

The title of today's sermon is *Everyone Must Work* and this will be *Part 3*.

The purpose of this sermon series was to explore what God has been doing. It is about the very work of God *and* Jesus Christ. In John 5:17, which is the foundation of this particular sermon series, it states, **But Jesus answered them saying, My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.** Jesus Christ has been working, doing the very work of God, God's will.

God was doing spiritual works *in* and through Jesus Christ. God was working "to bring many sons to glory," and we are part of that process, that work of God. God was and still is working in creating Elohim in mankind.

We'll pick up the sermon series in **Matthew 7:6—Do not give what is holy**, and what is "holy" is God's word, the truth, the way God is, **to dogs; nor cast your pearls**, which are the mysteries or the treasures that we have about God's way of life, the knowledge, the understanding that we have of God's way of being, the way to live, **before swine**, and that is referring to what is unclean, what is unclean in the sense of the world on a spiritual level, uncalled or non-converting, the non-transforming, **lest they**, those people that hear this truth of God (they can't understand it because they don't have God's holy spirit), **lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.** They *will* turn on us and mock us because of this.

The principle here is work quietly and wisely on a spiritual level. So that's what we are to do individually, which is to work quietly and wisely. We're to conduct ourselves wisely in this world because that's exactly what will happen to us in the sense of, people will turn on us. And there is a recent post that covers this very aspect about us working wisely while the world cannot see what we're doing. But how we live our life is the most important thing. How we treat others irrespective of how they treat us is the most important thing.

There is no point in telling others (the "swine" as referred to here by Christ) about what we believe, which are the "pearls of great price," the truth, because they *will* trample it as being worthless. Now, if for some great blessing we have that potential to deal with others in relationships where they don't turn and trample on us, that is a great blessing from God, that we have that. So there are those that are not against us, not against God's Church, and not against the truth. The most important thing out of all of that is that we live God's way as an example to them.

The main point of it all is that we must work quietly on and within our minds. Others don't need to know what we are engaged in, this spiritual war that we have engaged in. They don't need to know about it. They don't even need to see it, because they can't, because it's in the mind; but they will see that we're different because we're living a different way of life. We are choosing attitudes that are different than theirs. We choose Godly attitudes. Well, we fight and struggle against ourselves in our minds so that we do try to bring our minds into unity with the way that God thinks.

Verse 7—Ask, ask God, and it, what is holy, will be given to you; seek, what is holy, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

Verse 8—For everyone who asks receives, and that is if we are working (that's the most important thing there), because asking God *for* the holy spirit, asking God to be more like Him in our mind, that He will pour His spirit out and convict our minds so that we then have a choice to make, that truth and understanding will be given to us on a spiritual level so that we can live wisdom – if we're asking for these things, asking for faith, asking for love to come into our life. God says that He will give it to us and it will be measured (of course) because that is the way that God has determined to work with mankind – is that His spirit will be given in measure to us. **For everyone who asks receives,** and that is if we are working by asking, because asking is work, **and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.** So we're to ask God for spiritual fruit. We ask God for spiritual food, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom so that we can *live* righteously, so that we can be "holy." Because it's only by God's presence in us that makes us holy. We're to ask God for peace in our thinking, which is God's way of thinking, because God thinks peace.

Then we looked at the physical pointing to a spiritual matter. **Verse 9—Or what man is there among you who, if a son asks for bread, will give him a stone?** Which is a question. Well, in man's way of thinking, that's not what happens. If your son or your daughter asked you for something that was good, you wouldn't then give them something that was bad. And this is where God is using something physical to point to something greater, which is the spiritual.

Verse 10—Or if he asks a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, which is the natural carnal mind of selfishness. If we're this way, if we're selfish by nature and we would do something "good" in the sense of from a natural carnal minds aspect of "good" ...and still selfish because we're looking after our own and we're giving to our own, we're not giving to others, but we're looking after our own, which is by a selfish motivation in itself... **know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things,** and those good things are the truth, fruits of the spirit, God's holy spirit, knowledge and understanding and wisdom **to those who ask Him!** The principle is we have to work—ask God *for* these spiritual gifts (spiritual fruit) that we can bear them, and they will be given to us. They'll be given to us as a *benefit to others* because that's how God works. God works in pouring out His spirit through us so that we can *live* love to others, to benefit others.

Verse 12—Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, this is the Law and the Prophets. So this is about behavior. If we want to be forgiven, we need to live forgiveness. If we want mercy from others, we have to live mercy to others. If we want to be loved by others, we have to give love to others. If we desire unity, we are to *live* unity. If we desire friendship, we are to live friendship. If we desire no ill will to ourselves from anybody, we are to live no ill will to others. Now we can "see" a choice that is placed before us.

Verse 13—Enter, strive to enter, by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. They will not work on themselves. So this entering the narrow gate is what is required; it requires work. Because if we are working on ourselves, this is hard. It is difficult, it is narrow, but "wide is the way, wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are *many* who go in by it." Because? They are not working. They have given up working on themselves. They take the "easy, wide path," the gate which is easy to enter because it's nice and wide. It's Satan's system; it's the world. It's the natural carnal mind of selfishness because there is no work going on. It's easy! You just live life.

This really is saying it's just using the natural carnal mind. It just comes naturally. There is no self-control, no working on the selfishness within us.

Now, I've lived this way of life. I have *been* walking many a year before my calling in this wide path. This wide gate was open and I walked it, and it's called not working on the self, not even being aware of our own selfishness. We're not even aware of it. I wasn't aware of it. I just lived life and everything was to *my* own advantage. Everything was about *my* selfishness, what made *me* feel comfortable, what made *me* feel good. Well, that's that wide, natural path of the carnal mind, the natural carnal mind which is not aware of itself and operates in selfishness.

Verse 14—But narrow is the gate and difficult, and that is "by trouble and affliction." That's why it's difficult... **is the way that leads to life**, which is *true* life, which is spirit life, **and there are few who find it**. So to stay on this narrow path and to enter this narrow gate will take a lifetime of spiritual work. It's going to be a battle! We have to fight the self and Satan's system of thinking. This pattern of thinking that comes out from the natural carnal mind, that Satan also broadcasts to and triggers and encourages. Well, this is what we're fighting against, because it's easy, it's an easy way to go. To hate somebody, for example, is an easy path to go down, to have ill will. Because we work things up in our mind to think evil towards somebody else. To think ill will towards them or desire ill will to them, it's natural, to work it up, to separate them from ourselves so that we are "better," we are "higher," and we put them down in our thinking, which is driven by pride. But we've been called out of that.

So everyone must work to enter this spiritual gate which *is* the Kingdom of God, and it is narrow and it is *difficult*. It is difficult. And this path we walk is difficult. It's not going to be easy.

Now, the principle there is God works and we must work. And that's the outcome of it.

