

Welcome, everybody, to this seventh day Sabbath.

God has revealed in His word that we as humans have different types of enemies. Some are known by mankind, and people would say, "Oh, I've got an enemy," but to us we have three different enemies that we may not always think as enemies, but we have three.

The title of today's sermon is, *Know Your Enemy*.

Now, to start with, mankind knows that they have enemies, and it'd be considered another human, for example, that one person may say, "Oh, I've got an enemy." Enemies are between religions, which is another person. But they would see these as their enemies, in other words, someone that's going to harm them or hurt them. They see anyone that is actively against their ways or their thinking as a type of enemy. A classic example of that is between religions.

Now, the dictionary shows a definition of an enemy as "a person who is actively opposed or hostile to someone or something." So man has enemies. We would say, "Oh, yes, that person over there, they're my enemy because they don't agree with me," or they're doing things against you actively. The problem is being and still is with mankind that they do not know the true enemy or enemies that they have.

So we're going to start in Numbers 10:9. God uses the term "enemy" in different levels, but there are often, in the Old Testament, enemies of mankind. Enemies of Israel were seen as other nations or other people. **Numbers 10:9—When you go to war...** Now, going to war you've got an enemy, obviously. **...in your land against the enemy who oppresses you.** So the definition of an enemy here is an oppression that takes place. Now, we understand when we get to it on a spiritual level that there's oppression taking place. We are actually oppressed. Being in God's Church, having God's spirit there is an oppression that takes place. So God says here, **When you go against your enemy that oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Eternal your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.** What this is saying is, "If you remember Me," God speaking, "If you remember Me, I'll fight your battle for you. You don't have to worry about it." But there's an "if" in this. God has outlined that He would fight the battle, "Blow the trumpet, turn to Me, and I'll remember you and I will look after your war. You won't have to worry about it; I will win the war for you if... and that's the issue, the "if."

Now, the spiritual component of this: When we fight the enemies we have, which are in our minds, we have to fight them (not by ourselves, because we can't win), we have to fight these enemies by the power of God's holy spirit. We must turn to God and if we do He will help us in

that battle. That's what we're going to look at today, our real enemies. Not just mankind's enemies, our enemies in the Church who are oppressing us or against us.

Now, God explains the "if" in Exodus 23:22. So God said, "Sound the trumpet and I will fight this fight for you. I'll remember you having enemies that are against you that are going to war if..." Now, this is the "if" explained in **Exodus 23:22—But if you indeed obey His voice...** This is the issue. Obedience. So God will fight the battle for them if they listen to God and listen to His voice, **and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies—How good is that, that God would be an enemy against the enemies of Israel?—and an adversary to your adversaries.** In other words, God was going to fight for them if they obeyed His voice, which we understand Israel didn't do and in the end when they went into the promised land there were issues because Israel didn't turn to God. There were examples where they turned to God and God won the battle for them and they lost to hardly anybody. Other times when they went to war where they didn't turn to God because they looked to their own power, their own strength, they were massacred. So there is an "if" in the battle.

There's an "if" in our battle, the ones that we have, with three enemies. Well, there's an "if" in this too and it's all about this obey His voice.

Let's look at Leviticus 26:1 which is really explaining more about the "if." **Leviticus 26:1—You shall not make idols for yourself; neither a carved image nor a sacred pillar shall you rear up for yourselves.** In other words, don't put things before God. **Nor shall you set up an engraved stone in your land to bow down to it.** Now, this is not turning to God, this is turning to something else for strength and reliance on, trusting in something else. **...for I am the Eternal your God. You shall keep My Sabbaths,** which is the annual Sabbaths that we understand that are outlined in Leviticus 23, **and reverence My sanctuary. I am the Eternal,** because this is about the children of Israel and the process of worshipping God in spirit and truth.

Now, they couldn't worship God in spirit, but they tried to listen to God now and again and obey Him. So they were to keep the annual Sabbaths and the weekly Sabbath and respect what God had set up for them.

Verse 3—If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments, and perform them, this is interesting, **and perform them.** In other words, you have to do something. You can't just listen.

Verse 4—then I will give you rain in its due season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield its fruit (their fruit). Your threshing floor (your threshing) shall last time, until vintage to vintage, and vintage shall last until the following sowing. In other words, it's an endless process of planting, reaping, putting it in the barn. Well, it's time to go back out and harvest again. It's ongoing. Now, some of this we can look at. We should be able to refer and think about what it's going to be like in the Millennium because when we start to see change, where obedience comes into place, these are God's words and He says, "I change not." God's not

going to change. There are blessings for obedience and there's a disappointment or a punishment for disobedience. That's what God has set up.

Well, in the Millennium, if people will indeed obey His voice, there are great blessings, which we're looking at now, and there's going to be prosperity given to the people in the Millennium. God will give rain in its right season. The extreme heat and extreme cold won't be there because they destroy. For example, we know when we get extreme cold nothing grows. It's going to kill it. Frost kills things and extreme heat burns things. Well, when that's changed we can then see how the land will produce produce that will work from one to the other to the other. It's an ongoing process. It's going to be prosperity for those that are obeying God.

We also know that God says that if they don't come up and worship Him during the Feast that there will be a punishment. There'll be problems within the land, and it'll end up in death because of disobedience.

So mankind will continue to prosper if they obey.

Verse 6 we'll drop to—I will give peace in the land. Well, we don't actually have that really, because at the moment across many a territory we see that there might be some perception of peace but there is no real peace because of the governmental systems and because now other religions are getting confused about what they see is right and wrong in their own eyes and other religions are starting to press against those religions. For example, it takes you into the terrorism. Terrorism doesn't just happen in one or two places; terrorism is everywhere. It's just the way we view it. Terrorism is coming to all lands because people have got their own ideas of what they want as the way to live life. So these enemies are going to continue to grow for mankind.

Well, God says if you obeyed His voice and did what He said that He would give peace. We wouldn't have issues of terrorism. ...**and you shall lie down, and none will make you afraid.** So we wouldn't be living in fear.

There was a radio program the other day here and it was talking about—and I didn't realize how much fear there is—in these types of areas where we are now, in Victoria, there are gangs of youths going around and they're breaking into homes, they're hijacking cars in broad daylight and ripping people out of cars and driving off. They're invading homes, smashing in the front door and you know, going in and taking everything. There have been arguments about whether you should defend yourself. The police say you're not allowed to attack anybody. You've virtually got to wait for them to attack you. You have to be very careful of the weapon that you use because you could end up in trouble and they'll get off scot-free, which has happened.

And one particular lady rang up and she was in her seventies, I believe. She said that she lives in fear. This is in Melbourne, Victoria. She lives in fear, locks up everything. She doesn't sleep at night. She's terrified. People are getting guard dogs for their properties. One man rang up and said that he had a gun and he would use it and the radio person said, "Well, you can't do that.

You'd be breaking the law." He said, "I don't care. I do not care! If three people come in with masks in my house and terrify my wife and children, I'm going to shoot them." The end result was that he would end up going to jail. That's the law. Isn't that incredible? In this country, that if someone breaks into your house and you defend your family it's most likely you'll be charged. You'll be charged and they won't be. That's how bad it is.

Well, that's because man won't obey God's law. It's because of what's happening here, what God's saying, "Well, if you turn to Me, I will turn to you and I will give peace in your land. These things won't happen. The thinking would be different. "When you lay down, you will not be afraid." Wouldn't that be great?

I will rid the land of evil beasts, and the sword will not go through your land. We wouldn't have these problems if people were obeying God. Now, mankind is not about to turn to God in the short term until they get access to God in the sense of God opening their minds and when they start to read the book where they can see what changes need to be made. In the meantime, this is just going to get worse, just going to get worse and worse at different levels at different degrees in this land and the western world. It's just going to get worse.

