisions of God's government. And what does that produce? It produces *peace*! It *produces* peace.

If we are “*striving* to keep the unity” – in other words, putting our own opinions and own views down and submitting to the authority that is over us, which is God because it's God's Church, that will produce peace. **There is one body**, we know there is one body. It's called the Body of Christ, the Church of God. So there is only one body, there's not all these different bodies, **there is one spirit**, we know there is one spirit and it comes from God, **just as you are called**, because that's what's happened to us, we are called **in the hope of your calling**. Well, we've been called, brethren, and it's an amazing, incredible thing to understand, the purpose of our calling. And we have this hope, we have one hope in our calling, one hope *of* our calling. What's that hope? Salvation! We hope that God will fulfill in us the gift of Elohim.

There is **one Lord, one faith**, there is only one way, there are not hundreds of different ways. There can't be 500 different faiths, there's only one faith! Here it is, Jesus Christ and God the Father have clearly said there is *one faith*. There is **one baptism**, there is only *one way* to be baptized because there is one repentance. There's not two repentance, there's only one repentance **...one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all**. Isn't that incredible? Because that's what *creates* this unity. It's because God *in us* that will create this unity because there is *one way* of thinking. It's God the Father's mind *in us* that does the works. It's God the Father's spirit, holy spirit, living and dwelling in us, and it comes into us and it's in us all.

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. So we're all different, brethren, we are all different for a purpose. **Therefore He says**, God says, **When He ascends on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?** In other words, He died. **(He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fulfill all things.)**

Verse 11, which is now talking about this aspect of spiritual government within God's Church. **And He Himself gave some to be apostles, those that were going to be “sent forth,” some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers**, and why was this given? Why was this structure given? Because there *are* roles of service, but there was a role to be fulfilled for a purpose. God set up His Church for a purpose and it's structured a certain way for a purpose, hence why ordinations are given, therefore, a purpose, and they are spiritual in nature. They are spiritual in nature.

Verse 12 ...for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, the work of service, **for the edifying**, the building up **of the Body of Christ**, and that's going to continue **till (verse 13) until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ**. Isn't that amazing scripture? Because this edifying of the body, this building up of the Body, which is “the equipping of the saints,” because we're going to be equipped *with* God's holy spirit, we're going to be given it from God, but this “equipping of the saints” is that knowledge and the understanding that God gives by the power of His holy spirit, and He does it through a ministry – the role of service – those that serve the brethren. And it's all “for the edifying,” the building up “of the Body of Christ,” the Church of God, which we are, members indeed of the Body of Christ if God's holy spirit lives and dwells in us!

So we are part of the Body, we are connected to the vine if God's spirit lives and dwells in us. And if God's spirit lives and dwells in us the work of the ministry is to build us up on a spiritual level – not to make us feel good about ourselves, but to build us up on a spiritual level, which is God's spirit living and dwelling in us, explaining things to us so that we can take on more of God's mind, God's way of life and begin to live it to the benefit of others. And this is going to happen from this point forward as it has from

31 AD. It's going to continue through the Millennium and through the hundred years, until we *all come*, until everybody comes that is called by God for a purpose to fit into Elohim, "to the unity of the faith," this one belief.

We come into this one way of life, this one way of thinking, "and of the knowledge of the Son of God," to come to know the role of Jesus Christ, accept Jesus Christ as our Passover, to understand it, to understand what that's all about. It's about salvation, it's about the covering of sin, the penalty being paid. And this is going to do until we "come to a perfect man," to become mature in God's way of life, "to the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ," which is to come to *think like God*, which is to come to think like Christ.

So we'll finish *Spiritual Government – Part 2* there. □