

Today we're going to pick up again in the sermon series entitled, *The Rightful Place of Women*, with this being *Part 4*.

In this series the focus has been on what God has been doing over the past seven years for the Church in helping us to begin to learn things that have to do with the transition in time, the transition that's going to take place as Jesus Christ returns and the Church is fully established around the world, that it's going to take time for that and the things that take place. But at least they get off to a very good start. That's an awesome thing. I think of the time when Christ came the first time and began to teach things that hadn't been known for 4,000 years, the spirit of the law, things to do with the mind, things to do with how one thinks and things to do with how God thinks and He wants to give us those abilities, that opportunity to begin thinking differently.

I think of the word "repent" itself, which means "to think differently." God calls us for that purpose, that our minds can be transformed to go through a process of change where we do begin to think so much differently than our normal human nature, because our normal human nature is one that's in captivity in that respect, in the sense of being captive to our own nature, which is one of total selfishness. We are selfish by nature. It starts out as soon as we're born. It doesn't take long and it begins to grow and develop within us more and more and we become expertise at a very selfish nature that's inward. It's not outward.

I think of Mr. Armstrong talking so often about love, how that human love, in essence, it's not God's love. God's love is outgoing, and we understand even more so, it's a sacrificing kind of love for the benefit of others, but human love is selfish. Human love is inward. It isn't God's kind of love. So there's so much that has to be changed in our minds. We have to experience this human life and have to experience that kind of a nature for a great purpose that God has. It's the only way we can learn to judge later on, make right choices later on, whenever God calls, righteous judgment and choosing between God's way and our way, which is really not "our" way. It's one that comes from a being that started it all a long time ago, Satan, which is inward, selfish. So God made us that way to learn great, incredible lessons.

So in the past seven years God has been helping us to see another part of our nature that started clear back then, 6,000 years ago, with Adam and Eve, and that every human being has lived the same thing ever since. Because we're all the same. We're all inward. It doesn't matter who it is; we're all the same being physical and carnal as we are as human beings and go the same direction. But something started back then having to do with life, having to do with how life is lived. God is showing us a freedom that's coming, a freedom for mankind to get rid of all the kinds of prejudices, or at least to begin the process because you could never fully get rid of it all in this human life.

For the next 1,100 years there will still be human prejudice. There will still be those things that aren't right in human thinking because all human beings are selfish by nature, but at least with the truth being in the whole world and God's way of life being offered to all mankind, at least everyone at that time can begin to work upon more so (those who choose to do so because that will be the peer pressure at that time) to live God's way of life.

I think of Ambassador College. There was great peer pressure, as a whole, because that went off base in time because the peer pressure started to change. But for so long it was one of living God's way of life. It was about God's way of life completely and entirely. That was the Sabbath, the Holy Days, everything we had and received; there is a strong peer pressure that can go through life that way when you're all in the same community confined, in that respect, to a same kind of community. I think of myself being in Bricket Wood in England; we were pretty much confined there, in one respect, because there was no place to go, as a whole, unless you caught a train and went into London, or whatever. And that was a long way so that didn't happen very often, thankfully. We were separated from the world.

It's like the Feast of Tabernacles. You go to the Feast of Tabernacles; you still rub shoulders with the world, but not in the same way. You're away from your job. You're away from everything else in society and you're together with more of God's people, and that's exciting, that's inspiring. It's something different and unique to live during the year.

I think of the time of Ambassador College, able to live that for as long as I did, a unique environment to be in. Big Sandy was a lot like that, as well, while the majority of people were striving to live God's way of life. Because that started to change in time as well, but the point being is with that environment and being in that environment, which the Millennium will be that way, totally and completely. The peer pressure will be to live God's way of life. That's exciting! But there will still be those who choose a wrong way.

But what an incredible thing that God is going to begin setting it right from the very beginning, starting it already within the Church because this is where it has to begin. This is where it's starting. So there's a great transition. Jesus Christ came along 2,000 years ago and began to elaborate more about the spirit, God's spirit, about a different kind of thinking, and showing that the law, which was very physical that was given to Moses, as far as how people are to conduct themselves, goes far, far beyond that. It has to do with the mind and how one thinks. Now we're at a time of transition again because Jesus Christ is going to introduce a whole lot more, but it's starting already within the Church, and I find that incredibly exciting, that He is showing us some things that have to change because prejudice.

Look at the world today with the technology we have, with the things that we have out there, the things that are on TV, in the news; it's such a mess! It is so upside down. Things are so crazy out there and how people think about each other. The world, it's bringing out how divided the world really is more and more because people can blabber, blurt out anything and it's everywhere

quickly! It's an incredible world we live in! When it comes from people that are looked up to, whether it be in movies, Hollywood, sports, politics, or whatever, and those things hit the internet in the way that they do or go out in other ways as fast as they do. We live in a world of tweeting, and that blows my mind, but people can blurt out anything, and they do! Then others have to deal with that. There's such division.

I so look forward to a world where that division begins to be gotten rid of. What a horrible way of life where people are so divided, where people hate. I mean, hatred, deep hatred. It's being stirred up more and more. I think of a being out there who is stirring it up more and more as well, because that's the time we live in and he doesn't have much time left so he's using technology. He's using it against mankind. Because of the way we are, our human nature, it doesn't take much for him to broadcast and people be susceptible to that, and then to misuse the technology that we have. Mankind's getting very close to misusing the most powerful of technology that man has ever developed against one other. That's what we're headed towards.

Over the past seven years God has been blessing us in a powerful way as He's been leading His Church, the Body of Christ, into greater understanding of the actual practice, the actual living of what it means to restore the rightful place of women after 6,000 years of oppression, curses, and subjugation. The subjugation of women. It's an incredible thing to understand. I think of seven years ago when God began to introduce some of these things to us and helped to work with us, to begin to see some of these things, and knowing then, even though it was being given, knowing that it's going to take time for some of those things to really begin to sink in deep into the mind, because that kind of a change doesn't happen overnight because it's so deep in the human mind from birth. As children grow up, the way they think, how they think about such things in family, and so forth, are so ingrained that for men and women to see it in themselves it's nearly an impossibility to see it to the depth of what God is actually revealing. It takes His holy spirit to be able to grasp in a deeper way, indeed, what it is He's revealing.

So the transition, the transformation of our own thinking is taking a lot of time. That's been seven years and we're not there by any measure. We're working on it. We're beginning to see things that we've never seen, but we're not there. When Mr. Armstrong talked about three and four generations, that's how long it's going to take. Just that thing alone, just that area of life alone is going to take three and four generations to begin to really make things the way they should be as far and to the degree that human beings can actually live it. Because we have our limitations. We're selfish by nature. Even with God's spirit we're still selfish, but there is this battle that goes on, and that's the part of the process of change if people really want to change.

So as it was mentioned in the last sermon the oppression of women has been one of the greatest areas of suffering ever created by mankind's disobedience to God's way of living. It truly is! It began at the very beginning! We shouldn't be surprised by that, but what happened then is far more powerful and far more important and had a far greater impact on human life than even we

have grasped in God's Church! How can the world grasp it? They can't see it! They don't even believe in such things. "Adam and Eve? God created human beings? Right!"

That's why it blows my mind that they'd rather believe that we climbed out of some slimy swamp, you know! We didn't even have human form yet, but we were something like some toad, tadpole, somehow climbing out, and somehow with the intellect that a tadpole has, over millions of years a tadpole can become something really great, evidently, just by thinking about it. And you think, "Give me a break!" I mean, I'm sorry. I just can't help it how stupid, stupid, stupid people can be, calling themselves scientists and to believe such nonsense that defies any kind of law of science, but they choose to believe it because they so hate God and so hate God's way of life. They want to be so far away from anything that resembles anything that's truth or that has any control in life that we'd have to look at ourselves and think that we might have to change the way we live and the way we talk and the way we think about one another. People don't like that as a whole. Human nature doesn't because it's so selfish.

Anyway. So again, we understand that all this began in the Garden of Eden with both Adam and Eve, when they disobeyed God by turning inward, turning to themselves—which was their natural course—as their own authority for life and how it should be lived. Their own judges of how life should be lived. So human beings, all human beings have that, their opinions, how they think about things.

I get so sick of TV sometimes. The news, you turn it on, and it's about personalities. I turned it on today. I should just keep it off, but I can't help myself. I'm still looking for news, news events, so I go to things that come from other nations, to listen to some of that to see what might be happening, actually happening in the world. Because we live in our own world, and you know, the world kind of revolves around us. That's the way we are. So you get on the news and they ask this young guy about what he thinks about the interviews, and so forth, and the media and how they should approach the President. And you think, "Give me a break! He's just getting started! He doesn't know diddly squat about life and you're all enthused about what he's going to say to you! He doesn't have any experience!" And just because he got to speak first, first one to answer a question before the Press Secretary, just because he had the first question to be answered, they ask him as an authority about what he thought about this entire process. I'm sorry. Makes me sick. This whole world is so sick.