If you'd like to turn to **Isaiah 43:10—You are My witnesses**, referring to Israel of the Old Testament, now spiritual Israel, the Church of God, which is us, **says the LORD**. So, "You are My witnesses, says the LORD," **And My servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God (no El) formed, nor shall there be after Me**. So there is only one true or eternal Almighty God. There *is* no other Eternal God, only God. Now, also, the point there is anyone that enters Elohim will not be the Eternal God. Although we will have God's thinking, we will never be the Almighty God, we'll never be the Eternal God, but we *will* be God. We will actually be Elohim. There is only ever going to be one Eternal God, Yahweh Elohim. Christ was created and fashioned like God.

Verse 11—I (talking about Yahweh Elohim), **even I, am the LORD**, (the Self-existing One) **and besides Me**, apart from Me, **there is no Savior**. So this takes us back to this plan, this "project plan." This "action plan" that God has, is that it's all based on one thing, creating Elohim, a spiritual Family of God. Therefore, this plan has one Savior, which is one Master Potter, and it's God, Yahweh Elohim, that is our Savior. Now, through this process, in the plan He appointed Jesus Christ to be our Savior. So this is that appointment, but it all goes back to one Savior, which all comes from God. God is our Savior because it's *His* "action plan," it's *His* "timeline," it's *His* plan to create a family, and part of that is the creation of Jesus Christ to be our Savior, to be our Passover.

Now, this word "Savior" really comes from the word, "one who rescues." This declares what God is working at, what He is working to achieve. He is saving mankind....He is saving mankind from himself. And that is the purpose of life—to be saved from ourselves. It's a beautiful plan when we understand what God is really doing to us in great mercy, to us and for us.

One aspect of God's work is the rescuing of, the salvation of mankind. Now, we've been called to God's fellowship at this time, to God's Church, for the purpose of salvation at a point in time. This work of salvation requires God's patience, mercy, and *detailed* planning. Now, if we look at the aspect of the recent posts that we've had, which are to do with fellowship, if we look at that, and particularly Part 12 and 13 and 14, if we look at the detail of that, we realize the detail of God's planning, how much detail that has been put into planning the creation of 144,000 and then those that'll live into the Millennium, which required people to be called for a purpose of living into the Millennium. There have been others called through the history of the Church, since 31 AD, the history of God's Church, where there are those that have lived in God's Church, in the environment of true fellowship for the purpose of being resurrected in the 100-years, to live in the 100-years and to form a strong foundation of the Church. What great planning! What great detail there is in God's plan!

Verse 12—I have declared, and that is "announced or made known," **and saved**, which is "delivered," **I have proclaimed, and there was no foreign among you** (the word "god" has been added there). "There is no stranger among you in Israel," **therefore, you are My witnesses, says the LORD, that I am God**. So only God could achieve and deliver physical Israel, and we saw that through the Days of Unleavened Bread, that it was only God, it was only God, and His great power to be able to have a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day, to be able to lead Israel out of its bondage, out of its captivity. The same for us. Only God can deliver us today, spiritual Israel. It is God that is doing the work...it is God that is doing the work *in* us today. But our aspect or our part of it must be that we must work. So we have to make a choice. Now, making choices is work...making choices is work.

God, through the power of His holy spirit, will allow His thinking to come into our minds. Then the work that we have is what will we *choose* from that point? Will we choose to yield to, submit to the thinking of God, or will we yield to and submit to our natural carnal mind of selfishness? So there *are* only two choices. There is no grey area; it's either we are developing and transforming to have the very mind of God or we're *conforming* and using the natural carnal mind. "The way that I see it..." "In my opinion..." are all signs of our own selfishness. Because if there is ever a time when we think anything outside of the way that God sees it, we're using our natural carnal mind. Because our mind must be transformed to be coming into unity in the way that God thinks.

Now, that's a good sign for us to examine ourselves to see. How are we really thinking? Are we yielding to God's Government? Are we yielding to God's spirit in our life? And only us, individually, can answer that question.

We are God's witness (evidence), that God is God. So us individually, brethren, we are witnesses. We are the *evidence* that God *is* God because of this transformation that is taking place in our life. We are no longer the people we used to be before our calling. We have transformed into something new. We are a new creation, which is a creation of God. That evidence is our calling and our ongoing conversion. So we are the very evidence of God and His greatness, what God is really doing. The Church of God—PKG is the evidence of what God is doing, which is, developing Elohim. And it's all done in a time order. Some are called for different reasons (for different purposes) to achieve something in God's plan over the period of 7,100 years, and our part in it is just simply to yield to the government of God and not to use our natural carnal mind to make decisions.

Verse 13—Indeed before the day was, which is "before the 'time' was created." So before time was created, before the creation, before the creation of *anything*, which is the spirit realm or anything physical, **I am He; And there is no one who can deliver out of My hand**, so nothing can be taken out

from God's control. God is all-mighty and He is in control of everything. **I work, and who will reverse it?** So who's going to change it? Who's going to turn it back? This is the work of God! Now, God is saying, "I work!" He actually *works*. He is working at developing this family. "And who will reverse it? Who can change it? Who can interfere with it to change it, to be different than what God has planned?"

So what is God's work? Well, God creates! God is the Creator. And what can change God's will and purpose in His master plan? Nothing! Nothing can change it!

Now, God has allowed certain things to happen and to be developed by Satan and the demons, to allow it to happen, *all* for the purpose of assisting and supporting the creation of His Family.

Luke 2:21—And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the child, His name was called JESUS, which is "Yahweh is Salvation," the name given by the angel before He (Christ) was conceived in the womb. And that's referring back to Mary.

Verse 22—Now when the days of her purification, or her cleansing, according to the law of Moses was completed, they (referring to Mary and Joseph), **brought Him (Christ) to Jerusalem to present Him to the LORD...** Hold your place there because we're going to look at this in Leviticus 12. Leviticus 12:1-4, which is outlining this aspect of what has happened. Because they are following the law as defined by God, in obedience to God. They're following the principles that were set out in His word.

Leviticus 12:1-4—Then the LORD spoke to Moses saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying: If a woman has conceived and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity (her period) she shall be unclean. So here we have, referring it now to Mary and the male child being Jesus Christ, that during this seven day period she was deemed as being unclean. Now, on the eighth day, of course, there had to be a circumcision take place, and therefore, it was a seven day period of being unclean, but on the eighth day they would have to come in and present the child for the purpose of circumcision. And that's what Luke 2:21 was referring to, that "when the days were completed... the circumcision of the child... His name was called Jesus." So this is that process that we're going through now.

