

Today is *Part 2* of a new sermon series entitled, *God's Form of Governing*, and as it was mentioned in *Part 1* this new series is a follow up to a series that was covered a year ago that was entitled, *Lessons From A Ministry*.

One of the most important and more powerful means that God has used in the Church to teach about His form of governing is through the relationship of the Church to His ministry, and that of the ministry to His government, and likewise, the other as well, because it's about government. God has given this to us in the Church. I mentioned that ever since I've been in the Church, the sermons that are the strongest in my mind are what Mr. Armstrong gave having to do with the subject of government. It is one of the most important lessons that a person can learn, especially to understand how God works in life, why He works in the way that He does and so forth. Because it's about God. It's about how God works in our life through the power of His holy spirit. It's about how God works in our life to give us that flow on a regular basis and our response to Him. It's about how we govern our lives, what we yield ourselves to, and what governs our life, and that we come into greater unity with God's spirit and God's power and God's might.

Yet as I think about Mr. Armstrong and the things he had to say, it's one of the biggest problems that ever existed in the Church. It's been government, because that's when things haven't gone well, because of government, because of people not living as they should, people not yielding to God as they should, and people not following some of the most basic principles concerning government in God's Church and that dumbfounds me because it's the first thing that's accredited to Mr. Armstrong in the sense of the 18 Truths. It's the first one of those 18 Truths that's mentioned. It's about government. It's so important and there's a reason why that is number one. That isn't a matter of coincidence or chance.

I think of one that I saw recently write in and make comment about how, basically, what was given in the "Worldwide News" after Mr. Armstrong's death and the 18 Truths wasn't according to the sermon that Mr. Armstrong had given before that and it wasn't in order and they left some things out. Well, that's their opinion and their opinion is way off base because there are things that God inspires and gives to His people and He does so in a profound way. God's in charge. As God was establishing things in the Church and has established things in the Church there are things that are important for us in the future that God establishes, and that is one of them. And there, again, is a reason why government is listed as number one because it's the major thing people fail. All who have ever left God's Church have gone against God's government, have gone against God, and they don't understand that.

And so we need to understand how God works in our lives. That's why it was mentioned early on that the foundation of all that is God's love. It's a matter of God's love. Everything that God does

is based on His form, His kind of love. Government is one of those things. Once we're in Elohim we don't have to worry about government because we're a part of it, we're a part in the sense of being in unity and oneness with God that will be there forever, from the point of time that we are a part of Elohim, from then on. It's just the way we will be because we are at one with God. God will always dwell in us and we will always dwell in God. We'll never be cut off or become weak as we do as human beings.

You know, sin cuts people off from God's spirit. There are times in your life, it doesn't matter how long you've been in God's Church, you will experience times when you're fully cut off from God's spirit because of sin, and until you repent, unless or until, that flow will not begin again. There are times when we quench the flow of God's spirit! It's just like taking a hold of the umbilical cord of a baby, if you were to do such a thing, because we are as children, babies, if you will, unborn babies in that respect as far as God's Kingdom is concerned. We're begotten. We're growing, in a sense, within the womb spiritually, as Mr. Armstrong used to give those analogies, but we're not yet born into that family. We're not yet spirit in composition. So if you will look at that analogy of an umbilical cord that is feeding a baby, nourishing a baby, when we live a certain way or we don't strive to draw as close to God as we should or don't put God first in our life like we should, we can begin to quench the flow of that life blood into us, in the same respect.

So if you were to take the umbilical cord and begin to squeeze it, we do that in our lives by becoming lukewarm or Laodicean in spirit. We've had that problem for a long time in God's Church, in that sense, because it tries to come back because of the age we live in. You have to fight for this way of life. You have to be alert and on guard spiritually, but human nature has a tendency to let down. That's why we're admonished, "Don't quench God's spirit!" Because we do that as human beings. We quench the flow of God's spirit into our life. We can even get to a point where we literally, totally cut off the flow of God's spirit.

There is not a person in God's Church who hasn't experienced that, whether they know it or not, the cutting off of the flow of God's spirit. That's why it's so important to repent speedily after sin, to strive, to desire with all of your being to be close to God because you don't live long that way. You don't survive long that way. So there are physical analogies in life that we can learn from on a spiritual plane as well.

I think of all who have ever left, all who have ever gone against God's government and they are many. God has given us an arena in life, an arena in life within the Body of Christ, the Church of God, to learn one of the most important lessons that a physical human being must learn - God is number one. God is to always be first. That means He is to govern life and we have to yield our self to that. That's a choice that God has given to us. If we're not yielding to it then we're resisting that.

Oftentimes it manifests itself then in how people respond to the government that God has established within the Church, which is the ministry. So we're ever tried by those things in our

lives. Everyone has to be tried in those things as to how they think about it because how they think about it, how they think about certain situations is really how they're thinking toward God, but they don't grasp that so often.

So again, this series began by basically asking: Where does one begin when addressing such a broad subject that is focusing on God's form of governing? I've already answered that. The answer is to understand that the foundation and basis of God's form of governing, again, is a matter of His love, God's love.

I want to read a few more things before we continue on with the sermon from where we left off.

It was also stated that over the past year we have focused a great deal on God's kind of love. That's by design as well because God gives us the food we need as we need it. There is a reason why He's had us focus upon those things because if that isn't working in our life like it should be, like it needs to be, then this here becomes all the more important, a matter of God's form of governing that's working in our life or whether it isn't.

