

Welcome, everybody.

The purpose of this sermon is to look at a particular attitude which is common to mankind; it's in mankind's thinking. This attitude is in all humans other than Jesus Christ. It is when a person thinks that an event or a situation is not fair.

Now, when we just think about that, we as humans look and judge and make judgments to see or to consider whether we think something's fair or not. Now, we do this often without God in the picture. Now, mankind doesn't have God in the picture, therefore, all of their decisions are based on their human reasoning, their own judgments. There are many of things that mankind looks at and says, "Well, that's not fair," and they make their own judgments.

For an example, there has been a case just recently where a grown man raped a 12-13 year old woman or girl, would be considered a girl, and people would say, well, what would be fair in the judgment. Well, God makes it very clear what should happen, but mankind makes his own reasoning. "Well, he was brought up as a child and he was smacked and he was on drugs," and all the other things that they come up with, excuses and justifications for what has happened, and therefore, they turn around and say, "Well, three months," "Six months," "Twelve months." Maximum is probably three years or four years. It's just incredible what happens.

No different than when pedophiles are at work and there are cases of twelve or thirteen cases of pedophilia and the person gets six months jail and they think that's hard. Well, that's human reasoning. Some people look at it and think, "That's fair," and other people look at it and say, "That's not fair," because of the judgment.

So what mankind thinks is fair is not what God says is fair. Now, God is fair in everything that He does because He has a plan and He has a purpose, whereas mankind uses his own judgments, and because of a person's background or whatever has happened to him in his life, or her in her life, what you find is that people make decisions and judgments. No different than myself, where you make judgments because of experiences or whatever's happened to you, therefore, human reasoning or human judgment is perverted based on its own reasoning, based on what's happened to it. So it makes its own decisions.

Now, the principle here really is God is fair, mankind isn't. So there is nothing that mankind does that is considered fair unless it matches exactly with what God says about a matter, therefore, the judgment has to be what God says is fair, what God says should happen. Therefore, mankind by mistake often matches something that God may say, for example, a death penalty for a serial killer. Well, that may be the case and mankind goes on and on and does all these different things to justify why they're going to keep him alive for eighteen or nineteen years, whatever.

Therefore, mankind is not fair in anything he does unless it matches exactly what God says, but they can't match it exactly because it's about the spirit of the matter and mankind doesn't understand the spirit of the matter.

The title of this sermon is *That's Not Fair*.

Now, the main factor in all this is God's way of thinking, the way He thinks does not match human reasoning or human thinking. They are poles apart because we can only think like God on a matter if we have God's holy spirit where He gives us the transformation of the mind and we begin to see the way God views things, the spirit of the matter. So they're completely opposite.

Humans think selfishly, inward, the way of get, the way of self-gratification or self-satisfaction. That's the way humans reason. That's the way we think. It's about our view, our opinion, and our judgment. As humans think selfishly it's all about our comfort and our self-satisfaction, the way we see it.

God thinks love, outward, the way of give and the desire to create peace, because God is the author of peace; God is peace. That's what He does. Now, He forsook peace, or gave up peace for the fact of creating a family, creating a family of spirit beings - which is an incredible plan that God has!

So the real difference is that God has a plan for mankind and mankind doesn't understand it, therefore, they're just rattling around, really, in an empty can trying to make judgments, what they think is right and wrong. Now, every nation, every culture has a different reasoning about what they think is right and wrong. For example, here we have an aboriginal culture who say they've been here a long time, but they have their way of justice and it doesn't match the white way of justice, the western way of justice, so to speak. Now, what would happen is that if certain events happen, you know, the person would leave and run, knew that he had done wrong, well, what would happen is they'd get a group and they'd get a spear and they'd chase him and spear him. Now, that was their level of justice. Now, the average white would say you're joking; you can't go out there just spearing people and that. But that's what they made as a judgment, what they see that was fair was in their eyes, in other words.

Now, there's a song that goes, "What about me? It isn't fair!" So if you just think about this, "What about me? That isn't fair!" what happens? Well, this attitude is in all humans. Now, this attitude is something that we in the Body of Christ have to be careful of. We'd say, well, we don't have that attitude. Well, it does exist and has existed in God's Church and it will possibly exist in the future during this period that's coming and what we're facing, this great time of great stress on the world, because we don't make a judgment based on what God says. Without realizing it we often can think that God is not fair.

