

Well, welcome, everybody, to this particular Sabbath in Cincinnati and to everyone listening today. I do know there are some possibly in Australia that are listening as well. In your summer, our winter, it's 4:30 am in the morning on a Sunday morning. Then there's a change difference, it goes to 5:30. And at the moment because we're going into our summer, you're going into your winter, it's actually 6:30. So it's good for us.

Well, we've enjoyed the trip to date so far. We've had no real major travel issues with airlines or anything like that. The only delay that we had was in Salt Lake City when it was snowing. And I've only seen snow fall twice in my life, and so that was interesting. And then they came out with a big water cannon and squirted all the plane, which was interesting. But they made up time and was about a half an hour late than normal to be picked up. But other than that it was good.

In early, or late 2007, early 2008 I was actually asked a particular question. And that question was around the fact that I had made a decision to resign from work. And people knew what I was doing and the fact we were looking forward to 2012. And a particular person who was from the world's system asked me a particular question, a direct question, which was a two-edged sword when I looked at it now and consider it. But it said, "If Christ did not return in 2012, what was my Plan 'B.'" You may remember I've spoken about this before. And my answer was, "I'd still be on Plan 'A' because there is no Plan 'B!'"

So today the title of the sermon is *What is Plan "A"?* And I want to go through this. I've gone through it in my mind many a time and now I felt that it's probably time for the fact of just going through this because it's very, very simple, but very, very complex if you have God's spirit.

God has a Plan 'A' and it covers millions and billions of years. His plan isn't going to change. God will work the way He has planned, and the outcome is the same. So no matter what happens the outcome is going to be achieved. God is going to have a family created from humans that resist Him. It's an incredible plan. Sounds simple when you just say it like that, but it's very complex in another way.

God has a plan for mankind and the real truth is God has a plan for us as individuals. It's an individual plan because the way God works is not the same with every individual. Because it's like the Apostasy, everybody got something different out of it; everyone went through a slightly different experience. And the awakening is the same, everybody's slightly different. And everybody that has been awakened remembers the day that something changed. So it is different.

So God's plan is to create a spirit family that will be at peace and in unity with Him. That's God's plan, a family from mankind. Now, when we look at it, if we know ourselves and understand

ourselves, this plan is complicated. And it's complicated because of us because we have a mind, a natural mind that has certain desires that God has placed in us as individuals and everyone's at a different level within those desires based on our background, based on our upbringing. So some have a stronger pull in one direction than another, but we all have those three main lusts of the flesh, or those desires. And the underlying point of all of it is that *everybody* in this room, including myself, has one major issue in their life, and it's called pride. It's called pride. And it raises itself up at different levels at different times.

Well, when I looked at this particular sermon, went through it, I looked at particular planning. And in planning it says... When you do a chart and you're going to achieve something, it says, "who," "what," "where," "when," and "what timeline," and "who's responsible." So I thought, well, in Plan "A" there's a lot of this involved. "Who?" It's us. We're the "who" in the plan. "What?" It's about transforming a mind that is hostile naturally against God so that it is going to yield to God. That's what's taking place within our life. That's what *should* be taking place in our life. "Where?" Here. Now, is when it's happening. It's happening to us now, this very transformation. "When?" Well, God's plan covers 7,100 years and it's going to happen over that timeline. That's God's plan. Well, ours is within our lifetime, whether we're called young or old, it's *now* that it's taking place.

So we are so blessed to have been called now, because we've now entered this plan, the plan of God, so that this transformation can take place. Who is responsible? Well, we know that God the Father in the first 4,000 years worked and He was responsible for whom He called, who He desired to work with, those few. Then that responsibility was handed over to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. And that's where we are now. We are under Jesus Christ. And the next 1,100 years once Christ returns it's the same thing. But who's accountable for the outcome? Because in a plan you'll have all these things and it's time you've got to do, got to do that. But who's accountable to make sure it's achieved? Well, when you boil it all down we are as individuals; we're accountable for our choices. God and Jesus Christ can work with us to lead us, to guide us, but we're accountable whether we'll yield, whether we want to fight that pride that we all have that is natural. And we all have it. Now, we may see that pride at different levels.

Well, when I went through this I was trying to condense it—difficult for me—trying to condense it down that I could explain Plan "A," and what came to me out of all of it was that without God's holy spirit nobody is going to understand this plan. It's just not going to happen. And that's what I ran into when I said there was no Plan "B." The person never had God's spirit, and therefore, everything that I would say from that point was foolishness to them. And God talks about that, and we'll hopefully get time to look at that.

So point 1, because I've got 9 points. Normally don't like to have too many, but I ended up with 9 because that's what I felt needed to cover this plan, simple plan, but in detail.

### **1. The foundation of Plan "A" is based on God's holy spirit.**

Because *without* God's holy spirit there is no spiritual plan for any of us. If we don't have God's holy spirit whatever is said now is not going to be understood, it's spiritual intent. It's just not going... it's not *able* to be done. Because once we have God's holy spirit the power of God in us enables us to believe God, enables us to believe the truth. And we can only hang on to that truth if we have God's spirit. Now, we have all had relationships with others where God's spirit has left and they cannot hang on to the truth, therefore, they're not going to be here today. Because this is the foundation of Plan "A," having God's holy spirit. And it is a fearful thing. And I know David says in the Psalm, "God, do not remove your holy spirit from me." Because *if* we have God's spirit and we understand the power of God's spirit that keeps us in the truth, gives us the power to overcome, it's a fearful thing to lose God's spirit. And we should be in *fear* of that, and that fear is a Godly fear that we don't want to lose God's spirit, because if we lose God's spirit Plan "A" collapses completely. There is no Plan "B." There's not even a Plan "A." It's just back to the natural mind of pride. Pride is what drives the natural mind.

So that is Key 1, Point 1, because I have three Keys to this plan. The next part is:

**2. The plan is based on the understanding,** because it's spiritual in nature, if you've got God's spirit, will understand, **God does the calling.**

Now, it's something you can't go to somebody, because in their mind they would see that you're just a "big head." You can go up to them and say, "Look, you know, in 1982 God called me." Pshew! How does that sound to the natural mind? Talk about bombastic! "God called you, Wayne?!" "Yep. I was called. And then I was awakened in 2005." "Oh, and who did it?" "God did it." "God did it?!" Because it looks like you've got a *special* relationship with God and it looks like we're taking it to ourselves. Little does the natural mind understand that only too well we know that it is God that does it all. God did the calling. It was God! Because I was about 30 years of age and carnal is probably not the right word. *Carnal*, totally self-centered, selfish, like, totally! And then for somebody like me with my personality to be called with the natural zeal that I had, people can't understand it. But I was just like everybody else and tried to... went to someone else..."Have you seen this? Can you see this?" And, of course, you know what it's like. You've all been through that experience. It's a waste of time because? The Point 1, Key 1, God's holy spirit is not there. Having God's spirit, talking to somebody else, they cannot comprehend what I was talking about.

And probably the biggest mistake that I made is I went to my mother, who was a Catholic. Well... *Kaboom!* But you know, I didn't know. I was ignorant in all of this. And I'm saying, "Oh, do you know this?" And no way. I'm Catholic religion. I grew up in it, and unless, of course, you're a Catholic I'm going to burn forever. No different than some other religions. There's always something that's going to happen to me. And I know that deep down my mother was concerned for me because she didn't want to see her son burn, basically. Well, God willing one day we'll get that opportunity.

So the next point there is Point 2, is that God does the calling. And we know the scripture. Mr. Armstrong used to go through it many a many a time, and we may get time to get to it. But that calling is actually based in a time order or on a time order. Because we're only here today because God in His mercy called us. That's the only reason. Other than that we wouldn't be here. It would be like now taking out what we understand and getting a stadium full of people and standing up and saying, "Well, you won't understand what I say unless you've got God's spirit." "Unless you're called by God you won't understand." There's not going to be many left at the end of it. There's just not. They're going to walk out. Because they can't comprehend because of Key Point 1. The next point is:

**3. This plan that we have, because my Plan "A" is your Plan "A," it's the same thing; it's based on the fact God's word is truth, it's God's word is truth, and it's not based on any human reasoning.**

Because human reasoning is not what God's Church is about. It's not about the natural mind in the sense of reasoning things through or considering or having a view or an opinion based on pride when God's holy spirit is involved. Because if we have God's holy spirit, we will come to see ourselves and we'll come to see those three main points within our life that we naturally have and we'll be on guard all the time about those three points. But we do understand that God's word is truth. We also understand *who* we really are. And being part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God is really about coming to understand who we really are... who we really are *really*.