So we have been reminded over and over that we need to be focused upon the kind of love, that kind of love in our relationships and repent when we see we have exhibited our own selfish love. You know, the more God gives to me in understanding things about our human nature the more this thing about selfishness and the way we think naturally as human beings is so sick. It really is ugly. Even human love, if we look at it, is not a pretty thing because it's based on selfishness. It's so far away from God's kind of love, but that's where we begin to experience things about love and how we think about others. God uses that then to help us to come to grasp and understand a love that is far, far beyond that, because selfishness doesn't get it. Selfishness can't exist in God's Kingdom. It can't be there. So we have choices that we are to make, that we must make, and that's so much of what this life is all about. We have to repent when we have exhibited our own selfish love rather than God's love, because really, that's what we're to strive to live, yield our self to, and strive to live toward others - God's kind of love - in all of our relationships with one another.

The best of man's love is described in a Greek word "philia." I think of the word "Philadelphia," and I think of how people in the Church thought about Philadelphia. They thought that was it. Philadelphia, that's the greatest era because it's named "Philadelphia!" I think, "No, it's not. Don't you get it?" Philadelphia, philia, brotherly love, is not enough! It's not going to be in God's Kingdom! The kind of love we have in God's Kingdom is His love! Philia is lacking because it's selfish even if it's in the Church of God! It's a beautiful thing, in one respect, compared to the other human love, because at least people are striving to be a family and striving to get along as in a physical plane, but it's not enough. Philadelphia was not enough. Look at all the problems we've had in every era of God's Church, including Philadelphia. It wasn't the epitome of everything. It wasn't the maximum thing that God wanted us to grasp and comprehend. It's far beyond that...far beyond that.

I think of how people even after things happened they still wanted to be known as Philadelphians. Well, mainly because they were comparing that with Laodiceans, because Laodicean's, they were considered the lowliest of the low of all seven eras, in one respect. That's how people thought about it, thinking that Philadelphia was so much better. Selfishness is not better; it's still selfish.

So again, the best of man's kind of love is described in the word "philia," but that is still selfish, a selfish kind of love. If that's all one wants to attain to in this physical life, brotherly love, human love, then we miss the mark as far as the Church is concerned. We truly do. God's love is not inward or selfish. It's not that way at all! But it's outward. How often, if you ever heard Mr. Armstrong or read anything he wrote about this subject matter, when he talked about God's kind of love, and even when he talked to world leaders people felt that he wasn't preaching the truth or he wasn't preaching, giving a message to them that they felt that he should have been giving. They thought he had to go into scriptures or something when he talked to world leaders because if he didn't go into scriptures and have Bible type of jargon than he wasn't doing the job he should have been doing. That's a bunch of manure!

As we get closer to the days of Unleavened Bread here and Passover, you're going to experience more in life this year than you probably have in many other times past. I hope you understand why. I hope you recognize it when it's happening because there are beings out there that know things today that they didn't know a decade ago. That's because God has given certain things in the Church and they loathe and hate God's Church. They are stirred up because they have been allowed to start doing things in the world. They know what God says about that. Okay? They're already starting a certain kind of work that's leading to the end of an age and they know that they were not going to be able to do that. They know things that God has said. So they're stirred up very powerfully so.

So don't be shocked. Don't be dismayed. Don't be disgruntled as you approach Passover this year and there are battles out there and there are attacks taking place around you and toward you and toward others. It should be expected because that's the kind of world we live in and God allows those things to a certain degree. He is your High Tower. He is your Fortress. He is your strength. That's what you must look to right now as we go through this period of time because this is only going to become worse as we go forward, because they're not going to go out lightly and they have great power. That's why we should be so sobered and desire to be closer to God than ever before in our lives. There has never been a time like this in God's Church. There has never been a time when they've been so stirred up. They've always hated God's Church and God's people, with whomever God works. So we shouldn't be shocked that that anger and that bitterness and that evil on their part is stirred up greater than ever before. Because they are!

So anyway, these kinds of things happen to far too many people far too often. God allows that to a certain degree because we all learn from it. He warns us of the times we live in right now as we approach Passover season this year. Okay? And we're not to be shocked if certain things happen around you, but instead to pray to God, to seek God's help, to seek God's protection, to seek

God's favor, and for sure to make certain that you're striving to draw closer to Him, striving to be more at-one with Him, striving to repent more quickly.

Because there's still cleansing going on within the Church! There's still disfellowshipping that's taking place as this past week. Okay? It just goes on and on and on. When things like this happen I can't help but think how many are going to be left by the time we come to the return of Jesus Christ? How much do you want this way of life? How much are you willing to fight for it with all of your being and put God first in your life and fight against your own human nature and fight against wrong thoughts and wrong attitudes and feelings towards others? Quit disobeying God in your life in various things! Some who are doing that, you've already gone too far because I know this is not over and I know that some have become, a few have become so weak that I can't help them. If I can't help you by the words of God, and by counsel and so forth that I give, than how can I help? Because that has to do with your attentiveness and your hearing, as to whether you're listening to God.

We should be so moved to the core of our being if we're told something by God's apostle and we're not "listening." I can't make anyone "listen." I can't make anyone "hear." I can't give anyone the ability to "hear" and "listen." You know what it comes down to? It's your relationship with your God as to whether or not your spiritual hearing is sharp or not. I can talk until I'm blue in the face and it won't do a bit of good if someone's spiritual relationship with God isn't what it's supposed to be because then we're not going to hear on a spiritual plane like we need to.

