

For thousands of years faithful people have been looking for the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. And now toward the end of 6,000 years that reality is rapidly closing in for mankind. This will be *Part 1* of a new series entitled *God's Kingdom Is Closing In*.

You know, it's awesome to think through time how people have looked for what God has promised, what God said He was going to give, though if you go all the way back very little was given for a long, long time, but they still had a focus and a vision for the things that God did reveal to them, and that just grew and grew and grew through time with different ones whom God has called and worked with, and it is awesome. For us to recognize that we're living in that time is absolutely astounding and mindboggling in every sense. Especially, even if you go back to the time of Mr. Armstrong and whenever you were called, but if you were called during that time period when he was an apostle, during the Philadelphia era that was very much a focus that he had. It was always a desire, always looking forward, always a sense of urgency. That, to me, was the hallmark of his life, a sense of urgency that never let up. He kept pressing and kept pressing and kept pressing, and that was infectious in that respect because those who had ears to hear heard it and they were moved by that spirit, by that attitude, by that same focus.

So it's hard, nearly impossible for us to grasp all that has gone before us in 6,000 years that has led up to this time now, yet it's good that we should stop to consider that very thing as we strive to better understand where we are now and what is now directly in front of us. Through time God's faithful people have kept their eyes on Him, on God and His word, His promises to them, promises of another life, even everlasting life, promises of a Messiah, the Christ, promises of a new Kingdom that would reign on earth, one that is of God, God's Kingdom.

I thought a lot about different sections here, of where to begin this series; I know where it's going, and I know what we're primarily focusing upon. But a good place to begin is in Luke 21:36 in a verse that has been highly misunderstood, I know, especially during Philadelphia. And in time God began to reveal to us more what this was all about.

Luke 21:36 it says, **Therefore watch and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.** Now, just a bit of a brief history: The way this had been taken in times past, perhaps because of punctuation, perhaps because of the present truth at that time, what was believed, what was thought about was that we are to watch and pray always that we be accounted worthy to escape; praying about that in our lives, that God would count us worthy to escape. That's not what it's about at all. Not at all. It isn't about that we should be worthy to escape. We are indeed to live a certain way of life before God, and if we live that way faithfully before God He will bring us through whatever it is that's before us, if that is His purpose. That's why He's called those at this

time, many to live on into a new age, and for those who are part of the 144,000, and those who are yet waiting to be sealed as a part of the 144,000.

Again, we are to watch. We are to be watchful, to be on guard. That's what this word is about. It's taken from a word that means, "to watch," as they would put sentries to watch for enemies that would come up to a city. They would be posted, like in a military. They would be on guard. This word is being used for us, that we are in essence, spiritually for us especially, to be on guard, to be spiritually alert, to be watchful for those things that God has placed before us, to those things that God has given to us. Especially in this end-time with all that God has continued to reveal, and so much more than any other time the need to be more watchful because we live in that age. We live in that time that so much of the Bible has been given and written about, if you will, from prophets and so forth.

I think I mentioned this maybe last week, or the week before, how that there was a message of judgment on mankind and there is a final judgment, obviously, but a lot of the judgment that's talked about throughout scripture and throughout the Old Testament especially of certain things that would happen is about this time. It's about the end of 6,000 years. It's about the accumulation and finally a time to come to that judgment that we happen to live in, and because we live at that time this is when judgment's going to come upon the earth. God has withheld that judgment for 6,000 years. There's only one time that He passed a judgment that changed things dramatically, and that was during the flood, during the days of Noah. We live in another period of time though that was prophesied to take place at the end of an age, and we just happen to live in that age when the world is going to reap what man has done for 6,000 years.

That's why a final witness is so important on this earth at this time and has been for a few years now. It's because this is the age that's going to reap of what it has sown and what mankind has sown, not because of other people's sins through time, but because of a change that's going to take place, and because finally man's government is going to be brought to an end. It's about that judgment, and because of that man has to be humbled. That's not an easy thing, for mankind to be humbled. It takes a lot to humble people, especially in this age of the kind of wealth and power that exists on the earth compared to other periods of time. Yet God's going to humble this earth very powerfully so before He ushers in the Kingdom of His Son, the Kingdom of God that is rapidly closing in on us and on this world.

So we're to be watchful. We're to watch in many ways, spiritually to be on guard involves many things, and especially for us that's a lot of the focus of this sermon series, is to be watchful involves many things. Literally, to watch things that are going on in the world around us as well, to watch.

I'll tell you, I am dumbfounded when I look at some of these things. Even in working with some of the news articles and things we're going to look at in a moment, and to back away and put it all together and think all this is happening all at one time on the earth all for a purpose. Everything

that's taking place now is being put into place, if you will, a little here and a little there so that when it's time, when it's God's time everything will take place quickly and swiftly. That's a merciful thing, that it should take place quickly, swiftly, but to work with those things, to bring those things about like that is beyond human understanding, yet God has given us a bit of a picture of that, an understanding of that that has to come to pass of what He's going to do. I marvel when I see the news. That's the vision I have. That's the vision we need to have, in understanding, you back away a little bit and you see how it's all coming together around this earth. You see certain dominoes that when one starts to fall, and it's getting easier and easier to see where things are going to begin and to see as one collapses another collapses, because they're all tied together. They're all tied together so powerfully so.

Yet this nation, especially this nation (those of Ephraim and Manasseh, but especially here in Manasseh), to recognize what is taking place in our news, it's amazing. My wife told me the same thing this morning after I told her that's exactly what's going to be said in the sermon. It's all a diversion. The focus is turning more and more inward, on things to take our minds away from the rest of the world and what's really happening. People are so blind they can't even begin to see. Some people here and there see certain parts of the puzzle, certain dominoes, but to put it all together, they can't. There are certain fears out there that exist because some can see how one thing can lead to another into another, and so that's becoming clearer and clearer even on a physical plane to the world, but we know what's coming and so many of who is going to be involved.

As I go through some of these articles later even, to recognize what is said in prophecy about them, it's astounding to see it's all there, and it's not going to take much. It isn't going to take much, it's that volatile. Any day. Any time. I just hope that we make it through to the Feast, that we're able to observe a Feast. And then between then and January... because the reality is if things don't begin happening by January or in January this next year I fear time is going to go on. We're going to have another period of time. Perhaps a longer Day of the Lord, I don't know. God will show us when that time comes, but we have to be prepared for those things and God has helped us to be more prepared for things, though I hope and pray that doesn't happen. That doesn't change the truth, doesn't change this way of life, doesn't change what we live. We just continue to live what God has given to us, of a way of life because that's the most important thing for God's Church. His timing is fully in His hands.

If He gives us markers along the way that help us, then that's a blessing to us. I've used that example, if you're running a long race and you have certain markers in front of you, because generally you see something perhaps at the top of a hill, or perhaps at the bottom of a hill and you know you're going to be turning another direction now and you don't know exactly where, because if you haven't been on that course you keep running in the direction of that which is mapped out for you and you don't know exactly, perhaps, at times exactly where the turns are. You don't have it all memorized obviously. You keep having markers that you race toward. That's

what we've always done. It's what God's Church has done. We did that through Philadelphia, if we understood it. We were too weak to see it during Laodicea because that had to take place, a Church that began to get weaker and weaker, more lethargic, Laodicean, lukewarm, and couldn't see. There were no markers at that time, in that respect, that people could see because there was no one that had a sense of urgency to keep us looking short-range, to keep in the race, to keep running, and so the Church became weary and lazy. Lazy. Lethargic. Lukewarm. Awesome!

Yet at a time that we live in we need those markers. So if nothing else, if nothing else it's very important that we have them in God's Church, because if you don't have them you can't survive it. The race is too hard. So God mercifully gives us those kinds of things on a spiritual plane even in our lives. Does that change anything I'm focused upon? Not at all. It's just I'm ready for whatever comes.

So God's Kingdom is closing in and the world is witness of that in a very powerful way. The things that are going on around us are very powerful in what they're saying.