Verse 7, what God says—**You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you**, because God would do it. You don't have to do it yourself. **Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred shall put down ten thousand to flight.** Isn't that incredible? So we don't need big armies, we don't need guns, we don't need weapons to defend ourselves because God says He will do it if we turn to Him and obey His voice. **Your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.**

Verse 9—**For I will look on you favorably...** Now, this is actually happening with God's people, God's Church. We understand that God does look on us favorably. He's called us or awakened us for a purpose, and that purpose is spiritual growth. So at times we go through difficulties, but God is still looking on us with favor. We are begotten sons of God. What a title, an incredible title. Well, God is, but what God is doing is spiritual, therefore, we may find ourselves in difficult situations on physical levels and in difficulties, but that by no means means that God has left us. What is actually happening on a spiritual level is that we should be learning something spiritual. We should learn something spiritual, what it's really all about. The only way to learn—my own personal experience—the only way I learn is to put my hand on the fire. It's rare that I've learned anything by listening to someone else and not doing it or trying it. That's just human nature.

So we have to go through these things for a purpose, and it's very important that we don't look on things in the short term because I understand that many of the things that I've experienced in my years in the Church are not for now. I realize they're going to be for others in the future where I'll be able to draw alongside at some point, either as a spirit being or as a physical person, and turn around and say, "Yeah! I can relate to that. I understand. I learned that lesson. That's what I did!"

Because I was carnal just like they were or still are, and one day they'll have God's spirit like I have and they'll have that opportunity.

So, often we go through things now to learn lessons so that we can use them in the future. We know that man's system is corrupt. We know that. We've learned that. We see it every day. So when somebody says, "Ah, you wouldn't believe what I'm going through," I can believe what you're going through. We know what they're going through. So it's for the future and it's for our own personal growth that we go through these tests and trials, and everyone is different. Everyone goes through a different trial.

For I will look on you favorably, and make you fruitful, which is talking about children, potential sons of God in the future, multiply you and confirm My covenant with you. You shall eat the old harvest, and clear out the old because of the new. In other words, they're going to overlap each other. "I've got too much in there and there's a new lot coming. What am I going to do?" Isn't that a great thing to have when you look at food?

Verse 11—I will set My tabernacle (dwelling place) among you. Now, if we looked at that spiritually, that's happened. God dwells with us. **...and My life shall not abhor you.** In other words, God won't turn against us or fight against us because of our actions because God's living and dwelling in us. **I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.** Now, this was to Israel, something on a physical level. We know this is something on a spiritual level. God walks with us. God's for us. "Greater is He that's in you than he who's in the world," talking about Satan. So we've got the most powerful being of the universe for us and He is our God and we are His people. Church of God—PKG, all of us that have God's spirit are His people. We're precious to God.

Verse 13—I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. That was physical. Well, what a great thing that we were called. What a great thing that we were awakened. We've been brought out of confusion because of that calling. **...and you shall not be their slaves.** Now, just talking today when walking back we realize the world's held captive and they're in a bondage; they're in captivity. We're not because the truth has set us free. Therefore, we are not slaves to this world. Yes, we comply to man's rules unless it breaks God's rules. A classic is the Sabbath where they say you have to work; we say, "No, we're not going to." Well, that's fine. They can do what they want. We'll do what God requires of us. So we are not slaves to mankind. We're not slaves to Satan and his broadcasting. We are now, in other words, we are slaves to God, really, because of this willing to sacrifice. **I have broken the bands of your yoke and made you walk upright.**

Verse 14—But if you do not obey, so that was all the positive. Well, God says, "Well, if you're not willing to listen to Me. You're not willing to obey," **and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes (My instructions), or if your life abhors My judgments,** which is by the way we live, because people can use words, but really a lot of this is demonstrated by the

way people live. We have to be careful that we don't demonstrate this by the way we live, by being hypocrites or living something that's a lie. **...so that you do not perform all My commandments, but break My covenant (verse 16), I also will do this to you.** Now, we should stand back and think. Well, how incredible is this? This is the Creator of the universe with all this power. He says, "This is what I'll do to you if you're not going to listen to Me," because He knows what's best for us physically and spiritually, but if we turn around and say, "Well, we're not going to listen because we know better," well, God says, well, there's a consequence.

I will even appoint terror over you. I believe that's happened. Fear has been appointed over the western world in particular. People walk around in fear, fear of many things, not just fear of terrorism. Fear of employment. People fear that they're going to lose their job next week or they can't get a job. That's a fear because everything revolves around money. So people fear at many levels because there's not this obedience to God. **...wasting disease and fever which shall consume your eyes and cause sorrow of heart.** It's in the mind. Now, much of this has happened where now when you look at it, why is it that a five year old or a three year old has cancer? Because this is diseases that mankind's struggling with. Children are born with these things, diagnoses of terminal illnesses at 13 and 12. It's just incredible because this is all about disobedience because of what man's done. They've rejected God's ways, rejected God's health laws, and the body's broken down, and it continues to break down, and therefore, the sorrow of heart for most people. Somebody knows someone who has got something, that's going through a terrible, tough time. It's shocking. Shocking world!

And you shall sow your seed in vain, you're going to plant crops and they're not going to grow, **and your enemies shall eat them.** In other words, it's going to be taken from you.

Verse 17—And I will set My face against you... That scares me, when the Creator says, "I will set My face against you." We have no power as humans and here is a being that has all power, driven by love, but He sets His face against you? Why would we want to do that? But mankind has. **...and you shall be defeated by your enemies. Those who hate you shall reign over you,** and that's happened to many a country, **and you shall flee when no one pursues,** because panic sets in.

Verse 18—And after all this, if you do not obey Me, in other words, this is all going to happen to you and you're still not going to learn your lesson, well, you're still going to continue the way you want to go, **then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. I will break the pride of your power.** "I will take away from you what you trust in." It's going to be broken. Now, what does mankind trust in? Well, the biggest thing they trust in is in themselves first, their opinion and view, then its other things, their wealth or things that they've surrounded themselves with. That is their power. That's what gives them their (so-called) power. What we trust in will be destroyed. Now, God says He's going to do that. It's automatic because of the laws of sow and reap and cause and effect and obedience and disobedience. God will set His face and whatever we trust in will be taken from us. Well, we're at the doorstep of that. We're at the very doorstep, a matter of

months, really, before these things taken place, that God'll start to bring this down, what mankind trusts in.

The end result is God will not intervene to help mankind because of their choices not to listen to God. As we understand with the new book God says, "If you will listen, I will listen," but there's a lot that aren't going to listen. There's a lot that will, but there's a lot that won't. But if they listen to God, He will listen to them. The choice is theirs to make. Just like it is ours to make. We have a choice whether we want to listen or not. It's up to us. God won't force it on us.

God will intervene to stop mankind from destroying himself completely. That's the time when God intervenes, where He turns around and says, "No, if we leave it keep going the way it is man will completely destroy himself." So we see that the first enemy that man sees is other people, someone else that's opposite you, opposing you, but for us it's not an enemy. Isn't that amazing? Mankind is not an enemy. Not really because we trust in God and God says here that if we trust in Him He'll fight all our battles. We don't have enemies. In actual fact, God turns around and says if we perceive someone to be our enemy what do we have to do? Love them. Do good. We've got to do the opposite to what man would do, which is go to war. We don't go to war.

The second enemy that man sees in a "type" is physical death and the reason that they see that as an enemy is because they don't understand God's plan of salvation. They don't understand God's plan. Now, death separates, so there's a lot of pain. There's a lot of sorrow in death because people don't believe the truth, the truth of a resurrection, the proof and the truth of 100-years. They just don't. They believe in life after death and you go to heaven. So, really, why is anyone sad? Because if you stopped and just thought about it, if somebody dies in a family, why is anybody sorrowful? Because if they've got an immortal soul haven't they gone somewhere where they're happier than where they were? So why is everyone upset? Because there's no logic in it. The truth is that mankind gets upset because of self. It's grief. It's personal. It's, "I've lost something." So if the neighbor up the road that we don't know gets run over by a truck we would normally turn around and with human reasoning and say, "He deserved it. He's an idiot. He shouldn't have walked out on the road." There's no compassion. There's no sorrow. There's no grief, but if someone that's in our connection to self, if that happens, there's grief. We're upset. This is terrible because our grief is selfish. Our love is selfish. It's just who we are naturally.

So death causes pain for those that are left behind because if you believe in the immortal soul, they're off somewhere else. Unless they're, of course, burning somewhere. The truth is they don't know the truth of a resurrection. That's why death to mankind is an enemy.