I'll just tell you right now, it all started with football! Monday night quarterbacking, whatever it is. That's always blown my mind. How they talk about it afterwards. They talk about it before like the Super Bowl. I don't even know when these things take place because I really don't care. I don't even know whose playing and I really don't care. Anyway, that's how much I love football, and baseball, and everything else out there. I just don't have time for it. Now, if you do, that's fine. I understand. That's great. But they start asking people ahead of time, and then after it's over they're going to talk it to death! That's what they do in news today. It started with football and now it's the news. It's about people and personalities and what they should have done and how

they should do it and this is what they did wrong and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. You think, "Man, you should be making the money. You're the one that should be out there in the field." Anyway, to me it's so stupid.

Let's go back to the beginning, Genesis 3, because Adam and Eve's choice was not to listen to the Great God of the universe as their authority. Look what's happened. Now, it doesn't matter who it was. It would have happened to any ever created because all human beings are the same. That's the point. It wasn't their fault that we're all like that. God made us a certain way for a purpose, and it was so that we have the ability to turn inward because that's our natural course. Then we're responsible for our choices, and He gives that to us in a natural course of physical human life. We make selfish decisions day in and day out, human beings do. That's just the way we live, just the way we live, entrapped in it until God calls us and He begins to show us there's another choice. There is a different way. It's not one of suffering. It's not one of anguish in life, through life, because there's a lot more oftentimes than people will actually admit, unless they're deep in it, and most often people are deep in it.

That's what I like to call drama, drama, drama, deep in drama. They learn to live life by drama. They get to the point where they can't live without drama. It's like some of these things on TV that started years and years ago, *As the World Churns*, and some of those things. Yeah, soap operas. They started years and years ago, and the fact that they want to go back to it all the time, it's like, "I can't live without drama. I got to have it. What's going on with their life now? I got to see. I got to know." Then we live life like that. We just don't even see what's happening.

Genesis 3:14. We need to be reminded of what began here. God told what was going to happen to all three, to Satan, to Adam, and to Eve, but we're going to break in here to part of the story here. So because of Adam and Eve's choice, again, to listen to Satan rather than to God, their Creator, God told them (the three of them) that there was a result that was going to come from their choice, from their sins. For all three sinned greatly before God. So God told them what was going to happen.

But let's be reminded here first of all what God told Satan. **Genesis 3:14—And the Eternal God said to the serpent, Because you have done this you *are* cursed...** He was from the very beginning when he made the choice he did, but the curses just pile on. You know, the more people sin, the greater the curses, not blessings in life, not things that God can give and grant to give a fullness of life that is unique because of obedience to a certain way that comes from God, that if people live it their lives become better and richer and they can have added blessings upon life, blessings upon blessings, to where life, the more blessings, the richer life becomes! The more we learn how to obey and yield to God the more our lives are blessed physically and spiritually, though we're going to have physical battles in this life. Yet God gives us blessings, unlike what it would be, obviously, without God. Because then it's just a matter of curses because of sin that are added on top and life becomes more difficult, unfulfilling, and people always

striving to want some kind of fullness or greater enjoyment of life, and ever seeking it, but never, never attaining it.

So He told him, "you are cursed." The result of sin. The result of wrong thinking. "And here is what will happen to you." So, **you are cursed above all living creatures**, or "all living things in creation that's in the physical world and the spirit world." That's what God was telling him. "You are cursed above all." He was anyway from the very beginning, but now even more so because more was going to come his way, more torment, torment, agony, not being able to be fulfilled with life at all, but just having torment after torment. When it talks about torment here, of things that happen to people, to situations in life because of disobedience, there is torment that comes from disobedience. The mind that can't attain what it wants, what it desires, and constantly having things ripped away from it because of disobedience, because of God not being first in their life, period.

So again here, He says, "You are cursed above everything that's living," in essence. That's what He was telling him. **...and above every living thing, every living creature of the cultivated field** is what it's talking about here. In other words, all that God had given within the spirit realm for spirit life to exist, and within the physical realm, specifically on earth for physical life to exist. So "within everything that has been created and all that has been given life, you're cursed above all of it."

He went on to say, **Upon your belly shall you go**. Not a physical think as we tend to think, thinking that somehow maybe God changed his form so that somehow now he looks like a dragon or a snake. No, those things are used to depict his nature and what he's like and how he thinks, and so forth. He's depicted in other ways as well: "As a roaring lion." That doesn't mean he looks like one. He has a specific look from the time that God created him that hasn't changed, whatever that is. It hasn't changed. He still looks that way. It's not about how he looks, because he's created in a spiritual plane in spirit essence, not holy spirit but of spirit essence, of spirit life.

So again, He said, **Upon your belly shall you go**. God is telling him something that's going to happen that depicts what his life is going to be like more so now than ever before. **And dust shall you eat all the days of your life**. I love that since God's revealed that, what it means, showing it's just like a serpent or something that's close to the ground, and because you're on your belly the dust begins to blow and you're close to the ground and it's dry and your breathing it in and it gets in your food, it gets in your mouth. It's that kind of analogy. "You're going to eat dust, but the dust you eat is the dust I use to create mankind, mankind that you have hated the knowledge of. And you rebelled, because you hated the fact that something was going to be created and made great, that would make the spirit realm, the angelic realm far more fulfilled in life, when that life is created, Elohim, that it'll make the spirit realm as well rejoice with greater rejoicing than ever before." They rejoiced when they saw what God created on a physical plane when He started creating physical things in the universe. There's more in that than what is just by sight because

God revealed to them purpose for them, of things they would be involved in and be a part of. They were a part of the creation of the universe. Billions upon billions, trillions? We don't know, but a long, long time. They rejoiced when they learned what God was doing and the purpose of their creation, when they began to understand more about their creation.

As time went along God revealed more about the purpose of His creation, that He was going to create Elohim. Now, how long it was before He revealed that, we don't know. Perhaps when He told them about the earth and His purpose for it. But whenever it was is when Satan rebelled with great jealousy, envy, and hatred that began to emerge in his thinking. Yet now, even at this point here, when man was created, he went to Eve like he did, and led her into being deceived, in essence, as he worked with her and worked with her thinking and began to cloud her thinking and feed her selfish thinking. In time it began to work in her mind and she began to think differently, didn't she? She saw something that God said, "No," and she began to think, "This looks good. It looks like it might be good for physical food." It began to be attractive. Because the mind, it starts off on a different tangent like that, away from what God says, and rather than saying, "No! God says no. No!" and just stopping right there, she began to play with it in the mind. Then the mind begins to sin because it's making choices, drawn to something that God says you shouldn't be drawn to, making choices against something that God said. That's a choice. It starts in the mind. That's what it's revealing here in a very powerful way.

So Satan, everything he's tried to do to thwart God's plan, always fighting against mankind, about the creation of mankind, not wanting them to become a part of Elohim, even trying to kill the Christ as a baby. I mean, how distorted. Its distorted thinking. That's what happens to the mind. It becomes distorted. It can't think clearly. Haven't you learned yet you can't fight against God? Haven't you learned yet you can't turn God's purpose away? What God says is going to come to pass! Have you not learned that? Well, he can't learn that. He just wants to continually fight against it, and think that somehow he's going to be able to change some of it. But every time things turn against him.

I think of the story of Esther and what God did there and the people He worked with. It's a great story of how God can use certain things and turn things in His favor for His people and how others are brought down to the ground in the greatest of humility. That's what God is doing to Satan over and over and over again. Every time he tries to fight against God he has to eat more dust spiritually, more of God's creation, that brings him lower. It torments him. It's a torment to him.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, because God was going to do something great by what He'd created in man and woman. Productivity in the earth and that through time, through the process of life and the process that God gave it, that it would come from woman, out of woman, but in time there would be one born. That's what this prophecy is about, the first great prophesy, in that respect, in scripture about the Messiah. "And I will put enmity between you and the woman," the very one. This is the first bit of dust you're going to lap up and you're going to lap it up in a big way as time goes along because it's through woman that through time

there is going to come a seed. There will be one born. And speaking of the Christ, **put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed**, speaking of the Christ. **It**, speaking of that seed, Christ, **shall bruise**, and it's a word that means "to crush, to break," **your head**. "It's going to be your destruction. You started working against My creation from the very beginning and you're going to eat dust, because everything you do is going to turn against you and you're going to see what I'm going to do with mankind. Through woman is going to come a seed that's going to crush you in time."