Now, the person who knows us individually the most is God the Father and Jesus Christ, and outside of that we know ourselves. We know all the faults and things that are in our mind that nobody else sees. We know our thought processes, but nobody sees those thought processes. But we know them. Well, they're the things that we're meant to be working on.

**4. (And this is where I started to run into trouble with this particular person as far as behaviours, I suppose.) God is first no matter what.**

Now, that is something.... Words are cheap! Because many religions say God is first and they'll say, "Turn to Jesus Christ," and all that. But the reality, God first, requires a couple of things to take place. It's a thought process, but more than the thought process, because thoughts can be thoughts and not acted on and words can be words but not acted on. The point here as far as this Point 4, God is first, is about action. It is actually about action. Have to do something contrary to what everyone else is doing. It requires to do something.

Now, in this *doing* something it comes down to being an example. That is probably the greatest point of God is first. Well, we have to be an example that God *is* first. Because we can go to people and say, "God's first in my life," and they see something different... they see something different. They say, "Well, that doesn't make a lot of sense that God is first, but you do 'this' or you say 'that,'" and your actions don't prove that God is first. So that's Point 4.

Another part which requires Key 1, which is God's holy spirit:

#### **5. It's knowing where God's true Church is.**

It's knowing where God's true Church is. Now, many that have gone through the Apostasy understand about how confusing it can be without God's holy spirit to look at where God is. Where is God working? There are ways to prove where God's Church is but it all goes back to Point 1: a person requires God's holy spirit to know where God's true Church is, otherwise, it's just another organization that is preaching certain things.

Many a church preaches about the Sabbath, but it's not where God is. But they can preach about it and talk about it; they can talk about the Holy Days. But that does not prove where God's true Church is.

Now, in saying all these things one of the keys that comes down to underpinning all this, other than God's holy spirit, is the level of conviction, the level of conviction of whether you believe these points or whether I believe them. Now, this particular point to know where God's true Church is, if we are convicted, if we are fully in belief of it *how* could we ever leave *God's* Church? Because *if* we really, really, really, really believe this is God's true Church and we really believe this is where God *is* and we're convicted, why would we leave? Because any trial or test that comes on us we can go back to this foundation: "This is God's Church. I don't fully understand every aspect of what's happening, but this is God's Church and in time I will work it out," or we would work it out, "but I know where God is working. I *know* this is God's Church!" That's what we should be saying in our mind.

Now, can anybody in the world understand that point? If you went up to somebody and said, "Look, I'm part of the Body of Christ. I'm a begotten son of God." Boom! "*Sure! Crazy people! Crazy people.*" Well, that's encouraging if someone says you're a bit crazy. It's encouraging, especially if you're a part of God's true Church. Because that's what God said would happen to us. Jesus Christ said that's what would happen. "If they've done this to me, they're going to do it to you." This is encouraging. We should be encouraged because of that.

But to know where God's true Church is, it is an unbelievable blessing. And in the future when people meet members of the Body of Christ that endure to the end and someone comes up and you say, "I was a member of the Body of Christ." I just know my own human nature. I'd say, "Well, why didn't you tell me!" Well, you didn't have God's holy spirit. Well, it's going to be complicated. Unless they've got God's spirit they're not going to understand what we really mean.

Point 6, which is Key 2 - because there's three keys and nine points...

#### **6. (Key 2) It's based, this Plan "A," is based on knowing how God's government works in a person's life and in the Church.**

Because we can have some of these other points. We have to have Point 1 or Key 1, which is God's spirit, but to actually know how God's government works within our life, which is God governing us because it's about God's spirit and our minds and what we're going to yield to. We're going to yield to our selfish desires or are we going to yield to God? The choice is ours. The choice is ours. We have a choice.

Another part of that, which people get very confused about, and one of the reasons people do leave God's Church, is they don't understand how God's government works in the Church. And the big issue of *why* is simply pride. Simply pride. Because pride will lift itself up - has an opinion, has a view. And God's government works within the Church and pride gets in the way. And what does pride do? It resists! It resists correction. *Nobody* likes correction. I haven't met anybody yet that likes being corrected because we're right in our own eyes and that's how we are.

Well, God's government works the way God has set it up. And we may get to that.

So Point 6 is understanding how God's government works in a person's life and in the Church. And it really is a contrast between pride versus humility because God's government in a person's life will only work if there's humility. If there is pride, it won't work. God's spirit can't dwell with pride. So we have to be always on guard about our own pride, because if we have pride and lifting ourselves up, we are heading for problems in our life.

The next part is to come to understand how God's government works in the Church. And it's the same issue - pride versus humility. Exactly the same issue.

## **7. God's purpose for mankind is revealed in the seven annual Holy Days.**

Now, again, easily said, but it goes back to God's spirit to understand what the Holy Days mean, how God has a plan for mankind. And we can't go to people and explain why we're going to the Feast of Tabernacles. "The *Feast of Tabernacles*." That's actually a foreign language to most people. "Feast." Old language. "Tabernacles." What's a tabernacle? People don't understand it. So there's very little point. The Day of Atonement. "Atonement?" That is actually God's language, but it's foreign to the world. They don't understand it. But the plan that should be in our life is based on this. We keep the seven annual Holy Days as God has outlined. That's what we do. People won't understand it.

In one work place I used to get an annual calendar, put it up on the door, because I was a Sabbath keeper amongst people that didn't understand the Sabbath, and my motivation was to plan a year so that at any point of time that certain Holy Days, that I would have them crossed off. Never work on a Saturday. "Place is going to burn down." "Well, call the fire brigade." So they knew this cross meant something. And somebody would walk in and they'd see it and they'd see "Atonement" on there. They didn't understand it. I'd say, "I just won't be here. I just won't be here." And my boss and all that would come in and look at the calendar because they were trying to work out all the reasons why I should stay. And "The busiest time of the year," generally that Feast of

Tabernacles, "It's the busiest time of the year. We can't do without you," all those things. But at least it was on the board a year in advance and I was able to say, "Well, you've known for a year that I wasn't going to be here." Like, it's not my problem, it's your problem. And it's true. People won't understand us based on God's holy spirit. We can't explain to people the annual Holy Days. There's no point, actually. It's just we're not going to be here because we are putting God first no matter what. That's our actions, going to prove it. And there was never a fire in all the time, ever. And the business never closed down, it all went very well. So it was never a problem. So it made it easier the next year because I would turn around and say, "Well, you never had a problem last year; you won't have a problem this year." And it's true. The world will go around and around with us or without us. And the same with business, it'll go on.

Point 8... I'm going through these first because I knew that if I go into the scriptures going through these I'll never get through it, so I thought it better to give you the points up front. This can be a test:

## **8. Waiting on God.**

Again, it sounds simple. But there are times within God's Church where we are not 100% sure about exactly where everything is going. And we've had things happen to us, true, that we understand, various years that if you don't wait on God to give the answer we'll take it to ourselves. We think we know better, pride gets in the way, and we're gone. And we're leaving God's true Church because we, at this point in time, we're not sure, we don't understand? So waiting on God requires something. It requires God's holy spirit. And it requires humility to come to say to ourselves, "We don't know everything." We don't know everything. And looking back in times past where generally within the ministry if you asked them what was considered a difficult scripture they'd say, "Di-di-di-di-dah. That's the answer." Now, all truth, someone can come up and say, "What does that mean?" and I wouldn't have a clue. I haven't got a clue. Unless it's been explained by God's apostle why would I want to add to or take away? I have no idea! It's never been gone into. I'll wait for God. I'll wait for God.

Now, I'm sure the majority here would say that you can go through many parts of the Bible and say, "I don't have a clue!" Because we don't. If it hasn't been explained or gone into, hasn't come from God, why do we want to assume that we know the answer based on old Worldwide thinking or the natural mind thinking? Because unless God reveals it we'll wait on God. And that's what waiting on God is.

And the rest of our life is going to be? Waiting on God. And in the Millennium, the people are going to have to learn Point 8. They're going to have to learn to wait for God. The Hundred-Years? They're going to have to learn to wait on God. God will reveal what He's going to reveal when the time is right, not when we want it. Like, there's certain things in here I'd love to know the answer to "this." Hasn't been given; we'll wait. It's not that important, obviously. If it was important God would give it. But it's not that important at the moment. It's not what we need at the moment.

We've been given the food that we need now to go through the period that is ahead of us. And there's always more.

Point 9, which is the last point - which, hopefully, we'll get to some scriptures on this:

### **9. (Key 3) The understanding of repentance and working on one's self.**

Because it requires God's spirit to do it, *but* if we are not in a state of repentance we are not really involved in Plan "A." We're just not. And if we are not working on ourselves, one thing in our life that we know from the three major keys of human nature, if we're not working on them we're not in Plan "A"; we're just not. And it won't take long that we will be taken out of the Church because this is about God's true Church and it's about working on self.

