

Welcome to this seventh-day Sabbath, brethren. As you're preparing for the Feast, I hope that things are going well for you and all your plans and arrangements are all settled, and that you can head to the Feast season this year and enjoy this season that we are about to enter which starts with the Feast of Trumpets.

In *Part 1* of this sermon series we look at the reason why Christ spoke in parables. And we established there that Christ spoke in parables so that people could *not* understand, and that the parable was given in a physical way with a spiritual meaning. Its real intent, its spiritual intent, was actually hidden from those who were not to hear—which is the world. And only God's people, only those that were called to hear could actually understand the parable, what its *true* spiritual intent was.

We also looked at the reason for the Sabbath, "why" the Sabbath, "why" Passover, "why" Unleavened Bread, and "why" Pentecost.

So today we will continue with this sermon series, and that is *The Reason Why* and this will be *Part 2*; and this will be the conclusion of this particular sermon series. The purpose of this sermon is to look at the reason why of many biblical matters from God's word.

Now we will look at "why" Trumpets. We understand that the Feast of Trumpets is a commanded assembly, and we're soon to rejoice before God on this particular Holy Day, which is the Feast of Trumpets. Now, Feast of Trumpets is about announcements. So these announcements are about God's way of life, things that God wants to announce to His people, the Church.

Now, there *are* trumpets that sound during different times and for different reasons as it is all about various announcements, hence, we see the announcement of Christ's return, we see the announcement of the removal of Satan, we see the announcement of times to gather before God (which is all the Holy Days), the new moons, and various things that are announced.

So "why" the Feast of Trumpets. It's the way that God announces to His people. God uses announcements; for example, the 50th Truth was given on the Feast of Trumpets of 2008. It was an announcement. It was announced that Jesus Christ would return on a Pentecost. That is the reason for Trumpets. We rejoice before God on the Feast of Trumpets because we understand that it is God that announces truth to His people.

Now, the next part of it is "why" Atonement. As we go to celebrate the Day of Atonement, which is celebrated by fasting and by resting because Atonement points to the covering of sin *and* the future removal of Satan. Atonement really points to the reason "why" we need to be atoned. Because the reality is that mankind is *not* at-one with God, and the Day of Atonement, "why" the Day of Atonement,

because it pictures a reconciliation that must take place over a lifetime. We have to become at-one with God. We have to have the same thinking.

Well, the Day of Atonement tells us "why" we need to be atoned, "why" we need to be at-one with God, and the outcome of that being at-one with God.

Then we can look at "why" the Seventh-Day Feast. We understand that 7,000 years are represented by the seven-day week, and on the seventh-day we rest, which is the Sabbath, and that rest points to the Millennium, this 1,000-years of man's rest. And the rest comes from the removal of Satan. So during the Millennium, we get a rest from Satan and his demons. And mankind will be given this opportunity (during this 1,000-years) to rest, to come away from the pressure and the temptation that Satan currently broadcasts. So, "why" the seven-day Feast? Well, it points to the Millennium. It points to a time of rest from Satan's ways of being.

"Why" the eighth-day? The last day? Well, that eighth-day points to something. It points to the Hundred-years. This eighth-day (a day of judgement, a time of judgement) is about a great act of mercy of God, that God, in His mercy will give mankind the opportunity to choose, to choose one way or the other, God's way or their own way, their own selfishness. The eighth-day is about a choice. It *is* about a time to reconcile one's life to God. So it is a time of separation, because the day of judgement (the word "judgement" really means "the day of separating"), because during this day, which lasts 100-years, it is about separating truth from error. It is about separating man's thinking to God's thinking. So this separation will take place at the end of the Hundred-years where the eighth-day will be concluded and the separation will have been completed.

And then we can look at "why" the second death. We understand there is a need for the second death because everything that is not at-one with God must be destroyed. Hence, at the end of the Hundred-years, at the end of the eighth-day, at the end of the day of judgement, we will see a gehenna fire. We will see fire come down from heaven (from God) and everything that stands against God will be destroyed because they are *not* at-one with God.

So, why a second death? Because everything that is not at-one with God, everything that is not in unity of thinking, is not walking *with* God in their thoughts, their words, and their actions must be destroyed, because anybody that walks a different way of life is walking in unhappiness, and it will lead to their own destruction because the mind will be so perverted that it ends up destroying itself. God, in His mercy, will destroy everybody that seeks their own way and seeks to be separate from God, and God will honor that desire (that separation) by destroying them because that is the best thing that could happen to anybody that refuses to yield to, or refuses to be at-one with God.

Another point that we can look at during this Feast season that we're entering - we understand there are three seasons, and we are to come before God in those three seasons and give an offering. Well, the Church has made a ruling that we would give an offering on each of the seven High Days, each of the seven Holy Days. So, "why" offerings? Well, we're going to look at that in Malachi 3, and we're going to

read from verse 1, because there are other things that we can look at in Malachi 3 that give us the answer to the "why" of a matter...the "why" of a matter.

So **Malachi 3:1—Behold, I (God) send My messenger.** Now, this is actually referring to Jesus Christ, **and He (Jesus Christ) will prepare the way before Me.** Now, we understand that Jesus Christ did come in the flesh, the Word made flesh, because it was God's thinking in Jesus Christ. So Jesus Christ was made a man, *but* He had God's thinking. So "He (Jesus Christ) will prepare the way before Me," before God the Father, and that's what Jesus Christ came to do, and the process was that He was a messenger, someone that was sent and provided for mankind to prepare a way *for* God. And that preparation of the way was through His death, that He died for mankind, and the way was then made for mankind to receive God, which is "to prepare a way." Because through the death of Jesus Christ we know that sin could then be forgiven. And the veil on the temple was torn so then mankind, through the power of God's holy spirit, could have access to God Himself. So Jesus Christ *did* come and He *did* prepare the way before God because it was only through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that the way could be made to have access to God the Father.

Continuing on in verse 1...**And the Lord (Jesus Christ), whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple.** Well, we understand that the temple is the Church of God. So "the Lord that we seek," Jesus Christ, "will suddenly come to His Temple," because He will return. ...**even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, says the LORD of hosts.**

Now, we understand also that there have been "types" of the Elijah to come to prepare the way. We understand that Jesus Christ revealed that John the Baptist was a "type" of the Elijah to come, preparing the way, preparing the way for Jesus Christ. And then we also understand that Mr. Armstrong was a "type" of the Elijah to come, to prepare a way for the very return of Jesus Christ, and he pointed to (as an Elijah to come) the very way to walk in God's way, which is through the truth, through God's Church through the truth. And we also understand that Mr. Weinland is also a "type" of the Elijah to come that would come before the very return of Jesus Christ. Now, the role that has been covered is that of "the messenger," one that is being sent by God to reveal a message.

Verse 2—But who can endure the day of His coming? Well, that's a question: "Who can endure the second coming of Jesus Christ?" **And who can stand when He appears? For He (Jesus Christ) *is* like a refiner's fire,** which is a purifier, **and like a fuller's soap,** which is to cleanse. **He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver.** Because? It is about the return of Jesus Christ and this purification process that is going to take place. It's about Government, the Government of God ruling mankind for 1,100 years, where this purifying process is going to continue. It has been happening in the Church and is now still taking place within the Church, but during the 1,100 years we're going to see Jesus Christ as King of kings, as a ruler of God's Government on this earth with the 144,000. He will sit as a refiner, as a purifier. He will cleanse people's *thinking*. People are going to have to be tested and tried, just like we are today, but in a different way for the purpose of bringing the impurities out from within people's thinking. So this process is about being made pure.

He will purify the sons of Levi, and that, of course, also points to all of mankind that are called, and are called into God's Church, **and purge them as gold and silver**, because they have to be tested and tried to bring forth the impurities so that they can be gotten rid of, **that they may offer to the LORD**, because it requires a clean heart, a pure heart to offer true offerings to God, because they have to be given in spirit and truth. So to give an offering to Yahweh Elohim, which we are commanded to do, to give tithes and offerings, it requires an attitude. It requires a thought. It's just not an automatic process. It requires a yielding and a humility. Because one of the things that happens within a human's thinking is that they, first of all in life, they believe that everything that they own is theirs. They believe they own it. Most people believe they acquired it. Very few believe that God provides all things. Most people believe on their own efforts they've acquired something; therefore, they have control and the right over it because they have gained it themselves.