Verse 3—And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. Now, we understand what this actually points to. This is about something spiritual. The circumcision of the flesh carries for nothing; it's the circumcision of the *heart* that God looks to, and that is the important aspect of why physical circumcision took place, because it's actually pointing to something spiritual, which is the circumcision of the heart. Now, that circumcision of the heart can only take place by a calling, and then the choice of repentance that we have to undertake – we're given this gift and the ability to "see," to understand spiritual things (to a degree) that we can choose to repent, to "see" the natural carnal mind, (small aspect of it), that we can change. And then we go through this process of baptism and the laying of hands because now it's "the circumcision of the heart." So it's about the mind. It's the *way we think*...it's the way we think. And the reality of the circumcision of the heart really points back to one particular thing, and it's to do with motive and intent. Because to be circumcised in the heart, to be circumcised in the *mind*, really we have to "see" why we do what we do, to come to understand our attitudes, to come to understand our motives and intents of why we do what we do. Otherwise, we're not circumcised of heart. Because if we don't check our motives, if we don't examine our *intent*, well, how can we say we are changing, because the natural carnal mind's intent and motive is purely selfish...purely selfish! And if it sacrifices, it sacrifices to benefit self, whereas, with God's holy spirit convicting us, we sacrifice to benefit others.

So, "on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised." **Verse 4—She shall then continue in the blood of her purification thirty-three days.** So those thirty-three days were a set time (and we're going to look at this particular number in a moment).

She shall not touch any hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary (into the temple), **until the days of her purification are fulfilled.** So we see there were seven days, then there were thirty-three days, which makes a total of the forty days.

There is another aspect of this that was for a male child. So there is this seven days, then the thirty-three days so it made a forty day period. Then for a female it was actually eighty days. It was actually double this.

Back to **Luke 2:23...(as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD)** (verse 24) **and,** this is referring now to Leviticus 12:2-8, **to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the LORD, A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.** Now, they were given to the priesthood that would offer it as an atoning or covering sacrifice for her, for Mary, at this particular point we're referring to.

This is the sign of Joseph and Mary working. Their work is one of obedience to God's word. It's interesting because we can look at these things and see them as stories, and the reality is they're real people *doing* something – had to go through a thought process. So here we have Joseph and Mary going through this thought process of *obedience* to God, following the law to its full intent, which were these seven days of purification, the eighth day bring the male child to be circumcised, then to go through the rest of the purification process. So there's this forty days. And it's all taking place as a *thought* process in Mary and Joseph's mind because there is a work going on.

Now, that's the same for us, brethren. To keep the Sabbath is a type of work in the mind. We don't work physically to earn an income, but we must work. Now, on the Sabbath we are to work on a spiritual level. We're to think about how we enter the Sabbath day, what we do during the Sabbath day, because we engage our mind in spiritual matters, and therefore, we are *working* in obedience to God's word. And that is the work. Everyone must work! Everyone must work. To enter Elohim, every single person must work. We have a work to do, which is the battle within the mind, which is that transformation of the mind.

Brethren, for us today, tithes and offerings are a sign that reveals if we are truly working spiritually or not. Now, it's an interesting aspect, because *tithes* show or reveal, are we truly working? Are we really working? Because to give tithes faithfully with a right attitude of the right spirit and *intent* of giving it, (not just a mechanical process, but a thought process), if we are thinking it through, it's actually obedience to God. So tithes reflect whether we are working or not. If we are not tithing faithfully, we are not working spiritually. It's simple. If we don't give offerings with the right spirit and attitude, the right motive and intent, it is a sign we are not working spiritually. Now, because we come up to a Holy Day where we give an offering, if we have, for example, just simply allocated an amount with no thought, we haven't been working... we haven't been working. Because an offering requires *work*! And if you go back into the Old Testament scriptures and the New Testament scriptures it actually talks about working to give an offering. We're to *count* the blessings before we give an offering. We're to think about it. Now, thinking about it is mental work. We're going to have to think it through. Well, am I blessed? How am I blessed? Am I blessed on a physical level? Am I blessed on a *spiritual* level? And all of

those things have to be worked out, then we given an offering with a motive and intent of thankfulness for what God has provided us on a physical and spiritual level.

Now, if it was just automatic and no thought was given, we didn't work, we just simply went through a process. So tithes and offerings are a true sign, and it reveals whether or not we are working individually or not. If we fail to obey God in these basic matters of tithes and offerings, we are not working spiritually and we have been cut off from the flow of God working *in* us, because it is *God* that has to convict us. *Then*, from that point, we have to make a choice. So we have to examine ourselves to see whether or not we are tithing and giving offerings faithfully to God, according to God's word. Not the way that *we* see it, but the way that God states that it has to be given, in spirit and truth.

Now, there are examples of people that plan their Holy Day offerings in a regular way, but that has to take thought. For example, some people are paid fortnightly, or monthly, and they actually allocate an offering every month because they know there are Holy Days coming up. We know there are seven times where God says now because of the Church, something that is bound on earth is bound in heaven. There is a judgement that has been made, a ruling that has been made, an administrative decision that we would give seven offerings a year, and out of those seven offerings a year we would allocate amount of funds to God's Church for God's work. Well, some people budget every fortnight or every month and allocate a certain amount knowing that there are offerings to be given, and therefore, they budget them, they *plan* them, which we have done over various periods of our life where we used to allocate a percentage of our pay to an offering. But it does require thought. It had to be worked out and then we would put it away and we would see it physically being put away, *knowing* we were coming up to an offering period, and therefore, we didn't have to scramble the last minute to think, "Oh, what am I going to do for an offering?" We were measuring our blessings as we went progressively. Now, that's one way. It's not the only way. There are other people that don't have those types of funds available. Running businesses and various other ways of measuring income, it doesn't always work out that you can budget, but that's one way.

Another way is to be aware of it ongoing and to allocate just a small amount every time that you may get a blessing. You may get a spiritual blessing from God. You may wish this, to go off and allocate some money there, and there on the spot, because of a spiritual blessing that you may have received, something you have seen on a spiritual level. Or another person may turn around and see something physical and take it away at that particular point in time. But to do it progressively is one way, to do it on the spot is another, or as we approach it, coming up to a Holy Day, to meditate and think about it and then to draw a certain amount aside. So it's up to the individual, but God does know the heart. God knows why we're doing what we're doing, and the most important thing out of that, of course, is to give an offering as commanded in spirit – the right attitude, the right motive, the right intent –and truth, the way God says it to be done, which is now (an administrative decision) seven times a year.

Luke 2:25—And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just, and the word there comes down to "being righteous," **and devout,** which is "obedient and faithful," **waiting for the consolation/comfort of Israel,** and that, of course, now, we can look at that as being the Church. So, "he was looking for the comfort of Israel," **and the holy spirit was upon him.** God's holy spirit was *with* him. We wait for "the comfort of Israel" today, and that "comfort of Israel," that is the return of Jesus Christ, because that's the only way that Israel will be comforted, because we need a total change of government because the current government of this world (being Satan and his demons), cannot provide comfort for Israel, physical Israel *or* spiritual Israel. But God can! God can provide comfort for physical Israel *and* spiritual Israel, and for the whole world. When we understand what Israel

is on a physical level, we understand that *spiritual* Israel comprises anybody that has God's holy spirit living and dwelling in them. And it's not about nationality or race.