So we're to watch and to have a close relationship with God, to pray always! What is your prayer life like? What is your relationship with God Almighty? What is it like? Is it something you live day by day? I'm not talking about having to go into your closet and pray for half an hour or an hour, whatever it is, but whatever that relationship is, is it on a daily basis with God Almighty? What is it? What is it? Because you better start there. If you don't know what it is, if it isn't what it's supposed to be, you're living a very dangerous game because this is not a game, but you're making it one if that's what you're doing. Some in God's Church, and I fear too many, are doing exactly that.

God is our Father. He is our Father and we must see Him as our Father, God the Father with all wisdom, with all might, with all power, with spirit and power and strength that He can give to us and share with us, but you have to ask. You have to know that you need it every day of your life! You know that without it you have nothing and you'll become weak and you'll become lethargic and you'll do exactly what they did in Laodicea. It's a warning. The seventh era is a warning to us to the end. It truly is because with a nation and with where most of God's people are, the wealth, the ease of life, which is easy compared to what it was 50, 100, 200, 300 years ago, and on through time. Easy, easy, easy in comparison.

So we're to pray always, be close to God and see Him as our Father and see our need for the Great God of this universe and a relationship. That relationship is one of prayer and it's one with God's people where we can have it. Not everyone can have that, but where people are able to have it, we'd better take advantage of it, better use it, because some are backing away from that and that is exceedingly dangerous. If God makes a talent available, a blessing available, and we don't use it? We're cutting our own throat on a spiritual plane. We really are. That's happening in God's Church. I see these dangers taking place and I'm not going to go and tell individuals personally who they are and what you're doing and what dumb mistakes sometimes are made.

That's in your hands. You are responsible for the choices you make in your life on a spiritual plane. It's about your relationship with God.

I can only give what I give at times like this. Because if this doesn't get us, if this doesn't help us to focus, if we're not receiving what God gives us Sabbath by Sabbath nothing I say personally is going to change that. Nothing is going to change that! Not one thing because we'd be too weak to receive it. What we receive here reveals our weakness or our strength, whether we can hear or to what degree we can hear, how much we're able to drink in and how much we're not drinking in because it's spiritual. God's in control of that, and Jesus Christ, God the Father and Jesus Christ as to what we can receive.

So pray always so that indeed, because we're living that way of life, because we're being watchful, and because we're close to God, because we have this relationship and because we're praying always, that we will be accounted worthy to escape what's coming because that's how it's accomplished because then God looks upon that and He responds to that.

It's like the book - if we will listen, God will listen; but we have to respond to that. That's how our listening isn't just a matter of hearing something; it's a matter of the response then that comes out of our life.

Verse 34—And take heed to yourselves, otherwise at any time your hearts can become overcharged with surfeiting. Some translate this meaning as "nauseous from overdrinking," and that's not what it's about, as a whole. Not at all. We already understand those basic things of life, of certain things of how we're to live before God and so forth. It has more to do with the meaning of excess, "excess, especially [I love this] it's connected to the mouth, talking, speaking." Awesome! It's an excess in talking, an excess in speaking. But in a certain way, "in an overindulgence in life's concerns." God has been telling us that in a different term of recent time in the last two years. We call it drama. Drama. Drama. Drama. If you want to use one word that describes this word, it's drama. It truly is. To where things get to a point where certain things, people are involved in certain things so much in their life that's what keeps coming out of their mouth. That's what their life revolves around, not God's way of life, not the Church, nothing as a whole, but their own personal lives and what they're caught up in, the drama, drama. Don't you get tired of hearing it?—of life.

I hate drama. I hate it. I hate it. I hate it because I know what it does to people spiritually. There are people in God's Church who are too involved in drama...too involved in drama, "an overindulgence in life's concerns," not necessarily of trials and hardships and things they're going through but what they make up in their mind about what they're experiencing. It's almost as though people can get to a point where they thrive on drama and that's what they want to talk about. They want to share their drama. I don't like having drama shared with me, personally. Now, if people want to counsel about something, that's a different matter, but to share a lot of

drama and stuff that has no significance to your life if you really see it on a spiritual plane? But you can't give that to people. Some hear this and some don't.

Again, **and take heed to yourselves, otherwise at any time your hearts can become overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness...** See, the only thing that translators understood were the basic words of their time and what they could translate it into. They didn't understand anything spiritual and how God works in their lives or how God works with His Church, and so forth. This word, if they truly understood it, has to do with more of the ways of this world, being intoxicated, in essence, with the ways of this world even in escapism. It can manifest itself in different ways. That's what it's talking about because the point is take heed to yourselves because these are the things that will distract you!

Look at this nation. Drama. Drama. Drama. Oh, the Russians! (No offense.) I mean out of Russia that are there, the leadership, and their computer skills. They have an ability and they're using it in a very powerful way. So we're eaten up with all that, of how different nations are able to have an influence on our elections, or whatever, and it's just a bunch of stupidity and a waste of time, and they're not in the booth with people voting. You think this is so stupid! Every day, every day! Do you get tired of hearing it? Drama. Drama. Drama. People are eating it up, can't get enough of it sometimes. Parties get involved and it's like what can they do next? What things are going to come along to vindicate, or to whatever it might be, or to find fault with. You think, "As the World Churns." As this country churns, it's churning. You think, what a sad, sad state this world is in.

God's making it very clear, as I was about ready to say a moment ago, and I forgot to mention, about a diversion. I guess I said that, about a diversion. These things just turn people's minds away from the things that really are important, the things that are going to come around in a short time and bite them bad, catch them off guard - off guard, see, very much so in this country because this is the first to fall. This is the first that starts the dominoes, what happens here. It has to do with the First Trumpet. That's still very much about a financial state, and little rumblings here and there that continue to happen. Things are not peachy keen, as many would like people to believe. The reason they tout certain things and do certain things is because their life is wrapped up in it, a lot of their life, millions, and billions of dollars. And it can't fail, in their minds, and so what are you going to say? What are you going to do?

...and the cares (anxieties or worries). This is similar to the first one here about talking about certain things and building them up, but not the same at all. They're different. This just has to do with how people can become so eaten up with what they're going through in their life that they just worry. It's not a matter of talking about it and talking drama, it's a matter they just feel weighted down, and these anxieties that people have then in their life because the weight is so great upon them. Now, we can't have that in God's Church because when you get to that point you've taken your eyes off of God Almighty, of the one who provides us the help we need in our lives to go through various trials, to not carry the whole thing ourselves, to realize our lives are in

God's hands. God loves us. God's focus is upon us. Yes, sometimes we want relief and it's not wrong to ask for help that we have some relief, but if you don't get it right away there are some answers there. There are some things that we can benefit by going through in life. God doesn't just take everything away from us, especially at this time in our lives. He doesn't just remove certain things because then we wouldn't learn, we couldn't grow, whether it be for learning things for the future that will benefit our ability to help others and serve others or whatever it might be, or whether it be something we need to come to see and grasp in a deeper way.

...and the cares of this life, and then that day come upon you suddenly. In other words, not on guard, not spiritually watchful, not taking heed to these things that God says are the things that can destroy you. That's why I mentioned earlier I know people that are involved in some of these things in their lives, and we should deal with those things on a spiritual plane in a relationship with God because we're close to God in prayer, we're looking to Him for help.

For as a snare (a trap) shall it come on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. This earth isn't ready. This world has no idea what is coming, no idea, no idea. The world really doesn't grasp the magnitude of what's in front of it before Christ's Kingdom, before the Kingdom of God will be established. It has no idea, yet God has told generation after generation, written about it, given, inspired prophets to write about it through time, inspired things to be written in the New Testament that the world doesn't grasp nor understand, and things that God has given to His Church now more and more from the time of Philadelphia on a greater understanding of the age in which we live, the end-time. Mr. Armstrong understood we were at the end-time. He was farther back, but he was in the end-time. It's that generation still continuing on, barely. That's what gives me encouragement. Certain time won't pass away until everything comes to pass. Incredible.