The majority of mankind do not and does not understand that we have three enemies, really, and it's not the two that I just mentioned. So we in the Church of God have three enemies and we're going to look at those today because they're spiritual in nature. These real enemies can only be known or comprehended or seen on a spiritual level because of the power of God's holy spirit. It requires God to reveal these enemies to us. Other than that, we don't see them as enemies.

For us in God's Church we have three enemies. I'm just going to cover the three and then we'll go into some scriptures. The first one is Satan, the deceiver. He has the power of deception, and every one of us here has been deceived. This is where we came from, a state of deception. So we're under this enemy. He controlled us. He controlled our thinking because we were selfish and he broadcast to us and we became deceived. We came out of total deception. He broadcasts lies. Satan's power is that of broadcasting lies, deceit. Well, that's an enemy because it's about tricking us into death. Satan is trying to destroy everything God has created. He's had one go at destroying the earth so that the potential for mankind to enter Elohim would be destroyed. That's what he thought. So he destroyed the earth for that purpose because he hates what God is creating.

God loves us. Satan hates us with a passion because we're God's creation. The earth is physical; we're something different. We have a potential so much greater than the earth. So Satan does hate us. We should see him as an enemy, recognize what he does as an enemy, and always be on guard because he is out to destroy us spiritually. That's his purpose, to destroy us spiritually. Physical death is nothing. Physical death is nothing, but this one here, where we are in the Church, we are here to fight against this. The world doesn't really matter, generally, in the sense that they don't know. Some may make choices based on influence from Satan, but we're called out of it so our number one enemy is Satan himself. He wants to destroy us. We need to be on guard.

The second enemy is sin. Now, connected to that is our base nature because "the wages of sin is death." So death becomes that enemy because of sin. No other reason, just because of sin. Selfishness is the cause of sin. Selfishness is why we sin because of our natural state. Death becomes the enemy because the wages of what you get paid for sinning is death. It's not talking about a first one; it's actually another one which we'll get to, which is the third enemy.

The third enemy that we face and that we should be worried about is the second death because that's the end; there is no more life after that. Anyone that chooses to love one's self before God will face the second death because it's love of self. Sin, that's what it leads to.

So the three are connected but they are all individual enemies. Satan is an enemy that is out to destroy you. The saying says, "You are your own worst enemy." That's actually true. We are our own worst enemy because of our selfishness. And the third one is death itself, not a physical death. That means nothing. A second death is a major issue because it's the end of life forever.

Acts 26:12. Now, we only see these enemies because of a calling because we were called out of this world to see them. The world cannot see them. They don't understand them. If you went up to somebody and said, "Your enemy is Satan." They'd go, "Hmmm?" They don't really believe this one. There may be some sort of spirit world out there, but they don't believe that. If you went up to someone and said, "Sin is your enemy." "What's sin?" They haven't got a clue what you're talking, and you say, "Sin is the transgression of the law." "What law? It's done away." It's a waste of time talking to them, but sin is an enemy to them. They don't know it and the second death is

something they have the potential to face unless they change and go through that whole process of conversion.

So this is about a calling that will reveal our enemies. So we've been called to see these enemies. So this is Paul...**verse 12—While thus occupied**, which is he's hunting down the called out ones. So he's occupied. He's got a job, which is to find God's people, Sabbath keepers, and to lock them up or kill them, one or the other. **...as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests**. So he had a religious authority that said you're allowed to do this because they didn't like what these people were doing. The Jews didn't like them, the Roman's didn't like them, because they were obeying God. They weren't following the (so-called) system that the Pharisees and Scribes had set up. This is different.

Verse 13—at midday, O king, because here he is explaining it, **along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?** Jesus Christ is speaking. **It is hard to kick against the goads**, which is, "You're resisting." It's hard when you're pushing against something; you're resisting God and Christ.

Verse 15—So I said, Who are you, Lord? And he, referring to Jesus Christ, **said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting**, because that's what he was doing. What, at this point, if you looked at that from a spiritual component (Paul was only seeing it on a physical level), the spiritual component is that here he is oppressing Jesus Christ and is against God because God's people have God's spirit, have the spirit of Christ, what Christ had, God's spirit. So here he is he's pushing against and fighting against God Himself, really. He's persecuting Jesus Christ. So any time you are persecuted it's the same type of thing because when you are persecuted by somebody it's the same thing because you have God in you, you're resisting, and the person's fighting against God in you. So you can stand up and be strong and bold in the faith, in the truth, and when the person's resisting and fighting you they're really resisting and fighting against God, which we understand is a spiritual principle in the Church, why we should be very careful what we say about the brethren, because they belong to God. They are God's people.

Verse 16—But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose. So now we see why this is happening, why this is actually happening, **to make you a minister**. So he was going to be someone that's called out for a particular purpose, to be a minister of Jesus Christ, a minister of God, **and a witness both to the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you**. That's a fascinating scripture. He was going to be made a minister representing. Now, the word "apostle" is "one sent forth," so he was going to be sent forth as a servant of God to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the gentiles, which is what his job was. "And a witness of both the things which you have seen." Well, what happened to him? He's been struck down and now he's been called. "...and the things which I will yet reveal to you." Now,

we understand that Jesus Christ taught Paul personally for a period of time, and they were the things that Paul would go out and preach to the gentiles.

Verse 17—I will deliver (rescue) you from the Jewish people, because, understand, he's now changing and he's going to be converted and now he was being sent out by the Jewish people to persecute God's people. Well, now he's going to become one of God's people so he's going to need rescuing from the Jewish people who sent him out, if you understand what I mean, because they're going to turn around and say, "Well, hang on a minute. You're going out and killing these people and now you're what? You're one of them?" So he needs saving from the Jewish people, **as well as from the gentiles**, because, still the Roman government didn't like God's Church and they were out to destroy it as well, **to whom I will now send you**. So why? So why is this happening to Paul? There's a purpose. God has a will and purpose.

Verse 18—to open their eyes, which only God can do. So by the power of God's holy spirit people could start to perceive and understand what Paul was preaching, **in order to turn them from darkness**, which is sin. So they're in sin, which is an enemy. Well, Paul is being sent to them and by the power of God's holy spirit they're going to come out of sin, **to light**, to the truth. So from where they were to what they're going to see.

This has happened to us. This very scripture has happened to us. It's through somebody preaching that our eyes were opened because God uses a system called the Church and He uses His ministry, like, here is Paul. Well, the same thing happened. Our eyes have been opened by the power of God's holy spirit in order for us to turn from darkness. We were captive to sin. We were held in bondage. We can turn from it by repenting, turning to the light, to the truth, exactly what's happened to us. **...and from the power of Satan**, which is where we were. We were under Satan's power; we were in bondage and deception. Where are we going to turn from that? **...to God**. So we're now going to be called, we're going to come out of sin, we're going to believe the truth, we're going to come out from Satan's influence, his lies and deception, and now we're going to turn to God in truth and spiritual freedom. This has been fulfilled in those that have responded to God's calling and responded to an awakening. Actually it's being fulfilled. It wasn't through Paul. He was just one person, one apostle. It's happened to us through the same process, through preaching of the gospel, but it did require a calling.

...that they may receive forgiveness of sins, which is what they did, which is what we've done. How? Well, we believe God. We believe our Passover, Jesus Christ. We believe in the Passover. That's how we are forgiven. We've been able to receive it because if we don't believe that Jesus Christ is our Passover our sins cannot be forgiven. **...and an inheritance**, so that's what it's about, an inheritance. We are heirs of the Kingdom of God, which is the potential for spirit life. **...among those who are sanctified (set aside) by faith in me**. We believe the words of God. We believe the words of Jesus Christ. So we can see there is a process that takes place of coming out to see our enemies. It requires a calling to turn away from our enemies so that we turn to God.

We're going to look now at the first enemy, Satan. Satan has the power of deception. We underestimate Satan's power. We underestimate the amount of deception that is actually in mankind and that was in us. There are still levels of deception in us, but we can't see it yet because we don't know it. If we know what the deception was we'd get rid of it, but there is deception within us. The main deception that we have is about what we think we are.

Satan is a liar. He's an outright liar and he has deceived the whole world.