So we wait, brethren, for the very return of Jesus Christ. We are waiting for "the comfort of Israel."

Verse 26—And it has been revealed to him by the holy spirit, by God's power working in his thinking, **that he would not see death before he had seen the LORD's Christ**, the anointed Messiah. So he had been given this in his mind, that he would *see* God's Savior, the anointed Messiah!

Verse 27—So he came by the spirit into the temple, which are thoughts placed into his mind to go to the temple. So here it is, God has now influenced him to think that he needs to go to the temple, which is that spirit in the mind leading him. And you'll see lots of other scriptures around about being led by the spirit into the wilderness, or being led by the spirit, well, this is that, thoughts placed in the mind by God to go and do something, to actually take a particular action. And that's what we rely on, brethren. We rely on God's spirit placing thoughts into our minds so that we can make choices. **And when the parents brought in the child, Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he (Simeon) took up in his arms and blessed (praised) God and said: LORD, how You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation**, have seen Christ, which is for what he had been promised.

Verse 31—Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light, and that is **to reveal to the gentiles**, which is "all nations," **even the glory of Your people Israel**. And today it is the Church. Jesus Christ is the *evidence* of God the Father working, and we can "see" that. We can actually "see" that on a spiritual level, that Jesus Christ was and is the work of God. And Jesus Christ is working today in the Church, which is the work of God, because Jesus Christ fulfills God's will and purpose.

Verse 33—Then Joseph and His mother (Mary) marveled at those things which were spoken of Him, which were spoken of Jesus Christ.

Verse 34—Then Simeon blessed them, asked God to bless them, **and said to Mary His mother, Behold, this Child is destined (appointed) for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against**, (verse 35) **(yes, a sword will pierce through your own life also)**, **that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed**. Our inner thoughts are revealed once our minds are opened. It requires a calling and ongoing repentance, conversion, the transforming of the way we think. So, Jesus Christ has come for this very purpose, "for a sign which will be spoken against." Now, we've seen that. This "sign," Jesus Christ (the life of Jesus Christ) has now been spoken against because it's been twisted and distorted by Satan and the demons so that nobody knows Christ other than those who are part of the Body of Christ.

Hold your place there; Hebrews 4:12. **Hebrews 4:12—For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of the life and spirit, of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**. Now, this is what God's word is really about. God's holy spirit is living! It's alive and it is *powerful*! It is very powerful in the sense that it is "sharper than a two-edged sword." It's able to pierce into the very inner thinking of a man, to "see" people's motives, what we *really* are like, what we *really* do determine in the way of intent. "Piercing even to the division of the life and the spirit, the joints and the marrow," so it's going right into the inner heart, "and is a discerner of the thoughts." Now, this is the greater aspect of it. It is "the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It's this deep, inner thinking.

God's holy spirit enables a person to come to "see" their *intent*, their *motive*, *why* we do what we do. God's spirit reveals pride! God's spirit reveals pride. The only way to "see" pride on a spiritual level is by the power of God's holy spirit, this "piercing into the inner heart," inner intent, to "see" why we're doing what we're doing.

Now, a lot of people can do (so called) "good things" for selfish reasons, and therefore, often people's motives aren't always revealed. Someone can write a letter and say certain things (or write an email and say certain things) but deep down their motive is totally selfish. Yet, when a person reads the email they don't know the motive or intent. But God reveals it in time. So often within God's Church we don't always know what people are doing, why they're doing them, and some people can be doing "good," don't always know that it's "good" for a good reason. It may be "good" for a selfish reason, but that's not our problem. We are to look at our own motive, our own intent, and examine ourselves.

Now, what others do, God knows; God knows and God reveals it. And sometimes it's revealed quickly and sometimes it's never revealed to God's Church for many, many, many, many years. In the end, it's simply about living God's way of life individually. It's about what we do. And we should use God's spirit to discern our own thoughts and our intent of heart, because God sees all things, God knows all things, He knows our true motive, of why we do what we do. The most important thing is that *we* come to "see" *why* are we doing what we're doing. Do we have this ill will in our minds or are we working against it? Are we working against this ill will? These wrong attitudes? These motives? These moods? Are we working against them, fighting against them? Well, that's what God's spirit is about. It shows us *how* to fight against them by warring, waging war against them on a spiritual level.

Back to **Luke 2:36—Now, there was one, Anna**, and that word is "the face of God," is another meaning of that word, **of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity.** So if she was sixteen to eighteen, add seven years she'd been married and at that point her husband had died. Maybe she was the age twenty-three to twenty-five. **...and this woman was a widow of eighty-four years.** So if you looked at that, she was about twenty-three, say, plus the eighty-four, so she's in her hundreds and so she's quite aged, **who did not depart**, which is "draw away from a repeated action." So this doesn't say that she did not depart from the temple, didn't mean to say she *lived* in the temple, but the fact that she didn't draw away in her thinking, and this is a word that means "of a repeated action." So she didn't do it in the sense of drawing away from God. **...but served God—how?—with fastings and prayers day and night.** God was first in her life. And that's the aspect of it, that it was that God was first. And where it says, "with fastings and prayers day and night," she was choosing to fast regularly and to pray or to be in a state of prayer in her mind always, which is the prayer of thankfulness and appreciation for what God had done in her life.

Verse 38—And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the LORD, and spoke of Him, talking about Christ, **to all those who looked for redemption**, a deliverer.

Verse 39—So when they had performed all things according to the law of the LORD, and that's what we saw back in verse 22-24, **they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.**

Verse 40—And the child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and that "wisdom" is the mind of God, because when we live wisdom, we are *living* the thinking of God, **and the grace**, the favor and mercy **of God was upon Him.** So God was *with* Him during this period and He had the *thinking* of the mind of God. That's the way He thought. That's the way He was.

Just quickly turn to **Matthew 1:23**—"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." So that goes back to an aspect where He became "strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him," because it was *God* living and dwelling in Him. He *had* the mind of God, which is the word, "Immanuel," which is "God *with* us." Because Jesus Christ as a man, a physical man, He had God's thinking. So whenever anything happened, He thought the way God thought. Well, that's our desire! Our desire, our motive, *is* to be like God, to think like God. And when the scripture says, "Let this mind be in you, which was in Jesus Christ," well, what is that mind? It was the mind of God. Jesus Christ thought the way God thought about a matter, and therefore, when He was tested or something foreign was presented to Him, He thought like God, and therefore, would reject it. Because His thinking was God's thinking.

John 3:34—For He (Christ) whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the spirit by measure. Christ was not limited in His thinking. He thought like the Father. We have God's holy spirit by measure according to God's will and purpose.

Romans 12. We're just looking at the difference here of the mind of Jesus Christ versus our minds, because they *are* different. Jesus Christ had the mind of God, He thought like God, whereas, we don't. We have it by measure. Once we are called out of our selfishness, we have it by measure. So it's going to take a *lifetime* of a transition, of a *transforming* of the way we think, which is what our life's about, to come to think like God.