And some of the notes that I wrote here was: Conquering self! Now, if you go to someone in the world and say, "Yes, most of my day is, are based on conquering self." "Yes, I'm working on myself." We sound strange! True? We sound really weird. But it's all about what's going on in the mind. People can't see it. People can't see our real thoughts. We know them. We know what our weaknesses are. We know what we're battling. And it all goes back to the fact that we have God's holy spirit that enables us to "see." Because if you can't "see," you can't "see." If you can't "see" Plan "A" you can't "see" it, because it's God that gives us Plan "A." It's God that gives us the thought process. And it's no different than understanding who we really are.

Our level of pride that we all have, which is great, we only see that pride based on what God is revealing to us, because if we really saw ourselves and our pride, and our lack of humility, we would probably struggle a lot more than we do. But we *all* have a degree of pride. And it all depends on when it's pricked, you know, when that certain thing is and something is said that the pride reacts. And for me, I feel it. That's me. I... phooooo... because we all move into pride at different times on different subjects of different things.

And one of the issues within our main life is family. We tend to defend family before we'd defend brethren. And yet that's a spiritual matter within our life. But we do; only we don't know it. What's driving that is generally pride. It's *my* wife or it's *my* child or it's my, my, my, my. But brethren, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. We should defend our family, spiritual family. Well, if we're not we need to examine pride in our life, why we defend our own flesh and blood before God.

I remember a conversation once with - I do tend to divert a bit - but it was a conversation once about... and I knew the person wasn't necessarily doing the right thing having God's spirit. But anyway, had the conversation and I said to them, "Well, there's two people standing on the cliff edge. One you don't know and the other one is your son, and they're falling," this is just trying to make a point, "and it looks like they're going to fall. Who will you save?" Doesn't enter your mind - "I'd go and save my son." And I said, "Yet the other person was Jesus Christ." And it's... not that they were. It's just the way we think. It was trying to highlight that our thinking is skewed to self.

**What is Plan "A"?**

Own flesh and blood. That's the way we think *naturally*. And we have to be very careful about this natural thinking that can dominate our life when key decisions within God's Church. And you can go over these points. It can happen when how does God's government work within a person's life? How does God's government work in the Church versus family? They're the things that we should be grappling with, and really, if we understand Plan "A" with God's holy spirit, these are easy points for us. They *should* be easy points for us, to know what we're doing.

Let's look at John 14:16, going back to Point 1. **John 14:16**, Jesus Christ speaking, **And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another helper/comforter, that it may abide/dwell with you forever.** So we understand about the power of God's holy spirit. ...**the spirit of truth**, because we can only "see" the truth if we have God's holy spirit, see it on a spiritual level.

Because a truth is the Sabbath, for example, but people don't "see" the Sabbath. They can still "keep" it but don't "see" what it is. It's the day God speaks and communicates to us by the power of His holy spirit, where we're fed spiritually. That's the key to the Sabbath. So someone can take a Sabbath and keep the Sabbath - doesn't matter where they are - but not keep the Sabbath. Sounds like a double-speak, but because you can take time off from sunset to sunset, not do any work, far as we're concerned you just had a day off. It means nothing. The reality is, of what the Sabbath is really about, is individual personal growth. About what we "hear" and what we hear and what we do with what we "hear." Because we all "hear" what God feeds. We hear. But then when we go away what do we do with what we hear? And I'm guilty, like all of us, that sometimes we hear things and we know it's important but we don't necessarily go away and zealously implement it into our life. And it's not until you may hear the sermon again in the future you go, "Ah, that's right. I was going to change. I was going to do something different." So there is an accountability about being Sabbath keepers.

We're the called out ones of God. We're begotten sons and daughters of God. Isn't that an incredible responsibility? And it's *us*, we have that responsibility. We have that responsibility to the world to be an example of the way we live, the way we speak, all of those things, and to live the truth. It's a way of life; we have to live it. Now, we can hear these things and if we don't make the change in our life what good is it? Like Christ said, "The salt," its salt, "and it's lost its flavor." The flavor is God's holy spirit that empowers or enables us to make change from what we are naturally.

**Verse 17—the spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive...** Isn't that incredible? "The world cannot receive." So there is no point trying to explain Plan "A" to anybody in the world. They cannot receive it, **because it**, the world, **neither sees it**; they don't "see" what the plan of God is. They don't "see" who we really are. They don't understand who we are. ...**neither see it nor knows it**. They can't understand it. They don't know about it. It's foolishness to them, **but you know it, for it dwells with you**, God's spirit is with us, **and will be in you**. So that's the key, Key 1, Point 1, it's all about what God does in our life. Now, the key to that is what we are willing to yield to. And I'll use the word "willing to yield to," because there's a lot of times within our life we

don't yield the way we should. We don't take correction the way we should. We don't handle matters within our family or within our spiritual family as well as we should. And the reason, we would know, it's all to do with our pride. It's whether or not we understand and the depth we understand our own pride. We all have it. I have it. You have it. And it's all different degrees at different times within our life.

The truth is we cannot explain Plan "A" to anybody, as God's word and God's ways, the way we live our life, are foolishness to them. Yeah, it's true. They think we're idiots. They do. They think we're idiots; we're with a cult. Who cares! Like, really, deep down, if we have God's spirit, who cares? The choice, do we want to have God, the Creator of the universe, who has all this power to make things and unmake them, or do you want to listen to "Ted Smith?" I hope there are no "Ted Smith's" here, or there's any "Ted Smith's" in the Church. But, really, "Ted Smith's" opinion and view, *who cares* compared to the Creator of the universe? So why would we want to do anything that "Ted Smith" says or thinks? When you think, with God's spirit, you think it's logical, how stupid can we be that we would take someone else's view and opinion of a matter within God's Church, within God's government and then listen to that versus the Creator of the universe? We've got to be *insane*, if you really stop and think about it. But, guess what? We have that potential. We've seen it happen. Most of you would have seen it happen, that people listen to other people rather than the Creator of the universe who uses an apostle in God's Church. That boggles your mind. It only boggles your mind if you have God's spirit. If you don't have God's spirit it won't boggle your mind. It's incredible, isn't it? So it is a fearful thing to lose God's spirit because we just won't "see." There'll be no Plan "A," it'll be Plan "Self." That's the way it goes.

**1 Corinthians 1:18**— For the message of the stake, and that really is referring to the whole process of the message of Jesus Christ dying as our Passover, the forgiveness of sin, that component. Well, that message about that is **foolishness to those who are perishing**, those who haven't been called to understand, those who haven't been called to "see." Now, we "see" what God did for us through Jesus Christ, the sacrifice for sin. We know what sin is. This is an incredible thing. The world doesn't know what sin is, because, really, everything's been done away. And if you went up to someone and say, "That's sin." What is sin? We know sin is the transgression of God's law based on its intent - not just the action, the intent, the thought, the words that go with that intent, the motive behind why we do what we do. Well, that is foolishness to people.

And within the court system we know that they try to prove intent, some court cases where they have people going through and they'll have various crime scenes and they're trying to work out whether the husband killed the wife, or the wife killed the husband, and the prosecution tries to get to intent. They don't know, really, what it is, but they're looking for... "Oh, that's right. It was the will! He's got an inheritance. That's why he did it." So they're looking to try and prove a motive. But they know that motive's involved somewhere, somehow, but they can't prove it.

Well, this is our life. Our life is examining our own motive, not somebody else's motive. Well, that's easy. The easy part within God's Church is to look and think you know somebody else's motive. "Ah hah! They did that because of 'this.'" When God actually says what we should be doing is really working hard at why we do what we do. And examples? Someone in the Church can be generous to somebody else. We might impute a motive, thinking we know what that is. And yet that motive might be selfish. Isn't that amazing that we understand these things? Because we're not to work out other people's motives, we're to work out our own. So someone can be generous but the reason they were generous - not because God's spirit activated it - it was because they wanted to get favor or be looked on as being generous by somebody else. Now, that act was worthless and pointless. It was sin. So that's what sin is. Sin is based on motive and intent, why we do what we do.

Well, the world can't understand that. They're not meant to understand that. And the way we live our life, checking ourselves, monitoring ourselves, why did I do it... And we all do things based on pride. Doesn't matter how long we've been in God's Church, if we think that we don't do things based on pride, we need to take a deep breath, because deep down, the more we dig down into the mind we will find, yes, we wanted to impress somebody or we did it because of the wrong motive. It's there; we just got to find it. We've got to keep digging to find it. And that's what repentance is. Repentance, which is that Key 9, is turning around and saying, "I'm fighting myself. I now 'see' what I did. I did it. It looked good. But I did it for the wrong motive. I was trying to get something out of it." That's what we repent of. That's repentance, therefore, that's part of Plan "A," ongoing continual repentance.