...and you shall bruise his heel. In other words, the analogy is, "You shall only bruise his heel, but he's going to crush your head." I love that. I love the way it's expressed there. "You're going to be able to cause some problems. You're going to be able to create some pain and some suffering. You're going to be able to bruise his heel, but you're not going to have much of an impact," because, basically what happened, he died, and three days later he was resurrected. Spirit. The first into Elohim. The first of the great lapping up of dust, that seed that finally came along out of woman, that became the Messiah, the Christ, the one that was to die for all the sins of mankind. "The very one that you're instrumental in and you had your way, and look what happened—He became the Passover. The soldier that went up and rammed the spear in his side and his blood came out to the earth is the very means by which all the rest of My creation is going to be able to be forgiven of their sins. Of all the things that you can easily see that they've done wrong, they're going to be able to be forgiven of if they choose Me, if they choose My way of life. I'm going to give them the help to change, something to change in their very minds to where one day they'll be able to follow suit and be able to be born into the same family, Elohim."

He doesn't grasp those things, although he's seeing them more and more and he knows. He knows now his time is short. What an incredible story! What an incredible story when people begin to understand what happened 6,000 years ago because the world is ignorant of these things. They don't accept these things.

And unto the woman He said (verse 16); I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception, meaning the life that follows. You know what it's really talking about, in essence? It's talking about everything that comes, and that as the world gets larger and larger and this process of productivity continues on and life gets greater and greater on the earth so will the sorrow and the anguish in human life. That's what's happened. 6,000 years of sick, sick life, of what human beings can do to human beings, of prejudice and hatred, of things that are upside down and take away from the fullness that should be there in life and families. Just starting with families, because of this one thing that started, certain thinking began to take place because people wouldn't follow God's way and they began to live so selfishly, even between man and woman. From that point forward, because they chose a different way, they had to be cut off from any potential to receive what we receive now, the flow of God's spirit into our lives. They were cut off from the Tree of life. They were cut off from the ability to experience fuller, richer lives in human life, though we be selfish.

Because with God's spirit that's where that tide begins to change and turn around. That's where we are able to begin then to take control of life. Before that we really don't have control of life. But when you come into God's Church you're to begin to take control of life. God gives you the ability to fight and to keep fighting and to stand for what is right, and to keep standing for what is right and to keep pressing forward, though few be that find it, or that have found it in 6,000 years, that have been offered it. Many have been called and few have been chosen because it so works against our human nature, our human minds, our selfishness. So people give in to that and don't continue to fight to the end. You fight from the beginning, from the day you told God Almighty, "My life is Yours and I'm burying self in a watery grave." From that point forward, "I am Yours. Do with me as you will. You are first, because my life will be rich in Your hands, full in Your hands." That's the way it is. What God is preparing for us, preparing us for, we don't grasp... we don't grasp. Awesome, powerful, and mighty, so worth the fight to the end, whatever that end is.

I don't care whether it's 2019 or 2029. I really don't care! If it does I'm going to keep pressing forward. That's not the point. The point is how you choose to live your life and nothing should ever change that. We should have learned that in a very powerful and profound way by what we went through. God should always be first. I think of what would happen if 2019 didn't come to pass, because I know what would happen. Do you know what would happen in the Church? Most would leave. Most wouldn't last another two, three years, especially if I were to die. What would you do? I'm just throwing those things out there because life is life. I don't know completely God's mind and His choices and what He makes as He continues on because I understand that things are working differently now than they were before and I understand that if there is a purpose that something should go longer and God has a purpose in it, He'll do it and He's right and we're wrong if we think it has to be different. Either we're convicted of God's truth and God's way of life, God's Sabbath, God's Holy Days or not.

I am so thankful that God revealed what He did through Mr. Armstrong. Those truths alone, up to that point in time, 21 Truths, are so powerful and so profound! Yet the scattered Church isn't living them. They really aren't because they don't have the spiritual strength anymore because they're asleep. They lose a little bit more all the time, a little bit more all the time. I know what I have. I know what's been given to God's Church. I know the power that exists out there to see things, to know things, to have things that should be so profound in your minds. The very fact that you understand the Feast of Tabernacles of 2005 is so powerful and momentous in itself it's dumbfounding - that only God Almighty, the One Eternal God has eternal self-existing life in Himself and no one else. Jesus Christ never had that. He has everlasting life living within him now because he had a beginning, and that's what we have opportunity for.

So, sometimes I think, "Where are our convictions? How convicted are we? How convicted were we when we went into the watery grave?" Sorry, I'm straying away from a little bit of this, but it's all part of the story and it's a part of the battle. It's a part of what is in front of us and what God is revealing to us and helping us to begin to grasp and understand about a change that's taking

place in life because I still believe with all my being that there is such profound power in what He's revealed anyway, with 7 periods of 1260, 70 leading up to the first 5 being fulfilled, 50 more after that and with such profound meaning in those. You can't work that out! It's either there or it isn't. It's there and it's powerful and it's profound, if you're good at mathematics and think about math in any fashion or form of the probabilities! I took that in college one time. I didn't like the class. It was a toughie, a toughie. About as tough as calculus was.

Anyway, where are our convictions? How deep are they? You have to cry out to God to strengthen your life, to give you strength, to give you courage, encouragement, to press forward, to fight against the things that press against you, that fight against you, that want to take you away from what He has offered you. Because I'll tell you what, the destruction along the way has been so great, so powerful, so great. So many, especially in this end-time, have gone by the wayside.

So unto the woman He said; I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception. So again, as I mentioned in the last sermon, from that point forward the course became set for the next nearly 6,000 years. Incredible.

Genesis 3:22—And the Eternal God said, Behold, the man has become as *one of us*. It wasn't "one of us." You know, I marvel now that we see these more deeply and how people translate, because it's a word they don't grasp, Elohim. They don't grasp it. So it's like Elohim is a family, therefore, it has to be many, or at least two. You at least have to have two in there. That's just human thinking. God let us believe that for a time and they don't understand, no, He's referring to Himself until it comes into being because He reveals Himself as Yahweh Elohim. So how it should be translated literally, if people had understanding is: **The Eternal God said, Behold, the man has become as Me.** Me! Because it refers back to Elohim and it's about Himself, the Self-Existing Eternal God, no one else. There is no confusion in what it's talking about, that, **man has become as Me, to know good and evil**, because only God Almighty determines what is good and what is evil, what is right and what is wrong. **And so, and now unless he put forth his hand and take also the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.** So the opportunity that mankind, in essence, was told they would be able to have from the beginning, which God knew what was going to take place, He stopped it right there. So only a few through time were going to have the opportunity because that was part of His plan too, to have 144,000 when it was all said and done in 6,000 years that would have access to the tree of life—that's what it's talking about—to God's spirit, to the holy spirit, something the angelic realm has no access to, only God and the family of God, those who are begotten of God's holy spirit.

So again, I want to read this one word again and the definition before we continue on and jump into this long part getting into the sermon today, but this word, "subjugation." You want to talk about a word that really reflects in a very powerful way what took place from the very beginning and it's because of that, if we understand what took place, what transpired, that was automatic because of sin and because of what Adam and Eve did, both of them, and what transpired and because of our nature of mankind, of what we're like and the selfishness that exists in us and that

transpired. This is a word that explains it the best because that's what took place. There's more going to come out as we go through some of the things written by Peter, and by Paul, that you have never known and that God is revealing to His Church in a deeper way than we've ever understood, truly, that I find immensely inspiring and exciting because of where we are and God not revealing it until we were here, to grasp and understand what took place. It's actually opened up a lot of things to some other scriptures about things that Paul wrote that we won't even have time to go into before Christ returns, candidly, because there are other things that are more important to discuss. But it opens up so many things! Truly does.

Subjugation: "The act of bringing (someone or something) under domination or control." You see, that's what Adam did. Adam wasn't real happy with what took place. It's easy to blame the woman, "It's the woman You gave me!" If you think there wasn't a bit of an attitude in that, you're sadly mistaken, because it's carnal human nature. "It's the woman." So do you think there was that attitude? Because he told that to God! Do you think that attitude just suddenly disappeared or do you think it went on for as long as Adam lived? Because it did. He never could shake that attitude from that day forward. Resentment, some bitterness, because it was her, it wasn't really him. That's why we've had sermons about accepting, being responsible, accepting our choices, our decisions that we make, taking ownership because human beings don't like to do that. It's so much easier. It's someone else's fault because we're better than that! We're not stupid like that; we're better. Generally, it's always someone else's fault. "That's why I responded the way I did, because look what they did. If they hadn't of done that this never would have happened." Human nature is so sick. It truly is. It's the way we are.