Now, I'll just touch on that quickly before we get into the sermon. There have been times within God's Church, the Body of Christ, where people have thought, "That's not fair." Generally that

opinion or that judgment and that attitude came out when somebody was ordained that the other person thought, “What about me? What about me? I’ve been around this long. I’ve been baptized this long,” and all the other judgments that a person makes, and they think, “Well, that’s not fair,” and therefore, something happens to the mind, because they’ve made a judgment and they deeply believe it.

Now, the problem is that the person has left God out of the picture because if they don’t see God in the picture in this—which is where we’re going to get into scripture—if we leave God out of the picture, we won’t see things as fair, because if we see God in the picture we say, “Well, this is God’s Church. The decision that God’s apostle makes is fair based on what he is led to give,” what he is led to give by the power of God’s holy spirit. It’s not a human reasoning judgment, but other people look at it and go, “Ah, how can that be? How can that person be ordained? What about me? I don’t think that’s fair.” That will lead a person out of the Body of Christ, that attitude, which is one of rebellion against God. That’s what it really is.

Well, we’re going to look at that part. Then there’s another part which is all human judgment is wrong. It’s all perverted. Well, we have to be very careful when we get to the future where we might develop this attitude. A person says, “Well, how is that possible? I’m never going to have that attitude.” Well, we need to be on guard now because there’s a time coming when great distress comes on the world and what if husband, wife, child is in our family and they are affected by what is coming and they die? Now, could we develop an attitude that says, “Well, that’s not fair, God. ‘You’ve taken my twelve year old.’ ‘You’ve taken my six month old baby.’ That’s not fair.” Now, what we’re really doing, of course, is we’re saying to God that we know better. But God has a plan for all mankind, for everybody, and He gives everybody that opportunity, unless of course they’ve gone too far and set their mind against God. Well, we have to be careful that we don’t consider things unfair.

For example, a particular group of people that we might be friends with, they die. We say, “Well, that’s not fair. That’s not fair. What about this other mob over here that are doing the wrong things still and they’re causing problems and they’re definitely not going for God and they’re alive, but this other people here, well, they look like they were heading in the right direction and they died?” So we have to be careful that we don’t take on an attitude of blaming God for outcomes that we know nothing about. We’re entering a time where that’s possibly going to happen. It may happen to us - husband, wife, children, grandchildren, relatives - where God has made a decision that it is best for them that they don’t live on in this period. We have to be careful that we don’t make a judgment that goes against God’s decision.

Now, in all of this, with a spiritual maturity that’s being developed in God’s Church one would hope that this attitude doesn’t pop up, because we know that all things work to the good of those that love God and keep His commandments, which is us, if, if we do that and we draw close to God and stay close to God. But there may be examples where things may happen to people that we think shouldn’t happen to, and it’s interesting when you look at human nature, because

somebody else might die in another country and we don't blink an eyelid. We go, "Oh, well, that's them." But if it's close to us, personal, well, it's a different attitude. "Well, that's different!" We have a different attitude about it. Well, that's what we're on guard about; we have to be on guard about, that we don't develop an attitude like that.

Now, this attitude really can be traced back to Satan's rebellion. It may not be exact and we're going over this as just a concept, really, about this attitude that develops about something.

Now, I've been in different business work environments where this has actually popped up and it's been directed at me. As an example, I was in a particular organization and I was one of 23,000 people and I believe I was the only Sabbath keeper, and therefore, that caused some concern for some in the management area where they turned around and said, "Well, this isn't fair. We are compelled," because they were, "to work every second Saturday. And it's not fair that Wayne doesn't." Now, I've counteracted that to a degree by saying that I would work every Sunday if that was necessary so that I could keep every Sabbath, keep every Saturday. They didn't understand Friday night and Saturday, but I outlined that I never work Friday night and Saturday, and if they had anything going on, if anything happened I just simply wouldn't be there. If there were meetings, whatever, I just wouldn't be there. They said, "Yes, they agreed to that at that point in time in my employment." Well, as it went on there were others in management that came up and started to raise this. They raised this as high as they could go so that they had to have a board meeting to say, "Well, how are we going to handle this?" because there was a bit of dissention starting up that, well, Wayne won't work Saturdays and they're saying, the management was saying, "Well, it's not fair that he doesn't have to and we do." So how would they handle it?

Well, they did come to a conclusion and the conclusion was that they would never employ another Sabbath keeper in management. They actually, after three or four weeks, came to me and told me that, that they would leave the status quo because I was employed under those conditions, but they'd made a resolution that they would just not employ another Sabbath keeper ever because of the dissention. Well, that attitude was there, which is, "Well, this is not fair." And human reasoning, you'd say, "Well, it's not. It's not!" But under God's law it's right. They thought they should employ all non-working Sabbath people, whereas they should employ all Sabbath keepers because their business would be blessed. But, of course, it's Satan's system.