So this message about Jesus Christ is foolishness to the world, just like sin is, **but to us who are being saved...** Ah, Plan "A." This is about salvation, about God's seven annual Holy Days, because it's all on how a person can be saved. And we all need saving! We all need saving. We're all just on different levels of being saved. It's a continual process to an end result and it's in a time order. And people in the future will be given the same opportunity of being saved because of the natural mind needs to be transformed. That process is being saved. So we here, brethren, are being saved. Isn't that exciting? It's exciting. We're being saved from what we were. And if we're left to ourselves it will perish, it's of no good.

Only those that are going to be saved, or are being saved are going to enter Elohim. And if a person chooses not to enter into Plan "A" and go through the process of God's holy spirit, understanding how God does the calling, understanding about government within a person's life, the government within the Church, where God's true Church is, and understand the gift of repentance, they *cannot* enter Elohim. It's just not going to happen. Because this is *God's* plan! This is how God is going to save mankind. This is how God's going to have a family. It's because of this process.

So we are in the process of being saved. We should be excited in this. Doesn't matter what level we're at, we should be excited that the Creator of the universe through Jesus Christ is saving us for a purpose. It's incredible!

Now, we don't go out and tell other people. But that's what's happening. Because they don't have God's spirit, they can't hear. They just can't hear and they would think we've taken it to ourselves. We don't take it to ourselves. We give all the glory to God. God is the one who is saving us. We're not saving ourselves. We're willing to yield to the process. And that process is going to be painful, because every time we deal with self there is pain involved. Self does not like to change! It just doesn't like it because of the pride that's in us. It's tough. It is tough, and it will continue to be tough. Don't try to encourage you. It's going to be tough! It's going to be tough. It's got to be tough. This is the only way. There is no other way; otherwise, God would do it another way. This is the way. Natural carnal mind - God did it deliberately so that we can be transformed. We understand that process.

Now, to go out to say to somebody else they're selfish, they can't understand it. I remember at work - I think I've talked about it before - the smokers used to go out there and I used to call it "the selfish stick." And in the end they were mocking me, I knew that. They'd walk past with their cigarette and go, "Selfish," and wave the cigarette. Because it is; it's all about *their* satisfaction. It wasn't about whether the smoke is going to affect me. They didn't care. So the world can't "see" what selfishness is. They see glimpses and say, "Oh, that person's selfish." But deep down they don't see themselves as selfish. We have to come to see that we are by nature. And that's what we're battling. We're battling against ourselves.

**Verse 19—For it is written: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,** which is to do with pride. God is going to get rid of pride. There will be *no pride* in Elohim. None! And we know Satan is pride. He's against God. He's against you and me. We don't often see it. It's because it's invisible to the natural mind and invisible to the eyes, we don't fully always grasp what a spirit world is doing. We don't "see" it. It's just the way we are. Unless you see it, like they said in the New Testament with Christ, "Well, show us! Do that miracle and we might believe then. But you've got to show us." Well, it's like the spirit world. It's the same thing. It's almost a, "Well, you better show us. You better show us what it is and then we'll believe there's a spirit world." No, we believe God's word. God's word is truth and God says there's a spirit world that He created. And it's been left on this earth, a third of them, for the purpose (which they don't fully comprehend; I'm sure they do know to a degree) to develop us. Whew!

Now, again, imagine going to work and saying, "Listen, there's spirit beings out there. They're out there because I'm being developed, a begotten son of God, and I'm going to enter Elohim." Without God's spirit we cannot comprehend spiritual knowledge! To comprehend it and implement it, it just can't happen. We sound like fools. And I'm sure after today the people would say, "Oh, he's a crazy too." But, that's okay. I'm actually happy that I'm a crazy. I really am! Sometimes I struggle to speak I'm so happy! To be called, to be awakened, whew...!

Continuing on ... **and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.** Because it's worldly. They look on us as fools. They really do. Because that's what God says they would. Well, we can't blame them. We should have nothing against them because when "I" was like them I looked on God's people as fools, absolute fools.

I will tell you this one. I've sort of withdrawn it. There was a time when I was in United Church, and we used to go on Sabbath there, and walked into the room one day and there was a small group of people and went up and they said, "Did you know there is a guy out there that is saying that Joe Tkach Sr., is the man of sin." And I said, "What an idiot! How could anybody say that Tkach was the man of sin?" I have apologized. But it proves the point! Without God's holy spirit we cannot "see" spiritual things! We just can't. I didn't have God's spirit at that time. I was dead asleep. Then when I read the booklets I "saw" because God gave me the sight. It was nothing to do with me; God gave me the sight. I read it and went, "That's right!" Isn't that incredible? So we can take no credit to self for anything spiritual! Absolutely nothing! We only "see" what we see because God's allowing it. You only "see" the man of sin like I do, who it was and what happened in the Apostasy because God's allowing us to see it. And there's a time coming when people in the future, God is going to switch that like that. And I yearn for that day; I really do, because there are people out there that I desire that it goes like that.

But that goes back to another point - wait on God. God says it's going to happen. My role is not to try to force it or do anything. I'll wait. God knows what's best for other individuals. I have no idea what's the best thing for you or for anybody. I just don't know! Who knows what's best?

For you to go through a major trial? Could be the best thing ever happened to you. Well, I know that it is. If I go through a major trial it's the best thing that could happen to me spiritually. Physically, it's always awkward. But spiritually, because it puts us in a position of where we stand spiritually, this relationship we have with God, the plan that we have, that we're going to endure to the end no matter what. Well, let's find out what the "no matter what" is! Well, God will find out the "no matter what" and whether we're going to yield. Are we going to continue and are we going to take correction without pride? Are we going to take it? Are we going to accept a new truth? Are we going to? Or are we going to say, "Oh, no. I'll find you the other scripture. Hang on, I'll show you where it says no..." because we can read scripture based on our own interpretation from the past. That's how the mind works. If we believe this is God's true Church and if something comes to us, like it did the 50<sup>th</sup> Truth, it's a real test on our conviction that this is God's true Church. And if we *know* it's God's true Church and we don't understand, we'd best go to Point 8, I think it is, "Wait on God." You just best wait. It'll come. Be patient in it all.

There is no way we're going to get through all those scriptures, but that's okay.

**Verse 20—Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age?** Talking about mankind and their thinking. **Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world,** the human reasoning? Now, we "see" that the reasoning of the world is *foolish*. We see it because we

see ourselves. It's no use looking out to somebody else and saying... The way man is and their thinking and what they're going to do, and send someone to space and it's going to take sixty years to get there. We think, "Oh, crazy people!" Well, they're trapped in that. We should *never* look down on anybody. They're trapped! They're not like us where God has called us or awakened us. How blessed are we? That's what we should think. So when we see the stupidity that goes on in the world and the foolishness deep down we should remember our calling.

And people leave God's Church because of one key thing, other than government, they *forget* their calling. I hope each of us individually remembers our calling - really remembers it! Because *that* is what's going to, you know, be our salvation going forward - wrong word there, but that's what should motivate us. No, I know the day I was called. I know the day my wife was called. I know all the stupid things I did for three months while being called (because of the zeal). I know the day I was awakened. I know the *day* I was awakened. I remember the phone call I made when I left United and what I said. I remember it. I didn't fully understand what I was saying but I'd said it. But I remember it. It's burned into my brain! And therefore, when things happen in the Church that we may not understand, personally I try to go *back* to that so that I remember *this is* God's true Church. I don't understand everything; therefore, I've got to wait on God. It'll be fine. The problem is me! If you listened to last week's sermon, you're all encouraged - the problem's you! The problem is me. It's the way I think. And we have like a groove in the brain, and generally when things happen the needle goes back into the groove of behavior. That's the way we respond. It's just the way we are.

I'll share with you something that's very encouraging. Whenever I am not necessarily on the right path and my pride's getting in the way I have a wife that reminds me, and she says, "You're just being a big head." So *that* (she doesn't understand it), but that helps me! That helps me because I go, "Oooooo," I might fight it for a start, *but* it pulls the needle out of that big head groove and jumps it back into, "Oh... that's what... I'm being stupid. I'm having an opinion... It's my view and the way I see it." So those things can help us.