Revelation 12:9—So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old called the Devil and Satan who deceives the whole world. People don't believe this. It's clearly in scripture Satan is real and his main strength is deception. He lies. He manipulates. He tricks, adds a little bit of truth with a lot of error, and he has deceived the whole world. Now, if we were to go out there and tell people that they are deceived, well, they would just throw it back at us and say, "You're the ones that's deceived." But we believe God and we know that Satan is the deceiver. He broadcasts deception. **He was cast to the earth, and his followers, which are his angels (which are Satan's followers) were cast out with him.**

So our first enemy, being Satan, is out to deceive. We are to make no mistake in our life that we may not see Satan the way we should, but Satan is out to destroy God's creation - physically and spiritually. We are His spiritual creation, God's spiritual creation. So we should identify our number one enemy. He's our number one enemy. He's about deceit and deception and he's trying to get to us in different ways, and it's all through a broadcasting that takes place.

Satan is out to destroy God's Church, which is God's called out ones, God's people, to destroy their relationship with God by influencing the called out ones to sin. So that's how we separate ourselves from God. It's through sin because we all sin and whether or not we want to repent of that sin, or how long it takes us to repent there is a separation that has taken place. Well, Satan wants to do that. That's what his main goal is, to deceive us so that we sin, based on our selfishness, that we sin, and therefore, we're separated from God, and there's a rejoicing.

Personally I often think that when I make these errors of judgment and I do sin, that I often envisage the spirit world around, the evil spirit world, that there's a rejoicing that goes on. It's an evil one, but I'm sure it's a rejoicing because of my failure, my personal failures, that they would rejoice and they could mock easily, and I'm sure that Satan has in scripture where he turns around and says, "Oh, look at them. Look at him. How easy was that?" We're no match for Satan (no match at all), and we need God, but I do know that when, by the grace of God that we're given this spirit to repent, and move into a state of repentance, that there's a disappointment in the spirit realm, the evil spirit realm. There's a real disappointment because we've turned to God and we've repented. We've admitted who we are. We've admitted God's right, we're wrong. The angels in heaven rejoice at repentance. You know, one person repents, they rejoice. I'm sure the spirit world is like, "Nothing. We need a different angle maybe; maybe we've got to do it differently." So repentance is a key of overcoming Satan - by repenting, continually seeking God, and repenting.

Ephesians 2:1—And you He made alive, referring to God. And how's He done it? Through Passover. ...**who were dead in trespasses and sins**, because before baptism we were dead because when we get called we're still dead to sin because we haven't been baptized, and it's because of the baptism that all sin to that point in time is covered and washed away and we don't have to go back. It's been a weakness of mine to often remember back before then and think, "Oh, I did that. Oh, I did that." We don't have to go back there other than for the purpose of maybe improving and changing the way we think, but once we are baptized all sin to that point, no matter what it was (doesn't matter what it was), on a spiritual level is forgiven. Then we rise up and we need the power of God's holy spirit to walk anew. So this is referring that we were dead to trespasses and sins before baptism, **in which you once walked according to the course of this world**. Everyone here has done this. We've all done this. We've all "walked according to the course of this world," which is selfishness. ...**according to the prince of the power of the air**, which is Satan's broadcasting of deception because we were all deceived until we were called, until we were baptized and received God's holy spirit and started to believe the truth. We were all deceived. We have believed lies. Every one of us had believed lies and we've all had wrong attitudes. That's the course of the world. That's the world that's out there.

Referring to Satan, **the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience**. Well, we've just got to look outside and we can see it - selfishness is everywhere. Everything is selfish. We were talking at lunch and something that I see in just about all the emails and everything of broadcasting of TV's, is that everything is a con, if you know what I mean. Everything. No matter what it is. Out there deception rules. We get ads because we're on a remote TV channel, broadcasting comes out of the Northern Territory, and so we don't see the TV advertising you see. We see the same ten, fifty times, if you're not careful. It just goes on and on and on. Well, there's one there (you might even get it here), about the sweeper, the swivel sweeper, and it's just amazing what people do. So the advertising agency says, "Well, we've got to paint a bad picture if you don't have a swivel sweeper. If you have a swivel sweeper you're going to be happy and all is going to be wonderful; your floors are going to be clean. But if you don't have one it's a nightmare because you've got a vacuum cleaner." The person's got the vacuum cleaner and the cords only like 6 feet, 7 feet long and it pulls out of the wall and they're frustrated because of the vacuum cleaner. The cord is actually 12, 15 feet long, but no, in the ad they'll paint it 6 feet long and it pulls out of the wall. Then someone's there with a dustpan and broom and they've got the dustpan down and they've got a broom that's 3 feet wide and sweeping it and their back's sore. You think, this is just unbelievable, what people do. It's just incredible! That's the deception. It's in everything. You can't buy anything that's not got a level of deception.

As you know, they brought out a particular Panadol. If have a sore in part of your joint you can take this Panadol thing that would work in this particular area. Of course, people realize that that's not how it works. Your blood runs round your whole body and it'll affect the whole body. It doesn't affect just the joint and they virtually got taken up to some consumer group and they had to change it. They were no longer allowed to say that if you take this pill it'll fix that pain in the

knee. No, it'll fix all the pain over the whole body! That's the truth because it works in the bloodstream, but it's just deception and we are so gullible. We are so gullible. We deal with gluten-free, and they have low-gluten. Its things in milk. A lot of it's just a big con. It's just a marketing ploy because they get on to catch phrase or words and people use it and say, "No, this is high fiber." High fiber, you know, versus no fiber? Is that what you're saying? There is no fiber in that bread and there's fiber in this one? Everything, everything man does is about deception. It's about getting money. Everything. No matter what it is. It's just the way it is.

We're looking forward to a change to a time when that's going to change, when all this is going to be wiped clean and a person's word is a person's word and if the thing doesn't work, it doesn't work. I look up on reviews. I don't know whether you've seen the various pumps because I had a flat tire the other day and I realize I need a pump and they've got these new pumps that if you plug it in, you squirt it, it gives air to your car tire. A special one. So I thought that would be interesting to have in the car because you get a flat tire you can plug it in. Well, in the ad they show you the person there with the can of liquid and he's there and it's squirting all over the place. That's not how it works. You just screw the cap on; it doesn't squirt anywhere. But no, they've got it squirting out everywhere. Then they've got a bike pump thing and the guys pumping it up and down, and he's going, "Oh, my back! Oh, this is hard work!" It's all garbage. Those things work really well if they're done properly. Then you read the reviews of these so-called pressure things and everyone's saying its rubbish, and all these other words they use. And stars out of five? One. There's a hundred reviews and there's only one that's given two stars. All the rest have given one because it's the big con. A lot of it's a big con.

Then you find out now that consumer affairs are getting involved and they're saying that when you buy these things on TV that they weigh a certain weight and they send them to you. So you have a free trial, 14 days. So after 14 days you can send it all back and when you take it to the post office (it might have cost you, say, \$49), you take it to the post office, its \$98 to send it back! They said, "Well, hang on a minute! It's a free trial." You read the small print and it says you're responsible for the postage, \$14.95. So you think it costs \$14.95 to send it. Well, they've got a special deal. So when you go to send it through the post office its \$90-100. So what do you think everyone does? They keep it. They throw it in the bin because everything is a con. Everything is the small print. You know, you've got to read the small print and there's thirty pages of small print, and on the bottom of it, like the banks, it says, "All care, no responsibility." In other words, "We can change any rule we want. You can change nothing," like credit cards. Read the small print. "We can do anything. We can take it up to the maximum of government levels," which I think is 22%. "You can do nothing."

The other day I tried to close a credit card down and it was near impossible. Do you know, they made it that difficult for me? I went into the bank, "Sorry, we can't do it. You have to ring up telephone banking." I ring up telephone banking, "Who are you?" I didn't have my right number. They couldn't identify me. I gave them everything about me, everything I could possibly do. It was

frustrating. "No, Mr. Matthew. You've got the wrong number there, Mr. Matthew." I'm getting more frustrated and I think, "Oh, I've got to go through this process!" So in the end I said, "Don't worry about it. I'll go back to the bank." So I had to go back to the bank; I went in there, and they saw that I was a bit frustrated because this has gone on for an hour and a half, phone calls and everything. I said, "Listen. I just want to close it down." Now, if I was to open it I would have had two people there. It would have been all wonderful: "Don't worry about your credit rating. Don't worry about it. We'll give you 10 grand; it's easy." Try to close it down? Anyway, I eventually closed it down after two hours of stress because that's the system. That's the world. That's the way that it is because they know if they can get me for 22% interest they're making a lot of money. As you know, the banks make a lot of money.