So we as God's people do have a job before us. It's one that's been in the process of being set in place for some time now. That preparation has been taking place within a remnant Church. Although the Church has been involved in doing much of that job, that work, since being established on Pentecost of 1998, people, the world, have not listened. They can't, but it's a witness of that. They don't have the ability to because it's been that way for 6,000 years; it shows the true spirit of mankind.

So God has given Thunders and Trumpets that will be used to bring people to listen. It's just that simple. That's what they're about. They're about bringing people to have an ability to begin to listen, because of the intent behind it all, to bring people to a point of humility that doesn't exist now, to a point of a realization, of an ability to see a little bit here and there of what's happening in the world. When certain things strike everything that people have placed their hope in, everything that people have placed their beliefs in are going to be shattered quickly in a very powerful way.

As God has given us the responsibility to watch and to be close to Him, again, through prayer, and a closer relationship with Him so that we can do our job, our work within the timing and the time frame that He leads us to fulfill. So God has done that. He's given us that responsibility to watch. So within this timing and our need to watch we've also been warning of those things to come before Christ begins his return and that's magnified at different times and then other things are lessened at times depending on what God is doing with us as a people. So we've also been very much involved in a warning, though nobody listens, as a whole. Only the Church has had the ability to really listen through things that are being warned even to this day, like we've been talking about here at the beginning.

So we've also been warning of those things to come before Christ begins his return, and we've been announcing about end-time events and their purpose that leads to a greater fulfillment of the gospel, the good news, that can then be established on earth - God's Kingdom governing this earth.

So again here, in Luke 21. That's why Jesus Christ warned us as he did. So let's look at it again, **Verse 34—Take heed to yourselves, otherwise at any time your hearts can become overcharge with surfeiting** - Just say, they will become overcharged! You know, if we don't take heed to ourselves it isn't a "can" and a "maybe." It really isn't. It is; it will happen. It will take place. If we don't watch, if we don't pray as we need to and have a close relationship with God, this is what's going to take place if these things begin to be built up in our life more and more, if we're not watching and being on guard against these things, against this word for "surfeiting," or "an overindulgence in an active engagement and concerns over matters of this life," drama, drama, drama thing and of the ways of this world. You know, a spiritual type of intoxication.

Sometimes people get involved in that. It's a kind of a form of escapism and we want to be distracted. There's a balance in life of how we're to live life, but we have to be careful of this one. **...and the anxieties of the words of this life, and that that day come upon you unexpectedly. For as a snare...** So we're warned of a snare, a trap where people find themselves fully entrapped. That's what it means. All of a sudden it's there and it has you in a position, in a place that you don't want to be and you can't do a thing about it, unable to escape what comes to pass.

So this snare indeed will catch this world off guard, unaware of what's been coming or why though we've been declaring it. God's been declaring that from the beginning of time, things about how man should live, the results if you don't live that way, especially through the prophets the results of what will come, the times we live in, the judgment that's going to come upon this earth that's going to be executed on this earth. It isn't about what happens after the end of the Great White Throne. That is a judgment, but there is judgment spoken of again and again and again that's to happen soon on this earth. We just happen to live in that time.

Even the Church that was scattered after the Apostasy it's going to become entrapped. That's the only hope. That's really the only hope they have of being shaken to a point that they might have a means to escape. And others who can listen and will listen in time, because when they're caught in it, when they realize that what they have there's no way out, then what does the human mind begin to do? There have to be answers. "Why is this happening?" "What do I do?" "I've been hearing this." Or "I've heard of this." Or "Someone's told me about this." Incredible. An ability to listen, if they will.

So again, even the Church that was scattered after the Apostasy will become entrapped, but many will have the opportunity to escape much of the greater magnitude of destruction and devastation that follows in time.

So who is truly watchful, sobered, and wisely fearful of what is coming? Because if you're not you're going to get a pretty good shaking too. As horrible as it is in what happened down in Florida, as much as that affects us, because it should, and I believe that it does everyone, and the emotions of seeing those kinds of things take place, yet that happens day in and day out across this nation and around the world. Lives go by the wayside. But they have a life awaiting them; something the world doesn't see. We see it. We know it. To live in an age that they're going to live in, what they're going to experience because they're going to have had an experience in a very bad age and they're going to know of certain things, whatever their age is, of what the world was like then and they're going to see something that's going to so dumbfound and astound their minds, of what's happened after a thousand years, of what God has done on this earth after a thousand years. They're going to live a physical life in an incredible world, they truly are, but it's hard for people - even in God's Church sometimes - to see that, but nevertheless, it's still disheartening to see that, and to be moved by that. But it is so small, it is so puny compared to what's about to take place, it really is. That's why people are going to be so shocked and in shock. And the mind, we can't begin to grasp how minds are going to be. It's not going to be like WWII and WWI, because this is going to affect the earth in a very powerful way and everybody living on it. There is no way to escape. There really isn't. It's going to come upon all mankind.

So again, who is truly watchful, sobered, and wisely fearful of what is coming? I think about some of these things in news articles, and I'm going to spend a little bit of time on a few articles. I've tried to put these in an arrangement of time sequence in some of the things taking place, and we won't get through it all today because I'm going to save some for probably next week or another portion of this series.

Dumbfounding world we live in, but it's this ability to back away then from everything and see what's happening all around the world and see certain things that will lead into others as they continue to take place. It's not just one spot in this world, it's all over. It's a domino effect. One hits and one hits another, not in a week or a month, but quickly, quickly, day by day in some cases. One thing leads to another immediately because people have to act and react to certain things that take place. What are they going to do and how are they going to do it?

It's all going to be about self and self-preservation even as nations, and some being greedy as they are already are going to see opportunity (as they take it), and they will begin doing certain things because it's already in their minds. There are already certain things planned. There are already certain things planned by nations, this just speeds it up mightily. This just propels it forward to the front page, if you will, like "It's obvious! This is the time. Now we do it." That's exactly what's going to take place to throw this world into a tailspin. It doesn't take long.

So here we start in a part of the world, India, Pakistan, and China; all with a lot of nuclear weapons. A lot just in that portion of the world alone. An article here February 7th: "The fragile peace between nuclear powers India and Pakistan that's been continuously tested over the past few years has begun to break down, as both nations reported record numbers of ceasefire violations across the heavily militarized border that splits the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir."¹ I'm just hitting parts of the articles. "Separating the Indian and Pakistani sides of the region is the 482-mile Line of Control (LoC)," they call it. So when you see this in news articles, that's what they're talking about, "the most heavily guarded border in the world, with hundreds of thousands of troops standing at the ready at both sides armed with rifles, machine guns, mortar platforms and artillery."

Another article: You know, I was dumbfounded as I have gone through various articles recently and there was a time if you go back a few years (don't have to go back very much) and World War III wasn't being spoken of as a whole. You'd see something every once in a while, but it's being spoken of more and more and more.

"World War 3: India evacuates 36,000 people from Pakistan border to escape heavy shelling,"² from Pakistan, and some of the things they're saying back and forth is not good. Incredible.

"World War 3: India, Pakistan Nuclear conflict could be devastating for the whole world: A NUCLEAR conflict between India and Pakistan 'could be devastating for the whole world' as the two powers continue to engage in conflict with each other a top separatist leader in Kashmiri... has declared. As soldiers on both sides launch attacks along the contested border known as the Line of Control (LoC), Mr. Geelani called for the two to 'play a constructive role for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue.' He added: 'The risk of collusion between the two nuclear powers will be devastating not only for the region, but for the whole world.' ... Fighting continued later on Monday following a brief hiatus - the increased tension have forced thousands of residents to flee their home in search of safety."³

¹ <https://sputniknews.com/asia/201801301061205369-india-pakistan-border-ceasefire-collapsing/>

² <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/907950/World-War-3-India-Pakistan-Line-of-Control-evacuation-Jammu-and-Kashmir>

³ <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/908445/World-War-3-India-Pakistan-conflict-nuclear-Kashmiri-Line-of-Control-shelling-evacuation>

Another article: "World War 3: India and Pakistan 'are heading toward World War 3' as border conflict intensifies."⁴ Because they believe it's going to involve the world. They don't know how true it is.