Romans 12:3—For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. If we come to "see" and understand this fact, we will never take any credit to self for *anything*, because we've only been dealt a *measure* of something, a measure of God's mind. So all of us within the Body of Christ have *different measures* of faith. We all have different measures of forgiveness, all different measures of mercy because it's God's thinking. We all have a measure of God's thinking. And that's our lifelong process, which is to transform our mind to God's way.

If we come to "see" and understand this we will not take any credit to ourselves, because we can't. Because any "good" that comes from us has to be from the thinking, the mind of God. It is *God* that does the works in our thinking. He gives us the thought process through the power of His holy spirit. Yes, we have to choose, but we don't take credit for the initial *thinking*. The thinking of God's way has to be "put on." We have to actually think this way by choice.

So what was God's purpose in Christ? Luke 1:31: This is Gabriel, angel of God, being sent to Mary and speaking to Mary. And this would have been quite a shock to Mary, to have this happen to her in her life and to witness this and to wonder what was actually going on in her life at this time. It would have been quite difficult a time for her – joyous, but difficult – stressful in some ways to go through this experience.

Luke 1:31—And behold, you (Mary) will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. And "Jesus" means "Savior, or Jehovah is Salvation."

Verse 32—He (Christ) will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest (Son of the Most High, the Son of God!) and the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) will give Him (Christ) the throne of His father David. Christ was born to be a King! He was born to be a King! This will be fulfilled soon at the very return of Jesus Christ. He *has* the position and the role and the appointment of King of kings. It's been granted. It's

been given, but He has not yet inherited the actual fulfillment of doing it on the earth during the Millennium. But He *is* King of kings and it can't be taken from Him because God has given it to Him. But the actual role of fulfilling it on the earth during the Millennium is yet to come. So we look forward to this being fulfilled. We look forward to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings on this earth. We understand that God the Father is KING over all, but Jesus Christ has been born and appointed to this role as a King.

Verse 33—And He will reign over the house of Jacob (Israel, spiritual Israel today), which is the Church of God, **forever, and His Kingdom will be no end.** So this is not going to stop. This governing process as King or being in charge of the Household of God, the Church of God, will never stop. So when we get into the Millennium, this is a process; when we go through the 100-years, it's the process; and then when everyone is in Elohim, we will always have God then Jesus Christ then His Family.

Verse 34—Then Mary said to the angel (which was Gabriel), **How can this be, since I do not know a man?** Now this is Mary, of course, reacting, saying, "This is not going to be possible because I haven't had sex *before* my marriage. I am still a virgin, so how can I be pregnant at this time?" Now, this is a sign of Mary's *work*, because she had been working. This required work in the mind. To *resist* this temptation, the desires of the natural carnal mind for sex outside of marriage, was a work. It requires a work to remain a virgin. And for a man, it's *hard* work because the battles in the mind. And the way that God has designed man is that the man has a strong urge or a desire for self-satisfaction with a woman. That's just natural. But it requires work and it takes the work of self-control.

Now, before receiving God's holy spirit there is limited work going on within a mind of a natural carnal mind...limited work, little, to the point of none, because the natural carnal mind is driven and motivated by selfishness. Well, it's no different for a woman. Different urge, different need, nowhere near as strong and driven as a male, but there is urges and there are needs that a woman sees within her life that she would like to desire, like to be satisfied before marriage. Well, that requires work. To remain a virgin requires work. But once we have received God's holy spirit, this is still a work. It is still a work in the mind. It is still a battle in the mind. But we understand more about "*why*," *why* we think this way, *why* we think this selfish way. But the battle is still there, and of course, Satan has twisted this world's thinking, twisted the thinking of mankind, to make it *more* difficult for men and women to live in this world in a state of self-control. Because that boils down to the fact it's all about self-control.

Now, some people have the ability within the world to govern themselves (to a degree), using self-control. But with God's holy spirit we can actually *live* self-control. By the power of God's holy spirit convicting our thinking, to come to know and then *understand* the *need* for self-control...the need for self-control, to understand it. Then we have the power to live it, all driven by and governed by the power of God's holy spirit, that we make choices to govern ourselves. And that applies not only to sexual things, but also to the way we think about everything. Takes self-control.

Now often, women are often pressured in relationships before marriage because of the men because men have a tendency to put pressure on the woman, and they'll say things like, "If you really love me, you would consent to a sexual relationship before marriage." Well, for a woman that strikes an emotion, because women tend to be emotional about things, where men tend to be more clinical about things. So the man's actual motive of saying this is *selfish*, but it's putting the *emotional pressure* on the woman to say, "Well, I'll consent to it." The *truth* is, if a man really loved the woman—truly loved in respect, in an unselfish way—they would *never ask* for sex before marriage. Now, these are rare things in society today because of the way things are promoted, that all these things are just "natural" and "free" and it's

just "normal." Well, it's not "normal," it's *abnormal*, because man was made a particular way for a purpose and God made marriage for a purpose.

If a woman really loved the man she would *not consent* to sex before marriage. Now, this topic is not really something that I'm going to go into a lot about, but the reality is that if a woman truly loved the man she would *not consent* to sex before marriage. To come to understand that on a spiritual level, because she loves him so much (and that is a spiritual matter that needs some further detail, but the purpose of the sermon is not that today), but it requires work in the mind to come to make these right decisions.

Verse 35—And the angel answered and said to her, *The holy spirit*, God's thinking, **will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that the Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.**

Verse 36—Now indeed, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age; and is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. So this is a miracle that has taken place, and Mary would have rejoiced in this knowing that someone like Elizabeth, who she was related to, but friends with, that she was actually in child.

Verse 37—For with God nothing is impossible. And this is the point of what this whole process is about is revealing to Mary that "with God *nothing is impossible*." Now, something for us to consider, to take on board, because this is all about the work that's going on within us. "For with God nothing is impossible." This process of being transformed, from coming from selfishness to the mind of God, is *not impossible* if we yield. And that's the point. It's not impossible *IF* we choose to yield to God. And that's God's great plan, is for us to be in Elohim, "for with God *nothing is impossible*." Yes, it is possible to take a human being, made selfish and carnal, to transform their thinking by the power of the holy spirit, to go through this process so that they can enter Elohim. It *is* possible! And that's God's plan, and it is a wonderful plan that God has. How merciful and loving is it, because what are we? We are *nothing!* We are nothing... we're from nothing. We're just from nothing. God is taking something from nothing and going to make it something, going to make it spirit, Elohim.

Verse 38—Then Mary said, Behold the maidservant of the LORD! Let it be to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her.

These events are *signs* of God the Father working to establish a spirit Family through mankind because we had to have Jesus Christ to enable us to enter Elohim. Without Christ and Christ's resurrection, without His death and resurrection for us, *we have nothing!* It wouldn't be able to be happening. So it *was* made possible by God the Father through Jesus Christ. So Jesus Christ *is* a work or the workings of God the Father.