So this whole system that we're in is Satan's system. It's not here to help us; it's against us. Well, for us, brethren, it's more difficult because Satan's system is designed for the world, to keep it in captivity. Well we're coming out of it, but it's designed to hurt us, to punish us. We know the various things. Like here in Australia people say the tax is reasonable, but it's not. If you're unemployed you still pay 10% tax. It's called GST. It's built into the price of all the goods. So people on benefits say they don't pay tax. That's not true. That's a deception. Everybody, pensioners, everybody pays 10% tax. It's hidden. No one talks about it. Everyone says, "Oh, no, I'm on a pension. I'm tax free." No, you're paying 10% because it's built into the price of everything you buy. So it's a deception. It's covered up. Here they build it into the price.

You go to other countries, like the US, where you see the price, it says \$15.00, and you go to buy it, it's \$15.80. I thought it was \$15. No, there's the taxes, the state tax and all the rest of it written on the docket. Here in Australia you don't see any taxes. It's \$20, its \$20 because the tax is already built into the price by law, but everyone pays tax.

So we're all oppressed in different ways more than others. Certain areas, certain industries, we're all oppressed because this is Satan's system and it's going. We can rejoice in that.

Well, we've all "walked according to the way of the world," in all the attitudes, all the hate. All of us have hated because it's the way of the world. We've all been selfish in our attitudes. "My" family. "My" car. Neighbor up the road, he can do what he wants, but my area, I'm going to protect it. That's selfishness, just another level of selfishness. It's natural. When I say it's natural, it's natural, and we should know what "natural" means. It's carnal.

Verse 3—among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts, which is the desires of the flesh. So we're satisfying ourselves. Number one priority in life is ourselves. ...fulfilling the desires of the flesh; we fulfilled them. We didn't hold back. We fulfilled them the way we wanted to. ...and of the mind, we pleased self, and were by nature children of wrath, because we're earning the death penalty, which/just as others, which is just like others in the world now.

Matthew 13:1. Sometimes we don't identify Satan as an enemy as much as we should. We live our life and we don't really see that he is there trying to destroy us at every turn. Even though we don't see him, he knows us. And we can forget Satan and Satan's influence and what he does and how he works, how he manipulates, and we just think life's normal. But it's not. For us as members of the Body of Christ life is not normal because we have to be highly aware of his deception and his trying to get us into wrong attitudes.

Matthew 13:1, which is the parable of the sower. **On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And a great multitude were gathered together to him, so that he got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.** So we can see this is Christ in the boat. They're all standing there wanting to hear from him. **Then he spoke many things to them in parables.** Now, the reason he did that was so they couldn't understand. Now, the reason they can't understand parables and we can is because the physical points to the spiritual. So we have to have a spirit mind, or God's holy spirit to be able to see spiritually. And if we can't see, we can't see. It's simple. So he speaks to them in parables, which is all physical things, and they'd be looking at physical outcomes, physical results. We can look at this physically because we know it's telling us something spiritual about ourselves or what we need to do. We need God's spirit to understand these things.

Christ is saying, **Behold, a sower went out to sow.** We can envisage this. He has a bag, normally, and he's got all the seeds in it and he puts his hand in and he'll throw it out, cast it out with his hand in a radius. It's meant to go into the ground where he's sowing it. **As he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them,** which is, we can see that, it's a person there, he's thrown it, and it's gone too far and the birds just came along and ate it. **Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth,** which we'd understand, **and they immediately sprang up,** just on the top of the surface with very little rooting in the ground, **because they had no depth of earth.** So immediately they sprang up and they wither away because they have no real root system to be able to grow. The roots would get burned. **But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.** There's no strength, no ability to draw in moisture.

Verse 7—And some fell on thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. In other words, they couldn't get to the sunlight, and therefore, they will die without that sunlight. **But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.** So there's different levels of growth here. **He who has an ear, let him hear!** Now, they couldn't hear what this is really about. This parable is actually for us, for God's people.

Now, we understand the purpose of parables is explained by Christ himself. **Verse 10—Then the disciples came to him and said, Why do you speak to them in parables?** So why are you speaking to them in this way? Why are you using parables as a guide?

Verse 11—He answered and said to them, Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. Now, we know this. This is us. "It has been given to you," you and me, "to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven." We see spiritually. They can't. The world can't. We can. This should highlight to us how wonderful our calling is, our awakening, just how wonderful it is. It's been given to us by the power of God, God's love for us; He's given it to us. **...but to them it has not been given.** So it hasn't been given to the world.

For whoever has, and we have the truth, **to him more will be given.** So we've got the truth. Well, more is coming. More will be given. More is expected of us as more is given. **...and he who have abundance,** because of God's holy spirit, **but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him,** because this is the outcome of the parable. We may have something. We may have spiritual sight. We may have God's holy spirit and more truth is given, but there can be a point where all of that will be taken from us, every single thing we know. We've seen and have evidence of that here in this area where people have had it, they've had the truth, and it's been taken from them. They have nothing now. It's been taken away. It's all gone because of a choice they made. It's not a choice that God made, but a choice they made. They no longer obeyed or wanted to listen to God. Pride gets in the way.

So truth can be given and we can have more and more truth given to us because of God's spirit, but we have to be careful of how we treat the truth and how we live it because any neglect of it can happen and the fact is it can all be taken away from us. Those that leave fellowship with God and God's people, the truth is taken away from them, which is a tragedy, but that's what people choose.

Verse 13—Therefore, I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, because they can't, **hearing they do not hear,** because they can't, **nor do they understand.** Now, we can have knowledge of a parable, but do we understand it? Well, Christ is saying, well, without God's spirit you'll never understand it. You might know the parable and be able to repeat it back, but you'll never, ever understand it on a spiritual level, and they couldn't.

Verse 14—And in them the prophecies of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive. So you can see the sower, or the physical, you can see all that, but you won't perceive that it's talking about something spiritual. **For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their ears/their eyes they have closed.** So there is no interest in God's way. Well, that's exactly as it is today for us. People aren't interested in the truth. They actually don't want the truth at this point in time. **Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,** which is repent because when we hear the truth there's a choice, to repent or not, but it is a choice. **...so that I should heal them,** which is something spiritual. So they could be healed spiritually if they were called and given the opportunity, which we're going to go through here. They could actually have this opportunity but

Satan is there, Satan is behind the scenes all the time. That's what this parable really points us to on a spiritual level.

Verse 16—But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear. Blessed are we. For assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see. We can believe that, of what we have, what we have in the way of truth compared to what the prophets of old had even. **...and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.** Whereas we have, brethren.

Now Christ goes on to explain the parable because it is about choices. **Verse 18—Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the Kingdom,** which is the gospel of the Kingdom of God, God's plan and purpose, the preaching of the gospel which goes out now. The new book is all about the Kingdom of God. It's about salvation, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. It's the same thing because it all leads to the same outcome, which is that Truth 6. **...and does not understand it,** so someone can hear it, but they don't understand it. They're unsure. **...then the wicked,** "wicked one" it says, **comes and snatches away what was sown in his mind.** Now, this is someone who is called. They start to think, "Oh, that's interesting." They start to hear a little bit, but it's going back to the seed, but there's nothing there. Satan comes along and they deceive, and they go back into it, "No, that's not right," and all of a sudden in their minds their mind has gone back to where they were, fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, the desires. **This is he who receives seed by the wayside. But he who receives the seed on stony grounds, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;** this is exciting, the first love. "Yep, sell all the house, sell all the furniture, and I'll get you some more later." This excitement and zeal. You know, this is it, this is a start.