"World War 3: India declares Pakistan 'WILL PAY for expanding arc of TERROR' after attack. India has declared that Pakistan "will pay" for an attack on an army base in Jammu region that killed at least six people, the country's defence minister starkly warned." And this has intensified so much since then it's not even funny.

So that's just one little spot in the world. But see, there's so many places throughout the world these things are happening. Just like one domino, another one, and another one, and another one because they'll all erupt. They'll all erupt very quickly. It won't take long. It won't be like what happened in WWII (which is so disgusting) when this country stayed out of a war for a long, long time, and some of the things I've read and seen that were in news papers and people just ignored certain things that were going on, and how Great Britain and Europe was involved in fighting Germany, as they were, for a long time until finally, finally this country got involved. Some of the things that take place through time, time can be spread out, and because of what happened to us in a couple spots in the world, but especially in one that brought us into the conflict, and you go through history you see these things and sometimes it takes time for everyone, especially that particular war, to get involved; but eventually people got involved. This time it doesn't take time and that's a blessing, really, because there's so much going to take place with such power unleashed that the faster and the more confined that period of time is the better it is. That's exactly what God is going to do.

Another one here... Articles! I mean, just the headlines themselves speak volumes: "Can India fight China and Pakistan simultaneously?" Incredible some of the things that are being covered out there. "On October 5th," going back a little bit here now in this particular article that came out on October 10th, but using this one just to kind of show what has transpired since then. "On October 5th, Air Chief Marshall B S Dhanoa, the chief of the air staff, said, 'The Indian Air Force is capable of effectively countering any threat from China while engaging in a two-front war also involving Pakistan.'⁵ The fact that they're even talking about it in public and on the news to their own people, and then what does China hear and what does Pakistan hear, because they're also saying things too. But the fact that it's even being discussed in these terms is absolutely incredible.

Then this article a little farther down says, "China sees India as a strategic competitor and a rival for leadership in the Indo-Pacific region." There have been a lot of skirmishes down through there and a lot of threats going back and forth. "As part of its grand strategy, China seeks to confine India to the backwaters of the Indian Ocean as a subaltern State and is using Pakistan as a proxy

⁴ <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/915506/World-War-3-India-Pakistan-Jammu-Kashmir-Indo-Pakistani-War-shelling-artillery-ceasefire>

⁵ <http://www.rediff.com/news/column/can-india-fight-china-and-pakistan-simultaneously/20171010.htm>

to keep India embroiled in conflict." Now, that's pretty bold, but that's what people see. That's what strategists can see is taking place. That's how they're functioning. That's how they're working and they even speak of some of those things, perhaps not in those blunt of terms, out of China and so forth. So it just gets bigger and bigger and bigger, and if China is using Pakistan, which they are, as a kind of a proxy in fighting certain things and stirring things up.

It's just like people seem to be ignorant of how North Korea is being used. It's a little pawn in a big, big chess game; people have plans, some big nations have plans already. See, it's already in motion. Just takes a moment and it's in action.

Another article here, January 11: "China is starting to see India as a major threat."⁶ It's all a part of a plan. It's all part of the strategy. Your nation gets so big, and some people have a certain kind of thinking that history has shown that if you get to a certain point and you can't deal with everything that's there, go to war, prepare for war. This is not new. Every big nation on earth that's ever been big has planned such things. Just as this nation has done. You don't have to go very far back...not very far back, things that happened in Vietnam, things that are happening in different parts of the world. Nation building. Going to make democracies. Oh, give me a break! People don't think that way in those nations. They don't think like we do over here. Anyone to think such things is very naïve or purposely doing something else. Incredible.

"More and more, scholars in China see India replacing Japan as the second biggest threat to Beijing, following the U.S." So it's just a headline. I'm not going to read the whole article, but these things are out there all over the place.

January 12: "China's Official Military Warns: 'War Is Not far.'"⁷ They've been rattling the sabre for a little while now. So there's an official People's Liberation Army headline on Tuesday in what's called the PLA Daily. "A soldier without desire for war-preparedness is not a good soldier. The newspaper warned that Chinese soldiers are not ready for combat because many refuse to believe war is imminent." You think what they're preaching to their own people, to their own military. What are they getting them ready for? Incredible!

"President Xi Jinping kicked off the new year with a rare speech to the military urging soldiers to be ready for war and 'don't fear death.'" Little farther in the article, "While North Korea continues to be a great distraction, China is gearing up for conflict with India on the LAC, according to Global Times... In 2018, China's urgent caution to its armed forces to prepare for war has been a telling sign that an event is imminent. While many focus on the developments on the Korean Peninsula, the real showdown is emerging between the two nuclear superpowers divided by the Line of Actual Control." The LAC, what they're calling it in this one.

⁶ <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/china-is-starting-to-see-india-as-a-major-threat/>

⁷ <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-01-12/chinas-official-military-newspaper-warns-war-not-far-us>

Another one: "'Pinpoint Accuracy': India Tests Short-Range Nuclear Ballistic Missile."⁸ And the timing? February 7th. You see, the timing of these things is really amazing when you start looking at that too and you see certain things that are taking place and why they respond on certain dates that they do to something that's happened in the news. This one here: "India's Strategic Forces Command (SFC) test-fired the Agni-I short-range ballistic missile at their Integrated Test Range in the Bay of Bengal on Tuesday." A little farther down, "Named for the Vedic god of fire, Agni-I is the father of the Agni family of nuclear and nuclear-capable missiles." They have many of them. This is a small one, but they have many that are much farther along than that. "The aggressive expansion of the Agni program has coincided with worsening relations with New Delhi's primary geopolitical rivals: China and Pakistan. All three nations have experienced strong economic and military growth in recent years, along with increased tensions and border friction. China and India are the only nations to maintain the "No First-Use" policy, where they pledge not to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances..." Does anyone believe that? "...except as a response to another state using them first." Give me a break! "The remaining members of the 'nuclear club' opt for the "Mutually Assured Destruction" policy, where they can use nuclear weapons to defend themselves or their allies from invasion." Then they go on and talk about "The Agni-IV intermediate-range ballistic missile was also tested in January 2017," going back a year before that and just being reminded, "and the test was similarly successful." Then they have one, "The Agni-VI, once it concludes development, will expand India's nuclear range to cover Australia, Africa, and Western Europe." So what are they thinking? It reveals what's going on in these people's minds, in nation's minds and what they think they have to defend against.

So in this article on February 13th here: "China will 'take action' if India sends troops to crisis-hit Maldives - state media"⁹ Do you know where that is? I didn't. I had to look it up on a map. It's out in the Indian Ocean, a strategic location because of what China is doing out there at that particular location. It says, "Beijing will 'take action' if India sends troops to the Maldives, Chinese state media has warned." So again, the article goes on and talks about some of this. I'm not going to go through that either.

But they also have a strategic route and the military, with military significance to China and that's why they're concerned about what India is trying to do in that area. So there's this tug-o-war, it goes on. It's not just because of what's happening on that border; it also has to do with other places in the world that are really closer to India than China by any means, but China has their footprint because they're wanting to expand in the world and they have a vision of being able to accomplish that and do that. They're trying to get into places in Africa. They're trying to get places in the Middle East, if they can. They have focuses in different parts, South America, and so forth. They're wanting to expand and they're slowly but surely changing some nations to be affiliated with them.

⁸ <https://sputniknews.com/military/201802071061452870-india-agni-short-range-missile-test/>

⁹ <https://www.rt.com/news/418663-china-india-troops-maldives/>

This one here is from the 8th of February: "New Surveillance Images Show Beijing's Militarization of South China Sea."¹⁰ I don't know how many of you have been watching. You know, you don't hear this stuff on normal TV. You just don't hear it, as a whole. Maybe once in a while a little bit of a blurb. But surprise, surprise that some of the articles go through and talk about now there's absolute proof that they've militarized those Islands in the Spratly areas, I believe it is, of the South China Sea. This causes a lot of problems in the area, of what they're doing, because of the incredible route that's there and all the nations that are involved. There are a lot of them involved and they don't like what China is doing. So the U.S. keeps testing them and vice-versa and this tug-o-war that keeps taking place. It's very obvious of what China is doing; they're expanding. They're looking for opportunity to do so.