Well, here it's saying that the person has to be purified. It requires God's holy spirit to change their thinking, to bring the impurities out. And one of the impurities that *must* be removed from within man's thinking is that of believing they acquired things on their own effort because it is God that gives all things. *All* gifts come from God. All physical things and all spiritual gifts come from God. So if somebody must come into the thinking—must get rid of the impurity of the thinking they gained it themselves—they have to change the thinking to they didn't acquire it; God allowed them to have access to it. And when God allowed them to have access to it, whether it's wealth or whatever it is, there *is* still a component that God requires us to give back to Him. He owns it all anyway, but God requires us to give back to Him, and God only requires 10%, which is 1st Tithe, and then He requires a saving of another 1/10th, which is for keeping the Holy Days, keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in the main. So that's the reason "why."

Then, also, God did require a 3rd tithe, which today, of course, there is a ruling about 3rd tithe. But in the future a ruling will be made about 3rd tithe because it has to be given to support the poor. It's not all about ourselves. It's not about what we can get out of life; it's about what we can give.

So there are requirements around offerings, tithes and offerings. We have to change our thinking. Our thinking has to be changed. We have to be purified in our thinking, **that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness**. We have to be cleansed so that we can walk in obedience to God. We have to put on *God's* thinking!

So we understand, brethren, from this, that there is a time of purification that is coming on mankind, because this purification must take place and begin to take place as the tribulation starts, and then we get into the Millennium, that purification of 1,100 years will have to continue because people have the wrong thinking towards tithes and offerings.

Verse 4—Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant to the LORD, because at the moment an offering that is given is given with the wrong attitude, they don't understand God. They don't know "why" they're doing what they're doing. So anybody without God's spirit is actually giving an offering for a wrong reason, even though they don't understand it.

But when we are called, when we come into "Jerusalem," when we come into the Church of God, we then can give an offering based on God's ways, which is, has to be given with the right attitude. We have to have thought about it and we have to understand the principles that everything that we have access to is *not ours*. God in His loving mercy gives us a percentage to use, which is basically a time to look after ourselves, to look after the family, and to give of ourselves, and to give what we have and share with others. But there is a requirement of 10% to be given to God for God's work, for God's purpose. And we'll get to that in a moment.

Continuing on in **verse 4 ...as in the days of old, as in the former days. And I will come near to you for judgment**, because this is about a separation. This is about a judgement, a time to be judged, which is over a period of time, we have to see what our attitude is going to be. Are we going to give tithes and offerings to God because of a right spirit—not because of a wrong one, not because "I *have* to give a tithe"? Not because, "I *have* to give an offering." It's because we *want* to give a tithe and offering. We *want* to yield in humility to God; that's why we do it. And therefore, we are generous in everything we do towards God because we understand everything belongs to God anyway, and therefore, we should be giving of a sincere and pure heart.

Verse 5—And I will come near to you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against... so who is it that God is going to proceed with this judgement? Now, we understand that there is a judgement in the Church. Well, this is actually talking about this very time when we're going to move into times of various judgements. **I will be swift against** -so who's it against? —**sorcerers**. It's those that have this perverted trust in themselves. They trust in the things of mankind. ...**against adulterers**, well, not only physical, but spiritual adulterers, those that are involved in a relationship with falsehood, false religion, false ways.

Now, one of the greatest things we talk about with adultery, on spiritual adultery, is a relationship with false religion. But it's actually a lot deeper than that, because we yield to the self, we yield to the selfish desires that are in us, these "lusts of the flesh, of the eyes, and the pride of life." We love ourselves. We're putting ourselves first! So this adultery is *idolatry*! The biggest idol we have, brethren, is ourselves, our own thinking, because we raise ourselves up against God, against Jesus Christ, against the truth that is placed in the Church. And this has been happening for a long period of time. People have raised themselves up against God. For 6,000 years, people have been raising themselves up and committing adultery against God, idolatry, which is having a false relationship, because they're not in a relationship with God. To be an adulterer, which is to be unfaithful—unfaithful to a relationship. So to go out and to have a relationship with the world is adultery.

...**against perjurers**, which are *liars*. Those that are not sincere that are not genuine, they are hypocrite. Because anybody that is a liar *is* a hypocrite because somebody can act out a role. Now, the word "hypocrite" means "actor." It's an actor. So these days in Hollywood, people say, "I'm an actor." Well, that means they're playing something that's not their real self, They're playing something else. But in life most people act out a role. They aren't genuine and aren't sincere because of pride. They tend to cover-up what they really are.

Well, God says that He is *against* anyone that is a perjurer, anyone that's a liar, anyone that's a hypocrite, anyone that's acting out a role, because it's not really them, because it's pride. And God says He is against pride! This statement, "against perjurers" - "I am against pride!" Well, God *is* against pride because pride cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

...against those who exploit wage earners and widows and the fatherless. God is against anybody that is of greed. It's someone who *takes* or gets something at the expense of somebody else, who exploits. And when somebody exploits someone, they take it. They take advantage of their weakness and the person doesn't even know it. So this one is saying God is actually against anybody that exploits or manipulates against wage earners, so exploits them, someone who's a hard worker and someone underpays them (for example). That is actually exploiting them. And the only reason that someone would underpay somebody for their wages is because of greed! They are taking *something* from someone else at *their* expense, hence, man has, of course, tried to fix a lot of these problems and they have what's called a "basic wage," or "common wage," and made rules and laws. But there's always people who will work against that particular law and not follow it and hire people at low wages knowing they're breaking all the rules. And there's many other things with regards to superannuation's and lots of other rules and regulations. Well, mankind, because he doesn't want to really follow those things, he will manipulate things so that he can exploit wage earners, so that he can exploit widows, and the fatherless.

Well, when you look at what's happening in the world, which we call nowadays (not meant to be derogative), but it's a term that is used in the world, which is things like, "The Nigerian Chain Letter." Because what it is, is they're trying to exploit people, and it's mainly all done through the internet. And I'm sure most of us have had these particular emails that have come through with regards to "you've won a million dollars." Another one is a common one, which is saying that, "I'm stuck in a particular location. All I need is \$2,000 dollars. Can you transfer it to me?" And there's other ones which talk about, "I've inherited \$20M dollars and if you were to give me your bank account details, I'll put \$5M in your account so that we can share it." They're all exploitation. They're all means of trying to defraud people of something. They're trying to get something at someone else's expense.

Now, there's hundreds of different internet traps these days and ways to try to trick people. There's letters that are coming out now saying, "I represent the government," or "I represent the police," "I represent lawyers," "Will you do this, will you do that," all for the point of exploiting. Well, God says He's against that attitude. He's against that thinking! And anybody that takes advantage of others in any way, God says He's against them.

Now, we have to be on guard against this, that we in our thinking aren't taking advantage of others. And there's lots of ways that that can come about, but that's not the purpose of this particular sermon.

...And against those who turn away an alien— which is "a stranger." So we have to be very careful. So we have to deal with them in the right way. We have to treat them with the respect that somebody of God would treat somebody that is a stranger, which is "an alien." Someone that is not part of the Body of

Christ at this time would be considered "a stranger." Well, we have to be very careful that we don't mistreat them in our thoughts, words, and actions. And if we do, God says He's going to be against us, because we're not living God's way, we're not demonstrating God's way to others.

...**Because they do not fear Me, says the LORD of hosts.** So the reason all these things are happening is because people do not fear God. People aren't in awe of God. People don't respect God. People don't want God in their life. And those of the Protestant or Catholic religion who say they do, really deep down because of the deception that is in the natural mind and Satan's broadcasting, they don't really. They will yield to what suits them. They won't yield to God. If people were yielding to God they'd be keeping the seventh-day Sabbath (which we are today), and they'd be keeping the Passover and Holy Days, because that would be a demonstration of fearing God.