Well, we have to learn to do that with the power of God's holy spirit so that we humble ourselves so that we know our potential. Everybody in this room has the same potential of being a big head. That's the way God made us. And it's about understanding it. It's about then moving to God and admitting it, admit what's wrong with us. We've got problems. We've all got problems. But that state of repentance, that Key 9, staying with it and fighting, enduring to the end.

I'll just jump off there. I want to go to one particular scripture because it's something that means a lot to us as individuals within the Body of Christ. And we can relate to this. But there are some key points in this. This scripture, which is in Genesis 32, it was actually explained previously, some years ago, but it does mean a lot to us as individuals if we comprehend what it's really all about. In **Genesis 32:22**, and top of my Bible says here, "Wrestling with God," and it's talking about Jacob.

**Verse 22— And he (Jacob) arose that night and took his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children, because at this stage Benjamin wasn't born, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok, I think it's pronounced. He took them, sent them over across the brook, and sent over what he had, his possessions. So he's moved everything over. Then Jacob was left alone. So he's there alone, and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. So we understand its night, and then all of a sudden this man, and this is a manifestation of God into a human form. It's not God, the Creator God, but a manifestation, because God could wrestle with Jacob and beat him that quick. That's not what it's about. It's not about winning and losing. This is a test, a test of endurance.**

Now, this event really comes down to everybody that is called, this is a key. This is about enduring no matter, hanging on. So here is Jacob is wrestling with somebody until the break of dawn. **Now when He**, which is the manifestation of God, **saw that He did not prevail against him**, He wasn't prevailing against Jacob, **He touched his socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.** So he's still... He's in a bit of pain and he's still wrestling. He's still fighting. Now, we should take this on a spiritual level. No matter what happens to us within the Body of Christ we have to wrestle against ourselves. We don't wrestle against God. We wrestle... That's what a callings about. A calling is about wrestling with who we are. We're to fight. God gives us the power of His holy spirit to achieve it. It can be achieved. It can be achieved.

And do you know, I'll just say it - And do you know (that's Australian English, that last one), do you know there is 144,000 that have wrestled with themselves and won? There's evidence. There's proof. Isn't that incredible that we know that fact? Now, that truth of who the 144,000 are is *not* known! We take it for granted. I remember back when first called and the 144,000 who they were and the ones in the white robes and it was like all over the place a bit. God has revealed to us who they really are, on a spiritual level, and they have wrestled with themselves to the point where God has said, "Now I know you." That's *our* task! Our task is to hold on and wrestle, wrestle with self. And if it's going to take 45, 55, 65, 75, 95 years, if that's what it's going to take, hang on and don't let go. Because that's what the lesson is. Don't give up. Don't let go. Hold on to what's been given - the truth, the truth of God's Church. We know this is God's true Church! Hold tight to this truth. It's an incredible truth, because its great power when things aren't what we think they are or we don't understand. Enormous power, that. "This is God's true Church. I *don't* understand that. But it doesn't matter." Doesn't matter. God will give it when God wants to give it to fully understand what it is.

And out of all the truths, we may think we understand them. We know them, we know what they are, but do we really understand them? *Really* understand them? There is so much in each truth that it could take a lifetime to understand the depth of those truths as God reveals more, and within our own mind, what we "see," how we implement those changes that are necessary in our life.

So God has given us truth to hold on to. We're to hold tight to that truth and not to let it go! And we know people that have let go and they're no longer with us because they didn't hold tight. They didn't wrestle to the end. And they haven't got the conviction of Point 1, 2, and 3, the key ones, those three. God's holy spirit and the fact that this is a calling from God. God's spirit is the key to everything. Without God's spirit we can do nothing. As Christ said, "Of and by myself, I can do nothing." We can't do anything spiritual. And the moment we start to take things, that we think we're important, or we think, you know, "I'm doing 'this,'" or "I'm doing 'that.'" Warning! Warning! (How many of you have seen the Daleks? Dr. Who?) And this going: Warning! Warning! Warning! Well, that's true. The moment we start to think that we're important or we're doing something. No, God in His mercy is allowing us to do, to be part of the Church or to be in the Body of Christ. It's God's allowing it. It's only His great mercy that we're actually here today. God's doing it. We're yielding and wanting to yield.

**Verse 26—And He said, Let Me go, for the day breaks. But he (Jacob) said, I will not let You go unless You bless me!** Now, this is an attitude we have to have. We are not wanting to let go. And it's an individual choice. We can let go by becoming slack or lax, because the moment we start to become a little bit weak or a little bit lukewarmish, that's letting go of the grip. We should be holding really tight, and even more so now than ever! Such a short time to go, we really need to be grasping hold tightly of what God has placed in the Church and what God will place in the Church. Hold tight just as Jacob did.

**Verse 27—So He, which is referring to the manifestation of God, said to him, What is your name? He said, Jacob. And He said, Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, and we understand what "Jacob" means, it's "heel holder," or "supplanter," but Israel.** Now, "Israel" means "God prevails." Well, this is about us, about prevailing in the Church, prevailing with the truth, prevailing with God. Because we can only be here because God allows it, because God desires it; he wants to give us something.

Incredible human nature when we can come to understand it: You have a Creator of the universe who wants to give us something that He has. He wants to give it to us. His desire is to give it. And we've been built in a way that we can reject it. Isn't that... When you really stop and think about it, if you've got God's spirit, you think about it, that's stupidity! Here is the Creator of the universe who wants to give us life that will never cease. He wants to give us things that He's created that we don't fully understand all that yet, but He wants to give it. He wants to share with us all that He has and to live a way of life of peace and unity where we won't have sin ever again; He wants to give that to us. And what do we do? We resist God. We fight against what God wants to give us. Well, that's who we are. We have to recognize it. Yes, that's our nature. That's how we are.

So Israel means, "God prevails." Continuing on **...for you have struggled with God**, we have to struggle with ourselves. We're not to struggle or resist God. We're not to fight against God. We're to yield to God. But we're to fight against ourselves. **...with men, and have prevailed.** The desire

we have to have is to hold on spiritually. Remember Mr. Armstrong, those that will remember, Mr. Armstrong used to say, "Hold on to the trunk of the tree." God's Church and the truth, hold on! But there's been thousands, *thousands* that haven't held on, that haven't "done a Jacob." They let go.

**Then Jacob asked Him, saying, Tell me Your name, I pray. And He said, Why is it *that* you ask about My name? And He blessed him there.** So there is a blessing that we don't understand and that we don't always see. And that blessing is about holding on, about being in unity with the Church. And yes, there will be times when we don't fully understand. There's a blessing of waiting on God. And that blessing is being part of the Body of Christ. There's a blessing that is in this room today that we don't comprehend. We don't comprehend to the *depth* we should. Yes, we're different. In the world they'd say, "Yes, we're different and I'm proud of it." No, we are different and we're *thankful* for it, so thankful for being different. Because we are!

So we're not to let go of our calling. We're not to let go of this relationship with God.

Ephesians 6:2, which you all know well. I think I might have written down the wrong one there. **Verse 12** it should be. Sorry about that. **Ephesians 6:12—For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood.** So the fighting that's going on is not about other humans that we're fighting, or whatever, it's about what's going on in our mind **...against principalities**, talking about a spirit realm that is out to influence us to the point of destroying us. Now, if we don't recognize it, if we don't "see" it we're not going to be wrestling against our thinking, because that's what we're wrestling against. Just as Jacob wrestled, we have to wrestle. We have to endure to the end. **... against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age.** People don't understand that. If we were to go to people now and say, "Well, yes, I'm wrestling. I'm wrestling against 'principalities and the rulers of the darkness of this age.'" We understand it, but the key of this is we'd best be doing it. We'd best be wrestling. Just like Jacob, we'd best be wrestling. If we're not wrestling we are in serious trouble and we don't know it. We're losing the grip. We'd best be wrestling.

**...against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God.** So there is a way to do it. And God goes through and makes it very clear. But in the end it is a personal choice whether we want to wrestle and what we want to wrestle against. And if we're not wrestling in our minds, it's now time to stop and take a deep breath, and start the wrestling. Start the wrestling, no matter what it is, those thoughts that are there. And generally it's to do with the way we think towards others. Naturally we raise ourselves up. It's natural to think we're better. It's natural. And we have to be on guard all the time about thoughts about other people, brethren in particular. Have to be on guard about it, because we tend to measure, compare. That's just natural to do those things.

So the foundation of this whole plan, the key, is God's holy spirit. So let's look at Romans 8:8. We're going to go through part of this. This is a scripture that means a lot to me. All of Romans 8 means a lot to me. And every time I go through it, it just covers the whole plan of God, what it's

really all about. What is it about being in God's Church? What's it really all about. Well, this is what it's really all about; Romans 8 covers it.