So how many are going to be there? How many are going to be there at the return of Jesus Christ regardless of when it is, which I still believe is 2019? With all of my being, I do. But I believed the same about 2012. What does God have in store for us? I hope it's not more. I hope we don't have to go through more, because the longer we go, the fewer there will be unless God begins to call others at some moment here, which He will.

So again, there is so much to learn, brethren. There is so much to understand about where we are, what we're going through, and why a year later God is blessing us to go through a subject matter like this because it has to do with whether or not we're really living this way of life or not, and it reveals an outcome that will take place if we aren't, or if we don't.

So again, this philia love, the more you come to "see" the more you understand, as Mr. Armstrong used to say, there are two ways of life. Mr. Armstrong would talk about that and he talked about it to world leaders because they could understand some of that. They could grasp some of the things he was saying because of their relationships and what they see in their own countries, what they see in their own nations and the problems that they're overwhelmed with, and how to deal with matters in life, and he explained something simple. There are two ways of life, give and get, and he explained to them, but man's way is get. What can they get? What can they get? It's like today, talking about a new healthcare plan coming out. What can people get out of it and how are they going to get it? All the fighting and the bickering and the ideas that exist out there, it's a

mad house. It's a mad house, a sad, pathetic world. Then Mr. Armstrong would explain that God is not like that, that there's another kind of love that gives. It's outgoing, but it's not in man. Man's selfish by nature in taking in, inward, a selfish motive.

So God's love is not inward. It is not selfish. It's outward, away from self. That's the motive. It's about true giving. With human beings it always requires sacrifice. That's why God speaks in the way that He does about sacrifice because it's not the blood of bulls and goats that He wants, it's a different kind of sacrifice on our part toward Him, because God knows what we have to sacrifice to yield to Him. God knows what it is we have to sacrifice to live His way of life because our way of life is inward and selfish, His isn't. To live His, to seek to live it requires that we do something, and that's sacrifice our own selfish wants and desires. We have to give freely without the motive of getting something back in order to be giving in the first place. It's just free giving to the point of sacrifice, sacrificing our own nature that would rather get something back. Not easy! But therein is the battle in human life.

So again, God's love, the way of life that we're to learn to live, is one that is outgoing and giving, one that is sacrificing, agape. So it's through God's kind of love working in one's life in an outward, ordered, and orderly manner that we must embrace with all of our being and ask God for the help to do that and to live that toward others. It's not something that's just natural within us.

And finally, one other thing needs to be stated again. So how and where do we learn and grow in this kind of love? Again, it's about God's love. It's about that which is outward. How do we grow and live and learn that kind of love? Well, it's by physical family and it's in spiritual family. This is our arena of life. Who is it you come in contact with day-by-day? Most of all it starts out with our own physical family. On the weekend, on the Sabbath, we have a spiritual family that we're able to have fellowship with. Sometimes people are blessed to have that at other times of the week as well. That's where we learn it. We learn it on the job. We learn it wherever we are, with whomever we come in contact in the world around us day-by-day. So that's how we learn whether or not to live God's way of life. We hopefully desire to catch, to bring into check our own selfishness when we realize we're being selfish, when we realize we're doing something, thinking something.

I hate to use this example because people have to think I have issues with driving, but it's just when you're out there on the highway you're going to experience things. You're going to experience things of people doing dumb things with a vehicle that can take life. They don't understand how horrible that is, to be so foolish, to be so reckless in life. People don't care about anyone else. One of my pet peeves right now is looking over in a vehicle because they're starting to swerve over in your lane and you see that their heads down in their phone. They're texting! Or who knows what else they're doing on there, you know? They may be doing a massive search on the internet, I don't know. Whatever it is! But their minds are distracted from their driving. You think at 60, 70 miles per hour you can kill someone by stupid things like that, but people don't care! Do you care? Do you do stupid things like that? Have you ever texted while you're driving? If

you are, shame on you! It shouldn't happen! I've gotten to the point where I don't care who's calling - could be the White House - I don't care who's calling I don't want to hold a phone while I'm driving. People don't even think about things like that.

A lot of states, they're outlawing people driving and talking on their cell phone. You know a lot of states you rent a car and it says it all over the place. They want you to know when you go out and start driving out here it's against the law in this state and there's a \$250 fine or whatever it is if you're caught, or whatever. That type of thing. Well, you know if we're living God's way of life and we're considerate and desirous we should want to do what's better for others around us as well, not to do stupid things that could hurt somebody. You know, you can't take that back if you do something stupid and you swerve and cause someone's life to be snuffed out. Can you imagine living with that? But who cares, because people are selfish.

So this is where you begin to learn, evermore so, about God's form of governing. It's whether or not you're going to let these things govern your life. What do you let govern your life, as an example? And so again, it goes back to this thing too of something God has given to us within the Church in a very powerful way, and that has to do with the ministry. That's why it's been such a powerful tool and God's used it in a different way. The ministry today is nothing like it was in Worldwide yet people who have Worldwide experience have a difficult time sometimes when some things are adjusted and changed just for the sake of learning. Someone's retired, removed, or whatever, and sometimes because of things we've known in the past people have had some battles and can have battles with that. People have had battles with that. Yet it's here one day and it's gone on another. So be it. What can we learn from it? How can we profit from it? Because everyone can profit from what's taking place. God's used it as a powerful tool to teach us within the Church things about Him.

Let's go over to 1 Peter 2. We left off in Chapter 1; let's pick it up in Chapter 2. That's where we stopped last time. I want to complete some of this because this really needs to get through in our thinking, what it has to say here and what Peter went on to talk about.