Verse 21—yet he has no root in himself, in other words, there's pressure that's going to come and he cannot stand against other's opinions because family will turn and say, "Well, what about 'this?' What about 'that?' Have you read this on the internet? Have you done 'that?'" and the person's got no strength within themselves. They've got no courage for the truth. No. Determine. Know the truth. They doubt about things and all of a sudden they are gone. They cannot stand, basically. They just cannot stand. There's no strength of self. Their own pride and selfishness gets in the way. **...but endures only for a while.** Now, in the history of God's Church this has happened often. People start off with zeal, and often (won't say always), often that zeal is misguided because we tend to go over the top. You know, we look at things quite black and white and we go too far with physical things when it's not about that; it's about the spirit of the matter. So we need to be careful, but that's something we mature in. The spirit of the matter is something we mature in.

Well, they endure for a while. **For when tribulation or persecution arises,** comes from others, words, generally family, **because of the word,** because of the truth, **immediately he stumbles.** The person can't. They just can't cope with it all and they go back to the way they were.

Verse 22—Now he who receives the seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world, this is job, an income, the deceitfulness of riches choke the word. So what God says versus what they see as a priority is different because they have the cares of the world. It can be many a thing, not just money. Many things get in the way of a calling. ...and he becomes **unfruitful**. He doesn't grow spiritually. We talked about that in the previous sermon where we have to grow. Truth is about growth. Well, this person hears a certain amount and then becomes unfruitful because there's no overcoming of one's self. They're offended by God's word in cases often. "Oh, we can't talk about that to anybody because people will get upset." They have physical priorities and they become more important to them. So the person thinks, "Oh, I don't know whether I can actually do this because, you know, the boss will think badly of me or my family won't like me or it could lead in a divorce or it could lead in 'this,'" and people give up and go back and give in. In all of this God has to be number one priority.

Now in all this we have to remember who is behind the scenes trying to destroy everything. It's Satan. Satan will make sure that people find out that we're different. That's what it's all about. Satan will let people know in the way we live. He is there trying to destroy us no matter what. Even at this level, the cares of the world. What are the cares of the world? The cares for Satan's system because the world is under Satan's sway. It's all about deception, money, deception.

Verse 23—But he who receives seed on the good ground is he who hears the word, which we have done, and understands it. Ah, we have God's spirit; we understand the spirit of the matter. We need God's spirit for that. That's what we have, and therefore, we understand it. Therefore, we have totally different views on things than what others do. For example, tithing. We have a totally different view. We see and understand what tithings really about. The world sees it as a mob of idiots giving money to a group. That's the way they see it. They don't see God in any of this. They just see that you're in a cult and you're giving money to a cult. Well, we understand God's word. They don't; they can't. ...**who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.** Spiritual growth is overcoming our selfishness. That's what spiritual growth really is, remembering that Satan is there to destroy and squash it. Satan does not want spiritual growth. Satan does not want us to become more like God. He does not want that. He does not want us in God's family. He doesn't want that. He's fighting against it.

I won't cover that parable just at this moment, but the point is Satan's goal is to deceive for the purpose of destroying our future. That's really what it's about.

If you look at 1 Chronicles 21:1. Now, often we don't see Satan in things because we don't look. We're just not aware, but here is an example where things can go astray without really realizing they're going astray because we're making choices that aren't right and we've just left God out of the picture or we're not on guard against Satan's devices of deception and lies.

1 Chronicles 21:1, which is the census of Israel and Judah. **Now Satan stood up against Israel.** Do we think that Satan doesn't stand up against us individually? There are times when Satan is on

us stronger than other times. It's not just a now and again thing. Sometimes Satan can hone in on an individual where there's a weakness. Satan, I'm sure, knows our weaknesses individually, and that he can work on that weakness within our minds so that we are caused to sin, just like David. David made a decision here, no different than us. I don't know whether you've ever felt that pressure. I feel that pressure sometimes when there's certain things in the mind that you feel there's a pressure and it just won't go away and there's a pressure, a pressure, a pressure to make a choice or go in a different direction about something. It's there. And turning to God, sometimes you can turn to God and it doesn't seem to work all that much. It's still there. Well, they're the times when were to turn to God more and that's the time to possibly turn into a fast, time to go to fast to draw closer to God, to realize God is our strength, God's spirit is our strength.

So Satan stood up against Israel and moved (or influenced or broadcast to) David to number Israel. This is about wrong thinking because God is our strength. So we should understand from this what this is really talking about is the fact that God is our strength. I'll just refer to it, 1 John 4:4, "You are God's, little children, and have overcome them," talking about evil, "because He who is in you is greater than he," Satan and anyone else, "who is in the world." So we have a strength that we should turn to. Well, here David is now going to number Israel because he wants to see how strong he is. Well, this is something we have to be very careful of, never to go down that physical path of thinking, "Well, you know, I've got this ability or that ability." It's dangerous. It's very dangerous because to look to ourselves for strength or look to others for strength is wrong. We need to look to God who is our strength.

Verse 2—So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it, which is not helpful to know the numbers because it's going to cause issues with pride. **And Joab answered and said, May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are.** So Joab is saying, "Well, this is not good because God's our strength." **But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants?** "Aren't these all your servants anyway? Won't they do what you want? It doesn't matter how many there are." **Why then does my lord require this thing?** "Why do you want me to go and count them?" **Why should he be the cause of guilt in Israel?** Because there's going to be a consequence by going and numbering Israel. **Nevertheless the king's word prevailed,** which is the right thing, **against Joab.** Joab has to obey David. He's under David. David says, "Do 'this,'" Joab goes and does it. **Therefore, Joab departed and went through all Israel and came to Jerusalem.**

Verse 5—Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. And all Israel had one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, in other words, ready for war, and Judah had four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword. So they were ready for war. So there's a principle there about how do you obey somebody that's over you and you know that it's wrong. Joab's been told to do something he knows is wrong.

Well, I had this example early with the person that was in Banbury. At the time he was the store manager, and I knew I was under him and he asked me to do something, and I had to work out a way that I could still ask that question, or answer the question the person had asked me without lying because I knew I wasn't allowed to lie. He didn't care. He lied all the time to customers.

So there was a person, a lady that had brought back a particular garment and we don't refund that garment. I tried to explain. She said, "I want to talk to the store manager or go to the store manager." So I went up to the store manager, Guy, and said, "Guy, this is what the customer is," and he said, "You go back and tell them 'this.'" It was a lie. I thought, "How am I ever going to go back and tell this person this particular thing?" So I can't remember how I came about. I don't know whether I prayed or not. I don't remember, but I remember going up to the customer and I said, "I've been told to tell you 'this' and 'this.'" It's true. "I've been told, someone over me, "to tell you this," which was a lie, but this is what I've been told. "I'm not saying it; I've been told to tell you." So I did get through that realizing that there are ways you can handle situations when you don't have to lie and you can say, "Well, I've been told to dig this hole, mate. It's in the middle of the road, but I've been told to dig it. I'm doing what my authority over me has said to do without causing a problem. Well, Joab had probably the potential there to handle it, but anyway, he went ahead and did what he was told.

But he did not count Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king's word was abominable to Joab. So Joab knew that he shouldn't be doing this, but he did it. **And God was displeased with this thing; therefore, He struck Israel.** Now, if we look at the total, this decision that was made with influence by Satan, seventy thousand people died in total. Seventy thousand! Can you imagine that today, that a decision is made in a government structure and seventy thousand people die because of it? What would happen? People would get sacked for all sorts of reasons. David's king - seventy thousand people die.

We know the rest of the story, but the key to it is here, **verse 8—So David said to God, I have sinned greatly.** It's repentance. It's turning to God who is the source of our strength because this repentance leads to something. We know what David did. David turned around and had to make a decision, and he made a decision; he left it in God's hands. We don't know what's best for us. We think we do but a decision was made. Really there would have been rejoicing on one side. There would have been rejoicing by Satan and the demons by what David did. There would have been glee, you know, real glee, because here is sin because they love sin from the sense that it's against God, anything that's against God. Well, turning David against God there would have been a rejoicing. But when David repented, "I have sinned." "Aargh!" You can imagine it because that's the way they think. They rejoice in evil.