So again, the "Spratly islands between the Philippines and Vietnam," in that particular region, "show how Beijing transformed the reefs into a network of air bases and naval bases." They knew that's what they were going to do in the first place, but it just gets worse and worse and worse.

So that's just one part of the world, tug-o-war, that when the domino falls it's going to erupt, powerfully so.

Now, "New Iranian weaponized drone deployed in Syria and likely handed to Hizbollah." So now this goes back a little ways; this was discussed February 7th. But the Israelis know that Iran is sending now these drones and now they're weaponized and so they're concerned because if they come close to Israel, Israel has to respond to that. So that's what's been happening. That's what's happening in the news here recently. So they know this has been going on. They know what Iran is doing, and the world just sits back and watches. Dumbfounding! It just lets this tug-o-war go on. It's a dumbfounding part of the world right now.

Anyway, the next article, read in order here, all tied together: "...a major battle broke out on Saturday between the Israeli Air Force and Syrian Air Defence Force over the occupied Golan Region, south Lebanon and the west Damascus region. During the confrontation that lasted for hours, Israeli warplanes and Syrian anti-aircraft systems traded missile fire - literally dozens of such munitions were fired - as the latter launched a general attack against 'Iranian and regime' bases west of Damascus." So everybody, I think, probably heard that one in the news. Anyway, the first Israeli jet ever shot down like that, as far as what's taken place, but because of a drone that came across into their region (they say), and have pictures of it (supposedly), traveling there they responded and attacked several times; they sent jets over several times. One jet was destroyed. So the drone was destroyed, shot down by I think it was an Apache helicopter, Israel's. I think that's what it was.

But anyway, all these things, all the friction in that part of the world and some of the threats that are going back and forth on that one. So then that's what follows, "Israeli jet shot down after

¹⁰ <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-02-07/new-surveillance-images-show-beijings-militarization-south-china-sea>

bombing Iranian site in Syria."¹¹ It's not enough to realize all the people involved in Syria! That is just absolute nuts what's taking place over there: Russia, U.S., Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Iran, Jordan. You talk about a powder keg.

"Netanyahu said he had spoken by telephone with Russian President Vladimir Putin and that they agreed Israel-Russia military coordination in regard to Syria would continue." I'm sorry, that just means a lot, doesn't it? It's like us agreeing about certain parts we're going to bomb. We're not going to do this; we're going to share certain information... Right. I mean, how dumb? It's just mindboggling what's taking place.

Then: "Iran Unveils New Homemade Nuclear-Capable Ballistic Missiles Amid Massive War Celebrations."¹² So some of you I'm sure saw that on TV. "On the heels of an encounter between an Iranian drone and Israeli forces, Iranian leaders showcased their ballistic missile capabilities, which includes a nuclear-capable medium-range missile that appears to share similarities with North Korean technology, according to experts." That's amazing. I'm speaking facetiously. "The nuclear-capable missile can strike Israel even when fired from Iranian territory... Iranian military leaders bragged the ballistic missile 'can be launched from mobile platforms or silos in different positions and can escape missile defense shields due to their radar-evading capability...'" I'm sorry, but it is so foolish and what we do is so foolish, especially in this age because of what's getting ready to take place. They are playing with things they don't grasp, but it's going to happen.

Then: "...Russia attacks US troops in Syria."¹³ I don't know how many of you saw some of that in some of the articles coming out and some finally acknowledging certain things about what took place. It's not a good thing to happen.

Then the next one, February 13th: "US forces reportedly killed more than 100 Russian mercenaries inside Syria."¹⁴ Just a little tit for tat. They know what they're doing and they're playing these games. Then they have this talk behind the scenes, and I love some of the way some of this is stated. Let me read some of this: "The Syrian war is heating up, especially between the US and Russia. On Tuesday, Bloomberg News reported that US and Kurdish forces in Syria had killed 200 fighters last week, including many Russian contract soldiers, according to several Russian sources and an American official. The Russians, who were fighting on the side of embattled Syrian leader Bashar al Assad, attacked a military base in the Deir ez-Zor region of Syria on February 7, according to the Bloomberg report. US forces stationed with Syrian Democratic forces troops on

¹¹ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-iran/israeli-jet-shot-down-after-bombing-iranian-site-in-syria-idUSKBN1FU07L>

¹² <http://freebeacon.com/national-security/iran-unveils-new-homemade-nuclear-capable-ballistic-missiles-amid-massive-war-celebrations/>

¹³ <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-02-16/russia-attacked-u-s-troops-in-syria>

¹⁴ <https://www.vox.com/world/2018/2/13/17008446/us-troops-syria-russia-mercenaries-killed>

the base responded with artillery fire and air strikes." Anyway, just crazy stuff that just keeps going on and on and on.

So, if it isn't enough some of these are even the U.S. and Russia getting a little more involved there, then here is one, January 28th because it just gets bigger and bigger. It's just everything getting bigger and bigger right now. It's mushrooming to a point that at some point it's going to be uncontrollable. But more than that, it's going to be ready for what transpires because it's going to be held off until certain things take place.

This one: "Turkish Warplanes Begin 'Massive Bombing' Of US-Backed Syrian Kurds." They hate the Kurds. This has gone back for generations and generations. They haven't liked what the U.S. did in Iraq and the Kurds to the north in Iraq. They don't like what is taking place with the Kurds in Syria because to them a Kurd is a Kurd and they don't like Kurds. They'd like to destroy them all. So that's their enemy (they believe). It's been that way for a long, long time and those things don't just change overnight. As a matter of fact, they're not changing at all.

So, "'The TSK (Turkish Armed Forces) has started airborne operations,' Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said...eight of their F-16 aircraft were involved in the aerial sortie, which is ironic when one considers that Turkey is using US-made warplanes to bomb a US-backed military organization which has been provided with weapons made in the US." Then they're a NATO ally. They're a part of NATO and we have nuclear weapons on that base again, the Incirlik Air Base, that supposedly were taken out when this revolution type thing began to happen in Turkey. So this news kept being bantered back and forth. The U.S. has gotten the weapons out. There's been no proof that anything was ever taken out. He isn't going to allow anything to be taken out, being a part of NATO and so forth. So they have a lot of power. They have a lot of power right there in Turkey.

Something that people in the world don't know is that it's prophesied that Turkey is going to stab in the back Ephraim before this is over, whatever that means. They've already been doing that anyway, but what's coming is, and what's prophesied is more important, is greater by far. So, not good.

"Turkish tanks cross into Syria as Ground offensive against US backed Militia begins."¹⁵ So again, different things taking place here. "Erdogan warns of 'unwanted consequences' in Turkish push toward US troops in Manbij. The fuse may be lit on a major new crisis in war-torn Syria, as Turkish forces and their local allies push deeper into Syrian territory and threaten Manbij, a city where U.S. troops are deployed. Reuters noted on Monday,"¹⁶ and I was trying to find the date of this, February 12th. "Reuters noted on Monday that Turkish officials, up to and including President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have warned foreign forces to clear a path if and when Turkey makes a

¹⁵ <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-01-21/turkish-tanks-cross-syria-ground-offensive-against-us-backed-milita-begins>

¹⁶ <http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2018/02/12/tensions-grow-turkish-u-s-forces-manbij-syria/>

move on Manbij." Hmmm. Pretty brazen, telling the U.S. to get out of the way, we're coming. Anyway, "This is what we have to say to all our allies: 'Don't get in between us and terrorist organizations, or we will not be responsible for the unwanted consequences,' Erdogan said ominously in January."