1 Peter 2:1, it says, **Wherefore laying aside all malice**, meaning all that is evil, all that is bad, **and all guile**, in other words, deceitful practices, being deceitful in any way. Sometimes as a manner of how people try to manipulate or control others. We've talked about this in times past, how people try to control by being passive-aggressive or aggressive or whatever other means that people might try to use in their life, but some are more difficult than others.

...and hypocrisies, play acting, pretending. That's one thing God is getting rid of in the Church, this matter of supposedly being in God's Church and yet being outside the temple. God's bringing that to light more and more. It just keeps coming out. That's why I think, how many are going to be left? Are you going to be left? Are you determined that you're going to fight, that you're going to yield to God, that you want God's mind and being in you, that you are putting God first in your life and nothing else, but you're fighting that fight? Because you've got to fight this! You've got to

want this with all your being. It's not a simple thing. It's not just going to happen. You can't just pass your time as many did approaching 2012, just waiting for it to come to pass and then things'll change and we can address life then. No, you've got to address life now! You've got to fight the fight now until he returns!

So again, this matter of play acting and pretending, God's exposing. He's letting it come out more and more! Truly is. So things are being addressed more and more. It's just not going to be allowed.

...and envies, jealousy. I hate that in the Church when jealousies pop up. And yet they pop up. One of the worst things in relationships that people can have - jealousies. And that's when people really turn inward and selfish. ...and evil speaking. We have to be very careful in what comes out of our mouth in what we say about others. **As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby**, so with all of our being, obviously, to desire everything that God is offering to us. We should desire to receive everything that we can. That's not selfish, that's just smart. That's wisdom to receive, to desire to receive everything that God is pouring out upon us, that we be able to drink it in.

Verse 3—If so be that you have tasted that the LORD is gracious. To you. Is God blessing you? Are you blessed in your life? Sometimes people aren't blessed because they're not doing what they should be doing, you know? God takes care of His people. It doesn't mean you're not going to have battles and hardships, but it is about what we do and how we do it and we keep fighting; God will bless that fight. He will bless us in our learning.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, talking about Jesus Christ, talking about those things that we are able to have as God blessed him in his life, that there are blessings that God desires in our life. He was the first of the firstfruits. He's called others to be part of his family. We are impregnated with the power of God's spirit in our minds, in our being. We are begotten of God's holy spirit. How do we use that? Do we recognize the awesomeness of that calling?

Verse 5—You also as lively (living) stones... Think of Jesus Christ, chief corner stone, the life that God gave to him, the power that God gave to him, the purpose that God gave to him, a special calling, special purpose, obviously. Everyone who's been called into God's Church, begotten of God's spirit has awesome, special purpose in life that most human beings to this point in time have not been offered yet. They have to wait until the Great White Throne. How blessed are you?

...Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, **Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious. And he who believes on him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, who believe, he is precious, but unto them who are disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is become the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.** You know, we can read through something like that and think, "What a horrible thing!"

But the majority of people who have ever been called into God's Church, he's become a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. So again here, we have to recognize and understand what God has given to us and fight for what God's given to us. **...a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them who stumble at the word.** Do you realize that everyone who's ever left has stumbled at God's word, at the truth that God has given to the Church? Every one of them! Far more that have been called than those who are chosen that are able to continue on.

...and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient, working against God's government, working against how God is working in their life, whereunto also they were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood. That's why I mention the things I do here about a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense because we generally think of the world being like that. We don't think about people in God's Church doing that. I do, because I've seen it happen over and over and over again. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." What awesome words! I've repeated this several times in the past year, over and over. Hopefully, we're clinging on to that with more of our being, to understand that awesomeness of what God has called us to. **...a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.** That's what God has called us to participate in, to be a part of. **...a peculiar, or special, as it is, people; that you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.** So what we're being told here is that there is something that should be evident then in our life, that we should show forth (that word "praises") the virtues, the moral excellence, and the character of God in our lives. When people come in contact with us they're treated differently than the way they're treated by others in the world. If they're treated like everyone else in the world, who are we? What are we? Where is the power of God in our life? Where is God's grace working in our life?

Verse 10—Who in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God - who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. That's one thing I thank God of for so often, is His mercy and His patience. You, hopefully, are doing the same thing because if you really "see" who you are you will pray that often. If you "see" and understand your human nature and the selfishness of it you will pray that more wholeheartedly, more zealously in your life: "Thank You, Holy Father for Your patience. Thank You for Your mercy, because You have been so merciful to me." You know, that's a powerful tool. It's only by coming to deeper conviction in that in your own personal life that you can learn to live that toward others, to learn to be more patient, truly patient with others, to learn to be more merciful to others. The more you "see" it and understand it in yourself the more you can begin to live it toward others. That's really what it's all about in so many ways.

Anyway, there is an area of scripture that we have focused upon fairly often to one degree or another, and even over, again, the past year here that we're going to go back to today. It says so much. It truly does. I use it in nearly every lecture series that I've ever given to the ministry, and I speak of it often within the Church as well because it says so much and it is so powerful, and yet

sometimes it seems that human nature, we have these battles that go on and we don't grasp it to the degree that we need to and should in our lives, but it has everything to do with God's form of governing. It's about God's government. It's what we're able to see and experience in a very powerful way to teach us such great lessons. It's over in Ephesians 4, so we'll turn over there.

I have a few more things that I want to mention. This is something that I have given over and over again and this is one of the primary focal points for the final international senior ministers meeting that we had back in November that was placed on the EMC, which is the Elders Management Console. It's made available to all the ministry so they can go in there and receive, be able to listen to those as well and to have other information available to them from time to time.