Well, Satan had this attitude at some point in time and we as humans can fall into this same trap. Lucifer and a third of the angels had great authority and power. So Satan had great authority. He was one of three angels that had great authority. Now, something we don't think about very often is that God created all angels individually and they had a level of power, but Satan had more (Lucifer at that time); he had more power and he had more authority. He was over angels and he was in a position of rule and authority. What we don't consider is that when God made Lucifer there was a love from God (because God is love), there was a love towards that creation and that God had a relationship with him. Although Satan did not have, or Lucifer did not have God's holy

spirit, there's still a relationship that takes place and a bond that is developed just like we would within God's Church. We develop bonds and unity. Unity brings peace and unity brings a bond.

Well, after millions and billions of years, ever how long it was, when Lucifer decided to go against God because of a reason, he decided to do something because of a reasoning that he had, there would have been an impact with God because of this bond because God loves, and even though He could see this happening it's still not easy to watch when you see somebody destroying themselves. It wouldn't be easy to watch. Well, we forget that there's this bond that had taken place.

Well, no different in the Church. We see bonds that develop. We see bonds within families of our own physical level. We see special bonds and we have a special concern for that individual.

Well, here we have that Lucifer now is making a decision. He develops an attitude that virtually goes down this path which is one of "That's not fair!" Now, when did this happen? We don't know, but there is an attitude that is involved in any type of rebellion, and when Lucifer rebelled there's an attitude driving it. Now, we know that it is pride that is involved, but deep down there's a thinking that takes place. Now, it could have been potentially when God decided that He was going to talk to a group of angels—whether it was all of them or not we just don't know, but maybe it could have been these three angels that were in authority, had more authority, cherubs—that they were told that God had a plan, virtually, for Zion, which is the Kingdom of God, which is creating a spirit family, Gods in God's image, that they would be created that way with the potential (humans), but they'd be given a particular mind and that some point in time they would be over the angelic realm. They would be over them. They're going to be Gods and that the angels would be servants to them yet they would start off weak and pathetic, but God through the power of His spirit would transform them so that at some point in time He would say to them, "Now I know you," and every environment that a person's in that God would know the outcome.

Well, maybe that's what happened, and therefore, you can see this attitude. Now, I've had this happen to me, where there was a particular individual in a different company, and he had been there for a long period of time and he had climbed the ladder, so to speak. Well, they were looking for a manager and I applied for it and I actually was appointed to that role as a manager of a particular company. Now, I could understand and see quite clearly that their attitude (a couple of them) was a bit hostile towards me. But I understood why because when you see this attitude, "That's not fair! I've been working here for 10-12 years. I have started off in the factory. I've worked my way up. I'm now in management and now you just turned up and now you're changing things. You're getting rid of this system that I developed. You're getting rid of that which I developed. I've run this company and now you're running this company and you're new." Well, I can understand that attitude, I really can. I can understand because it's human reasoning. It wasn't about what was truly needed; it was just an attitude that, "What about me? That's not fair!" In time that was revealed, that attitude was revealed. It was resolved in time.

So here we have Lucifer who develops this attitude that now affects and infects all humans, this attitude. Everyone's got it. Because we can watch TV and say, "Well, that's not fair," whatever's happening. Now, 99% of the time it isn't because they don't use God's judgment. They use a human reasoning.

Let's start with **Ezekiel 28:14**. This we know well, which is about Lucifer whose name was changed to Satan, but in it all we have to realize that he developed an attitude, this attitude of pride which is, well, "I'm better. I am better than what You are allocating, and what do You mean this is what You are going to do? Well, what about me and all my service and all my time?" because he'd been there a long time.

Verse 14—You the anointed cherub who covers, which is the mercy seat. So he had a relationship with God. He was in contact with God. God says, **I established you; I set you so**. Now, this is a really important matter that we ought to consider. No matter where we are in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, no matter what role we fulfill at any point in time - because everything passes; that too will pass. No matter what we're appointed to and it passes; time moves on. We go back to the twelve apostles, you go back to all those eras of time people were appointed to roles, and it passed. It moves on. Time moves on. God has a plan that will be fulfilled in 7,100 years.

Well, God says here back to Lucifer, "I established you. I set you in this role. It's a role of service. It's not one about you're the best, you know, whatever and pride, it's about service. Here is an opportunity for you to serve everybody else." That's what it's about because angels are administering spirits or spirits that serve. That's what their role was. They were supporting the creation; they served God. They were then to serve mankind. In the future they were to still be servants of God because they are servants of God.