Another thing that's been quoted out there of what he said, "An Ottoman slap" he's going to give to the U.S. He's going to. He's going to betray this country, whatever that means. Whether it has to do with our base in Turkey or what, but something is going to happen in the future, not too far down the road, where they're prophesied to strike against this country. It's coming. It's going to happen. So, not an ally. When it's all said and done, not an ally, prophesied to do what they're going to do. There are things in his mind that he wants to do. It's already in his mind.

"'An Ottoman Slap'// Turkey warns the U.S. as Trump's budget continues to fund the Kurdish YPG."¹⁷ See, this just causes them to boil, causes him to boil inside because they so hate the Kurds and they see them as a terrorist organization, and since we're supporting them in a fight in Syria and we supported them in Iraq, this just drives the dagger in deeper as far as they're concerned, and so they see nothing but retaliation and hatred, hatred for what's taking place. What they see here when "The Pentagon requested \$300 billion for Syria 'to train and equip activities,'" they see it as betrayal by what's supposed to be an ally too. Incredible.

So again, it's just a matter of a picture of the world and seeing all these things that are there. These are just a few going from the South China Sea down to the Indian Ocean, down to the border regions into some of these countries, and then over to that part of the world that has all the major powers in so many ways involved, and Europe as well down through there and repercussions too with NATO and all that this means for everyone. Who can trust who?

I want to get back into the sermon here in a moment. I'll save other articles for later on, but I just thought I'd throw some of this out; just things that continue to happen that aren't in the news.

"*A Nearly Invisible Oil Spill Threatens Some of Asia's Richest Fisheries.*"¹⁸ A fiery collision that sank an Iranian tanker in the East China Sea a month ago has resulted in an environmental threat that experts say is unlike any before: An almost invisible type of petroleum has begun to contaminate some of the most important fishing grounds in Asia, from China to Japan and beyond."

Now, we're not hearing that. We don't hear about things like that. Saw the tanker when it hit. I think it was bringing something to the U.S., maybe I'll get to it in the article here, but it hit a tanker, and the one tanker made it back. This one here that had this particular petroleum product

¹⁷ <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/turkey/an-ottoman-slap-turkey-warns-the-u-s-over-syria-1.5820511>

¹⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/12/world/asia/china-condensate-oil-spill-tanker-cleanup.html>

sank and it showed the devastation out there on the sea. I don't know how many of you saw that on the news, but it was just a blurb, basically, and there wasn't much more to it.

"It is the largest oil spill in decades, but the disaster has unfolded outside the glare of international attention that big spills have previously attracted. That is because of its remote location on the high seas and also the type of petroleum involved: condensate, a toxic, liquid by-product of natural gas production. Unlike the crude oil in better-known disasters like the Exxon Valdez and the Deepwater Horizon, condensate does not clump into black globules that can be easily spotted or produce heart-wrenching images of animals mired in muck. There's no visible slick that can be pumped out. Experts said the only real solution is to let it evaporate or dissolve. Absorbed into the water, it will remain toxic for a time, though it will also disperse more quickly into the ocean than crude oil. Experts say there has never been so large a spill of condensate; up to 111,000 metric tons has poured into the ocean. It has almost certainly already invaded an ecosystem that includes some of the world's most bountiful fisheries off Zhoushan, the archipelago that rises where the Yangtze River flows into the East China Sea. The area produced five million tons of seafood of up to four dozen species for China alone last year," and that doesn't include the other countries that are using that area. "If projections are correct, the toxins could soon make their way into equally abundant Japanese fisheries. Exposure to condensate is extremely unhealthy to humans and potentially fatal... 'This is an oil spill of a type we haven't seen before,' said a scientist at the Greenpeace Research Laboratories in England. They said 'Working out the impact is actually a huge task – probably next to impossible.'" So they don't even know what's going to happen.

But these kinds of things, just one thing after another happening in the world. The world gets more toxic. We mess up this earth more and more. We're destroying, mankind is destroying the earth slowly but surely in different areas of the world, and God's had His fill of it at the end of an age. He's going to bring an end to it.

Then I thought I would read this as the last one. This is from November of this past year. Kind of interesting how this developed. "Upsurge in big earthquakes predicted for 2018 as Earth rotation slows."¹⁹ So there are times in history where it can be measured. It's not great but it's measured enough that they've made a correlation here. This is about some of the studies that came out. I'll just read part of this to you.

Oh, I'll just mention it. Someone in Montana, a University there, and someone in Boulder, Colorado presented a paper and it went through and talked about some of these things and how that this was a prediction now because of the studies they'd done since 1900 of all earthquakes and of this particular phase of the earth when there's been a particular time of the rotation has actually slowed down that they can actually measure it. So they're able to go back in time and do some of this.

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/18/2018-set-to-be-year-of-big-earthquakes>

So now today in the news, "Is a massive earthquake on the way? Ring of Fire activity sparks fears of a 'big one' after scientists warn tremor clusters make a killer quake more likely."²⁰ So because of all the things that have been happening in this ring of fire, "Earthquake activity has returned to the Pacific Ring of Fire..." You know, there's been a lull for some time and now they're starting up again. "...and now a new study has backed up fears that a huge tremor is on the way. Over the past few weeks, quakes have hit near Japan, Guam, and Taiwan," also Alaska and Mexico because this all involves that area. That "Ring of Fire" starts all the way from New Zealand, goes up through Asia, that part of Asia, through this region here, all the way around Alaska, all the way down by California, all the way down past Mexico down into South America, Chile. So what they call this huge "ring of fire," the activity is on a marked increase. Even though it was stated back in November now they have proof of it. It's already started.

So these are things that are all a matter of, that are prophetic, all working together as far as what's going to take place. They're just going to accelerate and accelerate if this is that time. I believe that it is. That's what I live by. That's my next marker. I hope it is my last marker, but it is the one that God has given to us as a focus and that we're to work toward; we're to keep sharp, we're to be alert. These things should stir you up because what's happening now is far greater than what was happening in 2007 and 2008. Maybe some other incidents in the world were traumatic, but if you put it all together and see it in such a short time right now, actually since the Feast, and you see what started to happen now in January and now in February that's increasing every week. It's mindboggling! It really is!

I look at these things and I think prayerfully none of us are falling asleep. Prayerfully we're alert and wide awake to what this world is like right now compared to 2008 and 2009, because these things should sober you to the core of your being! That's the message. I haven't even gotten into all the articles of things we're going to be looking at.

This is just a smidgen and an overview to give us an overview that we had better be fearful of what's coming, that we're not caught off guard, that we're not in a trap because I'm telling you right now some in God's Church are going to be in a trap, and when it hits you, when it smacks you, there's nothing anybody can do! I have cried out with all my being in the last several months that we need to wake up and be alert, be watchful and close to God! Some aren't responding to that and they play these little games out here with the world - lying and deceitful, not fully truthful to themselves or to others. I'm sorry, and yet I'm not. What are we doing? We need to be alert. We need to understand what's taking place in the world around us. We should be sobered to the core of our being.

This is not a time to be involved in drama, drama, drama. This is not a time to separate one's self from the Body of Christ, if you're pulling back because if you're pulling back from the Church, if you're pulling back from opportunities that God has given you, if you have that, cherish it and use

²⁰ <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-5400143/Is-massive-earthquake-way.html>

it, because it's something that God has given you for a purpose wherever you are! Yet I see people pulling back in their own area. Some that won't even sacrifice to be with some of God's people! What are you doing? What are you doing?

I remember being first called into the Church, 1969. I found out where services were being held. I lived in north western Kansas three hours away, a little over three hours up in North Platte, Nebraska. I thought, that's great. I thought maybe we'd have to go to Pasadena to become acquainted with the Church and here there's someone up in Nebraska. That was his second Church, individual's second Church area. I had written them and then I knew I was going soon as next Sabbath came around. I thought, "I don't care if the rest of my family doesn't go. Whatever they do is their business, but I'm going."