So *if* we fear God we will be obeying God. We'll treat God's word with the respect that is due to Him. Well, God says He's against all these attitudes that people have. Because they don't fear Him, God says that He's going to be against them.

Verse 6—For I *am* the Eternal, and I do not change. Now, God's way, God's thinking does not change. The truth is the truth. Now, God reveals truth progressively to us for a purpose, and that purpose is to see what we will do. Will we yield to God's Government or won't we? So truth is given to us on a progressive basis about a manner all for the purpose of trying and testing: What will we do?

Now, God says that He does not change. He won't change His ways. "The wages of sin is death." That is not going to change. God has declared it. God established it. That's what's going to happen. God doesn't change. God will always love. And God will destroy people out of love. God says, "I do not change." His thinking, His ways, His character *do not change*. We change...fortunately. Because that's what the gift of repentance is about; we have to change from what we are (selfish) to what God is, which is righteousness.

Therefore, you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. Because God doesn't change, because He is mercy, because it is part of God's plan. So why aren't we "consumed?" Well, it's because of God's great mercy and the fact that He does not change. God is love. God desires to give us the Kingdom. God wants "to bring many sons to glory," hence, we are not "consumed," we are not destroyed because of our sin, but God says He loves us. He doesn't change His ways. His plan is on course. And because of His plan and because of His love and because of His mercy, we are not destroyed at this particular time. And even when God did "consume" and destroy those in the past (like Sodom and Gomorrah, and like at the flood) it was actually done out of mercy. It was done *for* mankind. Because God says, "I don't change." His plan hasn't changed. He *will* "bring many son's to glory."

Verse 7—Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances, well, that's mankind. Since Adam and Eve, mankind in his thinking has always left God, gone away from God's instructions, God's commands, and the way to live life. And that's mankind, because he's leaned on his own understanding, **and have not kept *them*. Return to Me.** So God is saying, "Repent! Think

differently! *Don't resist Me! Return to Me! Turn back from where you're going!*" So if we look at it, somebody is walking on a path, they're heading in one direction, which is away from God. Now, God is saying, "Stop and return to Me! Stop where you are, turn around, and come back towards Me," is what "return to Me" is about.

So this, for us, brethren, is about this thinking differently. We were walking down a path called the natural carnal mind, then at some point with a calling we have to stop and turn around and think differently. We are to yield to God, to *stop resisting God*, because that's the natural carnal mind. And if we do that, based on a calling, if we stop, turn around—which is repentance, and we understand we are to repent every day of our life for the rest of our life—God says if we do that, **I will return to you**. How's that done? By the power of God's holy spirit, God's spirit in us. So if we're walking in the wrong direction, if we aren't thinking differently than the natural carnal mind, we've cut ourselves off from God and God cannot return to us. He cannot provide His holy spirit because we're not repenting. But here it's saying that if we *do* repent, if we seek God and seek the forgiveness of sin (as we forgive others) God says, "I will return to you." He will then provide His holy spirit once again to live and dwell in us, which will enable, which will *empower* us to have the ability to think like God, which will give us the ability to stop the sorceries, stop the adultery's, stop the lying, stop the hypocrisy, stop the exploitation of others, and be generous, learning to give and to learn to fear God...all because God has returned to us, God has provided us with the power of His holy spirit. Isn't that an incredible picture!

So this repentance is the most important thing that we can do in our life for the rest of our life, because if we are repenting God says He will return to us, He will provide His holy spirit for us. So, "why" repentance? The "why" of repentance is we are to repent so that God can live and dwell in us, and it's a key to life. It's the key to being in God's Church, which is this yielding to God so that God will return to us; in other words, He will provide His holy spirit. It will continue to flow into us and out to the benefit of others so that we can stop doing the things that were just listed before. We can stop sinning because we are learning to fear God. We're learning to hate evil.

Continuing on...**But you say**, so this is the natural carnal mind responding to what God is saying. God is saying, "Return to Me. Repent! I'll provide for you. I'll return to you. I'll be your High Tower, your strength for you." **But you say**, this is the *natural* mind responding, **In what way shall we return?** Now, the implication is here, is that they're saying, "Well, we actually haven't left You. We're not doing anything wrong. We're not doing anything wrong. We're following what You said. So in what way shall we return because we haven't done anything wrong?" It's a justification of self. "We have not left You. So why are you raising all this? What have we done wrong?"

Verse 8—Will a man rob God? Now, brethren, this is the most important thing that we can understand in this principle of "why" tithes and offerings. Because this "returning to God" requires repentance with regards to tithes and offerings. We have to come to understand that tithes and offerings are not given because we *have to*. Tithes and offerings are given because we *want to*! Now, if we're just going through the process and thinking, "Oh, I have to give a tithe. Oh, I have to give an offering!" it's of no value, because God looks at the heart. He wants to know what is our motivation. Do we understand? Do we

really understand that every single thing we have, including the breath of life, comes from God? It's a gift from God. And this giving of an offering, giving of a tithe is an expression of being thankful to God. So here it is, they don't believe they've left God at all. He says, "Will a man rob God?" Well, I've known many within God's Church that have started off by giving and understanding this spiritual principle, but at some point they lose their focus and they begin to rob God. They rob God! Why? Because the 1st Tithe belongs to God! It's God's! It's not ours; it's God's. And God uses it within His Church, within His ministry, according to what He has instructed. It has *nothing* to do with us once we have given our tithe to God; it belongs to God. It's given to God and it's given to God's Church. *Then* our responsibility, once we've given it, is zero. It is zilch! What the Church does with tithes and offerings has nothing to do with us. It's not for us to look at and judge and condemn. It's for us to do our part in loving God, in honoring God because we *want* to. We want to give to God.

Now, how God uses that money, well, that's up to God. That's up to God's apostle whom God has appointed over His Church on the earth, on a physical way at this time. So it's up to Jesus Christ, it's up to the apostle what happens with God's money, and we shouldn't worry about how it's used, because it's not for us to judge, because we're not held *accountable* for the use of it. We're held accountable for whether or not we actually *give* an offering in the right attitude, whether we pay our tithe in the *right attitude*. And that's the key: the right attitude!

Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! Now, we rob God because we don't give tithes and offerings in the right spirit. **But you say, In what way have we robbed You? In tithes and offerings.** So tithes and offerings test attitudes. It tests an attitude of whether a person really "sees," whether they really know, whether they really understand the principles of the acquisition of any type of wealth. Do they understand that everything they have belongs to God, and therefore, we're only doing what God has required of us, which is giving back 10% compared to the fact that God owns everything.

So God put this law in place because it is a spiritual law. And there is a physical component to it, about blessings and cursing's, about whether a person gives tithes, but more importantly there is a spiritual component to tithes. The giving of 1st Tithes is a spiritual test, and it's about a spiritual attitude of *why* the person is giving tithes and whether they are faithful. So tithe is about being faithful. And generally the history is, the first thing that happens when someone is being unfaithful, they're acting out a role, their tithes are affected. And it's obvious before God because their spirit has changed, their attitude towards "their perceived wealth" has changed. They now perceive it as "*their* wealth," and not what God has given them. They're not thankful for the mercy that God has shown them. The reality is that tithe *and* offerings are a test of one's attitude and it's actually spiritual.

So to give an offering during the Holy Days, it requires some thought. And it's about looking back and considering what has God given us physically, and if there isn't anything much in the way of physical, God says that we are only to (required) as we are able. There is no set amount, whether it's 1 cent, whether it's 10 cents, whether it's \$10, or \$1,000 dollars. It all goes back to what we are able based on the blessings from God on a physical level. But in that we should also consider the spiritual blessings that God has given us. What have we been given spiritually? Well, I can say from within myself, from my own

view and my own opinion (because that's what it is) that I have been so blessed on a physical *and* spiritual level that is beyond that I could ever give enough to God, for the appreciation and the thankfulness that I have within my heart towards God for what He has done for me, as an individual. There is many times when I've had plenty in my life, and there's many of times where I've had least. I've had very, very little.