Although the ministry has received this since it was given to them in the form of a lecture, it's good for them to now hear it in the form of a sermon as well. It's one thing to hear something in a lecture that's given to all the ministry; it's another thing to receive it in a sermon. The reason I mention that is because God's making it very clear how important this is to grasp for everyone in God's Church. It's not just about the ministry. It's about all of us with all of our being. A sermon, if we grasp it, is a very powerful thing that God has given to us whereby we are able to grow more if we yield to the process. So again, let's turn over there because it talks about the things that have to do with God's government, about harmony and unity and oneness, order. God is a God of such great order, power, and might. Beautiful! Awesome!

Ephesians 4:1—I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk in a worthy manner, "in a worthy manner," that's what the word means, **of the vocation wherewith you are called.** So this is for everyone in God's Church. When it uses the word here, "vocation," it's talking about a calling. That's what the word means in the Greek language. **...that you walk in a worthy manner of the calling wherewith you are called.** That's literally what its saying. If we grasp the calling that God has given to us. That's why we went through that chapter in Peter there, Chapter 2, and talked about how we are called as a holy nation, as a special people, a royal priesthood. All of us! That's what God has called us to, to participate in, to be a part of in training and guidance and direction and growth in our lives. We're to yield to that process and we're to desire it with all of our being.

We're to walk in a worthy manner, not to be out in the courtyard somewhere, not to be drifting around somewhere out in the courtyard acting like we're in the Church, playing games with God! God isn't allowing that right now. He's cleaning it up! He's continuing this process! I have a feeling this is going to go on all the way until things erupt on this earth. The expression is used in the Bible about people's legs shaking and their bowels opening up. It's going to be that scary. Okay? You haven't known fear. You're going to experience things, brethren, even on a physical plane of what's coming. Okay? We've talked about it a lot, but to experience it is another matter in life, when you finally experience it.

With all lowliness and meekness...Lowliness and meekness. God can't use us if we're not of this spirit. He can't work with us. He can't mold and fashion us unless we're of this spirit, unless we're of this desire in our life. It's talking about a humble spirit. Meekness is about a teachable spirit. Sometimes people aren't teachable. They already have their own ideas about things that are even stated in sermons, or where they can choose to agree or disagree with certain things given in sermons. The reality is you don't have that right - not from any of God's apostles through time. No one has ever had the right to decide and choose what they believe is being given to them. But to believe the present truth that God has given, that is our responsibility and our choice. It's the only choice! I'm just saying that with the boldness that God gives because it's true, not because of anything else, but because of how we think about it. I know human nature and I know what people do sometimes. That's just the way it is. I have experienced that over and over in the Church.

...with all lowliness and meekness, teachable spirit, because we know we have so much to learn. **...and longsuffering.** It means suffering in life with others. Sometimes even the matter of giving is a matter of your suffering? Absolutely. Your forgiving oftentimes is very much about longsuffering and suffering because there is something you have to do with your own human nature and take it through and be in control and seek to govern your own spirit, your own mind with the help and favor of God's spirit because you can't do it on your own.

...forbearing one another in love. Forbearing. Sometimes we can look at that word in a wrong way. It's almost like tolerating one another. That's not a part of what that means. That's not a matter of that kind of tolerating. There is a tolerance in the sense of how we think as a part of God's plan, but it goes way beyond this. This word has to do with even allowing, in essence in our mind, allowing for the differences in others. We have so many different kinds of people in all the Church worldwide. God didn't call people who are very much alike and just would automatically get along really well. No, He made it a little more challenging. He called all kinds of people with all kinds of background. And some of them, who, if you're around, are going to be like an abrasive sandpaper to your personality and the way you think and the way you do things. But you know what? You have to get rid of the sandpaper, because it's you, and to learn how to love and to learn how to be patient and to learn how to be forbearing, allowing for differences, and to learn to even love the differences. That's a beautiful thing when you really come to grasp that point. Not only to allow for the differences but to be thankful for them, to love the differences of what God has given within the Church and within the world, to make it possible that there can be so much variety, and when people come into God's Church variety on an extensive scale, but unity and oneness and one mind in time with God. That's the desire.

...with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. That's how you do it. You allow for the differences when you grasp God's love, in His kind of love, frankly, that's what it's all about, in grasping what God is doing in our lives and what He has planned for all mankind.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit... Endeavoring. It's not just a passive word. It's not a lukewarm kind of word. It isn't something that we just kind of sit back and watch happen. No, it's something you make happen! It's something you work at, making it happen. Endeavoring, meaning you work at it with every bit of your being, crying out to God because you know you don't even have enough in your being to endeavor like this, but you cry out to God for the help to work and to **endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit**. Unity. Unity in the Church of God. Oneness with God Almighty.

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Beautiful verses here: "In the bond of peace," that which binds together, peace together, to have peace. It's a beautiful thing to have peace. It really is, to have peace. No jealousy. No warring. No factions. No disagreement. No resistance. But see, those are human traits and thinking and they do fight against God and fight against the truth of God. We have to yield ourselves to God in everything that we do.

There is one body... Oh, that the Church could have always understood that one, one body. One Body. I think of the very beginning, and as large as Worldwide was back in 1969, when God called me. I think of all the different people you'd come in contact with that had so many different religious beliefs. God calling people out of so many different kinds of Traditional Christianity into the truth, into the Church, and thinking of this thing of one Body. Yet you don't see that in the Protestant world. You see all kinds of bodies, ideas, factions, differing beliefs, a body here, and a body there, a body of one organization over here that doesn't agree with this body over here. That's the confusion of the Protestant world. Some of that stuff has tried to get into God's Church at different times. We are one body on a spiritual plane, truly.