**Romans 8:8**, we'll start, **So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** We should "see" that. Anybody in the flesh, in other words, doesn't have God's holy spirit active in their life, cannot please God. Now, pleasing God is about obeying God. So anybody in the flesh with the natural carnal mind *cannot* obey God in spirit and truth, therefore, the key for this is, well, we don't want to be in the flesh, we want to be warring against the flesh.

But! **Verse 9—But**, this is the complete opposite, **you are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you.** Point 1, we have to have God's holy spirit. **Now if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, he is not his.** Unless we've got the Logos, the Word of God living and dwelling in us we are *not* part of the Body of Christ, we're *not* in the temple. Can't be, because we don't have God's holy spirit.

**Verse 10—And if Christ is in you**, the thinking of God is in us, **the body is dead because of sin.** Well, we know that, "the wages of sin," the transgression of God's law, spirit and intent, "the wages of sin is death." So yes, if sin dwells in our mortal body, which it does by nature, well, we're living in sin. That's just sin within us. We're going to die unless it's repented of. **...but the spirit is life because of righteousness.** Because God in us, because of that, we can have life, spirit life, and the promise of spirit life in the future. Now, righteousness is about God's thinking, God in us, and having the faith and obedience.

Because within the Church, I remember in 1 John 2:3 it was (won't get there today), was one of the first scriptures where I tried in the first three months of my calling to prove to somebody that the Commandments were still in place. Went to that scripture and it says, "If you love God, you keep the Commandments," and went through all that. And the person couldn't "see" it. And I could not understand why they couldn't "see" it. "Look! Here! Look! Look... It says very clearly if you don't keep the Commandments you're a liar and the truth is not in you! What is it you don't understand?!" They just looked at me as if I was crazy. Well, I was beginning to go crazy. I was just in the process of becoming crazy - it was wonderful - to their eyes, to their foolish... You know, God's way is foolishness. For someone to sit there and say, "Look, can't you see this?" And they see it and I've got a different interpretation. Well, it is foolishness to them, and we are crazy to them. It's not a problem. It's fantastic news, really, if we understand it. Because we *are* different. Brethren, we are different. And we *should* rejoice at being different. And I mean, really rejoice at being different.

If we understand what God is doing for us at this point in time, at this end of the age, of this period, whew, there's thousands that would love to be in this position that we are in, which is part of the Body of Christ, the Church of God. Just incredible that God's allowing it and allows us to be here.

Now, if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he is none of his. And if Christ is in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, which *it does*, because it's a promise of God and He said He'd do it, and it's because of God's Church. So one way to prove God's Church, where God is, God's spirit, so the people will be different because of God's spirit! So you *can* prove where God's true Church is (if you've got God's spirit) because God's spirit is *active* within His Church, within His people. That's why we're His people, because we have His spirit.

**He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies.** Salvation! *Being saved!* Everybody in here, in the main, is being saved. There's children here that haven't entered into that agreement with God at baptism yet. They haven't started being saved. So at the point of baptism is the point of being... we begin a process of being saved. Repentance, God's holy spirit is given so that we *can* repent, so that we *can* be saved. And the end result is that we will get raised up in a time order just like Jesus Christ, our elder brother. Isn't that exciting? Really exciting! Well, that's why we're here, that's why we're in the Church. It's a process of being saved. And it can all go wrong. All of it can go wrong because of our personal choices, because we won't stand, we won't hang on, we'll put other things before God - family, other relationships; we want something different than what God is offering. But if we keep this in mind in Romans 8, of what it's about, God promises that we will be in His Family. That's a promise from God. The problem is us. The problem's us. We don't really believe it.

Just human logic. I don't like to go... Just think logically. Okay, the Creator of the universe says to you face to face, "I want to give you life forever. That's what I want to give you. Do you want it, or don't you?" Well, logic goes, "I want it!" Put your hand up. "The thing is, you've got to overcome yourself." And the natural mind, "Well, I can't overcome myself. There's nothing wrong with me. Why would you do that?" But we know there's something wrong with us. So when we look at it on a spiritual level, God is offering you and me something right now, and that is to be resurrected in a time order. Isn't that an incredible promise? Well, we "see" it. That's why we should hang on. That's why we should wrestle with ourselves. Just like Jacob wrestled with God and wouldn't let go, we've got to do the same. We've got to wrestle. And if we stop wrestling *we will die* on a spiritual level. We will die on a spiritual level because we have to be wrestling. The whole point of this is we've got to learn to wrestle.

**...will also give life to your mortal bodies by/through His spirit which dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh.** We owe the natural carnal mind absolutely nothing! In actual fact, we've got to destroy it! We've got to sacrifice it! We've got to get rid of it! That's what we've been called to do. We've got to get rid of our natural thinking, those selfish desires.

Now, everybody in this room has selfish desires. Shock! Horror! We're members of the Body of Christ. We've been called out. When you look at the word "called out ones." Called. Out. Ones. Called *out*. *Called* out. What are we called out from? The natural selfish mind and the way it thinks. We're called out of the world, which is just carnal and natural mind and lusts and desires

being fulfilled, self-satisfaction. We've been called out for a purpose and it's to overcome those desires. We all have them. We'll all fall back into those natural desires at different times. It's natural. The underlying thing is *its natural*. It's natural to go *back*! Because God's spirit doesn't stand still, we should be moving forward, overcoming, recognizing those natural things in us. And yes, I'll admit I slip back. We all slip back. We all do things that aren't right and we say things and we regret it and we repent and yes, we fight. But the key? Hold on. Wrestle. Fight. It's not the conquering necessarily, it's the wrestling and the fighting. We do conquer things that we don't do - God willing we don't use bad language and we don't have wrong, severe attitudes of jealousy and hatred. One would hope that we've passed that. But there's other things we do just because of who we are, personalities and the needle in the groove going around. That's just the way we are and we become complacent with that, who we are, because that's who we are. And we don't work on those things the way we should. Well, God is calling us for the purpose of salvation that we now are to work on those things no matter how much longer it takes. "Till the break of day," if that's what it takes. We're going to go all day, all night, and if it's 30, 40, 50, 60 years, we will hang on.

So the statement, when I said, "I'm still in Plan 'A,'" is true. There is no Plan "B" in God's Church. This is just Plan "A" full steam ahead, and God willing we will hold on and endure to the end. God wants to give us something; the problem's us.

**Verse 13—For if you live according to the flesh you will die.** That's an incredible statement! Don't you think that's an incredible statement? How much more blatant can you get? **For if you live according to the flesh**, the natural mind and you don't do anything about it. You don't fight and wrestle and try to sacrifice and overcome it, **you/me will die**. That's should be a motivator. ... **but by the spirit**, because it takes God's holy spirit (Point 1, Key 1), **you put to death...** Now, when you put something to death, what do you do? You kill it. You get rid of it. It's dead. ...**you put to death the deeds of the body**, the selfish desires that are in us, **you and I will live**. Now, that's a stark contrast. Life and death. What does God say? "Choose life!" And yet by nature, by nature we will choose death. Because there's a satisfaction in sin, there's a pleasure in sin, temporary, but there is a pleasure in sin and we fall down. The most important thing is to repent and continue to fight no matter what happens.

So we're to put to death, we're to kill; we're to sacrifice the desires we have. And everyone in this room, everybody listening has a desire that they're aware of that is stronger in themselves than in somebody else. And it doesn't matter what someone else's desire is, the most important thing is the desire that we have, that we know that we have to kill. And that's the key of Plan "A." Fighting. Wrestling. Killing self. Tell other people, "I'm going to go out today and kill myself." But that's what I'm supposed to be doing in my mind! I'm supposed to be putting to death the things that rise up. And if nothing else we get out of all this sermon - the thing that raises up in ourselves is based on pride. *Everybody* in this room will have something in their mind, any given time, that will raise itself up and it's called pride. "Well, I think..." "I know...." "I believe..." They're

all signs of this pride that we have. It's just natural. But God says that He will give us humility, we'll come to "see" who we are, and we'll come to truly understand the statement, "Of and by myself, I can do nothing." We can do nothing spiritual of and by ourselves. It requires God's spirit to be able to achieve anything spiritual.