Back to **Luke 2:41—His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of Passover.** So this is that season of Passover and Unleavened Bread which was often referred to in scripture as the season or the Feast of Passover. Now, we understand that Passover is *not* a Feast and this is referring to a season.

Verse 42—And when He was twelve years old, He went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the Feast. When they had finished these days, which is Passover and Unleavened Bread, as they returned the boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know *it*.

Verse 44—But supposing Him (Christ) to have been in the company, so there were other relatives and friends that had travelled to Jerusalem at that time with them, and they are just thinking that Christ was there playing with them and in the company of other family friends. **...they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances.** So they've gone a day's journey, now they're saying, "Well, where is He?" And they're asking about Him, "Where is He?" **So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem seeking Him.** Now, this would have been quite a stressful period. I don't know whether you've ever lost a child in a shopping center or you've thought you've lost the child, or the child is missing from your presence and you actually don't know where they are; you come into great mental anguish. You become distressed by it because all of the fears that enter your mind about the "could be's" and "maybe's" and the "if's." Now, often when a child is missing you see parents go into great distress and it's the unknown that causes the distress, because you're not really sure, and because of this present evil age that we live in, most times when a child goes missing the mind tends to wander towards the worst case scenario, which is the depravity of mankind. And it is a very stressful period to even contemplate. Losing a child would be stressful.

Well, here we have Mary and Joseph and they've sought for Jesus and He's not there, so now they're having to make the return trip because they've got all these fears about having left Him behind. He's only a twelve year old boy and they would be quite anxious about where He really was.

Verse 46—Now so it was after three days they found Him. So this is a journey back. They've been travelling a day and they've gone back. Now there's *three days later* they find Him **in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.** So there is a discussion that was taking place on a spiritual level and the teachers are sitting there and Christ is in the midst of them. Now, remembering that He'd been lost now for three days and their anxiety and their distress would have been quite great! And I know the anxiety towards a child, if you lost a twelve year old boy, and your anxiety and stress, you'd actually be working up some pretty strong emotions towards the child. Well, you find Him there, He's just sitting there and He's just talking. You'd be quite anxious about it.

Verse 47—And all who heard Him (Christ) were astonished, they were amazed, **at His understanding and answers.** Because? It was God's thinking being revealed because Jesus Christ had the mind of God. So here it is they're starting to "see" these answers that were all spiritual in nature because the answers would be given were actually God's thinking in Christ, so He's giving them these spiritual answers which they may not fully understand (all of them). They'd be amazed at the understanding of the answers that He's giving because they'd be quoting Old Testament scriptures from the Book of the Law and Jesus Christ was giving them answers that would dumbfound them. They'd be amazed how He knows all this, and let alone the answers He's given, the *wisdom* that is coming out from Him.

So when they (Joseph and Mary) saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, you can imagine the tone here, because this is a long period of time and the distress from a mother towards a son, that has lost a twelve year old boy, **Son, why have You done this to us?** You can understand that statement because it's coming from a mind that is distressed. **Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.** So, "We've been quite distressed about this and here you are just sitting there!" So the tone here was probably quite strong.

Verse 49—And He (Christ) said to them, Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about/in My Father's business? So the *work* is creating Elohim. So Jesus Christ is about His Father's

work. He is *working*. And He's about it because that was His purpose in life. Now, they wouldn't understand this.

Another version says of this, "Why are you looking for Me? Didn't you know that I have to be here dealing with the things of My Father?" Christ knew what He was to achieve while doing God's will, by doing God's work.

John 5:36—“But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—they bear witness of Me,” “they,” the “works,” **bear witness of Me that the Father has sent Me.** What God was doing in and through Christ was provable because of the *evidence* that Christ was from God. They bear witness of Christ, the very works that He's doing.

So this "greater witness than John's" was the works of God the Father because God had appointed Jesus Christ to a role and He says here that the Father had given Him to *finish*. He had to fulfill these very things, because without the fulfillment of the works that God had given Jesus Christ, we would have no life...no life available *in us!* Because it *was* the fact that Jesus Christ finished the works that we actually have potential to enter Elohim. The power of Christ was *from* God the Father. The power of Christ was from God the Father.

John 14:10. We read these scriptures often, and there is always something in these to understand more about the purpose of Christ and the way that Christ was because of the very work of God the Father.

John 14:10—Do you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own, on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells (abides) in Me does the works. The words *are* the words spoken. So these words spoken, the Logos that is spoken, the things that Christ *said*, *are* the works of God because it was God the Father working in Him through the power of His holy spirit living and dwelling in Christ, that He had God's spirit without measure. So He had God's very mind living and dwelling in Him, abiding in Him. So the things that He *did*, the things that He *said* were from God because He thought like God. So these works are the *words* that He said, which are the works of God. God the Father was and still is working in and through Jesus Christ.

Verse 11—Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, so there is this complete unity of mind and purpose, **or else believe Me** (believe Christ), **for the sake of the works,** or the deeds or the words. So these works are the words that He spoke or the deeds that He did. So we're to believe because they were from God the Father, **or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.** The evidence is why we should believe, because it should be obvious. Once we have God's holy spirit and we read these various scriptures, it is obvious they had to come from God the Father, Yahweh Elohim.

Verse 12—Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, that Christ was from God and the words Christ spoke were from the Father, **the works** (the deeds, the words spoken) **that I do he will do also; and greater than these he will do because I go to My Father.** Now, "the works" are the thinking of God in Jesus Christ. "The works" are the thinking of God in the mind. "The works" are that of the conversion of the mind. "The works" are the fruit of God's spirit which comes into us out to the benefit of others. So these are the very works. These "greater works" are the conversion because it is a great work when we "see" the conversion of the way we were, to the way we are, to what we will be, and this is the work of God in our life.

We can do the same works as Christ *IF* God's spirit lives and dwells in us. So it's only enabled by God living and dwelling in us. Christ did works powered by God's holy spirit. We can do the works powered by God's spirit also. Now, we're not going to do the same works as Christ to the degree because He was without measure, but we have the potential to do the same type of works, which are the words of God living and dwelling in us. The Logos of God, which is the mind of God, now, we have it by measure.

Back to **John 5:19**—**Then the Lord answered and said to them, Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do.** Now we understand this "seeing" is the thinking. It's in the mind. We "see" spiritual things in God's word and then we do them. We come into unity of mind. We, also, can do nothing spiritually without God's holy spirit because it's God's spirit that gives us the thinking. **...for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.** Christ was fully yielded to God and at one with God. He was filled with God's holy spirit. Christ was God's thinking in the flesh. Whatever God's spirit led Him to do, that is what He did.

Verse 20—**For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works (greater deeds) than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*,** and that's spiritually and physically; when we receive God's spirit we receive life, **even so the Son gives life to whom He (God) will.**

Verse 22—**For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgement to the Son.**

Verse 23— Why? **...that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.** It is God that established Jesus Christ and His purpose. Jesus Christ is the very working of God the Father. The Father has been working and is still working today. God's work was *through* Jesus Christ, our High Priest. **Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My Word (Logos) and believes in Him (God the Father) who sent Me (Christ) has everlasting life,** because it requires God's holy spirit *in* a person to "hear" God and Christ's words.