I've known people in different regions like that. It was nothing: 3½ - 4 hours. Now, I'm not telling everyone you have to do that every Sabbath, though we did and were thankful for it, just saying. Measure yourself. What do you have? What have you been given? What opportunities do you have? I think of the highways today and they are so much better than they were back then, how much easier and how much faster it is now than what it used to be, and then what we look for in vehicles and transportation, as a whole. Think, do we grasp what we've been given? Do we grasp the importance of this as a part of our spiritual development and growth, this thing of fellowship? If we've been given such an opportunity.

I hurt when I see these things take place. I feel badly. I think of all people who live we have absolutely no excuse whatsoever to be caught off guard, to be entrapped when this happens. Yet I'm telling you some in God's Church are going to be entrapped, because, you see, they get to a certain point where when certain things happen they will have been judged. There is a cleansing of the body that's been taking place for a long time now, going back to 2013 and on, that began back then that won't stop for some time, that's going to continue on. But at some point God picks that up and it's not left to the Church anymore, and God intervenes and passes judgment, judgment you can't return from, and you won't anyway. It's not in you by that time, to become so spiritually weak that you're spiritually asleep. And you see, God has to do the awakening from a spiritual sleep. No matter how bad the earth gets around you doesn't mean you're going to wake up.

There are going to be some out here in some of the scattered group who can't be awakened out of a spiritual sleep no matter how bad it gets, no matter when they see Europe do what Europe's going to do, no matter what happens when they see what happens to the United States, no matter what happens when they see nuclear weapons. At some point they die because that's their judgment, because they'll not be allowed to live into a new age. It's as simple as that.

What happened when the Israelites were in the wilderness for forty years to thousands and thousands and tens of thousands of people? They did not come into the promised land. God has that power. How much more at this time with so few?

So God continues to cry out, to warn, to encourage, seeking to stir, move, and motivate, but as with the message going out to the world, it's a matter of listening, and listening requires a response, for listening is not true listening with God unless there's a response that follows it.

And who grasps (after we've gone through all these news articles), and who grasps the Seven Seals of Revelation have already been opened? That, to me, is dumbfounding! You know, the world talks about, and Christianity talks about these seals that are to be opened and so forth, and so does the scattered body, and yet to hear that from the scattered body right now, "You're nuttier than a fruitcake. You are out of your bloomin' mind. And who are you? Look where you had to go. And you know, anybody who follows, that says a lot about them." That's their attitude. Sad. Instead of seeing it for the truth that it is, instead of grasping what God does and how God has done it through time and what God has allowed for great purpose through time to try and test people they're too asleep to see and to understand, and haughtiness reigns.

So to grasp the Seven Seals of Revelation are already opened? I still think of when God revealed that the first one had been opened. It changed everything! It changed everything to understand that those seals were about the Church. What a beautiful thing to be able to see and to understand what they say and what we went through, those of you who went through it, those of you who experienced the Apostasy on a very specific day. Amazing! Absolutely amazing!

Who grasps that there have been Thunders that have been occurring since 9/11? People don't believe those things. Incredible. Who grasps that the Trumpets have already been sounded and that it's already begun to be partially fulfilled, that which leads to the economic collapse of the United States and then to a complete worldwide economic collapse? Who's been watching? We're the only ones that God has given us the ability to see and to know those things. There are things taking place God is fulfilling and preparing just as He's been working with us and preparing certain things with us. The most important is still the completion of 144,000. That's the most important thing above everything else. That is number one. That's the most important thing in God's plan right now, to complete 144,000. Awesome! Then as soon as that's done we will witness the beginning of a greater manifestation of the First Trumpet.

So, how is it then that we know, and have been, therefore, able to watch? Well, it goes back to some verses we looked at toward the end of the last series that we just completed. I think it's worth going back there because, you see, sometimes people forget, and it's easy to forget, and yet this should be ever so much in our minds. I'm going to repeat it, 1st Peter 1, because there are some other things said previous to these verses that we need to look at because this is about our spiritual welfare. It is about understanding where we are and how something like this now is more important to us, to God's Church than ever before. What is stated previous to some of this is more important than it ever has been for God's Church because of where we are in time.

1 Peter 1:10—Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. So much of what has been said through

time is about things that had to come to pass, things that were going to come to pass through time that they didn't even grasp and comprehend, things that were written for us that God had recorded long ago, things that are written by David, prophet and a king, things written by David in the Psalms that are very prophetic that God hasn't revealed until this time. I guess you could call this kind of an era, the remnant Church. It's a period of time, if you look at it in that regard as a specific moment in time, a period in time in which God is working with His Church, one not recorded in that respect as far as a period of time in scripture, but one that we're experiencing and living. Incredible what God has given to us.

I'm speaking primarily of what's written in the Psalms and things that are recorded that reveal very plainly so that Jesus Christ was born of physical life. Things that he spoke prophetically were not from David but from as though Christ were speaking it - prophetically God gave it as it was being spoken to him that are recorded in the book of Acts, that reveal very plainly that he had a beginning in life and he has not eternally existed. No one has understood that till the end of this age.

No matter what we go through, no matter what you go through, if that isn't deeply embedded in you, and you continue to draw close to God and stay close to Him and you ask for the help to love His truths, to see those truths, to know those truths, because that is your strength. The word of God, the mind of God, the truth of God that can come into your mind gives you strength, because the stronger that is in your mind, the more deeply convicted you are of those things, the stronger you are spiritually. And if we let down, if we begin to back off, if we begin to let up, if we begin to do some of the things we just read about and warned about there in Luke, and we begin to engage in some of those things in the world, then we begin to lose sight, we begin to lose out spiritually because we're not maintaining a right relationship with God through being watchful and close to God in prayer, having a relationship.

It's about a relationship with God Almighty, and all that relationship is not just in prayer, as I've been crying out. Some of that relationship is in fellowship on a basis when we have it with God's people. There is strength in that, brethren, there really is. It isn't just about prayer because this reflects, if we are able to be so blessed to have it, our relationship with God. If you're living in some other area, like has been written in on occasion when someone is by himself or herself and stranded, you can't help that. You have to strive to do the best you can with what you have and strive to drink in and God will give you help and give you what you are lacking or what you don't have because you have that desire that you wish you could do it. But if you can't, you can't. Whether it is because of health, finances, or whatever it might be, God knows. But when we do have that ability we're to use it. Because, you see, that reveals very powerfully so, if we've been given that ability, it reveals our true relationship with God Almighty in the first place. It really does. It really reveals how we are in our relationship with God and Jesus Christ, by how we see that part of our lives. We each are God's. It's a part of receiving God.

Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently; this time, looking to this time, never being able to. All through Philadelphia the focus was this time, a desire to see God's Kingdom come, to know that we're at the end-time, to know that there are certain things going to happen on the earth and we're now in that time. It's closing in, powerfully so. I'll tell you what; this world is just witness in a very powerful way, because these things are happening so rapidly, so fast if you're not careful you begin to think that's the norm. It is not the norm, what is taking place, not to this level and not to this scale ever.

...who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. The Church and the makeup of the Church and then finally God's Kingdom that comes to this earth, how God's Kingdom is able to come about, as a whole, how God has created that Kingdom through time, especially in the last 2,000 years.

Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister... So Peter is saying that even for them, they understand this was for the Church. This was for all for us, to have it. How much more right now? Because God has given us so much more after 2,000 years, more than any other time. **...the things, which are now reported** (revealed, preached). I think of all that God has revealed, **unto you by/through those who have preached the gospel unto you with the holy spirit sent down from heaven.** It comes from God. We should be able to see that. We should understand how God works in the Church. We should understand government, how God governs the Church. These all fit together very powerfully so, and yet sometimes people don't have that vision of even understanding that, of how God governs within the Church because some disrespect that government at times. They don't understand how God works to serve them.

So we still have situations where people look down upon others who are serving in the ministry, and especially women. It's still out there. It's still a problem because people don't recognize what's inside of them. They don't understand their own prejudices, see, and so certain things are said or said in a certain way that they don't grasp they might as well just tell that to God, directly to His face, the same thing, because that's our area of learning. That's our area of seeing our relationship with God. Just as fellowship has to do with our true relationship with God - it reveals it.