"I establish you." It's God that places a person in a role and nobody should develop an attitude, "Well, that's not fair," because this is what goes wrong with ordinations, where people say, "Oh, well, that's not fair," because they forget "I established it." Yahweh Elohim, the creator of the universe who knows all things and knows the purpose of why He does what He does. Whereas we don't; we only just see dimly.

You were on the holy mountain of God, which is the government of God. He was part of it. **You walked back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones**. So he was there in a role of authority with and working with other angels. He was taking directions from God and communicating that to other angels.

You, perfect in your ways... Now, he didn't have God's holy spirit, but he was created a particular way that it was perfect in what he was created, in the way he was created, in other words, what was able to be achieved by creating spirit beings. **...in your ways from the day you were created**. He was created by God. Now, being created by God, God would have had a particular relationship, and Lucifer would have had a relationship with God. At some point his

thinking changed because of an event; **Till iniquity**, which was sin, pride, and injustice, because if you look up that word “iniquity” it’s about sin. It’s about pride and injustice. So he now is thinking a different way than the way he was created. ... **was found in you**. So now he’s starting to think against God (because sin is a rebellion against God). So he’s starting to think, “Well, God’s not fair!” This is, “God’s not doing what I think should be done,” basically.

Verse 16—By the abundance of your trading or trafficking, which is this wrong thinking and attitude towards other angels; that he’s transferring that attitude, what he thinks. **You became filled with violence**, which is cruelty or wrong **within**, within the mind, because it’s the same for humans. It’s within the mind. People can act out roles and they can bluff people, but in the mind something different is going on, a different motive is going on, which is what our life is about in God’s Church, checking and correcting motives because we can do a lot of things that appear to be doing the right thing.

I know Ron mentions often about tithing. He can’t understand how a person robs from God. It is difficult to understand that, but in another way people can still tithe faithfully but be doing it in a wrong motive, which is the spirit of the law, because they’re doing it out of an attitude of they don’t really want to do it, but I know I have to do it. I know I have to do it because that’s what God says. Well, they’re doing it begrudgingly. That’s the word I was looking for. They’re doing it begrudgingly.

So people can do things (it all looks good), but they’re doing it with a wrong attitude. They’re not worshipping God in spirit and truth at all, but they can get away with it for years and years and years, but only God knows the true motive. Well, here, Lucifer is in the same position. You can’t hide anything from God. God knows what a person’s thinking. God knows what a person is doing. So you can’t hide it.

You became filled with violence within, which is cruelty in the mind. That’s a wrong attitude. **And you sinned**. So now it’s being put into action. **Therefore, I cast you as a profane thing...** because anything that goes against God it’s a rebellion against God thinking that a person knows better than God, which should be applied in God’s Church. We think we know better than God; we’re profane. We’re sin. We’re polluted. ...**Out of the mountain of God**, out of the government of God, **and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones**.

Your heart (your mind) **was lifted up because of your beauty**, because pride got in the way. And what’s connected to pride, brethren? What is connected to pride? Opinions. Opinions about things. “Well, I think...” “I don’t think that ‘this’ should happen.” “I don’t think ‘this.’” “I think ‘that.’” We elevate ourselves and we lack humility because a humble mind won’t think that way. A humble mind will handle it differently. It won’t develop this attitude, “It’s not fair,” because we bring God into the picture. So a key for us in all of this is to learn a lesson that yes, pride is about opinions and lifting ourselves up, and opinions are about, “This is what I think is fair.” Now, it’s a danger for us that we have to be careful about. Coming to the future that we’re going to enter into we need to be very, very careful about the way we think.

You corrupted your wisdom. Now, he did not have God's holy spirit which is true wisdom, but he did have a wisdom that God had placed into his mind which was the way to operate in fairness, in the way without pride, in humility, to fulfill roles, roles of service, roles of helping with and supporting the creation. So he didn't have God's spirit, but was given a wisdom to achieve God's will and purpose. Now, when you think about it, what did he do? Well, he lifted himself up in pride; he had an opinion that did not support God's will and purpose. That's the problem. That's the problem that we can develop within the Body of Christ even, that we support an opinion and we develop an opinion which is based on pride that does not support God's will and purpose.