There is one body and one spirit, see. If we're yielding ourselves to that one spirit we'll have the same mind, we'll have the same thinking if we're truly in unity with God's spirit. It doesn't exist in the world. It doesn't exist in the scattered body. There are all kinds of different ideas out here even when it comes to the Sabbath and the Holy Days, how things are to be done. **There is one body and one spirit as you are called in one hope of your calling.** One hope. Because of what? Because of one truth that you have, because of one way of life that you're able to live.

...one Lord, one faith... Even that one alone, if only people could begin to see that in the world, one faith. That means one belief. One faith. Faith in what? Well, people out here, the majority of people out here, Sunday, have the belief of going to church on Sunday, if they believe in going to church at all. But those who do have it go to the great big buildings and have many several hundred or even several thousand people coming together in one location. We drove by some coming down here. Huge buildings! On Sunday there will be hundreds of cars in some locations. "One faith." They don't agree with someone that's right next to them, next door. We saw one where there's another huge belief, a different religion in the world. They don't agree with each other. Even those of Traditional Christianity, they don't agree with each other! They don't have one faith. They have different faiths, different beliefs as to why they go to church on Sunday and what they think about it, what they believe about it. How thankful are you that you're not in that

kind of bondage anymore and that you understand the awesome meaning behind all that, starting out with the seven-day creation week, or creative week and seven thousand year plan of God. Awesome!

One faith, one baptism... One baptism. ...**one God.** God's Church hasn't believed that one too long. God's true Church hasn't really believed that one too long. It started in 2005 when God revealed to the Church that we weren't yet totally out of the Trinity yet because people believed that Jesus Christ had eternally existed. God revealed to us, no, he didn't, he had a beginning, and that there is only One Eternal, Self-Existing God. Awesome to know that, to embrace that. I think Exodus 3 where Moses is being told that basically the ones before him never knew God as he's being blessed to know God, even His name, Yahweh Elohim. Awesome! Abraham didn't know. Noah didn't know Him by that name. No one, until He finally revealed His name at that point in time to Moses. Awesome!

...one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. A lot said there, but I don't have time to go into today, but again, everything that God has called us to to be a part of is a part of His design and His governing. Even within the Church in a very powerful way. If we know that this is God's Church then we will understand that God has things take place, some things happen as a matter of timeliness, and most everything is in that regard, as far as sermons and the like and things that we're doing and when we're doing it. It is according to His timeliness. Not on our own. It's not by our own, but it's by what God does.

Going on in **verse 9**. It goes on to say **(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?)** I think of the Protestant world and what they read into things like this and they don't understand what they're reading. Yet it's very simple, very basic. It's talking the only one who has ever ascended to God Almighty, but he had something he had to do first. He had to go into a burial chamber, if you will, in the earth. That's what it's talking about. Just like all mankind, in essence, as a whole does. The word "hell" in the Old Testament simply is talking about a hole in the ground because that's generally what happens to most people in time. They just get buried in a hole. So it's talking about this for him as well, that he had to experience, or his body did, anyway, the same thing.

(He who descended is the same also who ascended up far above the heavens, all the heavens that he might fill all things.) He is going to fulfill God's purpose and God's plan for mankind, first of the firstfruits, to make way, to make it possible for us to be able to enter Elohim, beginning with Passover, and what that means in our life.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. I think of that. I think of the peace that people can have by knowing that God has given an apostle to His Church, because from the time that Mr. Armstrong died until God revealed that, there was no apostle in God's Church. People have made comments and said things to the

degree, even in God's Church, to the belief that maybe it could happen again, or that someone—me, because that's the only one leading and guiding and directing the Church at this time—could do the same thing. No. It won't happen to any of God's apostles. If people could just grasp and understand that one alone, the fact that there was only one Apostasy in the first place. I think of some who have made comments like that. Shame on you! Shame on you that such a thing could come out of your foul mouth. I hope you've repented deeply of those things. You haven't even been embarrassed to say such things in front of me. Crazy, isn't it? It's sad. It shows a lack of understanding on your part.

Anyway (**He who descended is the same also who ascended up far above all the heavens...**) **And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.** Not always called the same thing within the Church, the matter of "teachers" and so forth. There are many different forms. Today we have what we call associate elders, elders, and senior elders that fit into that category. Mr. Armstrong and Worldwide had it separated in different ways. We had preaching elders and so forth, different things, different purposes for different times, but still fitting within the overall picture of what is given here: apostles, prophets, and then evangelists. Then I think of what happened in God's Church under Mr. Armstrong. Those evangelists, not a one of them remained faithful except toward the end when there was one who was ordained later on that I mentioned last time in the first part of the series, and also another man that my wife and I have wondered about because he stood up to certain groups and then he died. So there are some things we don't fully know about people's lives in that regard, but as far as the ones who were surrounding him before 1980? Anyway, except for one.

For the perfecting of the saints. So why did God give this? It's the way we grow. It's the arena we have within the Church to grow, and in ways that God has magnified over the past seven years that didn't exist in the Church before this. Powerful things! It's a speeded up process for learning and being able to learn within the Church. **For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.** So it's always been established that way for a purpose in the past 2,000 years nearly now. It's always established that way in God's Church for a great purpose and by design, of things that people can learn, whereby they can grow.