So, "the act of bringing (someone or something) under domination or control; the act, fact, or process of subjugating, of bringing under control; enslavement." I think of mankind. I think of our own human nature. It's one of enslavement because you really don't control yourself. You can't control your own human nature without God's spirit. Then how good of a job do we do? It's a battle! It's a fight! You have to fight it. You have to cry out to God! How often do you cry out to God? Sometimes for the same sins over and over again because of certain ways we are. We're selfish and how we think, and relationships and things that take place, and so we have to fight. Certain personalities just rub us like friction because they're so different from us. Our relationships, sometimes the heat gets there and all of a sudden, you know, people lose control and they say things they shouldn't say because of selfish human nature because we're really not in control of our selves like we think we are. To do things justly, righteously, the way God says to do them, forget it! We have our own way of doing it. Human nature.

To continue on, more of the definition in other places: "To bring under control and governance as a subject." I'm going to tell you what God reveals to us of why it's been this way and why He's allowed it for 6,000 years becomes so important, so important, so awesome. Even under bad conditions you can grow, you can mature, you can work on developing the very mind of God because of this. Because we're in bondage to our own human nature, we learn, we can

acknowledge, and we recognize such things that take place in the human mind. God uses that for us to be able to grow with His spirit, to see things that we otherwise couldn't see, because He reveals that kind of nature and what it's like, what it does, the results of it.

"To conquer, to make submissive." Another one: "To defeat and gain control (of someone or something) by the use of force." So how is man created? You need to understand that there is a tremendous power in the very fact that a man is made physically stronger, as a whole, just in strength, physical strength, than a woman. That has been abused from the beginning. If you don't think that's important then you're missing a lot in grasping and understanding what became even more automatic in the way man thought about himself when God wasn't in the picture because man has abused that power.

People, human beings misuse power, misuse things. That's the way the world is. That's the way governments are, the misuse of power over others, because the concept is to subjugate others. The desire of human nature is to bring others under control. That's why we learn about things about our own minds and how we think and sometimes psychology and so forth. They understand some things about how people respond to various things. That's where we come in to find out that very few people are just assertive by nature. Some of that to be done in a right way, especially God's way, has to be learned by/through the power of God's spirit. Then we have all these other things: aggressive, passive-aggressive. They're all there for a purpose! To control! To take control! To be able to control things in life! To control others! To get our way! That's why we function the way we do. It's all there for a purpose! It's just our nature.

So man being made stronger just physically has had great power in it. If you look at history, and look at even the Bible and things that took place, wars and battles, armies, look at Abraham and his servants. They didn't just go out and cultivate the fields. They didn't just go out and take care of the animals, the camels, and all the other things that he had. They learned how to war. They learned how to kill. They learned how to defend. Why? That's the way of the world. It was the way of the world around them. It's a matter of survival in many cases. That's how people live. Look at all the places in the world today, of people that try to take control and abuse others and bring others under control, and people who are greedy and take bribes and do the kinds of things they do without thought of the subjects that they have that they're supposed to be serving. Sick world!

So to grasp this from the beginning shouldn't be too hard. But it infected the minds of people, of a way that life kind of became. It just became. It's just normal. It's the way it is. Children grow up in it in a kind of a family and they see certain things, the way they are, and they become the same thing. Boys and the girls, and they become the same way. It's just repeated over and it gets worse and it gets more deeply ingrained. And somebody comes along with an idea that, you know, it's just wrong for any man to see you except your own husband so you got to wear this kind of garment that you have a peep hole in it to see through it, and make that kind of thin so they can't see too much of the eyes. You got to turn your whole head to see right and left. That's why they

can't drive. I'm just kidding there a little bit, but that'd be pretty bad. It's bad enough people on cell phones today; they can't see out the right side. What if you only see a little crack in here and you're wearing that and you're driving down the road, you know, cranking your whole head around so you can see right and left. That's dangerous! A little mockery in there, but you think then the kids that grow up in that if that's all they see, they think that's right. Little girls, they think that's normal. They think that's the way it should be. They think that's how they should look at themselves and their own lives, their own bodies. Their minds become so distorted. To heal that kind of thinking? You talk about Satan doing a number on human beings. Sick. Sick. Sick. But that's something you can more easily see.

But he's done it to every one of you as well. You're all suffering from the same thing, the same curse that started 6,000 years ago. You're still, all of you, have to come out of that, men and women, truly. You're just barely starting. You've had seven years. When it's all said and done, it's not very long, but we started and the start that's there and the changes that have been made are awesome, but they're not where they need to be yet by any measure. It's a long way to go because it's spiritual. It's in the mind, deeply in the mind.

And so again: "To defeat and gain control of (someone or something) by the use of force. To conquer and gain the obedience of (a person, group of people, a country, etc.)." It says it all. Subjugation. It's the way of man, but men have done it powerfully toward women and then what has come out of that is society, then, does that. The world does that. Religion does that. And on and on it goes. So God is going to change that course because it is an enslavement that God never intended that mankind live under. Truly. On a spiritual plane, talk about being in Egypt and bondage, it's been one, very powerfully so.

So it was mentioned in the last sermon that there were things that Paul had to say that are difficult sometimes to grasp and fully understand and the Church has not fully understood those things and that's becoming even clearer now, but some of that's due to the fact that we haven't known the correct context and condition under which Paul spoke, in one respect, and some of which was the present truth at that time. God allows that. He allows present truth for a purpose. He gives certain segments of things to understand. I think of 4,000 years, how there was so much that wasn't given, on a spiritual plane, only to the degree that God worked with an individual, whether it be Abraham or David or whomever. Abraham, David, and different ones that He called through time, different of the prophets and how He worked with them personally, that they could learn and see things. But whatever they said, whatever they gave, that they might see on a spiritual plane they couldn't give it to others because others didn't have that same mind.

Just like our fellowship. You can't go out here and communicate things that you're given. If you say something, just like things that David wrote in the Psalms, what did people get out of that? Well, only on a physical plane, and some of those things are really awesome on a physical plane. But to grasp it spiritually? They didn't have it. Didn't have it. It wasn't there unless God gives His spirit. So there are things that just haven't been understood.

But before we start looking at some of the things that Paul wrote, what he wrote needs to be in the context of what we're first going to look at in 1 Peter, what Peter had to write and everything we're going to go into in this sermon and the one to follow, as we go through some of the writings of Paul, needs to be understood and grasped in large part in the context of what is covered here, because that is the context on a spiritual plane.

1 Peter 2, going to back up quite a ways because there are things in here that have, candidly, been hidden because we weren't there yet, things that haven't been fully understood, of what emphasis that God was giving to certain things that He inspired to be said. Now, all that scripture has always been profitable for the Church, always, to a certain level, to a certain degree, but now in the context of what we're covering it comes alive even more and has far greater depth and meaning than ever before. So we're going to back up to an awesome scripture here where God is talking about the Church and those who are begotten of His holy spirit, those whom He has called.

1 Peter 2:9—But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. That's how God sees us. That's how He wants us to see ourselves and how He's working with us, how He wants us, indeed, to see ourselves and how He's working with us indeed. **...a holy nation, a special people,** so special before God, special to God and Jesus Christ, special because of how we can, if we continue to fight to the end, of a place that God has prepared for us and how He's molding and fashioning us and working with us for a place in the future because there's so many things that God has to fulfill within His temple that are so great and so powerful, especially in the beginning. So He molds and fashions us.

That you... So we're a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a special people for the purpose of? The reason why? **...that you may show forth, or that you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you.** That's a part of that which makes us special and holy because God's involved, because God's spirit is in it. So if we can grasp our calling and who we are and how God sees us and how He wants us to see ourselves, that we are all a part of a royal priesthood before God - far, far, far beyond that of the Levitical system that was just a physical thing that had puny significance in comparison to something on a spiritual plane that God has given to us. **... that you,** so God gives us the ability through the holy spirit to be a special people, to be a holy nation, a holy people, if you will, a royal priesthood, to be able to **show forth the praises.** That word, as I've mentioned so many times, is a word in the Greek language that has to do with "the virtues, the character, the moral excellence" of God Almighty. That's what it means. There's really not a single word like that in the English language that captures it. It takes more. It takes more.

This is what God is saying to us, that we are able to have this living within us, and Jesus Christ spoke of it as a "light" if you will. Different analogies. Different examples that are given of a light that can shine, of something the world can't see on a physical plane. It's spiritual. They see certain things, but they don't grasp it. But the world is to see certain things, and especially when

they're called and when people begin to be called there is something unique and special in you that stands out in a powerful way. So physically the world can see certain attributes of things.

I think of the Feast of Tabernacles when we used to be, especially, very large. People loved God's people. You could go into restaurants and hotels and in the beginning they're cranky and by the time you leave they hate to see you go; they hate to see you leave. They don't understand it, but they love God's people, as a whole. They enjoyed that time together with God's people, as a whole, compared to their normal lives. It's something they don't see nor grasp. Yet God says it's something that we should be able to have in our lives, that we should be able "to show forth," because of how we live, especially to one another because that's what it tells us, "a moral excellence," the character of God Almighty, the virtue, the thinking of God because that's where it comes from. It comes from God. The more it lives within us, the more we can treat others that way, with that kind of thinking, with right judgment, to be able to learn how to judge righteous judgment, to learn mercy and how to be merciful to others, to learn the various attributes that come from God and God's spirit on a spiritual plane.