**Verse 14—For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons of God.** Isn't that an incredible statement? It moves me sometimes to realize who I really am and that God is willing to call me "a son of God," a son of His. Whew! Isn't that incredible? Son or daughter of God. That's just *staggering* that we could be called that. Why? **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, back where we were. We've been called out. ...but you received the spirit of adoption.** So this is about a change, a sonship. Now, what happens with a father and a son according to the Bible? A father has something and he leaves an inheritance. We're heirs of a promise. God has given us a promise. Salvation. Being saved. So God has said to you and me, "I will save you, but..." There's other things in there, "but you've got to choose it. You've got to be willing to sacrifice yourself. You've got to be willing to do these things. You've got to be willing to yield. Well, if you do that I'm going to give you, as a son, what I've got, an inheritance." God has got an inheritance. **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the spirit of adoption by which you cry, Abba, Father.** God is our Father. That's why He's called "God the Father." We exist because God the Father. We were called because of God the Father. We were awakened because of God the Father. God's doing it all, and He wants to give us something.

**Verse 16—The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, begotten sons of God, and if children, then heirs.** So we have God's holy spirit. Well, God wants to give us something. We're heirs. **...heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,** because Christ has already inherited it. So Christ has inherited what God has given him, life in Elohim. Well, we're joint-heirs with Christ. He has been given it. We're awaiting this promise to be given. And God's not a liar, He has promised to give it. Incredible! And promised to give it!

Now, we're not worth of and by ourselves for any of this. Like, who are we? We're dust of the earth. Our minds can't go there. Your mind can't go back to that you didn't exist. You try it. Within ourselves we think we've existed. Here we are. But prior to so many years ago we just didn't exist. I wasn't even a thought in my father's mind. Wasn't anything. Or my mother's for that matter. We didn't exist. It's hard to comprehend it. So now we've been given life. God's given us life. And from this He wants to give us something. Well, we can't earn anything. We can't... we're not worthy of anything. It's just God and His great love and mercy wants to give us something. From nothing to something - whew! Incredible plan that God has for a family, and we've been called to be part of that family. We all too often forget it. We all too often forget what God is actually doing for us and with us and what He has promised us.

**...joint heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer.** Ah hah. So here we go back, "if we suffer." And the "with him" was added, I believe. But if we suffer. How do we suffer? We sacrifice our pride. It

hurts. It hurts to sacrifice self, to give up self. And if, as we go more powered by God's spirit, and we do things in sacrificing it doesn't hurt as much because it becomes part of us. That's the way we do it because that's who we are, we're God's people, we're powered by God's holy spirit. We then do things that other people think are a bit strange, but we do them because we have God's spirit, we have God's power.

And we do suffer. The world doesn't understand that God's people suffer - not just external forces, we suffer in the mind because we're fighting against ourselves. That's how we suffer.

**That we may be glorified together.** Whew! Isn't this great! That one day all being well, that we all hang on and endure, that we are all, everyone I met here today (God willing), we're all going to be in God's family. Because that's my Plan "A." I'm going to do everything I can to hang on to Plan "A." If you have the same desire we are going to be true spirit beings in a family. It's so exciting! Where we can't sin. I can't imagine that. Imagine... well... Not sinning, not saying something bad, not lifting one's ... just being at-one with God and Jesus Christ as a family. That's... I desire that. That's what I want. That's my life - is about that. That's my Plan "A," that I want to be part of a resurrection, whatever resurrection that is. But I want to be there. I want to be there with you. And I know you want to be there if I'm there too. We desire the best thing

I had in my notes here one thing about love. If I showed you my notes, people... It's my notes. Please don't look at my notes. There's stuff going everywhere! We should desire that everybody within the Body enters Elohim. We should desire the best thing for others. Now, that's God's love, really. But deep down we may not. We desire things for our self, but to look out at other people and say, "I desire that *you* enter Elohim. That's what I desire, *you* to enter Elohim," well, I know where that comes from. The natural carnal mind cannot think that way. It's absolutely impossible. It's selfish! Lust of the flesh, pride of life; it's not going to look out and say, "Oh, yeah, I want to give you eternal life." "I want it. Don't worry about you." With God's spirit it's the complete opposite. We desire that everybody here endures to the end and is given life in Elohim. That's what we want for others! That's God's spirit. The natural mind can't do it. Absolutely impossible. So that may be something that we can think about: Do we really desire the best for everybody?

When I was going through the previous sermon about the ministry and how the ministry works and about the shepherds feeding themselves and not the brethren - because that's what goes in the end, is there is no desire... Because, really, part of the ministry, the role of the ministry is to help and support. It's not about self. It's not about titles. It's a role about helping others, helping them, desiring the best thing for them. And the best way that we can help anybody is everybody in this room, everybody listening, the best way we can help *anybody* is to be an example that somebody looks to and says, "Ah, I notice that they 'this,'" or "I 'that.'" Because, know from experience, that if there is a weakness in somebody naturally people look at that. "Ah, Wayne; he talks too much." Well, that's true! It can be a blessing and it can be a curse. But that's the natural mind, will look to the weakness. It won't look to the desire the best for others. Because we can all spot faults and problems with us. "Oh, he's 'this,'" or "He's 'that.'" Or "She's ...." That's natural! Well, we should

know the moment we look out at someone and say, "Yeah, they're 'this' and 'that,'" well, *that's natural!* We're not supposed to be thinking that way because it's *natural*. We should be thinking the opposite. How can I help this person? I really would like to see them in Elohim! I really would! How can I help them? Well, by fighting, by hanging on, and being a great example of belief of this is God's true Church, believing and being convicted - two different things - of how truth enters God's true Church. If we believe it and we're *convicted* there's not going to be a problem in our life. We know this is God's Church! We know how truth comes in. Truth doesn't come in any other way. There's not a left field. And it doesn't come from me. It doesn't come from others. It comes a particular way that *God* works.

Now, we either believe it and we're convicted or we're not. If we believe it and we're *convicted* we're going to be here to the end. We're going to hang on because we're convicted! We may not understand everything but it doesn't matter, this is how God works. Do we believe it? Do we really believe God, what God says, "This is what..." We're not going to get to the scriptures there that we understand and know in Ephesians (I think it is), where God talks about, you know, the structure of the Church, what He has set up... and underlining there what *He* has set up. This is not a manmade thing. This is not a manmade group. We are members of the Body of Christ. We've been placed under Jesus Christ. We're part of the Church of God. We have God's holy spirit. And God works a particular way. Now, it's simple, isn't it? It all sounds simple, but it's complex. And it's complex because of us because of what we think we know and what we see. Natural.

And I speak all those things because I've been through it. I'm not trying to correct or anything like that, I'm just, I know, I've had these thoughts. I've done those things. I've said things that aren't always right. I'm natural! I've got those problems, some you don't even know about.

**Verse 18—For I consider the suffering of this present time...** We're suffering. We should be. ... **are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.** I find that so encouraging. It's worth fighting for. For what's going to be revealed in us in the future, those sitting here, it's going to be revealed in us in a time order, this is exciting. But it will be revealed in us at some point in time.

**For the earnest expectation of the creation,** which is talking about mankind and the creation of them, **eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.** Well, that can be in a spiritual term, about the return of Jesus Christ and the 144,000, but on another level people will look at begotten sons of God and look to that example. "I remember this guy up the road with his wife. They lived in this place up the road. I remember them. They did 'this.'" Or "they did 'that.'" So we should be really concerned about the "this and the that," the example we set, the things we do, the way we drive, the way we cut into queues, the way we speak to assistants, the way we answer people over tables, the way we open... All those things are important because people look to those things. And God's people *are* different. They have God's holy spirit; therefore, they *should* be different. And we accept that challenge, true? We accept that challenge because we're

willing to fight against the natural desire not to do those things and to be impatient, or whatever, and do those things that satisfy self.

**For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.** Well, that's how God works. He works through a family environment called "sons," "begotten sons of God." **For the creation was subjected to futility.** Now, vanity, we're subject to it by nature. That's how God did it, for a purpose. ...**not willingly**, because this is the only way. The humans that are created with the spirit in man that have the traits of pride, God did it because He wants to create a family. And it's not that He just says, "Oh, we're going to do it and forget them, and leave them to themselves." No, God did it for a purpose. He did it so that He could give them something. **But because He (God the Father) who subjected it in hope...** What's that hope? The hope of salvation, what we've been talking about, the hope that we will hang on to Plan "A," that we will *strive*, really strive to overcome ourselves. Now, we'll go up and down. We'll have good days and bad days.

I remember a sermon, somebody today reminded me that I once gave a sermon about the horse jumping the field and "it could be good, could be bad." Well, that's actually reality in our life. We don't know what tomorrow brings. We really don't. And it could be good, could be bad on a one way, on a physical level, but on a spiritual level God says clearly that, "All things," that's *everything*, "works to our spiritual good *if* we're spiritually minded and we're desiring to grow, we're desiring to kill self and get rid of self." It will work out to our good. God will put us through the trials or we'll put ourselves through the trials, which is my way of life. I put Chris through a lot of trials because of who I am and what I am. That's, you know... Often trials are created by ourselves, by wrong decisions. God doesn't have to put us through too many trials because we put ourselves through them. That's just the way we are. We're natural. We do it ourselves.