It says, **Till we all come in the unity of the faith.** So it's not just a matter of things that are taught. It's things we're able to experience by this existing within the Church and how we respond to it because we have seen good things and we have experienced bad things in life. But how do you respond to that? How do you live by that? Do we practice what it said earlier, "with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love?" Because we're all physical human beings and sometimes as people are learning, in the beginning especially, they're not going to know things that others might know who have had many more years experience before them. I'll use myself as an example. There were many things I had to learn. Along the way I made mistakes and I had to learn from that process. I repented of the things where I was wrong and where I was shown that I was wrong in a process of learning. That's how God works with us within the Church, but

sometimes others may not react to those moments in the same way - in unity and oneness, in longsuffering, in patience because they understand this is God's Church. And how we respond to it is so important because it's how we're responding to what God has given to us, knowing that human beings are very imperfect. Does that make sense? I hope it does. If it doesn't, it will in time because this is a part of our growing.

So indeed we are to come into a unity of the faith. We are to be faithful. We're to be faithful. We're to be faithful to our calling. As it said in the very beginning, do we grasp that? It says here, "That we beseech you that you walk in a worthy manner of the vocation (of a calling) wherewith you are called." There is a calling that God has given to you, and a process of an overall calling that God has given to people over the past 6,000 years and worked with in different ways. In the Church, only for the past 2,000 years, a calling that God Himself has to do. He has to be the one that draws you and teaches you and shows you the things that you come to see. Then you make choices as to whether you want to receive it.

So indeed we are to come into a unity of faith, to be faithful, faithful to God and Jesus Christ, and faithful to God's government, and to me as His apostle. It's just the way it is, and as a whole people are, and to those ministers who are over you in authority. See, I mention this because this has always been in God's Church and it still exists to this day, that sometimes there are situations in people's lives where they do not think of the office, they see the person. The longer they've known the person and perhaps have known weaknesses of the person, or what they perceive to be as weaknesses sometimes, they judge them accordingly, but we don't have that in God's Church, in that regard, when it comes to a position or a place that someone holds, that God has set apart. There is a response we're to have to that ordination or that office. I hope that makes sense. Mr. Armstrong spoke of it often, but I haven't preached it or spoken of it as often myself, but certainly in this sermon I'm doing so.

You see, the reason I'm mentioning this is because sometimes I hear of people speaking of someone else who is ordained to a senior elder, to the place of an evangelist or a senior evangelist, or a prophet, and because of their comments sometimes toward others, toward some of those, it reveals to me a great lacking on their part, that they are not in fear of speaking in wrong ways or in ways that aren't wise before others.

I think about back in Worldwide when they talked about desiring to hold up Mr. Armstrong. A lot of that had to do with holding up who he was. He was God's apostle. We were to stand for him. I didn't do that as well as I should have when I first came into the Church because I was a novice and I was new and I didn't understand what I should have done when I heard people speak about him in wrong ways. And I did too much, far too much in God's Church. None of those people lasted that long either that I heard speak of him in wrong ways, people that made judgments about him and so forth when he purchased a jet and chose to fly to visit world leaders around the world and travel that way rather than by whatever airline was available at that time. All kinds of criticisms and so forth that I remember in God's Church, about how he did things, about building the house

for God that was dedicated to God there, the auditorium, about why he spent more time over in Europe for a period of time than he was in the United States. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. It's like this quarterbacking thing when people after a football game and they're out there all giving their opinions about what they think different ones should have done and who lost the game and why. Those things just wear me out. I don't care. They're not for me. Some people maybe enjoy them and can talk about it some, and I'm not criticizing anyone too much that does that kind of thing! I'm just kidding! You know, its one thing to talk about a stupid play that someone made or whatever, but when people go into it in depth? I mean, they re-live it over and over and over again like their life revolves around it. And I think, "Get a life!" That's when things like that have gone too far in this world.

So the same things are done today as they were during Mr. Armstrong's time, and things are said about different ones who are ordained, and you don't know what you're doing when you're saying something like that, especially if there's a need for patience or longsuffering to at least exercise that before God. But so often when I hear people make those kinds of comments—and I've heard them—I have let them go the majority of the time because it's something one must come to learn through time, through their own relationship with God, and if I were to say anything at that moment in time they wouldn't be able to hear it anyway because if they can't hear it in a sermon they're not going to be able to hear it that way either.

So we have to be careful how we speak and how we talk about one another, but I'll tell you what, if it's one of God's ministers you'd better be extra careful and on guard because if you're loose there you're going to be far looser in how you talk about one another in the Body of Christ. That's the point. If we can't be stirred, moved, and motivated, and more on guard when it's God's apostle, or when it's one of God's prophets, or if it's one of God's evangelists, or one of God's senior pastors, then I can guarantee you, you can take that to the bank, you can know that it's far freer when it's about one another in the Body of Christ. That's a great tell tale sign right there.

So I hear individuals that I know are not on guard against speaking out about something in a negative way. It doesn't even have to be a matter of accusation. It can be just in a bad way or not a decent or respectful way because of the office or because of the person. It is a fearful thing because the person is in the Body of Christ and is not afraid to talk about somebody else. I fear that kind of thing, brethren. I always have, and to do otherwise is a giant mistake. I hope and pray you understand what I'm saying. Because, see, these things still go on to this day.

Now, I will tell you, in the future I will not hesitate to respond from this point forward to anyone who speaks of anyone in God's ministry in a negative or downgrading or even if it's supposedly a joking kind of manner. There are some things in life you do not joke about. Okay? It depends on the taste of the situation. That doesn't mean that people can't be joking with one another. I like to, as good as the next person, when it comes to sparring. I like to spar with people, but you have to know somebody pretty well to spar with them back and forth. Sometimes people say things, though, and they're not sparring; they're just not being nice. So I hope we can understand the

analogy that I gave there. If one is not on guard against doing those things to someone in the ministry, they're definitely not on guard with one another in the Body and therein is the problem and the fault and the error because we shouldn't be doing those things.