...that you should show forth the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; which in times past were not a people but now are the people of God. Who were we before we came to the point of baptism? Because we all have to make choices. Some grew up in the Church, have opportunity to learn certain things within the Church, but everyone has to make that choice in time, if indeed God gives them that choice. **...which in times past were not a people but now are the people of God, which had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy,** because God is calling and drawing and so He gives great mercy when He does that. He gives so much to be able to be brought to a point of baptism, and then on.

Verse 11—Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, how we should see ourselves. We're not very many in this world. I think of the Church today compared to what it was thirty years ago. We're puny in size. With God it's not a matter of size. I think of in the first 4,000 years only one or two here and there, throughout 4,000 years of time. Incredible, until the Church, until the Church came along in 31 A.D., and God began to work with far more from that point forward. Before that it was "onesies" and "twosies" all the way through the Old Testament.

So, **I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims.** They were far more than we are, but we still are in comparison to the size of this earth and the numbers of people that exist. **...abstain from fleshly lusts,** or desires of this world, of human nature. God says fight against that, abstain from them, keep away from them. They'll destroy you. They'll lead you astray, especially in this age of technology. You have to fight. It's in front of you all the time, this, the evil of this world and how the world is so demented and twisted and distorted and wants to pull your thinking way from soundness of thinking. **...which war against the soul.** It means what it says, which war "life." It's not about some kind of a "soul." It's a word for life: "Which war against your life, your spiritual life," that which God is creating and molding and fashioning within you. So what's out here in the world and the way of the world and the way of selfishness in this world is a battle. If you don't

see it as a battle then you succumb to it and you're giving in to it and it'll lead you astray in time if you don't keep fighting against it. Even if you don't fully conquer it you have to keep at the battle! That's what it's about. It's about you staying at the battle. It's a war that doesn't end until you're changed or until you die and then you have the ability to be changed later on whenever God resurrects you. But until that time, it's a war. And if we don't recognize the world around us in that way it'll get a hold of you.

That's why you get on your knees and you cry out to God for help to continually be delivered from it. It's an ongoing war, not to be taken lightly! If you see it in any other context, if you see your life day by day in any other context, you're missing the mark. You need to see it as a war, the greatest war that's ever been fought, indeed.

...**having your conversation**, which it's a word for conduct, but generally (oftentimes, I should say) it comes out in what we say because that's what happens with wrong conduct. In times it just comes out of the mouth too. ...**having your conduct honest among the gentiles**. Well, it just means "non-believers." It's not a matter of race. It's not a matter of Israel and the rest of the world, or Judah and the rest of the world. It has nothing to do whatsoever with any of that. It's about everyone else out here that has never been called by God or hasn't been called yet by God. So, "having your conduct honest among the non-believers of the world, that don't see what you see yet." ...**that whereas they may speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold**, that they don't get and can't acknowledge, because they're not even fighting. They have power working with them that they don't even know at times. And just like Christ, we should be able to say, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing." They don't know the power that exists out there that causes them to react and act toward you the way they do. They're stirred up. They don't understand why. They're in bondage to it. They don't know who you are. They don't know who you are. God does. We know each other.

But notice what it says, **which they shall behold...** They're going to see these things, your good works, how you respond. You don't respond in kind like they do. You don't do the things they do. You're different. You're different. You should stand out like a sore thumb to them in one respect, that you're so different. In other words, it should be so clear, not that you're a sore thumb.

So that they may glorify God in the day of visitation. What does that mean? It means when their minds are finally opened, whenever that is, whether it be in the Great White Throne or if they're blessed to live on into the Millennium. Especially for us, some are going to have the opportunity to live on in the Millennium and when they come to understand how they treated you because you're a child of God, because you fought in this world, in this age, they're going to feel pretty low. They're going to be able to see themselves. They're going to be able to see what they did. It's not going to be a pleasant thing for them at that moment of awakening and then that will turn into a matter, once they recognize that nothing is held against them, nothing, they'll glorify God in that day. They'll be so thankful to understand there is a different way of life than what they're

accustomed to and how people treat each other. Truly! And they'll embrace it so that "they will glorify God in the day of visitation."

That's a big responsibility upon God's people. That puts things in a framework of something that we should be able to see and recognize and think about every one who ever crosses our path and how we treat them and how we think toward them and how we react toward them about various things that they do against us, or might do against us, or say against us, or whatever it might be against you.

Notice what it says, because it doesn't stop. This is powerful, what God is revealing. **Submit. Be subject to yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.** Submit. Yield to it. It doesn't mean its right. It doesn't mean its fair. It doesn't mean it's just, because none of it is. This world is not right before God but there are certain things there for a purpose in a physical carnal world. So it was from the beginning and why God said to be subject to certain things because of the world that had to exist for 6,000 years in the way that it did, and then how we should interact with it as God's people with God's spirit.

What I have just said is a sermon. What I have just said tells the entire story of what's happened over 6,000 years. What I've told you I could stop at right now because it's told you everything. It truly has. It's a matter of God's spirit. It's a matter of understanding, a matter of seeing and grasping it saying, "Isn't that incredible." Be subject. There are things you're to be subject to that aren't right. There are things you're to yield to and submit to, not to fight against, not to resist, not to speak against, not to do as the world does toward one another, but to learn to live with it in the best way that you can, which is God's way. You will learn through that process by learning how to treat people God's way. You can grow and will grow powerfully spiritually with God's spirit in a way in an environment that otherwise you really can't grow to the same depth.

What the Church over the past 2,000 years, and those whom God has called over the past 6,000 years have been able to grow in, because of the world around them is incredibly unique. There are opportunities and abilities in that that God has given that are going to be different than the 1,100 years that follow because the world's not going to be the same and the purpose isn't going to be the same. The way has been paved to make it so much easier for people to choose God's way and to come into God's family. But this first 6,000 years, not so. That's why sometimes we don't grasp what awaits us because of what we've been able to learn and have molded within us in this age, and whatever time you have before Christ returns to live on into the Millennium, those opportunities of what can be molded and fashioned within you are immense and powerful and God can use them in profound ways in the future if you yield to the process, if you will make the changes in your life that you need to make, to grasp a hold of what God offers you.

Because, you see, I agonize sometimes because I see some, and too many, who don't do that, who aren't doing it to the degree they need to, to latch a hold of what God is offering and to seek to make changes in your life. To get behind this thing, says it all, frankly, if we really grasp that one

on a physical plane and a spiritual plane. Because if we see it spiritually that means a lot more that will make the physical fall into place, but that's something you have to receive from God and God's spirit. I can't give it to you. No one can. You have to cry out for it and ask God for help.

So, "Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Does that mean they're all right? I hope you understand, not by any measure, but it's a matter of something greater. It's a matter of peace. It's a matter of a way to have a measure of peace in life God's way. But we don't have it yet, not the kind of peace we seek.

...whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as unto those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing, in other words, doing what is good in life. It's about God's way of life, the way you live, how you treat people, how you respond to people, how you think about people, how you treat them, **you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.** Think it's going to happen right away? Ah, it goes back to "in the day of visitation." In the day of visitation, that's the only time they're going to be able to see and grasp what they have experienced in your life by how you have interacted with them in life, whether it be your neighbor, your boss, your fellow employee that you work with side-by-side, whatever it is in life.

Verse 16—as free, and not using your liberty as a cloak, in other words, to hide, of maliciousness, in other words, for the wrong purpose and the wrong reasons. We live right before God because it's right, **but as the servants of God,** because we serve God because God is first and so we live a certain way of life. We seek to live a certain way of life toward others.

Honor all, show honor to all, respect. The place I was for three years, a big thing for a lot of them was a matter of showing respect. If you don't learn to show respect to one another and treat each other properly you're going to learn the hard way and there are some people in there that just were stupid, dumb, and exceedingly selfish and didn't show respect to others, and it was quite a training area for some of them just in physical life alone. That's where I learned something in a deeper way myself about this drama, drama, drama. We have no excuse in life for not being able to get along with someone next to us, especially in God's Church! If you see an environment like that and live in an environment like that you learn some things in a profound way. We are without excuse with God's spirit to not be able to respect others, to show proper respect, which is the way it should be. That should be natural, but I didn't realize, I didn't see how it was in the world, how people thought about some of those things themselves to the same degree about an environment like that, and what it meant to them.