You can't live this protestant life to somehow think that you go through the motions, to go to church whatever day (usually Sunday), but you go to church, or, in the world today they're not even doing that and they still think they're Christian because they send in a little bit of money to whomever. So that makes them a part of the church. On and on it goes. It doesn't make you a part of God's Church. But these things, we can deceive ourselves in in thinking we're going through certain motions and "I'm doing 'this' and I'm doing 'that' and I'm okay." Are you really? Are you, really? Do you measure up to the things we're discussing today in the sermon?

So, **given unto you those things that have been preached (revealed) unto you through those who have preached the gospel unto you through the holy spirit sent down from heaven.** In other words, everything comes from God that's true and right. **...which things the angels desire to look into.** That's how they learn. They don't learn any other way because they don't have the holy spirit. They don't have the holy spirit dwelling in them like we do. So we have it and so God communicates that to His Church in a specific way. It goes out into the Church and then we see it and we know it and they desire to know what God is revealing to His Church. Awesome to understand that!

So again, it'd be good to back up now and review some of the verses that precede these. Verse 6. Because to get to that part, to see those things that we grasp and understand, if we grasp and understand them at the end here, we just read, is to see a certain way of life that is to be lived in order to have that as a truth in our life.

Verse 6—Wherein you greatly rejoice, although for a season now, if need be, you are in heaviness through various kinds of trials and testing. Have you gone through any trials and tests in the last several years? More than ever because we've been in a time period of training, of being refined, of being able to go through fire. One after another, wham, wham, wham, wham, wham, unlike any other time that I have known of in God's Church.

That the trial of your faith, because it has to do with God molding and fashioning His mind in us, His character in us, and a speeded up process, as I've talked about. So we're living this in a very strong and intensive way as no other group of people have before us. **That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.** Now, a lot of this too is because we're down to the wire, we're down to a timeline. No one else has had to go through that. Ephesus didn't have to. They weren't coming up to a timeline. On the contrary, it was going to go on for another 1,900 years past them, as a whole.

So we're the ones that live in a specific time with all that God has brought us to this period of time, with all that He's revealed and the present truth that we now have that others haven't had before us. We're tried through those things and it's been speeded up because we're on a countdown to whatever that is. I believe Pentecost of 2019. So that's our marker. That's what we're focusing on and we see all these things that testify of that in a very powerful way that we'll continue to talk about in this series. So we're very much focused upon those things.

We've had things happen to us because, first of all, there has to be a completion of the 144,000. That had to be stepped up, especially because of what happened back in 2008, see, and God let us go through that. God let us experience that. It was a part of a purpose and plan anyway, a greater purpose and plan. Anyway, to learn from that - for us, for our benefit, for those who are being molded and fashioned to be a part of the 144,000 because there's something unique being

developed within this body, this group of people that hasn't been embedded in others or molded into others.

We're all molded for different parts of the body, for different parts of that government, if you will, whatever that is we have to go through things that are special to us, in that respect, unique to us, maybe is a better way of stating it, even as they, those through different periods of time, have had things unique to them to prepare them for whatever God has been molding and fashioning them for. We're not all the same in the body, in the Temple.

And then not only that but now there's a certain body that's to continue on and to be there at Christ's return - the Church that continues on. And unlike any other period before it must be a specific Church, one that is cleansed, one that has been purified in a way that the Church as a whole hasn't had the need to be as this has. Because, you see, those through time, things have happened, goes on from another period of time to another period of time, but now we're approaching the actual time of Christ's coming, and God talks of and speaks of a certain way that the Church must be at Christ's coming. It's just going to be that way and either we're alive for that and readied for that or we will not be alive at that time.

So we're in a time frame, and so these things have happened in an intensive way. So the previous series and this series? Awesome!

So again, **That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, although it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.** So, for those in times past and during Peter's time that was strictly for those who were going to be a part of the 144,000. Now is different. Now is unique. This applies to us more specifically than any other time, and in a unique way because it's about those to complete that process of 144,000, the end of it, and those who are going to live on into a new age.

Whom having not seen, you love... You love. What do you love? It's easy to say, "I love God." The whole world says this, well, not the whole world, but the whole protestant world or world of traditional Christianity talks about, if they talk about it anymore, but some do in certain regions especially in this country, they love Jesus. What does that mean? What does that mean in their life? How does that manifest itself day by day by day? And some people really strive and to do certain things by their own power to live by certain principles in their own life, but have not been blessed with what you have been blessed with to see, to know, to grasp, to understand a greater picture of what God is accomplishing and doing on this earth.

So what do you love? What is it that causes you to love God? What is it you have that they don't have besides the holy spirit? The truth. The truth, starting with number one, number two, and number three that Sardis had, eighteen more after that that God gave, to love those truths. Then to see all that God has given after that period of time and to love those truths, to understand

what it means for us to see and grasp what we do, to understand what it means for the Millennium, what God is preparing to do and what God is changing.

I just love the fact of what God is changing in family alone. 6,000 years of families, life has not been what it was supposed to be at all. People's minds have been prejudice from the very beginning of time on because that's just the way human beings are. It's passed down because children learn it so quickly, so early on. It's a part of their mind then; it's a part of their thinking. Little girls. Little boys. Young men. Young women. Men and women. It's what it is and only God can change it through the power of His holy spirit and what He's going to educate mankind then in the Millennium is so awesome. I love that. It reveals the mind of God in a way that we hadn't seen before. It reveals things about God and God's purpose and intent for His creation that we did not grasp to that degree before and now we see it more.

I hope you feel that. I hope you see that. I hope you know that. The more truth you have the more you can love God. It's God's mind. It's the way He thinks. It's the way He is and He shares that with us. Everything that He's given to us about His plan and purpose - even the Apostasy and what we went through and all the truths relating to that - reveals God's mind! You think, well, what does that mean because of what it's given to us, because of what we've been able to come to see? One of the greatest lessons of all time is in the Apostasy and what God allowed the Church to experience, and the lessons associated with that, that even with the holy spirit of God in you you can turn against God! You can turn against the truth that He gave! You can turn to where you treat the truth, you can treat the mind and thinking of God with absolute contempt and hatred!

And some hated it! They wanted something different. They wanted, just like those Israelites did, "Give us a king. We want to be like those others around us." Sometimes that's so hard in people's lives. They want to be so much like the world, they cling on to it, and they don't want to be seen as different. It's a hard thing to be "cut off from the world" as it talks about in Hebrews (maybe it was Revelation). Anyway, yeah, I marvel at those things. It's hard to stand up for this way of life. Yet the more you do, the more it's your mind, the more it's your character and you don't care what they think. You know they can't help it. They can't help it. That's why Jesus Christ was able to say, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing." That's a way of thinking. They can't help it. So how do you judge them? Do you expect something of them they can't deliver? No. It's all about you and how you think toward them that's important. It's not about their wrong thinking. They can't help it.

So they see you as a little weird, as a cult. They love to throw that one out and they like to associate that with other known cults throughout time. The worse they are the more they want to associate you with the weirdest ones and the sickest ones out there because they don't have the capacity of seeing the truth. They don't have the capacity of knowing who you really are. They don't have that capacity so that's what they latch on to, because they see you as a threat. They see you as something against what they stand for. I mean, to believe that he didn't die like this with two nails in his hands, one in each hand? That destroys everything! To believe that it was

both hands above his head with one nail instead? "You are nuts! Who are you? Who do you think you are to believe something like that?" Well, I know who I am. I don't have to worry about that. I know they can't help it.

They're going to hold on to that until they're so deeply humbled and finally able to hear it, to realize they've been lied to from their youth. It started with this little thing of Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. That's where these lies all started. Then they just grew up with more lies as they were taught it by whomever. Sad. They can't help it. That's in God's control and time as to when people are able to come to address those things. Incredible.

We'll stop there. I want to hit that again next Sabbath as a starting point. *Part 2* next week.