Spiritually the same thing applies. There are many times when I've had *nothing*, where I didn't have God's holy spirit—had nothing—and that was a time before my calling. Then I was given much on a spiritual level because of my calling, and I remained faithful (for a period of time), then I went to sleep. Then God in His great mercy awakened me to give me spiritual food, and how thankful I am for that spiritual food. I could not give enough in the way of a physical offering that would ever express to God how much I am thankful for an awakening and the truth He has enabled me to see within the Church of God—PKG where God works, where God's Government is. And therefore, the only thing that I could do, personally, is to thank God from the words that I speak. So that's what's required of us, brethren. Tithes and offerings are a test of our attitude. Will we rob God or won't we? And of course, only God knows whether we're robbing Him or not because it goes back to the spirit of the matter.

Well, because these people have robbed God in tithes and offerings, **verse 9—You are cursed with a curse.** There's going to be a penalty paid. Now, often mankind thinks if you curse somebody, like the "witch doctors" and "voodoo people" do, they curse you, that something is going to happen and that it'll come true. This is different. This is about a law of "sow and reap" and "cause and effect," which is Deuteronomy 28 in main, which is about laws. So disobedience will bring a penalty. We're going to suffer. So **you are cursed with a curse**, is simply the very law that God has established will now apply to you. "You will actually now *suffer* because of your decision to rob Me, to not be faithful to Me in tithes and offerings." **...for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation.** So at this point all of Israel was robbing God, mainly because of their selfishness, their greed, and their lack of understanding that all things, all credit, all glory, everything we have must be given back to God, because He is the one in His mercy that has allowed us to have access to it.

So we are to give our tithes and offerings according to God's word, and therefore, if we do in faithfulness, we're not going to pay the penalty that applies to being selfish. Because we're generous and doing it in the right spirit, God says that we're going to be rewarded. There is a blessing for a right decision that we make.

Verse 10—So what do we have to do, brethren? **Bring all the tithes into the storehouse**, bring *all* your tithes. Come to the understanding that everything belongs to God and that to show love to God and faithfulness to God is to bring all the tithes, which is 1st, and to save 2nd, and not spend it, not use it, because any use of a 2nd Tithe for a wrong purpose (no matter what we decide or think that purpose might be) is actually wrong. It is a sin. But the beauty is we can repent. Hence, what God is saying in verse 7: "Return to Me." How? Well, if we've made mistakes in 1st Tithe, if we've made mistakes in 2nd Tithe, and we've made an error, we've erred, we're at fault, the best way out of it is stop, repent, and return to God! Go back to being faithful in *all* our tithes.

That there may be food in My house. So what's the purpose of all the tithes into God's House, to give them into God's Church? "That there may be food." If you look back in the Old Testament, the way the tithing system worked was that people would give a tenth to the high priest, and they would use it. Well, it's the same principle today, that the tithe is given to God's Church, and the church, the ministry will use it, and it is for food for themselves. So it is, the fact that there are some paid ministry and the ministry is supported by God *through* tithes and offerings. And the work of God, what God is doing is done through tithes and offerings. Now, we could say, "Well, what's the work of God today?" Well, God's work actually hasn't really stopped. Although we often look for physical applications of this principle, "the work of God," which is some physical event, which happens, which has happened, with Mr. Armstrong, we saw witness and evidence of that, which, the work that he wanted to do (which was on a physical level) is preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all the nations, and that was achieved.

The work that we are to face very shortly *is* also a physical work, but it is all underpinned by a spiritual work. The work is spiritual! God requires tithes into His Church into His household for the purpose of a spiritual purpose—into God's House, which is the Church of God. It is to feed God's people spiritually and to feed others spiritually. And *that's* what we face. So this spiritual principle that has always applied is that God requires tithes and offerings into His Church, into His Government structure, so that food could be delivered, and hence, the structure of the ministry. This sermon today is spiritual food for His people. God is feeding His people, and it's all done through a government structure, a Church structure called, "apostle, prophet, evangelist, elders." And that's the structure God set up. So God says that we should bring it in, that spiritual food could be given to His House—not only physical food, but spiritual food could be provided.

And the reason we are to do this, to give our tithes and offerings, **And prove Me now in this**, well, let's test God. He's saying, "Well, test Me! Test Me to see whether or not you being faithful in tithes and offerings is going to be of any value." "Well, let's just test it and see," God is saying. So, "Test Me now in this, in this very principle of bringing all tithes into the storehouse." If we have eyes to "see" and ears to "hear," I think we would have to say we have already *proven* that God is true to His word because He has provided us much in the way of spiritual food. If we go back over all the posts that have been given we will see the spiritual food is in abundance so that we can't even put it in the storehouse. There's just so much that God has given that at sometimes it's difficult to retain it all, and we have to go back over it and over it, because there is *so much* spiritual food that we can't absorb it all. There is so much in the spirit of everything that is written.

And prove Me now, says the LORD of hosts, If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you *such* blessings that *there will not be room* enough to receive it. Well, this, of course, physical Israel would have looked at it and said, "If I've got to give my tithes and offerings, that you're saying, well, God is saying, 'Well, prove Me, test Me. Just do it. Just give these physical things and just see what I do.'" And that's because the *law* that God has established, this spiritual law of cause and effect, sow and reap, would kick in, and therefore, there *would* be a blessing for them because of their faithfulness and their obedience.

How much more for us, brethren, where if we are faithful to God in spirit and truth that God will pour out such blessings that there is not enough room that we've got to actually receive it all, because it's spiritual. God calls us and then God lives in us, and that is the greatest blessing that anybody could receive. We are so blessed! So this calling, and the fact that we're hearing this sermon today is one of the greatest blessings that will ever come upon us as individuals, because God is revealing to us, because of our faithfulness, because we understand all things come from God, because we are willing to give our tithes and offerings to God in spirit and truth, according to our blessings physically and spiritually, God says that He'll keep pouring out truth, pouring out His spirit on us, so much so that we can't actually absorb it all.

Because out of all of the posts that have been written, we "see" certain elements. But as we go back over them God will keep pouring out *spiritual understanding* of them. We *see* more. We have a greater *understanding* of the things that are told. And this will continue to be expounded right through the last 1,100 years. Greater blessings are going to be poured out because of the faithfulness of those that turn to God and acknowledge that God is the provider of all things.

Verse 11—And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and that, of course, is symbolic of Satan. But Satan is going to be removed. He is going to be rebuked because he *is* the devourer. He *is* the destroyer—his name means "Destroyer," "Adversary." ...**so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground,** which is pointing to the Millennium we are soon to celebrate, in the sense of keeping the Feast for seven days, and on the eighth day we will rejoice as well because of that Hundred-year period that God talks about. Because this is a time when Satan is removed. He is destroyed from the presence of mankind for that period. And in the sense of being destroyed, it's actually "removed." He is actually held in a place of restraint for 1,100 years. ...**nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field, says the LORD of hosts.** Well, we can look at that on a physical level and say, "Yes, there is going to be plenty. There is going to be abundance in the field." Also, on a spiritual level, the vine, which is, says, "I am the vine. If you're connected to Me you will bear much fruit." So this spiritually is pointing to this Millennium and 100-years where God says He's going to take Satan away, and therefore, the vine, this connection to God will not fail and we will bear fruit in the field. Well, what's the "field"? It's in the Church, the Church of God, because the only place to bear fruit is in God's Church. We have to be connected to the vine. We have to be connected to the Church of God, because that is the only way. And this is a demonstration of God's mercy to us, which is that removal of Satan so that we can bear fruit. How merciful is God? The fact that we even "see" and understand this. ...**says the LORD of hosts.**

Verse 12—And all nations will call you blessed; well, they will. One day, brethren, people that are resurrected at the end of 1,000 years to live that day of judgement, they're going to look back and call us blessed. We are *just so blessed* to understand about tithe and offerings. We are *just so blessed* to understand the "why" of many matters within the Bible. We understand "why" Passover, "why" Atonement, "why" the Feast, "why" the Last Great Day. How blessed are we! Well, those resurrected in that last Hundred-years will look at us at this time, the Church of God—PKG, and call us *blessed, for you will be a*

delighted land, and it's talking about where God's spirit dwells, **says the LORD**. So wherever God's spirit is, wherever God's spirit dwells in the temple (which we are), "for you will be a delighted land."