Now, a lot of things being done wrong there, in that respect, but when I come back out and I see people who can't get along in marriage, when I know how to live in a little corner cubicle (which wasn't hard, wasn't hard for me). It doesn't matter. You have your little space in life. Respect other people's little space in life because if you can get eight people in one little room and you can all learn how to get along and how to solve problems and work together in certain things, why

can't someone with God's spirit do that all the time in every segment of their life? No matter how someone else treats you because they're not always going to treat you well. Some are going to want to do you in. How do you respond to that? How do you treat them? How do you act toward them? There's a time to be assertive in life, but there are times to use great wisdom and God's spirit to love others because they don't understand because they don't grasp.

That's why I'm candidly telling you, in one respect, because of knowledge or things that God gave to me and showed to me, that by the time I got out, and His cleansing of the temple, I have far less patience. Now, I'm patient with a lot of things and merciful, strive to be. God has given me that because some things should be dealt with in certain situations far more quickly, in some cases far more severely, but I don't try to decide those things myself. I look to God Almighty to lead and guide and direct me, to know when and how to deal with various things in life. I know how it works now with me because that's how God works with me. So I wait on His timing, but as far as understanding is concerned, just say it clearly as I can, there is absolutely no excuse in life for anyone who has God's spirit to not show respect to others around them, to not be respectful and loving and caring. Yet there are husbands and wives who can't get along. Now, I'm talking about two who have - are supposed to have - God's spirit in their life. I'm not talking about situations where there is one mate in the Church and one who is not. Those are unique in themselves and you learn how to live within that environment, but you do it God's way with love, patience, and mercy, and respect, showing respect and love.

So God's been cleaning up the Church and there are still things that are being cleaned up out here. There are those kinds of situations where people can't get along in God's Church. I have no qualms about asking them to leave, no qualms whatsoever because this body is to be a clean Body when Jesus Christ returns, and if two people can't get along in God's Church, or brethren can't get along in God's Church then I have no qualms about asking them to leave. Like at the Feast of Tabernacles that happened and some that cursed at other brethren. Cursed! How do you think I'm going to respond to that as God's servant? I'm going to come down like a tonne of bricks. It might not happen immediately, but it's coming. In God's time it comes. There is no place for that. How can we ever get to a point in life, in our lives in God's Church, where people don't get along and work and fight to get along and go to each other and say, "I'm sorry." And if I have to, as an apostle, write a letter to someone and tell them, "This is what you need to do and this is what you need to tell the other person." I should never have to tell someone what they need to tell the other person, about where they were wrong and what they did wrong toward a brother. When I have to write it out word by word and spend time in paragraphs and paragraphs and paragraphs and tell someone, "This is what you did wrong. This is your sin. Now you need to go and tell the other person what you did wrong and that you're sorry, if you are, for what you did if you want to come back. Otherwise, you have no place in this Body." Is that much to ask? Why should I even have to say it? Why should I even have to spell it out?

I'm not sure why we got to that point, but it has to do with what Peter said about how we are to treat one another. Sometimes we just don't get it in life and if we think we're in God's Church and we're treating someone else wrong and that we can say bad things to others or that we have a right to hold something against someone else, we're so sadly mistaken and so missing the mark you need to get on your knees and just cry out to God for great mercy and forgiveness of sin.

Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it's to the king as supreme, or unto governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the praise of them that do well.* For so it is the will of God, that with well doing, or doing what is good in life, in other words, before God, you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. So if you are being done wrong, do right. Do right toward them.

Verse 16—as free, not, again, using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all. Love the brotherhood. We should honor, show respect toward all, but even more so here the Body of Christ, the Church of God. We should love them! We should show love to them. What does that mean? I shouldn't have to tell anyone. For someone to get upset with, for someone to be mad at, for someone to raise their voice toward someone else, let alone curse, but even to raise a voice at someone else because things didn't go their way or the way they thought they should? Even if you've been done wrong, what right is there to respond wrong when we have God's spirit? Because we have no right to ever do anything apart from showing the virtues and the praises, the moral excellency of God Almighty through our life. That's what we're held accountable for.

Fear God. We should fear to go against His word. We should fear not to use His holy spirit that He's made available to us, that Jesus Christ was put up where he was, and was nailed as he was, and had a spear rammed in his side as he was, was beaten as he was, suffered as he did so that we can have what we have. To treat others, to live God's way of life, to have God's spirit within us, and then if we don't do it, you think there should be a fear of God to take the sacrifice of Jesus Christ lightly? Because that's what people do when they get upset with someone else in the Body. "Love the brotherhood; fear God." Fear not to do that, to be right toward others.

Honor the king. Servants, *be subject to your masters.* When it says, "honor the king," too, it's a matter of a respect that should be shown in life towards others. That's why we sometimes and have to be cautioned about what we say about others. Be careful when you talk about others in leadership and so forth. **Servants, *be subject to your masters with all fear.*** Does that mean your master, whoever it is, your employer, whoever it is, does that mean they're always right in how they treat others and what they say to you or how they treat you? It has nothing to do with that. It has nothing to do with that, but it has everything to do with you and how you are to others and toward them, even when they do very wrong. See, that's the point, to be subject; there is so much learned by being in a position of subjection to someone else, of being submissive, yielded to someone else. There is so much that can be learned in that kind of an environment that you won't learn in any other way. So God tells us we're to learn these things, we're to grasp these

things, and to understand God's purpose and why He tells us it should be this way, because we're to be different. We're to be a light. We are to show forth the praises, the virtues, the moral excellency of God. We're not to show forth our carnal human nature, which is just pretty easy to do, which is the most likely thing we're going to do in situations where things are done wrong toward us, said wrong toward us. How do you respond? How do you react? How do you think? How do you think?

...not only to the good and gentle. When someone's good to you and gentle toward you it's much easier to be subject to them, but when they're not and when they're wrong and when they've come at you you're still to respond in a specific manner that reflects God Almighty and His holy spirit of love, of understanding, of mercy, of patience. Most of all that thing of understanding, again, "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they're doing." **...not only to the good and gentle,** speaking of employer, someone who might be over you, **but also to the froward,** which is a word that means "the crooked, the perverse." God still says you have no right. Even within an employee/employer relationship you have no right to say, to talk down, to condemn before other employees, to attack, to do the things that human beings do, in whatever environment it is. Have you ever lived in that environment? I know you have. When's the last time you've been in one? Was it maybe yesterday when you were in an environment where people like to talk about others? So often it's about others who are over them, or whatever it might be, and it's like everyone getting on this bandwagon. In a community they do this. In certain places they do this.

It's just a way of life. There are people who like to gossip and talk about others and tear down wherever they can. It makes them feel better. What an insane thing that people do sometimes, just tear down and talk about and put people in a bad light and try to make yourself look better. So much of it just involves a lot of lying and everything else that goes on in human life. Look out here today, things that people say about each other. It's just a bunch of lying!

I think of this thing where they call it "fake news" now a days. It's gone worldwide. It's gone viral! I was watching something the other day and they were talking about this being a problem in different parts of the world now and they're addressing things having to do with fake news. I wonder where that started. It's a big thing right now. It's like this is the "in" thing to talk about fake news because the reality is a lot of times there are things put out there that are just false because people just want to destroy and hurt and tear down and find fault. There's no desire to try to understand. There is no desire to be kind and patient, or whatever. What a sick world!

Anyway, so not only to the good and gentle, but also to the crooked and the perverse. And that, just what it does for us if we see it, is a desire to cry out to God, know that others go through this in the world in a far worse way than what you do. Because they do! It doesn't take me very long to look around various parts of the world and I think about things that people are going through, the suffering that's out there, the evil that's out there. We are so blessed in this country. We are so blessed. We have it so good, even though it's still not God's way by any measure. We know

what's coming, but these things help us to long for it that much more, God's Kingdom to come and to get this world turned right side up, to stop the suffering, because no country, no leader, no group of people can change what's going on out here. They can't reverse the course of the nature of mankind.

That's why Mr. Armstrong was very popular with a lot of world leaders. He put things in simple terms that they could understand about people, about selfishness, about how and why people react the way they do toward each other. They knew he knew what he was talking about. They knew that. He put it in simple terms that they could understand because that was his job, his function.

It goes on to say, **For this is thankworthy.** Not a good word. It's "grace." It's the word for grace in scripture, if you understand what grace is. Grace with God and what God's grace is all about toward us and how our grace should be toward others. It's showing us that not only should we receive the mercy, the favor, the kindness, the love of God, but that we ourselves are to reflect that and live that toward others, the mercy, patience, love, kindnesses, tender heartedness toward others around us. That is our task. That is the moral excellency, if you will, the character, the virtue of God Almighty that He has given to each one of us, that He says we're to live toward others.