And God will work with us in that trial, and if there is a lesson to be learned it doesn't matter where we flee, and I've learned that one. It doesn't matter; if I'm to learn a particular lesson God will make sure I learn it. But my tendency is to try to flee learning it, so, you know, I'll resign and go somewhere else or live somewhere, so I don't have to learn. And guess what? Bee is back home! So it's better to face up to the trial. It's better to turn to God and admit that of and by ourselves we can't do it. Help us!

And there are certain things that are said in sermons sometimes and it may just be for us as individuals, it's "Ah." And yet the person speaking, later on you go up and say, "Oh, well when you said 'this' I felt 'this.'" No idea that that was for you. It's very personal. It's how God works. And there's a lesson to be learned. God will work with us and He's very patient, and if we continue it will work out. The matter is, will we continue?

**...because the creation itself (verse 21) also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption,** which is sin, because sin decays. We're dying, really. **...into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** Well, this is God's plan! Jesus Christ returning, 144,000, and the creation will be delivered

into their hands. It's going to be an exciting time. And our minds can't really grasp, really, what it's like to have Jesus Christ and 144,000 ruling on this earth and what it's going to be like in certain situations and environments. There's a lot of overcoming to be done. And human nature is human nature. It'll be human nature during the thousand years. It'll be human nature during the hundred years. Because that's what God did, He subjected it to this for the purpose of salvation. All of those people are going to have to have a Plan "A." There'll be no Plan "B." It's either God's way, Plan "A," or death, you will die. That's what it says. Life or death, that's the choice that we've got.

**Verse 22—For we know, we "see," that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.** We've had 6,000 years of man's self-rule. 6,000 years. And in some ways we now, because of God's spirit, can look out and go, "Ah, look at it." When really, we're far better off to be looking inside and going, "Ah, look at it!" That's what we... really. Because that means we're working, we're suffering, we're enduring, we're wrestling. We're looking and going, "Ah..." We groan.

Well, the world's the world, and they haven't been called. God's not going to work with them as He is us at this moment. The time is coming, it's going to change. But at the moment the most important thing is you and me as individuals and what we're doing. And it's so important to God. It really is important to God. We are God's people, God's Church. We carry God's name. So working on who we are and groaning within ourselves, and I know we do. I know that when we make mistakes and it's the same one that we did yesterday or the day before, the last hour, that we groan: "Ah, you know, I *don't* want to be this way! It's something that the needle's in the groove and I just do it. I've got to jump that needle out. I've got to change. I *want* to change." It's the wanting to change, the desire to change, continuing to wrestle no matter what. And it doesn't matter whether we lose a battle here and there and we get pinned down on the mat (a wrestling term), you know we're pinned down and they "One. Two. Three," it's over. No, it's not over! It's *never* over for God's people! Never, ever, ever over until we're changed to spirit, which is God's promise.

**Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the spirit...** Whew, this is encouraging! We have God's spirit! Not sure the exact count, but it's something like 6 billion people...? I think it's nearly 7 billion people, and Ron's gone through and mentioned the numbers. But we don't really comprehend some of that. But we have God's spirit, the firstfruits of the spirit. We're the first. Compared to the numbers that have been through history, we have God's spirit. That in itself is an amazing thing. And why wouldn't we want to fight for it if we understand it? We'd want to fight to hang on to it. **...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption.** That's what we're waiting for. We're waiting to be changed. But we're never going to give up; we're not going to stop fighting. **...the redemption of our body.** We want to move from physical to spirit. That's what we want. And I know the ministry want it for you as individuals.

That's what we want. And if there is anything that we could do to help to have you enter Elohim, and God wants it, that's what's best for the Church!

So sometimes when we see things that may happen in the Church and we think, "Oh, that can't be for the best for the Church," guess what? We're wrong. It *is* the best thing for the Church! We may not understand it. We may not understand it.

Now, that's no different in some ways than ordinations (I'm going to wind up here in a minute), because an ordination is the best thing for the Church. It's the best thing for the individual because it gives them potential, and it's opportunity to serve and to overcome, but it's the best thing for the Church *if* we have God's holy spirit. If we don't have God's holy spirit active in our life we will view it wrongly. Warning! Warning! Warning! It's Daleks. We have to be very careful how we view things. Now, people say an ordination comes from God. It does. So if a person goes up this way, it's from God. But if it goes down this way, is it from God? Do you think? Do you understand? I hope you're with me in what I'm saying. We have to view ordinations as they are. It's an opportunity to serve. That's all it really is.

Someone asked me once, "What's the role of an evangelist?" I do as I'm told. That's the role of the ministry. If God - I do believe this is God's Church, I really believe it - if I'm told to do something I know it's from God. I will do what God tells me. We have to view it that way. It's not what somebody else said, it's what God said that's... And if it's that way, it's that way. And if it's down this way or removal, for whatever reason, we have to have a mindset that it's from God. Because the problem can be that we're all happy while it's going this way, "This is pretty good!" But when it goes down this way, "Oh, this is not... This can't be God's Church!" Yes, it is. The opportunity to be in the ministry is an *incredible* opportunity for personal growth and the ability to serve. And if time is up, time is up. None of us are going to live forever.

One thing in Worldwide... I'm going to start to wind up. One thing in Worldwide that I realized was that... I was probably in early thirties, a bit older, and then younger ministers came and were placed as ministers in the Church. A lot of people will remember this. They were 25, 30 years old. They were younger. And there were members in the Church that had... they were 65, 75, really old, 85. You're not old until you're 85. So when you see it, you're older, you're mature in the mind and God willing, with God's spirit, that we have to view things that this is God and this is the authority. 40 years junior, they can't know as much on a spiritual level, they haven't had that experience, but this is God's Church and that's the outcome. This 25 year old is now in God's ministry. The danger is that as we get older we look at them, "They're whippersnappers. They don't know anything. They're all wet behind the ears." All those carnal thinking! Whereas really (I hope you understood that Australian English) the reality is we have to see it as God's Church. And if we see this as God's Church, ordinations, age, whatever, it makes no difference. This is God's doing! It's *God's* Church! Up, down, age, it's God's Church. God knows what's best for *His* Church! Jesus Christ knows what's best for his Church.

What's it all about, brethren? What's it really all about? Being saved. So, some of these things happen because it's the best way for us to be saved because God knows what He's doing. We think we know what we're doing. God *knows* what He's doing and He knows what's best for the Church. God knows - isn't this a shock - God knows what's best for His Church! So why would we want to fight God on anything? Fighting God is a losing job.

We know one particular being fought God and he's going to lose. He's lost. You can't fight... It's stupidity to fight! Why? Just logically, to fight God? How stupid could we be as humans, to fight God?

Well, when we get into attitudes about these things that go on in the Church and resist we are being spiritually stupid, really stupid. Because we shouldn't. This is God's Church. God knows what's best in His Church and for His Church. God knows what's best for you and me individually. And we can take great comfort in that.

I remember once when we came out of Worldwide and God gave me a particular thought process. And I battled with this thought process with other people. And that mostly because we ended up in United and thought we were doing the right thing, and all that stuff. But the reality was God gave to Chris and myself one key thing. And that key thing was, we used to go to the ministry and say, "Look, guys. Can't you just all get together and put one person with God's spirit in charge, and we'll just do what he says?" Now, that is a great blessing to have that thought process, if you understand what I mean, because we couldn't understand why.... Surely there's one in all of this group that could be in charge, and we'll... He's got God's spirit, and therefore, we're home. We're safe, true? If a person's got God's spirit... Well, we use the term, "We're home." What have we got to worry about? The leader of the Church has God's spirit! Woo Hoo! This is easy! Well, why couldn't they do it? And they'd say, "Oh, well, no, Wayne, you can't do that. And we don't trust 'this' and 'that.'" And we'd go, "Oh, this is so frustrating!"

Well, in 2005, because God gave us that thought process it was like going, "We're home!" That's what it was like. We're home! One person that God appointed, an apostle, with God's spirit, what more could Wayne Matthews want? Well, I was fortunate because God gave us that and we've seen it and we see the reality of it. We understand that; only by the grace of God do we, that we understand that.

But it's something about a conviction, that whatever happens this is God's Church, brethren. That's a commitment and a conviction we should have. And if we haven't got that conviction that this is God's Church we are *not* following Plan "A." We're just not. Because if we believe that it's a great strength to have, because no matter what happens in our life we know we're in Plan "A," and we know that God is working with us.

With that, we'll finish.