Well, we are, brethren. We are a "delightful land." This is the location where God dwells. Well, in the future the same thing will apply. Nations will look at God's Church and in time turn to God's way of life.

Verse 13—Your words have been harsh against Me, against God, because Israel has talked against God. Well, they talk against God's Church. That's one thing on a spiritual level people just don't understand, and that is people in times past have made certain comments within God's Church, and they'll say things like, "Well, there is no love in the Church." The reality is that *they don't understand what they're saying*. They have no idea what they're saying. They're responding to something on a physical level. They don't "feel" loved. And I underlined the word here, "feel," because it's an emotion. What they're saying is, they're speaking against God, which this scripture says, "Your words have been harsh (strong) against Me." Now, this is with regards to tithes and offerings and other things, but when somebody says, "There's no love in the Church," it's *harsh*! It's harsh against God! Because really, deep down if you get rid of all the emotion and the physical component of "no love in the Church," this is an accusation against God and God's people. It's somebody *looking out* and saying, "You don't have God's holy spirit," because God is love. And therefore, to say there is no love in the Church, what they're saying is, "God is not providing His spirit to His people." Now, when somebody says, "There is no love in the Church," it's generally directed towards an individual or particular individuals, that *in their judgement*, *in their* thinking the person is not demonstrating love towards them. But to say this is a very dangerous matter because it actually reflects a lack of spiritual understanding.

So if these words ever come across our lips, if we're every tempted to *say* this, we need to stop and look at ourselves, and look at ourselves in the sense of, "*Why* would I be thinking this?" Because it's all based on a physical understanding and it's not based on a spiritual understanding. Because where God is, love is. So where God's people are, love is. So, to say something like that really is *harsh* against God. It's actually against God. So, "You have been harsh against Me," **says the LORD**, **Yet you say, 'What have we spoken against You? You have said, 'It is vain to serve God.'**" So this is that wrong attitude of being unthankful. In other words, "There is no point obeying God in tithes and offerings. There's no point in obeying God, the 10 Commandments. It's all a waste of time; there is no benefit *to me*," because that's what it's about. "It's vain to serve God. It's empty; it's a waste of time. I'm not getting anything back!" We see this attitude stinks. You can see this attitude is *wrong*; it's a wrong statement to be saying.

What profit is in it that we have kept His ordinances, so, "What's in it for me? I'm getting nothing back!" Which is not what it's about. So this is just a stinking attitude.

And that we have walked as mourners, we've walked as repentant, we've been lowly, we've humbled ourselves, and what are we getting out of all of this, doing all this for God? **...before the LORD of hosts? So now we call the proud blessed**, so this is the thinking of the world. They call the proud in the world, blessed. So who's the proud in the world? Well, somebody that has acquired wealth. Normally wealth will puff up. They're living a life of luxury; they have plenty. Well, people look at them and say, "Wow! Aren't

they blessed?!" In other words, giving *them* the credit, the individual the credit rather than God. So they think, on the world standard, if someone has possessions, or has wealth, is actually blessed. And this what they're saying. "Well, all of those people over there, out there, that haven't humbled themselves, they're not obeying You, they're not walking in the commandments, they're not repentant—look at *them*! They're all doing really well!" Well, they're looking at it on a physical level. They're not looking at a spiritual level.

For those who do wickedness are raised up. Well, they are! They're lifted up! They are esteemed by others! **Yes, those who tempt God go free.** "All of those people out there," they're saying, "They won't pay the penalty. They're not paying any penalty! Yet we, we obey, we're giving these things to You, we're obeying You, we're repentant, we're mourning, we're putting ourselves down—what's in it for us? We're getting nothing compared to all of those out there! Have a look out there! All those people in their wealth and their cars and their houses and their prosperity and their stock market and everything they have, well, they're not paying any penalty! They are walking free. They don't pay *any* penalties for their *disobedience*. They pay no penalty for their *unfaithfulness*. They're not giving tithes and offerings, and have a look at them!"

Now it drops down to verse 16, and it talks about obedience, which is the opposite to what these people are saying and their attitude. **Verse 16—Then those who feared the LORD,** here is someone who fears God, they obey God, they obey God in tithes and offerings, and they are generous and give of themselves to others. They're not proud. They walk in humility. They walk in repentance. They have returned to God, in the sense that their mind is towards God and God is living in them. They fear God. They, within God's Church, **spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him,** before God the Father, Yahweh Elohim, **for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name.** They esteem God. So this "book of remembrance" is about those that are worshipping God in spirit and truth, those that are faithful in fearing God in obedience to God, and are not blaming God for the things in their life that are going wrong. They're looking to blame themselves for their decisions. They are continually repenting. They *fear* God because they are learning to hate evil *within themselves*. Now, to fear God is to obey God. And to learn to hate evil, to hate evil within ourselves. To hate it in the sense of we're willing to forsake it. We're willing to leave it behind. We don't want to have anything to do with sin.

Well, there is a "book of remembrance." God says He will not forget His people because it is God doing the work. It is God living and dwelling in us. So God won't forget us and we will be rewarded with *righteousness* because of our obedience. And there is something in it for those who obey God, and it's called "the gift of eternal life." Because it has to come from God and it is a gift. So what's in it for those that obey God? For those that yield to God? Those that are willing to be put down by the world now and not lift themselves up? To walk in humility, to walk in repentance? What is it? Well, God says He will remember us and that there is a reward in it, and what's that reward?

So "why" is it worth obeying God, is another question? Why is it that a person *should* obey God? To fear God, and to walk in repentance? Why? Well, God gives the answer, and it's not for selfish reasons; it's because of love for God, because it's powered by God's holy spirit.

Verse 17—They shall be Mine. We belong to God (Isn't this incredible?) ...says the LORD of hosts, **On the day that I make them My jewels**, which is at a resurrection. It's the day that God makes us "His treasure," we enter Elohim! Isn't this an incredible statement! So all of this obedience to God has an outcome, and it's called "the gift of eternal life." We'll be made a "treasure" of God. We belong to God!

And I (God) will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. Because of this obedience. **Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.** Because this is all pointing to obedience gives life and disobedience has death. And that's what the eighth-day sermon will cover—which is this between, the selection between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him. Because there is an outcome. There *is* an outcome for obedience and there is an outcome for disobedience. There's an outcome for challenging the self and examining the thoughts and the attitudes and our faithfulness to God. And there's an outcome for *not* considering our thoughts, words, and actions, and serving the self and not fearing God. There's an outcome for it. And that's what the day of judgement points to: There is an outcome.

Well, there's an outcome for us, brethren. So "why." The "why" of any matter. Why obedience? Because obedience leads to *life* and enjoyment and it's the right way to live. It leads to happiness. And the opposite to that is unfaithfulness and disobedience which leads to death. So why would we want to live in a state of unhappiness? Well, God says that He won't let us. If we continue to willfully reject God, as we go further in our own unhappiness, God says He'll end it. God, in His mercy, will apply the second death to us which is a demonstration of His mercy, because our unhappiness has to be put to an end. Why would God allow anybody to exist in unhappiness? There is no benefit for them. So in His mercy He will apply the second death to them, which is death forever, never to have life again.

So now, brethren, we'll all look at "why" the ministry. Ephesians 4:1. Now, this area is basically all about government. It's whether or not we respond to God with our obedience. So this is about government, which we have to yield to. Now, people will say government is about something physical, but the truth of the matter, government has two parts. One, whether or not we allow God to *govern* our life. Now, God governs our life by the fact that He provides His holy spirit to us so that God's spirit enters our thinking, and then we have to learn to yield or choose to yield to that. Therefore, if we are yielding to God's holy spirit, we are "under Government." It's a spiritual matter. And therefore, if we're under Government within our lives, we'll be under government within the Church, within God's Church, because we will have yielded our spirit (our attitudes) to God's holy spirit, therefore, the flow of God's spirit in His Church and God's holy spirit in a person are the same. Therefore, if we have yielded ourselves to God's Government (God's holy spirit in our life) we will *yield* to God's government in the Church, the spirit of the matter and also the physical things that are announced by God's government, the ministry.