So Satan is the destroyer and there is a penalty to be paid because of Satan. Now, we know Satan will pay his ultimate penalty, "the wages of sin is death." There's a penalty to be paid. We won't go into the other scriptures that I've got there about Christ and Satan coming to Christ and testing Christ, you know, the Son of God, but he's there. He was there in David's time. He was there with

Adam and Eve. He was with David. He was against Christ. We should remember he's against us. He's there. He knows full well what we're doing, why we're doing it. He's there and he's out to destroy just like he has every other time. Adam and Eve; he was there to destroy. David; he's trying to turn David against God. Christ; he was trying to turn the Son of God against God. But he's not going to give up. He hasn't given up and he's not going to give up. We know future scriptures that say until he's removed from the influence on mankind he's not going to give up. Not until that very last day.

The second enemy that we're going to look at now is sin. Our selfishness, what we are by nature causes sin because it's a personal choice. When people turn around and say, "Satan made me do it." No, Satan doesn't make us sin. He influences us and tries to have us sin, but we choose. It's our personal choice because we can resist Satan. We can fight against Satan. By the power of God's spirit we can do it. We are our own worst enemy. We can say Satan's an enemy, but really our nature, our selfishness is our worst enemy because it's our selfishness is why we sin. Our selfishness is why we sin. The wages that we're going to get paid because of that selfishness is death.

Romans 6:15. We're either slaves to sin, which is our selfishness, or we're slaves to God through obedience. **Romans 6:15—What then?** Which is the question. **Shall we sin because we are not under the law**, which is we're not under the penalty of the law anymore. So Paul is saying, "Well, do we just go out and just keep sinning, keep being selfish?" Because we can come from out of the penalty of sin. We've been baptized, therefore, the penalty of sin has gone, but we re-earn it, but if we repent we can go out from that penalty. So, "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the penalty of the law anymore," because of repentance and baptism? **...but under grace?** Because that's how we get it. Grace is God's mercy, the forgiveness of sin because of our ongoing repentance. We repent at baptism, but we also repent ongoing. He goes on and says, **Certainly not!** So we are not to sin just because we can be forgiven. No, we're to fight against sin.

Verse 16— Do you not know that to whom you yield (present) yourselves slaves to obey, so it's either one or the other we're doing it, **you are that one's slave to whom you obey, whether to sin**, so we're either giving in to sin and selfishness, **leading to death**, or of obedience **leading to righteousness?** So there's a choice in our life. It's something we have to choose every single day. We're either slaves to our own selfishness, which results in sin, which results in death forever, or we're leading our life leading to obedience. So we're overcoming self and we're obeying God by sacrificing our selfishness, and it leads to righteousness. Now, righteousness we know is from God, and God is righteous. Well, obedience leads to righteousness forever because we can enter Elohim, we can be in the Family of God, and we will live righteousness because we will think like God. So the choice is ours now. We're either slaves to sin, selfishness, or we're slaves to obedience to God. It is our choice who we're slaves to.

Verse 17—But God be thanked that though you were slaves to sin, which is slaves to our selfishness, put self first, yet you obeyed from the heart (from the mind) that form of doctrine which you were delivered. So we've had a choice now to whether we're going to live according to God's word or not. **And having been set free from sin...** Isn't this great, that this enemy that we have, sin, we're set free from it. Firstly by baptism, then this ongoing repentance. If we are going to God He will forgive sin. That's a guarantee. God said He will forgive if we are willing to forgive others. ...**you became slaves to righteousness.** So we have a choice now. We've made a choice to yield to God, which is God first no matter what.

I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. That's because there was still a level of selfishness in us which is by design because this whole process of conversion is about coming to know our enemies and fighting against those enemies, not falling into the traps that are set. **For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness,** which is sin to sin to sin, because one sin will lead to another will lead to another, which is what we did before we were called, only we weren't really aware of it, **so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for holiness,** because that's what we've been called to.

Verse 20—For when you were slaves to sin, which is held in bondage by Satan's deception and lies, you were free in regard to righteousness. Now, we were free from righteousness because we couldn't live it. We didn't have it. We had a freedom, but it was worldly. We didn't have God in us. So we could not be righteous because we were slaves to sin, we were held in bondage, which is through Satan's broadcasting and through our selfishness.

Verse 21—What fruit did you have then in these things which you are now ashamed? Which is a question. We're very disappointed now that we see; we're disappointed in ourselves, what choices we did make. **For the end of those things is death.** That was the outcome. Well, we're no longer under the penalty of sin, as far as death. We can get out of it. We can have a life of righteousness.

Verse 22—But now having been set free from sin, from the penalty of sin, and having become slaves (servants) of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. So that's the end result, which it goes back to Truth 6. It goes back to that whole process why we were called, what we are choosing to do, which is obey God, so that the end result is that we'll be given everlasting life.

Verse 23—For the wages, or what we will get paid for sin is death. It's a law. The wage, what we earn when we sin, is death. And for us, it's the second death because unless we repent we will face a second death. We have to be in a state of ongoing repentance. We can never say, "Oh, I'm not going to repent of that sin," and just leave it lie, because the end result will be face a second death. **For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God, something God wants to give us, is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.** So that's what God wants to give us.

Now, once we know who we are and what we are we can see that the end of 6,000 years is a wonderful thing because the end is Satan will be removed, Satan will be bound.

Revelation 20:1. In the Millennium and the Hundred-years mankind will only have one main enemy to fight because once Satan is removed there is only one main enemy - self, sin. We've got to fight ourselves. So the role in the Millennium, for people in the Millennium, is actually easier because Satan's no longer broadcasting deception and lies and the swivel mop will have to tell the truth. All these machines that make people have abs - they're going to have to tell the truth! They're going to have to tell the truth. And "free trial" will mean a free trial, not a hundred dollar postage back. All the deception in advertising and marketing, all that's got to go. The return of Christ, the establishment of 144,000 as kings and priests over this world, no lies, no deception—it's an incredible thing—and people will soon learn the truth of Christmas and Easter and all these things. They'll learn. It's just lies. It's just deception. The tooth fairy, it's all garbage.

People have got to learn those things. Well, it takes time. Their minds will be set free, like we've just read, they'll no longer be slaves to sin, but they'll be slaves to God. There'll be a freedom in it. How wonderful it will be to go to bed at night and not have fear, not to fear that someone's going to break in and steal your car, or someone's going to break in or highjack you on the road. It's just incredible, or that the fruit that you buy is not full of preservatives or chemicals and it's been in storage for a year and they bring it out and defrost it. How incredible all this is going to be to know that what you eat is going to be good for you, not killing you slowly. You know, people will say, "Yes, I eat my fruit." Well, I worked with a person that grew tomatoes and they were (so-called) naturally grown. But you wouldn't want to eat the skin. The chemicals that are poured on tomatoes, and it sits in the tomato skin, is horrendous, the chemicals. And man's pouring billions and billions of chemicals.

We've lived in different properties in the wheat fields and you realize what they do and all the wheat - other than probably organic (if the wind hasn't blown that way) - is polluted. They go through with tractors spraying the soil first - chemicals to kill the bugs. Then as it starts to grow they put more chemicals on it so that the bugs don't come up into the leaves. The end result is most of what you eat is full of chemicals and there's very little you can do about it...very little you can do about it. Even though it says "fresh apples," they're not fresh apples. They polish them and they use chemicals. That's just the way that it is. It's man.

We can only do the best we can based on God's health laws, but the reality is the world is full of deception. Marketing is full of deception. One of the greatest things here in Australia is you go to supermarkets and they'll have three lots of fruit or vegetables on a row and there's only two signs. You look at it and you think it says, "Apples, \$1.00," and "Oranges, \$1.00," and the pears are in the middle. So you assume they're a dollar, until you get them scanned and they're \$4.00. They're \$4.00, because everything's trickery. Signs are trickery. They mark up to mark down. There's so much that goes on. People say it's 50% off, and then you go and have a good look. There are laws now. Let's say a bar of chocolate is \$4.00. Well, they're going to reduce it so what they do is

they'll put it up to \$4.80, and by law I think it has to be on there for so many weeks. Then they'll say 50% off the \$4.80. They say half price. Lie! \$2.00 is half price, not \$2.40 because everything's a gimmick. Everything is a trick because that's what it's about; it's just about deception. The world is full of deception.