So there are far too many who have proven to be fully unfaithful in their service to God and Jesus Christ, as they became very unfaithful to God's apostle and to the teaching that God gave through him. That's where I'm interjecting here now a bit of a part that I felt was very sobering when I went through this. I realize now, I went back through and dug up, dug deeper and found out the number wasn't nearly as high as it should have been because I missed several people when I gave this, because I worked to get this quickly when I did the November meeting for the international senior minister's meeting that we had, but I thought I'd just throw this out today as a sobering thing.

Since all the addition of ordinations, since 2008 and those few who were before that, there have been a total of 191 ordained ministers in the Church of God—PKG. 191. That's for the Church to learn from, to learn the process. There's great learning that was able to be received from that and many have profited from that.

But it's incredible to think of the fact that we have already had 92 who have been retired or removed. That many. Primarily they've been retired, and too many people sometimes think about Worldwide, "Well, that's a punishment," or "That's because they did something wrong." No. No, some of it's for learning. Some of it's for shifting gears and learning from the process, of the individual who goes through that themselves, because of our past and the mistake of comparing something with something that has no meaning whatsoever for the reasons it's being done now. Sometimes, a majority of times here, it's been a matter of age, mobility, a pressure that's put on people because of some of those kinds of things that they don't need to live, some situations where people have learned what they can learn. They've profited by that. They've grown and they can learn something else added above that by pulling back now and letting others have the opportunity. There are things you learn along the process. Everyone can learn from these things.

Very few, as a whole, have been a result of some kind of correction. There have been a few. And those individuals have been told various things in their life of what they needed to address in their lives, but as a whole it's just a matter of a continuing process God has given to us in the Church of just going through a process that's different and unique to us that I may have more to say about at another time. But I just thought that this was an incredible number. 92 have had that opportunity, who are now pulling back and others are having opportunity. In some cases we have done certain things because areas don't need them now because of what's happened within the Church and the cleansing of the temple and certain areas becoming smaller and smaller. In a lot of areas they've suffered quite a bit, people going by the wayside. So in some cases there's just not the need in some areas of having someone there, of maintaining that.

But I'll tell you right now, most of it's for the process of learning, what we can learn from it. It's what God has given to the Church for growth, for training because we're all a royal priesthood and that's what we need to understand. We all have awesome calling in God's Church. How we live it for what we have, for what God has given to us is what's important, so, so important.

Anyway, the most staggering fact in the midst of the ordinations that have been in the Church of God—PKG—37 have been disfellowshipped. 37 ministers in the Church of God—PKG are no longer in God's Church. That's incredible! That's mindboggling. There are 37 who did not remain faithful to God and Jesus Christ, to God's government, and to me as God's apostle, but that's minor compared to what they actually did, not being faithful to God Almighty and Jesus Christ. There are 37 who turned against God's Church and against God's people. Awesome! Incredible, such numbers. Blows the mind. All the way from associate elder to evangelist. All the way through.

I might add here now serving in the Church there are 62 in the ministry. 62. Incredible.

So nearly 20% became disfellowshipped. It's a huge number, huge number. To me it was a very sobering number.

So I'll just mention here now just so people can know, but of the 62, 9 are in the senior ministry of the Church, 4 are senior elders, 31 are elders, 18 are associate elders.

Anyway, incredible what continues on, what has continued on through time, what I experienced with Mr. Armstrong in that period of time, in the sense of the Church, speaking of Worldwide and those who were a part of that, things that we experienced and things that we saw within the ministry, it goes on, continues on. There is so much we are to learn about government, about how God governs within the Church, and how we respond to that, how we respond amongst ourselves in that regard.

Ephesians 4:13. So God gave the ministry for a purpose, **Till we all come into the unity of the faith.** That's what it's all about. It's about training - training and teaching. It's not about individuals even having to preach. That's not what it's about. It's what we can learn through the process, indeed. "Until we all come in the unity of the faith," to come to understand how God has organized us, how Jesus Christ has organized his Church. See? There's something that some in the ministry, especially I would say within the senior ministry, understand and know in a very powerful way, and that is I make no decisions about any of those matters unless I am convicted that they come from God for a specific purpose, whatever that purpose might be, when it has to do with ordinations. I receive input from different ones, but when it comes down to it, just as with sermons that I give or anything else, I have to listen to God, and I seek God's guidance and direction as to what I am to do and when I am to do it.

Jesus Christ is very much in control of this Church. God Almighty is in control of His Church. Always has been. Although during the period leading up to the Apostasy He allowed certain things to go the way they did, and that for a greater purpose. Most of that's going to be later on in the **God's Form of Governing, Pt. 2**

future, in the Great White Throne, as well as throughout the Millennium because those things are going to be taught, of what human beings can do who have the impregnation of God's spirit because you're not there in God's Family until you're there.

Well, I probably should stop there. We've had many interruptions today. We've had a difficult time today with the Internet. I have no doubts it's probably going to get worse as we get closer to Passover, especially because I think we're going to try to get the video program up and running before too long. You might be praying about some of that, that we be led and guided and directed. Sometimes just the kind of programs you use and different things it makes a big difference as to how things turn out. I know that we're going to have battles and going to have problems with some of that as well as time goes along.