So "why" the ministry? It's all about Government. It's all about Government. And at first He starts with Government within our own life. Are we governing ourselves by the power of God's holy spirit? It's not about *control* of a man or a church *over* people. It has nothing to do with that. It's not about control. This is about Government. This is about God's holy spirit.

So Government is about God's spirit. So we can say, "Why the ministry?" Well, it's all about God's holy spirit. It's about what God is doing within the ministry.

Ephesians 4:1—I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called. So now, this is about a way of life. This is about the way we live. So we are to "walk worthy of this calling." Well, what's the calling? We understand we have been invited by God the Father to be a student. So we have been invited to come into the Body of Christ. We've been called out of this world with this natural carnal mind of selfishness that we should now walk worthy. Well, how do we do that? It's the way we respond. It's the way that we walk, the way we talk, our thoughts, words, and actions have to be demonstrating, have to provide evidence that we have been called. And the evidence is God the Father living and dwelling in us. God's spirit living and dwelling in us. That's the evidence that can be given.

A person can be called and then walk away, walking down a path of natural carnal mind and not repent, not return. So we demonstrate the "walking worthy of a calling with which we have been called" by repentance, by change, by thinking differently. Now, if we're *not* changing, if we're not repenting, we're not thinking differently, we are *not* walking worthy of the calling, which is what Paul is outlining. He beseeches us to "walk worthy," which is to be in a state of repentance and humility.

How do we demonstrate it? ...**with all lowliness**, and that "lowliness" is "humility." It's an attitude of mind. We are to *know* what we are. We're to know we're no better than anybody else. We are to compare ourselves to God, and then from that, like what happened to Job, we can see ourselves as we really are. "Hmm, I'm not 'crash-hot' after all. I'm actually just a vain object walking around in my own vanity in my own pride. I've swelled up my thinking." So we are to demonstrate this calling, that we're walking in this calling by walking in humility.

This **lowliness, and gentleness, with longsuffering, forbearing with one another**, which is this demonstration of God's love. We are to demonstrate that we love one another, to love God's way of life, to love the brethren.

Verse 3—endeavoring (which is "striving, making effort") **to keep the unity**. Now that unity is that same mind and same thinking, same purpose. So we are **striving to keep the unity of the spirit**, which is that oneness, the one mind, the bond of unity. And that bond of unity, what will it bring? ...**in the bond of peace**. It will bring peace within our thinking, peace within the Church, because it's all about a way of thinking. So we are to "walk in the unity of the spirit." Now, one way we demonstrate this "walking in the unity of the spirit," is that we will believe the truth. We will believe what God places in His Church, and if we believe that, and we're all in unity with that, it will bring peace. It brings a peace. There won't be

contention within the Church. So this bond, or this binding together that must take place, has to be done in peace, which is the thinking of God.

Now, if we go back to the very beginning where we understand that God is peace, that's the way God thinks, and there *was* peace, and then God created choice for mankind so that they could choose one way or the other. This giving mankind choice provides the opposite to peace, which is war. And it provided an opportunity for sin because it is about a choice. So we are to come into this "bond," or this "binding together of peace," which is this one way of thinking, which is not to have sin. Now the last Hundred-years points to that very fact. It's about people coming into this "unity of spirit" or into "the bond of peace."

Verse 4—There is one body. So there's only one Church, and no matter what anybody says, there is only one Body, and it's actually joined together. There are many part of the body. There's the hand, and the eye, and the nose, and the ear, but there is only one body; there is one organism that carries around the mind, the spirit in man. Well, from a spiritual point of view, there is only one Body, there is only **one spirit**, which goes on to say. So there's only one Body that carries God's holy spirit, and there is only one spirit. There's not all different types of spirits. There's one spirit and it's from God. It's God the Father. It's God's thinking. It's God's holy thinking, God's holy spirit that is placed *into* the mind all for a purpose.

Now this "one spirit" is what holds the Body together, this "one Body" together. The whole Body is joined together, "fitly joined together," and it's all done by the power of God's holy spirit. And that's what creates unity, the unity of the spirit, because it's God's thinking in a person that creates this bond of unity, creates this peace. Because God *is* peace. So the only way a person can have peace, true spiritual peace, is that they are *in one Body*, they're in the Church of God—PKG at this time, and they are *in the spirit*. They are with God's spirit. They have God's spirit living and dwelling in them. It's active and they're yielding to it. And that's what creates peace.

...**just as you were called in one hope**, well, what's that "one hope"? We've been called with the hope of salvation. We desire to be saved. And this "one hope" is about coming to see what we are and what we deserve. What we are is selfish and carnal, and we deserve death: "The wages of sin is death." But our hope, the hope **of our calling** is that God will transform our thinking so that we will be given life. We will be saved. And God provided a Savior in Jesus Christ to cover sin. So "the wages of sin is death," has been paid for us *IF* we remain in a state of repentance. If we stay with the one Body, and with the one spirit, God's spirit, and we have this one hope of salvation, the hope of our calling, **one Lord**, one Lord, Jesus Christ. There is only *one* Passover, and there's not two. There is not another way to be saved. You cannot be saved by rejecting or not yielding to God's spirit. You can't be saved by rejecting Jesus Christ and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and the shed blood for sin. It's impossible. There's only **one faith**, so there's only one belief system; there's not two. And there is **one baptism**, so there's only one baptism which points to the fact that there is only one way for sin to be covered... sin to be covered. So people can be immersed in water, but that doesn't mean to say that it's a right baptism, that it's the "one baptism." Because the "one baptism," it's about the gift of repentance first and that a person comes to see on a spiritual level where they are wrong, where they have sinned. And they desire to have their sins

covered, which is that "one baptism." So there's not two, and therefore, this baptism must take place as a person repents, as they begin to "see" sin. They "see" themselves!

So the "why" of all of this is about "a unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." That's why all this is outlined, and therefore, there is only one Church. Why? Because that's where God works. There's only one spirit because God is Yahweh Elohim, the one true God. And God is the one who provides *His* holy spirit, His thinking. There is only one. And there is only one calling that is genuine and it has to come from God. And there is only one true spiritual hope, and that hope is salvation. And there is only one Lord. There is only one Jesus Christ. Why? For the purpose of saving mankind. There is only one faith. Why? Because God is working in one place and God does not lie. There is only one truth and it has to come from God. And there's one baptism. There is **one God and Father of all, who is above all**, we understand that, **and through all**, because God created all things, **and in you all**, in God's Church, God spirit dwells. His mind is *in* us. Isn't this an exciting thing? Because all this is outlined because it is about God's spirit, it is about God's government. And this outlines how God's Government, how God's spirit works, and it's *through* the one Body, and it's about the one spirit, and it's *about* God the Father who provides truth to the Church, because there's only one faith—there's not hundreds of different doctrines. There's not a hundred different ways to look at something. There is one way to look at it and it has to be powered by God's holy spirit because this is covering the aspect of "why" God's Government.

Verse 7—But to each one of us grace (favor) was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Each and every one of us is different. Each and every one of us has been allocated a level of knowledge and spiritual understanding and wisdom, and Christ's gift was His death for us. He paid the penalty of sin for us. That's the gift. We've been shown God's mercy. **Therefore, He (God) says: When He (Christ) ascended on high, He (Christ) led captivity captive**, which is our sins, because we are held captive by our sins. Well, Jesus Christ, who died for us, has now ascended to heaven to be at the right hand of God the Father. He has led our sin captive. He's actually freeing us. He enabled this process to take place, which is the forgiveness of sin, **and gave gifts to men**, these spiritual gifts, which is the forgiveness of sin and the gifts of God's spirit living and dwelling in us.

Verse 9—(Now this, 'He (Christ) ascended'—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?) So the first thing that had to happen was He had to die and He was in the grave for three days and three nights, which is "the lower parts of the earth," which is the grave.

Verse 10—(He who descended, into the grave, is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He (Christ) might fill all things.) That is about this process of being able to have sin forgiven so that we could at some point in time after 7,100 years, mankind could enter Elohim, "that He might fulfill all things," all the spiritual things that are required for the covering of sin and the process of "bringing many sons to glory."