For this is grace, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, endure the things that are wrong toward you because you live in a world that just is wrong anyway, so not only is it going to happen, just expect it to happen. That way it's not a surprise when it comes knocking on your door. Deal with it God's way because that's what we're charged with. That's what we're charged with, to show forth, to respond in the moral excellency, character, and the virtue, the mind of God toward them. Just as much as we received it from God it's to live through us toward them as a light, though they don't understand it. But in the day of visitation God says, that, that's the purpose. Because if we don't do it can you imagine, in the day of visitation someone says, "You were in that Church? I can't believe you were in that Church! I remember you talking this way. I remember you doing 'such and such.' Duh! I don't get it!" Anyway. It wouldn't help them too much. Matter of fact, it would hurt them so much. You know why? Because then they're not going to be as zealous and desirous of change in their life and they're going to think they can do things that they saw you do in your life, you know, in the way you talked and the way you treated them, the way you respond to them. "Well, they did that in the Church." Do you think people don't think that way?

This is grace, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief suffering wrongfully. Do you think you're going to suffer for what is right? Some people do. It even brings that up in a moment, but if it's wrong, then there is still a right way of responding and you're to take it and respond in a specific way, in God's way.

For what glory is it if, when you are buffeted... It's a word that means, "harshly treated." It's a Greek word that means to be "beaten or struck" by someone. That's what the word means. So it can happen physically. It can happen verbally. It can happen in whatever way it comes toward you. So someone strikes out at you - that's the point - harshly so, unjustifiably so, wrongfully, lying, whatever it might be about you, toward you. **For what glory is it when you are buffeted for your faults,** for something you have done wrong and you're corrected for it, struck for it, corrected for it, **you shall take it patiently?** In other words, where is the grace of God in that because if you've done wrong? You just need to take it up as ownership, "Yeah, I did wrong," and repent of it and say you're sorry to someone else, in the world, whatever it might be. "Yeah, you're right. I should have done it a different way." "Yeah, you're right. I shouldn't have responded that way." "Yes, you're right, I didn't do what was right at all. I'm sorry. I'm wrong." Take ownership of your own sins, your own faults, your own problems. So God says, where? There's no grace in that. You're just doing what you should be doing anyway because you're just wrong if you did something wrong toward someone else.

But if when you do well, when you do what is right because you're living God's way of life, **and suffer for it,** you take it patiently, **this is grace...** It's not the word "acceptable." It's the same word. That's what grace is **with God,** because you have to exercise certain things then, mercy, kindness, patience, kindness, whatever it might be toward someone else. And of all things of all times, we all, I think, have experiences, whether it be in family, on the job, whatever it might be, of things where people say things about you, toward you, or whatever. How do you respond? People who have left us, people who once walked to God's house side-by-side and counsel blended sweet that stabbed you in the back several times over. What do you do? How do you respond? How do you think toward them? I feel sorry for them because of what they've done to themselves, of what they have given up. I don't look for them to have to suffer and to hurt for what they're going to go through, but I know that they are because God holds that in a very strong and profound way in the Church of God, how we treat one another, how we act toward one another.

Verse 21—Powerful. Powerful. Powerful. For even hereunto were you called. This has everything to do with your calling and how you're to live your life. God didn't call us in the Great White Throne. He didn't call us during the Millennium. He called us in a time when the world is upside down. He called us at a time when the world is fully away from God's way of life and going the opposite direction, when Satan is the god of this world, as it says in scripture. That's when you are called. So how, what are we supposed to do? **For even hereunto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us;** you learn through suffering. He lived God's way of life perfectly so and suffered mightily and because of that became a faithful High Priest in a plane that we still don't really grasp fully, that you will grow in as time continues to go forward, that you'll learn more and more and more what that means as you grow. **Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps,** meaning you're going to suffer in this world. This is a part of your calling. This is what you've been called to, and because you've

been called to it, expect to suffer, expect that the world isn't going to treat you fairly or right. Expect that it's going to attack you. Expect it and respond properly to every situation that comes your way, whether it be in the job, whether it be by neighbors, whatever it might be. Don't respond in kind, respond in God's way.

Who did no sin... Do we sin when things come our way like that, in how we think toward someone else and how we react and respond and treat someone else, what we say to someone else, even if it be someone in the Body of Christ? What do we do? How do we respond? **Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.** No guile whatsoever. No bitterness. He meant what he said when he said, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing." If you can respond that way all the time then you're doing well and you're doing what is right before God because that should be your response.

They don't know what they're doing. They're caught up in things. They're caught up in a time that the world has never been so stirred up by a spirit world. There has never been a time like it is right now. The spirit world, whether you grasp it or not, has never been stirred to the point and level that it is today, never, never has been like it is today! The primary reason is because they know much, much more about things that God is doing now than they ever have. I don't believe they knew until 2005 and afterwards in sermons that followed later on, certain things about what God was going to do with them and to them, for Satan to even understand what was said in the beginning. Because the Church never even understood that until recent time, about what was going to happen to Satan himself. The Church never believed, in that respect, during Philadelphia, nor Laodicea, that Satan would have an end, because anything that had spirit in it was thought to live eternally. Not so. God revealed that to the Church at a specific period in time. What do you think that does to beings who have not known that, and all of a sudden they do? They've been around long enough when God says something they know something's going to come to pass because it talks about them fearing. They don't fear to the point of wanting to obey, but they know when God says certain things that God's going to do it. If God says He's going to destroy you, you're going to be destroyed. So you think they're stirred up more than ever before because of that? Because they are!

...who, when he was reviled (abused) wasn't abusive in return. He didn't respond back in kind. He didn't respond back in the way that human beings do, with selfishness, justification, whatever it might be. He had power available to him and he knew it. He knew it! He knew he could call down legions of angels if he wanted to, and he didn't do it. You know why? He knew it wasn't God's will. There are things happening in this end-time that aren't going to take place because they aren't God's will. When it becomes God's will they will take place and God will inspire certain things to be done in a specific manner and a specific way that are written about.

Verse 23—Again, When he was reviled (abused) didn't revile back, wasn't abusive in return. **When he suffered, he didn't threaten.** He could have. He didn't. How do we respond sometimes as human beings to various things that happen around us? How do we respond to some of the

simplest of things - might be by a mate, a child, a parent, or within the body, a brother in the Body, or sister. The word "brethren" is used in the Bible spiritually, on a spiritual plane, because we're all brethren, in that respect, on a spiritual plane. We don't call each other that, though some sometimes do.

I'll just plug that in there so that you know that we don't speak that way in the Church because that's in the Protestant world. We don't use "thee's" and "thou's" because that's in the Protestant world and that doesn't make anyone religious. So there are some things we even actually stay away from because the way of the world, that we don't want to be seen as the way of the world. God makes sure of that. That's why even some of our patterns of prayer have changed in time because God wants us to be different than the world and to learn from that process. So there are things He's inspired to be done even within the Body, within the Church that have changed in that respect, of the way they were done before as a matter of being separate from the world, different from the world. We understand that, but the world doesn't.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. No matter what the context is. No matter what anyone else does. There are things you're to be subject to. That's the point, even when they're wrong. So often because of the world they're just going to be wrong. So how do you respond to that? How do you deal with that? You have to do it God's way and God says there's a certain way of doing it: "Should live unto righteousness." **By whose stripes you are healed. For you were a sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your lives.** It's powerful.

Going on **Chapter 3:1**. Because, you see, man put chapters and verses in and the subject doesn't stop. The lesson continues on in the exact same context of what is being given about grace, about how we are to live toward one another, how we are to act, why we've been called. **Likewise, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any do not obey the word they also may, without the word, be won by your conduct,** or by the conduct of the wives, conversation, conduct, whichever. It's about conduct, primarily. Powerful. Why? Why did Peter say this? Because of the world, because of the way of the world, because of what started with Adam and Eve. There is a way for things to function even though they're not God's way. Only those who are called by God can live God's way. Only those who are given God's spirit can live God's way toward one another. That's why there are scriptures that get very specific about how husbands and wives are to treat each other. If they do that there is none of this in their marriage anyway. If they do what God says they're living something on a spiritual plane anyway and this has no place in their life of a man striving to be over his wife, or a wife having to live the way she does or has been expected over so long a period of time to live. It'll be natural in how they love each other, not a matter of the husband expecting her to be subject to him, not a matter of her feeling like she has to act that way either, because they're both living God's way toward each other.

But to what depth and degree people in the Church have grasped that? Well, that's varied through time. That's varied by the power of God's spirit and the changes He's brought about in their life

and their thinking, but God is giving us so much more right now because of where we are. Because the reality is, the bottom line is, the simplicity of it all is, the present truth is its being changed. We're just at the end of 6,000 years now and now it can be changed. Before this it couldn't because of the world, because of the way of the world, and because of how God would be working in people's lives. Because there'd be times when one is called and the other isn't. There are times when both are called. That's an awesome thing. Sometimes both can be called and one responds and one doesn't. One lives what they should and the other doesn't. So always things to learn in life, to grow in in life, but there is a certain way to think and to respond and to live up to this point in time that God has given even within the Church, even from the time of the early Church and on all the way through Philadelphia and all the way through Laodicea as well. We're just at the end now of 6,000 years and God is putting a stop to the things that are abused and misused in life. Mankind has misused and abused authority and power from the beginning. That's why everything is at the point of now being changed, everything having to do with power and authority in life.