It's hard to imagine a society where there's no deception, where man is going to be held accountable for his choices.

Revelation 20:1—Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having a key to the bottomless pit, which is a place of restraint, and a great chain in his hand. It's not physical. This is spiritual language pointing to the change that's going to take place, that Satan is going to be removed from broadcasting to the mind that is receptive to this. **He laid hold of the dragon, Satan, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years; and he cast him into a bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should not deceive the nations no more.** The issue is deception. So he can't deceive mankind anymore through this broadcasting, through this lie and the lies that have been told in the education system and everything else.

And when that thousand years is finished. But after this, or after these things he must be released for a little while. So we see 7,100 years in a total plan. We see 6,000 years of Satan's rule, then the removal for 1,100 years. We see mankind with a thousand years without Satan. Can we imagine the change where people don't have to go up anymore and say, "By the way, I can't work Friday night and Saturday anymore." What a freedom the Millennium is going to bring! Where people will come to understand that everything they have comes from God. It's a freedom. Everything comes from God, and therefore, paying tithes is an honor. Paying tithes and offerings is an honor, to be in support of God's work. It's a great privilege. Not many people have had that opportunity. We have.

During the 1,100 years mankind will have to fight and overcome one main enemy - themselves. They have to fight their selfishness. Sin, which is to do with selfishness, is the enemy of all mankind because of what it earns.

James 4:1. This is James writing to the Church. **Where do wars (battles) and fights *come* from among you?** Speaking to us. Why is it that we would get into an argument or disagreement with another member? **Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for pleasure that war in your members?*** They come from selfishness because we should learn to yield because people can be quite dominant or bombastic about a particular thing, even in God's Church, and, well, does it really matter? Well, if we're going to stand up and start arguing about it, really, what's the point of it? **You lust and you do not have. You murder, which is an attitude, you covet, you cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you ask amiss, because it's desiring self, it's trying to gain for self. You ask and ask amiss because of it, for selfish reasons, in other words, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses!** Isn't this incredible. This

is about a relationship. You're in a wrong relationship. You're having a relationship with a spirit being because he's broadcasting to you because he's the one who wars and battles; he's the one who broadcasts ill will. So you're having this relationship with him when we shouldn't be. We have to have a relationship with God.

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Do we know that? Satan is out there, Satan's system. We want to get too close to it, too friendly and to do those things we're having a false relationship. We're having a relationship with a being that's out to destroy us.

Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Simple. We're either one or the other, brethren. We're either in a relationship with God or we're in a relationship with the world.

I want to move to closing because I want to close off with the third enemy that we have. It comes about because of the first two, which is the second death. Now, the world wouldn't think that the second death is an enemy because they don't believe in a second death. They believe in a physical death and then live forever (the majority). Other's believe in a death and then you come back as a bug or a cow or something like that; there are all different types of beliefs, but God says an enemy of us is death. It's called the second death.

Our first death is not an enemy. It's not an enemy at all, but our second one would be. So we need to be careful about the way we think in life because we could face this. We will face the second death if we refuse to repent, if we refuse to listen to God. That's when we will face it. Now, mankind in the Hundred-years will have this opportunity because the end result of a second life is either life in Elohim or no life ever again, which is called the second death.

Revelation 2:11—He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches, talking to us. He who overcomes... Overcomes what? Overcomes our selfishness. We have to overcome Satan's influence. We have to overcome our selfishness. We have to overcome sin. ...**shall not be hurt by the second death.** So if we're conquering sin by repentance we will not face this second death. Now, the second death is death which lasts forever, never to have life again ever.

I was saying to some brethren here before, I've met somebody that has made a choice in life. It's to do with when Ron revealed to the Church that people can be set and not have God's spirit. So a person who doesn't have God's spirit, hasn't had a calling, but they're already set, they will never change. I've met such a person, I believe, and that person once sat across the room from me and said, "No matter what you say, no matter what you do, I will never, ever do what you do or want your way. I don't want anything to do with it." In other words, "I'd rather die." I said, "That's probably what's going to happen." Because, see, they didn't realize what they had done. They've set their mind in a lifestyle, in a way that they want, and it wouldn't matter if God called them. And why would God call them? They've already set their mind to that. They want that evil. They want that temporary pleasure of sin, and they would rather have no life ever again (because they won't remember they had a life), and therefore, they're just happy in their selfishness.

Well, mankind during this Hundred-years, this is the big issue. Choose life or choose death. The choice is theirs, one or the other. Well, it says here anybody in that period, now and in the Hundred-years and in the thousand years, anyone who overcomes themselves, overcomes the influence of Satan now (in the future he won't be there), overcomes their selfishness, they will not be hurt by this second death.

Revelation 21:8. Sometimes it's hard to imagine that a person could go down that path, but some people just get influenced by a way and they're just very happy in their selfishness. They really are. They don't want another way. They just will make no effort at it. It's hard to understand.

Revelation 21:8—But the cowardly, unbelieving... They don't believe God, they don't want anything to do with God's way. **...the abominable**, those that are willful in what they are doing, **murderers**, they like ill will, they hate others, **sexually immoral**, **sorcerers**, they look to something else for their strength, they trust in something else, **idolaters**, **and all liars...** Now, we know the father of lies - Satan. It says, **all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.** They will be totally destroyed, the end of life forever. There will be just spirit life and no more human life.

We'll conclude by just looking at this last enemy in 1 Corinthians 15:20 because it takes us to the end and it summarizes God's plan for mankind as well and the end result. Well, it's wonderful to understand this and the fact we do. **1 Corinthians 15:20—But now Christ is risen from the dead**, we believe that, **and has become the firstfruits**, or the first of those who have fallen asleep, which means he died and has been resurrected to spirit life, which is salvation. It's what we look forward to. **For since by man came death, by man**, which is through Christ, **also came the resurrection of the dead**, which we've had sermons about that, which is this life that God is going to give to us, from physical to spirit. **For as in Adam all die**, because all men do, **even so in Christ shall all be made alive.** That's our potential. Members of the Body of Christ, begotten sons of God, this is our potential, to be made alive in Christ because we believe God, we believe Christ. **But each one in his own order.** So there is an order: **Christ the first, afterwards those who are Christ's at His coming**, referring to the 144,000. There are more resurrections.

Then the end, so we get to this end period, **when he** (Jesus Christ) **delivers the Kingdom to God**, so everything is finished. There are spirit beings and everything else is destroyed. Satan and the demons, he is the author of sin (because of his pride), and he will be destroyed along with others that do not want God. **...when he** (Jesus Christ) **puts an end to all rule and all authority and power**, because we understand now that Satan has a power and he has a rule. It's called "the earth." He's actually ruling this earth, but he's going to be replaced shortly. So this includes Satan and his followers. **For he must reign till He has put all enemies under his feet.** So Jesus Christ is going to rule until all enemies are gotten rid of. **The last enemy that will be destroyed is death**, because death is an enemy. The second death is an enemy, but when that's done and completed there is no more death. It's finished. It's over. So when that's all finished, when sin is gotten rid of, because "the wages of sin is death," therefore, there is no more sin, death will be gotten rid

of because no one can sin because they're in Elohim. There'll be no more sin. So when sin is gotten rid of, death is gotten rid of. Once everything that has or does resist God is destroyed, there is no more death. No more sin means no more death.

Verse 27—For He (God the Father) has put all things under his feet (Christ's feet). But when He (God) says all things are put under *him*, under Christ at this time, *it is evident* (it is clear) that He (God) who put all things (under Christ) under him is excepted, or outside of this. God the Father will be over all, and He always has been, and He always will be, and He still is. He's over Christ and He always will be, but at some point in time Christ will hand it all back to God the Father. It's going to be an exciting time to see all that. God willing we'll be there.

Verse 28—Now when all things are made subject to him (to Christ), then the Son himself will also be subject to Him (to God the Father) who put all things under him, that God may be all in all. What this really means is everything will be placed back to God. This means everything will be at-one with God. Everything will be in unity with God. There will be no more enemies. Incredible time, isn't it?

So we have three enemies. Well, there's coming a time when there will be no more enemies because we will be in Elohim.