Now, in doing this, **verse 11—And He Himself gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.** God, in establishing His Church, the Church of God, has appointed Christ as the Head of the Church, to feed the Church. He then set up a physical structure for a spiritual

purpose. So "why" did God set up "apostles, prophets, evangelists, and some pastors and teachers"? So why did God do all that? Well, we know from the other verses it's about the "one Body" and the "one spirit." It's about salvation, that God could live and dwell *in* mankind.

He set this government structure up in spirit because **verse 12** (the "why" of the matter)—**for the equipping** (perfecting) **of the saints**. Well, that's us, brethren. We are "saints." We are the called out ones of God. So the ministry responsibility is for the edification, or the building up, or the perfecting of the saints. So we are taught God's way of life for the purpose of absorbing it so that we can change, so we can be transformed.

...**for**, another reason "why," **for the work of the ministry**. Well, there is a "work of the ministry." There is a service. Because the word "minister" or "ministry" is "the work of service." God's ministry is appointed to serve, to sacrifice for the benefit of "the saints." And that's the reason for the ministry. It's not about a role of glory. It's not about a role of self-importance. It's one of sacrifice. So a minister is there to serve.

Now, the moment a minister does not serve a particular function, there is no point. They're not fulfilling the role of the ministry, the work of the ministry because it is about a structure for the work of "edifying the saints," the "work of service towards God's called out ones." That's why the ministry exists. ...**for the edifying of the Body of Christ**, for the building up on a spiritual level, the Body of Christ, the Church of God. So ministry exists to serve God, to fulfill God's purpose in building up, in edifying (which is building up) the Body, to strengthen the Body on a spiritual level. Well, that's the work of service. The service is for the point of edifying or building up the Body.

Verse 13—Until (till) **we all come to the unity of the faith**, so it's about unity. It's about this "bond of unity," which we should be striving to be at-one with God, the "unity of spirit." Well, that's what the ministry is about, "until," so we're educated, we're taught about God's way, the ministry serve the brethren for the point of, "all coming into the unity of the faith." There is *one* faith. We all believe the same thing. We all believe the truth, which is given from God. We believe God! We believe Jesus Christ! We believe what God places in the Church.

So this is all going to happen "until we all come into the unity of the faith," which is the same belief. We all believe the same thing. ...**and the knowledge of the Son of God**, well, we've been given this "knowledge of the Son of God," from the very Feast day in 2005, where God revealed Himself, but in doing that, in revealing that He was the one true God, He also revealed His Son, Jesus Christ. And the purpose of Jesus Christ was *magnified*! But in all of that the glory was given to God! The real source of all knowledge and all truth and all understanding comes from one God, Yahweh Elohim. We then can come to "see" the knowledge of His Son, the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

...**to a perfect** (mature) **man**, to a mature person. Each of us has to come to a spiritual maturity. Now, what is "spiritual maturity"? It's pure thinking. To be perfect, to be mature, it is a person that has the mind of God, pure in thinking. Because God is pure. God is holy. Therefore, God says, "Be you holy as I

am holy." Well, we are to become mature. We are to become perfect. We're to become holy in our thinking. And the *only* way that we can do that is to have the mind of God, is to have God's holy spirit.

...to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Well, Christ was the mind of God. Christ was holy. Christ was pure. So we are to come "to the measure of the stature of the fullness in Christ," because we have to have the mind of Christ: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ."

Verse 14—that you should no longer be children. Now, what's a "child"? Well, a child can be tossed around by what is said. One parent says one thing, another parent says another thing. Well, the child doesn't know what to do. He's torn between the two. He's tossed around. So all of this happens, God's government has happened, this role of service the ministry is given—why? So "that we should no longer be children" **tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men.** So these ideas from man, from a natural carnal mind, man leaning on his own understanding, we should not be "tossed to and fro" like children. We shouldn't be "carried away" by these things. We should remain within the Church of God because it *is* a place where God feeds His people. But the moment we leave the Church, we leave God, and therefore, we *will* be "tossed around by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men" because outside of the Body of Christ, the Church of God—PKG, there is not one spirit. There is not a spirit of unity. There is no hope. There is no faith. There is no one baptism, and they *don't believe* the one true God, the Father of us all. They don't! They might say they do, but they don't. *IF* they believed the one true God, the Father of us all, they would remain within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, because there is only one Body.

So we remain in the Church so that we're *not* "tossed around by the trickery of men," **which they lay in wait to deceive.** Now, where does deception come from? Satan. He is the master of deception. **But,** what do we have to do? **...speaking the truth in love.** This is the mind of God living and dwelling in us. **...may grow up in all things into Him (into Christ) who is the head,** who is the Head of the Church... **(verse 16)—from whom the whole Body, joined and knitted together (it's one Body) by what every joint supplies.** So we're all different; we're all supplied different needs of the Body. Not all of us are the arm, not all of us are the ear, not all of us are the knee, not all of us are the waist. We're all different, but we all supply something to the body and we're knit together in unity, **according to the effective working by which every part does its share.** Now, this is where it goes back to somebody that might say there is no love in the Body. They don't understand that God places people in the Body so that every part does its share, *everybody...everybody* has a purpose in the Church. Now, the natural carnal mind doesn't always "see" it, but God's spirit sees it. We need each other. We are all here for a purpose. We all have different fruits. We all have different roles at different times, but it is all to be part of this "effective working by which every part does its share." **...causes growth of the Body for the edifying of itself in love.** It's all done through the power of God's holy spirit within His people.

And that's how we share. We share within the Body, all driven by the power of God's holy spirit. Now, we're not all the same. We're not all going to be the same. We all have different roles to fulfill. All parts are different, but it is all about the growth of the Body. If it jointed all together it becomes *one* Body, and every part does its share. The hand does its part. The ear does its part. The mouth does its part.

The eye does its part. The waistline does its part. The knee does its part. The foot does its part. It all comes to one Body, and it's all done for its "edifying of itself." It's the one Body; it builds itself up. Hence, one part of the Body should not criticise another part of the Body. How foolish is that! Why would the eye criticize the mouth? Well, that's what happens, brethren, when we ever have the thoughts or the saying or the thinking, "There is no love in the Body." That is not building up. That is not edifying itself in love. That's the eye criticizing the ear, or the eye criticizing the hand, saying, "Well, I'm doing alright. You're not doing *your* role. You don't have God's holy spirit." This does not bring peace.

So the only way to have peace is that every part must cause growth to the Body by the edifying of itself. We have to build up each other. Now, this is not physical things. This is spiritual! This can be done through right thinking. By the power of God's holy spirit, we can build up each other, edify each other through prayer. It's not just about talking to each other and commenting somebody on something, which is physical. This is about a *true* spirit. This is genuine and sincere edification, which is a spiritual matter, which is done in love, which is this real, genuine, outgoing concern for the welfare of others. It's love expressed to others. Now, *that's* why the Church exists. *That's* why the ministry exists. That's why we exist within the Body. We exist, the "why" we exist in the Church, the Body of Christ, the one Body, is for the edification of each other. We should do our share and we will cause *growth* to the Body. We'll build each other up in the spirit of truth. And it can be done through prayer. It's the way we think. It's the power of God's spirit *in our thinking* that we yield to and we will build up each other. We will see the value in each other. And that's why we are part of the Body of Christ.

Genesis 10:6—We're going to look at this, about "why" God does certain things within mankind. Because there's a reason why God does everything. There is a reason why God intervenes into the lives of people. Now, we understand that God intervened into the lives of mankind at the time of Noah. Why? Well, that was to save the spirit for another day. That's the reason why. So we understand that. Why did God intervene into Sodom and Gomorrah and save Lot out of it? There was a reason. Well, the reason was that man had sinned and was sinning so much that God wanted to save the spirit for another day. There's a reason why God did it, why God sent down the angels, and why He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and it was all about a demonstration of leaving an example of what will happen to the unGodly. So Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of sin, so that God would leave an example for mankind, so that they could see the consequence of sin is death. If you will not repent, if you will not change, you *will* die, a death, a second death, which is going to last forever. It's called "fire and brimstone." You will die and not have life ever again. So that's the reason "why" those things.