Continuing on in verse 24...**and shall not come into judgement,** which is that condemnation, **but has passed from death ("the wages of sin") into life,** if we have God's spirit living and dwelling in us. **Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead... now, "the dead" is those called, awakened, or resurrected at the second resurrection because everyone is dead to that point in time on a spiritual level, but also on a physical level ...will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.** Those who respond and choose to yield, to listen to God and Christ by the power of God's holy spirit, can live spiritually. They will *live* in the flesh with God living and dwelling in them, and then as spirit beings with God *in* them. And that's our future.

Verse 26—**For as the Father has life in Himself, so He also has granted the Son to have life in Himself...** it was God that gave the life.

Verse 27—**... and God has given Him (Christ) authority to execute judgement,** and that is to separate based on justice, **also, because He is the Son of God. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the grave will hear His voice.** So there's going to be a great resurrection to physical life at the end of the Millennium and it's called "the Last Great Day," that resurrection to physical life once again for those that are to have the potential to enter Elohim.

Verse 29—and come forth—those who have done good, to a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, a resurrection to condemnation, a resurrection back to physical life to be judged by God's word.

Verse 30—I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, which is in the mind, **I judge,** we make decisions based on God's word, **and My judgement is righteous.** Now, why is it righteous? **...because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.** Now, Christ had no selfishness in Him. He did not have a natural carnal mind with its lusts and desires on a natural level. Now, He would have had temptations, but He did not think using a natural carnal mind. He thought like God about those things, therefore, could be rejected.

The natural mind (what we have) is actually against God, where Christ had a mind that was *for* God. Christ's mind was God's thinking. God worked in and through Jesus Christ. All the credit for spiritual works belongs to God the Father. Jesus Christ was and is the *evidence* of God the Father working.

Verse 31—If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true, because He would have given credit to Himself. If Christ gave credit to Himself, He would have been filled with pride, He would have been a liar, and would be denying the Father who actually *did* the *works*, who gave Him the mind that He did. **There is another who bears witness of Me,** referring to God the Father, **and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Yet I do not receive testimony from men,** so He's not going to take a witness or the evidence of men, what men say, **but I say these things to you that you may be saved,** on a spiritual level.

Verse 35—He (John the Baptist) **was the burning and shining lamp,** he was showing the way to walk, **and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.** John the Baptist was actually doing the works of God. He was actually revealing an element or an aspect of God the Father.

Verse 36—But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness, they provide evidence, they are proof, **of Me, that the Father has sent Me.** The power to do righteousness comes from God.

Verse 37—And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified, and that is "given evidence," **of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.** So they have not heard God or seen God the Father on a physical level. God the Father has not manifested Himself to them on a physical way *or* on a spiritual way. It just has never happened to that degree. **But you do not have His Word/His Logos abiding in you,** but Christ did! Christ had the very mind of God in Him! **...because whom He sent** (whom God the Father sent, Christ), **Him you do not believe.** Now, if we cannot believe the truth, God's Word (the Logos), we don't have God's holy spirit. We cannot believe the truth (God's Word) without God's spirit living and dwelling in us.

Verse 39—You search (examine) **the scriptures, for in them you think you have everlasting life; and these are they** (the scriptures) **which testify,** (which prove, give evidence, bear witness) **of Me.** So the very scriptures that they're searching, believing that they can find everlasting life in them, they're actually the scriptures that reveal Jesus Christ. And of course, there is no life in the scriptures of and by themselves because it requires God's holy spirit to empower the mind of God in a person to be able to "see" the scripture on a spiritual level. Because there's millions of people out there that can search or examine the scriptures every day, believing that they're going to find life in those scriptures, and yet

these very scriptures reveal something different to them than what it does to a person with God's holy spirit. They actually would be a witness or give evidence of Jesus Christ because it's the way Christ lived, the way Christ thought, and it requires God's spirit to be able to "see" all of this.

But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. So they're not willing to submit or yield to what the scriptures say. Now, there's many of scriptures that could be read and easily understood, even on a physical level, and yet man chooses not to. They don't choose to yield to them even on a physical level, even without God's spirit. The Commandments, for example, now, it's not hard to come to understand the basic principles. You could live a life in obedience to those in a physical level all for selfish reasons, the natural carnal mind, to God's law. But man doesn't even want to do that. They're not willing to submit to yield to them, not even to get the blessing that would come from those Commandments, obedience to them on a physical level. "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life," and it's talking about something on a spiritual level, that we have to come to Christ on a spiritual level, accept Jesus Christ as our Passover, to come to Him, to live a life, to *yield to* the way of life that God revealed *through* Jesus Christ.

Verse 41—I do not receive honor from men. But I know you, that you do not have the love (the agape) of God in you. And that's the key. To have the love of God we have to have God's spirit which enables Godly love. So Christ was saying to them, "I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. You don't have God's thinking. You don't have God's mind in you, therefore, you cannot love... you *cannot* love the way that God loves, which is a sacrificing love."

Verse 43—I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you'll receive him. So if somebody else turned up and had another name, someone preaching something different, they would receive it because it was something from the natural carnal mind. So they can only receive what is coming on a natural carnal mind; the mind can understand it. It can deal with it. But something spiritual, it can't "see" it. It can't understand it.

We, brethren, come in God the Father's name. We are God's people. We are the Church of God. We are the called-out ones of God. We are God's people. We represent God in all our way of life. So we are to be an example. We are to be an example to others of God's way of living, God's way of thinking. Now, that in itself should be a great pressure on us to monitor (to check) our work. Are we working or not? We are God's *workmanship* *IF* we allow God to live and dwell in us.

No one will receive us because they did not recognize God or Jesus Christ. So they didn't recognize the works of God, the works of Jesus Christ, so they're not going to recognize the works of God's people, God's Church. *But*, it'd be different if a movie star turned up in their selfish importance, or their self importance. People would receive them and recognize them because they are of the world. The world will receive the world. The world will receive the world, but the world cannot receive us. And that's what Christ was actually saying. If someone else came in another person's name, they would receive him, but they're not going to receive Christ because He was the very thinking of God, and the world cannot accept the thinking of God.

Verse 44—It's a question...How can you believe, how can you believe God if you **who receive honor from one another... so because of pride they'll honour each other. So they like to praise each other. They receive the praises of men, they like pride, they like the praises of men, **and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?** So that's the question. So, how can you believe if you're receiving all this**

honor of men and the praises of men and you love it? How will you receive the honor that comes from God? Well, they're not going to be able to. They prefer to please men rather than to please God. And that's the key point. The natural carnal mind is a man pleaser; it likes to *please* others or to get the praises of men or have others think well of it. But it doesn't have and doesn't desire to please God...it just doesn't. It prefers the praises of men, something obvious the mind can deal with.