So it goes on to say, **that they may, without the word, be won by the conduct of the wives.** We took that, at one point in time, almost as being a matter that if a wife responds in a certain way to an abusive husband, even if he's abusive, and responds to that in a Godly manner, in a submissive manner always that, because of that he might be called. It didn't say that anywhere, but that was kind of the thought because of what it says here. They're only going to be called if God calls them. One can only be called if God specifically calls them. There are times because of, of being separated in the sense of one being called in a family, even for children, as we've talked about, that a person has an ability to perceive and understand certain things and grasp certain things to a certain level, but it doesn't mean that they have the ability to receive yet God's spirit, to be able to come to the point of baptism in their life yet to receive the impregnation of God's spirit. That's a different plane, something totally separate. We may revisit some of that in time, what God has given us over just the past few years.

So what was the context of how you treat others? "In the day of visitation." Whenever God does call them that's their day of visitation. Whether it be in this age, which is rapidly running out and becoming less and less, or whether it be in the Millennium, or in the Great White Throne, because that's in God's time, the day of visitation. The day of visitation is fully about when someone is drawn by God's holy spirit to be called, to be given the opportunity for baptism. This context didn't change. That's my point. Everything being stated here goes back to everything that's been talked about before this by Peter. And so is this because the subject has worked into situations where employers or employees, you're to be subject to your employer, to your "master," to the one who's over you, your boss, whatever it might be as a matter of time when people lived and what they understood by the different words that are used. It means something profound to us in this age because of how things have changed so much in the world around us, but again, things to be lived by. Then it breaks it down to the most basic of things in life, marriage, husbands and wives, family.

While they behold your chaste, from a word that means "holy," because it has something to do with the reality that God's spirit has to be involved in it. In other words, your response and how you react toward them, how you treat them, well, that's going to depend upon God's spirit, isn't it, and your use of God's spirit? That's what it's talking about. So if they see that then, again here, **That they may behold your chaste**, "sacred" is another word that's sometimes used here, **conversation/conduct**, because of God's spirit being in it, **with fear**, because you lived a certain way of life. They don't get it now. There are situations in life ever since I've been in the Church - there were those who have never gotten it - but because of someone living a certain way, just as an employee to an employer, or employees to other employees, fellow employees in a company, because you treated them a certain way and you didn't treat them as other employees did, you know, when there's a conflict or a problem, you treated them in a Godly manner, when you were wrong you went and told them, "Hey, I'm sorry about that the other day. I was wrong in what I had to say." They're not used to that in a jobsite, you know, you're apologizing for something that you said.

Have you ever had to do that? I've had to do it. I've had to do it at camp. There are times that sometimes some things get to a certain level and you realize, "Whoops! Screwed up on that one! I need to go make that right." They're not used to that, especially there, let alone in the world, employees. They have a certain respect there of something that's different. They don't know how to respond so often to things like that. Incredible. It's just the way we should be because of God's spirit, even when it's a matter of going to someone and saying, "Hey, I was wrong and I want to make it right." Whatever it takes. It's hard for human beings to do that.

Whose adorning, let it not be that which is outward in the plaiting (braiding) of the hair, the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel (outer garments). Some have taken this in a wrong way. It's like there are certain thing you do too much of and you shouldn't be focused on that. It's giving an analogy of something here. You better have on outer garments. Is it wrong to wear gold? No! It's fine. If you like it, you enjoy it, fine. Nothing wrong with it, okay?

Making your hair look nice? That's nice! That's an adornment for a woman that makes her beautiful. We're going to go into some verses here a little bit later, but there are some profound things said about women and the very fact of the hair that God has given to them. It's a power that God says is there. It's a sign of something in a profound way, it says, even to the spirit world. Awesome! Even to the spirit world.

So again here, people can take things and read things in different ways and not grasp the context of what is being spoken of here. It's not saying that these are wrong. It's just saying that this can't be your focus in life by itself, because this is what people do. This is what men do. I want to have on outer garment. I don't have to worry about braiding my hair, but men take care of their hair. Well, hopefully most do anyway to whatever degree we can. But women, even more so, which is a beautiful thing. It's a beautiful thing that God has created and made. Far more than what we really even grasp.

But *let it be the hidden person of the heart*, "Hidden man of the heart." Anyway, you understand how scriptures are quoted sometimes here, but it's the inner person, who you are. That's what God says, *let it be what's inside, in that which is not corruptible of a meek and quiet spirit*. What's wrong with a man having that? But it's talking in this context here about a certain condition, situation, because of what started 6,000 years ago that is even more needful for a women to live in such adversity. God says be subject to it because that's best for you, because that's the way it is. It's the way of the world. It's the present evil world we live in. It's not going to be used right. Being in subjection to that is not the way it was meant to be from the very beginning. It wasn't meant to be that way, but because it has been, because of the world, God has allowed it to exist and be in a certain way and we have to function within that.

As much as, even some people who criticize Mr. Armstrong for doing so, because of the way it was in the South back in the 50's when they began to meet at Big Sandy. That's in eastern Texas and east Texas has had great problems when it comes to race and prejudice and evil and KKK. Matter of fact, there's a minister in this area, because he being white and invited black members into his home had a cross burned on his yard in Beaumont, Texas when he lived there before he became the minister here. That wasn't that long ago. That wasn't that long back. That wasn't back in the fifties or the sixties; it was much later because it's so rampant in that part of the world still to this day. Sick people. Sick minds. Sick prejudice that exists there in some of those areas that go all the way up to Louisiana.

So because of that, and because of the environment, and because of the community there were certain things done even at the Feast, and because of people who would still be coming into the Church, and because of the community and other things around there, there was still a separation. Sadly so, but it still happened. I mentioned this, I think, in the last sermon, or the sermon before that. Some can find fault with that, but because of the world and the society they lived in around them at that point in time to do anything different would have caused such harm to people in the Church and to the Church that it was better to work within the framework of what existed in those communities in that area than to go against it at that time. So it's been for 6,000 years. What are you to have done, women, but to do exactly what God said and exactly what God inspired the apostles to tell them, that the husband is the head of the home as Christ is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church and to be submissive to that for a purpose and for a reason. Because it's man's world. It's the world of mankind, if you will, and very much man's world, sadly to say. But the bottom line again is, I'll just tell you bluntly as an apostle, that's what God is changing. It doesn't exist anymore in God's Church. On the contrary, God has shown us far more.

As much as when Christ came along and began to show the spirit and intent of the law God is revealing this now even far more so how He is working in the Church and how He is going to work in the world in the future. The authority and the only authority that exists in life is that which is spiritual through the Church. Meaning if a woman is ordained, on a spiritual plane, it's the way

the authority comes. Does it have to be a big deal in a family? No! No more than it should be if a husband and wife are both in God's Church and live the way that other scriptures talk about how they should live toward each other, and if they live right toward each other, the matter of a wife being subject to the husband is never an issue, never comes up; it's never a part of it, period, ever.

I hope we grasp that and I hope we grasp what God is showing here through Peter and putting in a context of how the world was to live and why it was better to be that way. For if it'd been any other way what would have happened? What would have happened to people unnecessarily so, or to people within the Church unnecessarily so? Great persecution. Instead, God gave a measure of peace in a very un-peaceful world. The best peace you can have in life is to live God's way of life toward all others, even to the perverse and the cruel. That's what God shows. It's how we live towards others that count, and how we think, then, in our minds toward others and toward God and about ourselves. The peace that we're able to have, the peace of God we're able to have is dependent upon our relationship with God and the power of His spirit that works in our lives.

We're going to go ahead and go through the rest of these verses next week because all this is in a context that sets the stage, in essence, for some of the things that Paul gave. Some of the things that Paul gave have never been understood by God's Church. That's why I find it immensely exciting, of some of the things that he has revealed and why he gave what he gave that we can only see in a context of what is given to us. It's kind of like until God comes along and shows something you can't see it. It's like when we had the trinity. God showed right away to Mr. Armstrong this holy spirit is not a person; it's the power of God, but He didn't show about Jesus Christ, and because of that you work within the framework of what you can see at that point in time. The only conceivable answer is, then, if God doesn't show it to you, there are certain things that are taken about his life that are misread in scripture. You can't see the full story until God reveals it.

So it's been with the story of women and why God has said some of the things He does through the apostles to the Church. I find awesomely exciting that God is revealing these things.

So we'll continue on next Sabbath with a continuation of looking at some of these things. We will get into some of the things that Paul begins, or does teach, has taught.