Well, let's look at this particular example in **Genesis 10:6—The sons of Ham** (and the word "Ham" there is "Hot") **were Cush** (and "Cush" actually means "Ethiopian" or "Black"), **Mizraim** (which is "Egypt," the land of the "Copts"), **Put** (and "Put" means "Bow or Libya"), and **Canaan**, (which was the lower lands, which is "Palestine").

Verse 8—Cush begot Nimrod. Now, we understand Nimrod is a man of renown and he was against God. He raised up against God and did not follow God's way. Now, interestingly, the word "Nimrod" means "Rebellion, the Valiant." So he was somebody that was in rebellion against God. ...**he began to be**, so he

wasn't at the beginning, **he began to be**, this carries the meaning of "beginning to profane one's self. He began to defile one's self, defile himself, "pollute himself ritually and sexually," **a mighty one on the earth**. So here we have Nimrod and he's now polluting himself. He's going against God. He's defiling himself and he defiles and pollutes himself because of what he does. And ritually he's now turning to the false religion that was established on this earth and continues to this day. Nimrod, the son of Cush, the grandson of Ham, the great-grandson of Noah, a mighty hunter, he established an empire in the area of Babylon and Assyria. So he grew up, and he was related to Noah because this is after the flood.

Verse 9—He was a mighty hunter before, and this word "before" is to "turn away from" **the LORD**. So he's a "mighty hunter" because he turned away from God. He didn't depend on God. He trusted in himself. **Therefore, it is said, Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before** (or "who turned away from God") **the LORD**. So he was "mighty before the Lord," because he turned away from God. Nimrod lived by his name. He turned in rebellion against God's way. Just like Lucifer chose, he turned his face away from God and did what he thought was right in his own eyes. He selfishly desired, dominated the world by violence. He was one of the men mentioned in Genesis, which is "a mighty hunter."

Verse 10—And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and we understand that ended up being Babylon in that area, Babel. Everyone descended from Noah's family and had one language, one speech, and the population has grown from Shem, Ham, and Japheth, where the races come from today. And they have expanded. Well, they all had that one language as they came off the ark, they had one language. They had one speech, so they could understand each other when they spoke.

Now, we can trace our lineage back to somebody from the ark, because we all descend from Noah.

Genesis 11:1—Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. Then they said to one another, because they had this one language and they could communicate well and they didn't have a language barrier. **Come, let us make bricks and bake *them* thoroughly**, so they're going to be strong. **They had bricks of stone, and they had asphalt for mortar**. So they've now made these bricks and they use asphalt, which is like a tar, for mortar, so that they could build. **And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city**. Now, this is "a place guarded by walking or a watch." It's a form of self-protection. So they're now going to build a city, and when they built these cities it was an area that they could build a large wall and they could actually walk around the outside of it and watch so that nobody could come in, wild animals or other people could come in and take from them. And it is a way of self-protection. Now, this self-protection is about protecting self, not relying on God. Cities or castles with walls were a demonstration of a lack of trust in God, because *if* they had trusted in God there was no need to build these cities or these walls or protections that they wanted.

...and a tower, so they're going to build themselves a city *and* a tower, **whose top is in the heavens**. So it was going to be rather tall. So it was going to be above the clouds so that rain could not flood them. So if they had a big tower and there was another flood, for example, they felt they were protecting themselves.

...let us make a name for ourselves—why?—lest we shall be scattered abroad or over the face of the whole earth. So there's many attitudes here. There's many intents of why they're doing it. They're doing it for self-protection. They also want to make a name for themselves "so that they're not scattered abroad," so that they won't lose their identity.

Verse 5—But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. Now, understanding they all are descendents of Noah (Shem, Ham, and Japheth) and they also are of one language or one tongue. So they understand each other.

Verse 6—And the LORD said, Indeed the people *are* one. Now, this is not only one language, but it's one in intent and purpose. So they all are in unity of agreement. They all want to do this. They all want to build a city. They all want to build a tower. But they have the same intent behind it. They want to build it for protection, they want to build it in case there's another flood, and they want to build it so that they can protect their people, which is the one culture that they have. ...and they have one language, and this is what they begin to do, which is build a city that will allow them to profane, defile, and pollute themselves, because it's one community, one language, they have the one understanding. And what will it lead to? Well, it's going to lead to this polluting of self, because of their thinking, the way they are, the natural carnal mind.

... now nothing they suppose, nothing they intend to do will be withheld from them. So they're going to think or have an idea, and the intent of that idea will be realized! Mankind's intent is to add sin upon sin, to satisfy the self. Now, man doesn't always know that; he doesn't understand it. But God knows that if man is held in a position and they have this form of self-protection, and they have this form of an idea, that they will just develop the idea. And what will it lead to? It'll be just about satisfying the self, pleasing the self. And we can see this demonstrated today that not much is being held from mankind. Why? Because there is only one main language that is used. Although there are many languages, most countries are learning English, and because they learn English they now can have unity. Hence, things can be developed quickly because it only takes a fax, or it only takes a phone call, or it takes a photo and being sent to another location. Nothing is being withheld from them! Any new idea and the intent of an idea is not withheld because of this one language. So it causes a problem. And what does it lead to? Sin up sin, the satisfaction of the self.

I know that within the fashion industry what would happen is that people would travel overseas for an idea. They would see a particular garment, they would take a photo of that garment and send it by text to another country, to a manufacturer—could be in China, could be in the Philippines, could be anywhere in the world—so within one second that new creation (because of this one language and this new idea) it could be communicated: "This is what I want made and these are the measurements and the dimensions and this is the fabric I want." So it takes a split-second now for these ideas to be transferred. So this is a problem that is now being developed within mankind. There is nothing being held from mankind, hence, we see the development of nuclear weapons. And now mankind knows, because of this one language, things can be transferred very quickly and can be understood very quickly.

Verse 7—and says, "Come, let us," but that's a bad translation because there is no "let us." It just should simply say, **Come, go down there and confuse the language**—Why? This is God's intent to stop their potential to sin like before the flood. Because God knows that if they stay the way they are sin will become upon sin, and by confusing the language and scattering them abroad it reduces the potential for sin—that they may not understand one another's speech. So this lack of understanding means sin cannot be multiplied quickly. The transfer of ideas, the transfer of intent is now going to be difficult.

Verse 8—So the LORD scattered them abroad from there, from the Tower of Babel, over the face of all the earth, hence, we see today all the different nationalities that exist, and the three main cultures or three main nationalities, they've also been scattered abroad and have developed their own language. So now today there are hundreds of different languages or dialects of particular languages. And it has saved mankind from himself. It's an act of mercy of God because if everyone was of one language evil would multiply much quicker. ...and they ceased building the city. This was, again, an act of mercy of God because He scattered them abroad and confused their language. The reason why? Because it's God's mercy towards them.

Verse 9—Therefore, its name is called Babel, (Babel or Babylon), which means "confusing by mixing," and therefore, people can't understand each other. Now, we understand that Babylon (on a spiritual level) is Satan's system, Satan's way, which is one of confusion. And there is confusion in the world, absolute confusion on a spiritual level. They cannot "see" God's truth because they haven't been called to it. So Satan is the author of this spiritual confusion, this Babylon, this mixing of ideas. Hence, all the different religions and all their ideas.

Verse 9, continuing...therefore, its name is called Babel, because the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the earth. Their potential for mass evil was reduced. This is an act of mercy.

Well, we'll end this sermon series here, brethren, knowing that we understand because of God's holy spirit the reason "why" of many matters. We understand the reason "why" God requires tithes and offerings of us—because it's the test of the spirit, to see our real attitude. Do we *understand* the principles behind giving tithes and offerings? We understand "why" the ministry. We understand "why" the Church. We understand "why" God confused the languages and "why" there are so many languages and cultures on the earth today.

So understanding all these things is a great and wonderful blessing, and we shouldn't take it for granted. We shouldn't become familiar with our understanding of the reason "why" God did the things that He did. □