Another scripture says, "How do you expect to get anywhere with God when you spend all your time jockeying for position with each other, ranking your rivals, and ignoring God?" So it's not going to be possible.

Philippians 2:1—Therefore, if *there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit*, and that is the sharing of the spirit, *if any affection and mercy*, so this is all about the evidence of our fellowship. "If there is any encouragement from Christ, if there is any comfort of love, if there is any sharing of the spirit, if any affection and mercy," because it's all about the way that we live toward others, **fulfill my joy by being like-minded, so this is about one spirit of unity, **having the same love, being of one accord, with one mind**. So there is only *one* way of life. There is only *one* way of thinking and what we should be doing as members of the Body is living this in humility. This is about this attitude of service. So if we have this from Christ, this encouragement of Christ because of God's holy spirit, if we have a relationship and we if we are having the sharing of God's holy spirit in us, living out to the benefit of others, we'll be *living* mercy to others. And it says, "fulfill my joy being like-minded." We have to be like-minded. We have to come into unity of doctrine. We have to believe what God is saying. And that's what we were reading before about Christ, saying, that, well, if we have the same mind (the same mind of Christ) we'd be able to understand spiritual matters. But if we're of the world, well, we're not going to be able to understand spiritual matters, but we will accept the praises of men and we'll be lifted up in pride and we'll be able to communicate with each other because of this natural carnal mind.**

Well, the same within the Church. We can communicate with each other because of this bond of unity, this bond of love, this humility that is in us, "having the same love, being of one accord." So we have the same mind towards each other, which is no ill will. And we are of the one accord, we're in unity.

So when you look at this it's the same note being expressed. So we talk in unity, one mind, which is the mind of Jesus Christ. So we come into complete *unity* of thinking, the same way. Now, the moment we're not in *unity* of thinking, the moment we go out and think the way *we* want to think and it's not in tune with God's way of thinking and we've reasoned within our own selves the way that *we* see it, well, we're no longer in unity with God's people, because we're no longer in unity with God.

The natural carnal mind, of and by itself, *cannot* be in *unity* with God because it is motivated by *selfishness*. So we should strive within our minds, we should be working within our minds, to bring every thought into captivity, into this captivity to be in tune with God. Because our natural carnal mind is in bondage to Satan's way of thinking, the way of selfishness and get.

Verse 3—Let nothing be done through selfish (which is the motive behind it) **ambition**. Now, what is "ambition?" Well, "ambition" is "lifting up the way that *we* want it." Ambition is to be ambitious. And if you look at the world and people say, "Are you ambitious?" Well, you're trying to *get* something, you're trying to *lift* yourself up to be ambitious, to acquire something. Well, this one is saying, "Let nothing be done through *selfish*," which is the natural carnal mind, that's the motive, "ambition," because we're

going to consume it on ourselves, **or conceit**, so this *pride* that lives and dwells within us. So the things that we should do can be ambitious, but we should be ambitious towards the way God is. We want to be like God. We want ambitious for God's holy spirit. We want to *live* another way of life. We want to be a better example. Now, that is not selfish ambition, that is a good ambition. So there is nothing wrong with being ambitious for righteousness. We want to be more like God.

So this is saying, "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition," so all our motives, all our actions should not be done for selfishness, which is the natural carnal mind.

So we have to examine why we do what we do. And you will find the natural carnal mind is motivated by selfishness, and the majority of what we do is for self. We are pleasing self. We're getting something out of it. And the majority of things are the *praises of others*. We want others to think well of us. And deep down that is the motive of why we do what we do. Even though we may not "see" it, that's generally what is going on.

But it's saying here, "Let nothing be done through this selfish ambition or conceit (this pride)," **but in lowliness of mind**, so this is that yielding, this giving up of self... **let each other esteem others better than the self**. Now, this is about respect for others. And we are to do things to benefit others. So we're to esteem them, which is to not have it *our* way. So if there is a choice we would give up *our* will for theirs – "better than ourselves," which is to this giving up.

Verse 4—Let each of you look out not only for your own interests, so there is nothing wrong with looking out for our own interest on a spiritual level, but on a physical level, well, it's "looking at our own interests" is looking out for the right foods that we want to eat, or our exercise program, or our mental health by what we watch. They are our own interests. It's in our own interest not to watch garbage on TV. It's in our own interest (on a spiritual level) not to be consuming false doctrine. It's in our own interest not to promote ourselves. Well, we should be doing those things! That's our *own* interest *not* to do them.

...but also for the interests of others. So this is about caring for ourselves, making sure that we are managing our physical life and our spiritual life, but also "for the interests of others" is really saying that we need to have that same care, that same interest of others, sacrificing ourselves, putting ourselves down and not having it *our* way – giving up on our *own* wills. So one way is not to look down on others, not to judge others. And that would be showing interest of others.

Verse 5—Let this mind, which is this mind, **be in you which was also in Jesus Christ**. Now, that's what we've been covering. This is the *thinking of God*. Now, Jesus Christ did not look out after His own interests, He looked out for the interest of others, because He gave Himself up as a sacrifice for us. And so He lived it! So living this mind, which is living to the interests of others, is the mind that Jesus Christ had. So "let this mind be in you," which is one of looking out for the needs and the cares of others in humility. Because it says, "in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than ourselves," so we're to give up. We're to sacrifice. So "let this mind be in you," which is the very way that Christ thought towards others, which is humility, in unity with God the Father, and willing to sacrifice for others – "which was also in Jesus Christ." So that's the way He thought, that's the way He lived His life.

...who (Christ), being in the form of God, which is the mind of God, He had the mind of God. So "being in the form of God," which was in the flesh. He was God in the flesh. He had the flesh like we do, but He

had a mind that was different. **...did not consider it robbery to be equaled with God**, or like God. So He was willing to sacrifice the way that God sacrificed, to live God's way of life, to think like God, and to respond to God's motivation in Him, God's holy spirit in Him. **...taking the form of a servant**, which is to lower the self to be humble, **and coming in the likeness of men**, which He was. **And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death on the stake. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him (Christ) the name which is above every name**; so He is now part of the God Family, He is now the first *of* the firstfruits. And that's what we desire to be, in God's Family, just as Jesus Christ is.

Verse 10—that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and those in heaven, and those on earth, and those under the earth, and *that every tongue should confess* (acknowledge) that Jesus Christ *is Lord* – why? – to the glory of God the Father. Because it is God that did it. The way we confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord is by *living* the way Jesus Christ lived, to be an example, to discipline the self, to control the self, to put the self down to the benefit of others.

And what is it all about? "...to the glory of God the Father," because it is God living and dwelling in us. So we confess Jesus Christ is the Master because it is God the Father living and dwelling in us that does the works on a spiritual level.

So with that, we'll end up *Part 3*, and we will resume a new sermon series next time. □