So an ordination is God's will. Now, we think we understand all the reasons why. Well, we don't. We know very little, really. And God's purpose? What is God's purpose for different decisions that are made within the Body of Christ? We don't know. We can form opinions. We can form opinions of why we think this is happening. Be careful because that opinion, if we develop it too far and it's not supported by God's word, there's a danger because we can fall into this trap which is at some point we can say, "Well, that decision is not fair." Whether it comes to suspensions, it can come through disfellowshipment, it can come to a location of a feast site, it can come to anything if we're not humble and on guard against this attitude.

...**for the sake of your splendor**, which was this self-importance that developed within his thinking and you can see how easy it is to develop this opinion, "Well, that's not fair." Now, watching different news articles and different TV programs it's quite easy to look at things and use God's word as a judgment and to look at it and go, "Well, hang on a minute. That doesn't match God's judgment. That's not fair." It's all over the place. The world is not fair. The way that councils run different shires and charge different rates, and insurance companies, none of it's fair. It can't be fair. How can it be fair? They're driven by selfishness and pride. So it's not fair and it's not going to be fair so we should accept that it's not fair.

I had a phone call the other day from an insurance company, and I'd received the bill and I rang them up and my insurance had gone up 70%, and I said, "And how can it go from this price to this price?" It was like nearly over a thousand dollars more than what it was before. It was 60-70% more. They said, "Well, Wayne, you've got to take into consideration the weather and you've got to take into consideration the fires, and you've got to take into consideration the floods and all these things." I said, "Yeah, but this house has been standing 70 years and I've had none of it so why?" They said, "Well, it's a broad approach. It takes to everyone," which is true. If there's a flood up in Queensland we all pay. If there's a fire in Victoria everyone pays. I said, "Well, I don't accept it." They went through and said, "We'll do a better deal for you and they took 3 or 4 hundred dollars of it and I said, "Well, I'm still not really happy but I'll accept that at the point in time because I still had a month to go." Then I went to a broker and he brought it down and gave me more insurance for less than what I paid originally so I saved about a hundred dollars on the original insurance, so saved over \$1,100 just by saying I wasn't satisfied with this level of service. Now, they justified everything. Typical of all humans, they'll justify everything.

Well, at that point I made a judgment that I didn't think what they were doing to me was fair. I don't believe that that was fair. Well, there are certain times that we can make judgements in the world where we think, "Well, hang on. That way you're treating me is not right. It's not right compared to other standards." So there's time to consider that certain things aren't fair, and there are other times to consider. Within the Church of God particularly we have to be very careful we don't develop a wrong attitude.

We're going to look at an example which was about Saul being anointed and raised to the position of king. **1 Samuel 15:1-3**. We'll start there. Now, Samuel, being a prophet of God, he was appointed by God to that role. Now, other people might have said, "Well, that's not fair. Why wasn't I called to be a prophet? Why wasn't I called to be appointed to 'such and such'?" Well, it's because we're leaving God out of the picture. It's God's plan of salvation. God knows what He's doing and how He's going to achieve it. We don't.

So, **Samuel said to Saul, who was the first king of Israel appointed by God, The Eternal sent me to anoint you king over His (God's) people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the Eternal.** Point 1: Heed the voice of the words of the Eternal. Don't raise yourself up. Don't think that you know better or know a better way. Listen to what God says, "This is the way to go." It's His plan. It's His creation.

Thus says the LORD of hosts: I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel. Well, what did they do? **He had ambushed him on the way when he came out from Egypt,** when he came up from Egypt. Now, they attacked the people at the rear. If you remember the story he was attacking the weak and the stragglers at the back, which is a pretty cowardice way rather than a front on attack. It was virtually attacking the weak. So he attacked the people at the rear, the stragglers, the tired, and the weary of Israel, those that had a little energy. It was an easy target.

Verse 3—Now go and attack (strike) Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have. Now, this particular verse, I'm going to this particular verse because here the natural mind cannot grasp this concept. It just can't grasp; it can't deal with it. It just can't deal with it. **...and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, and infant, nursing child, ox and sheep, camel, and donkey.** Now, mankind looks at this and this is where they get a lot of the God of the Old Testament, that He is hard and cruel. Like, He's really cruel. This is incredible. You're killing nursing children! This is like a baby still being breastfed. Oxen! Sheep! Camel! Donkeys! Infants! Women! It's just the mind can't go there. The reason it can't go there is because it just doesn't understand God's plan of salvation. It does not understand what God is really doing because if these people were left to themselves, which is the people had nothing to do with God and they were worshipping false idols and they were in perversion of the mind, and the mind is being more and more polluted, the best thing that could happen to them was that they be destroyed because they'd be given an opportunity in the future.

Well, mankind doesn't understand that. We understand it, that this is an act of mercy. This is an act of mercy, but mankind can't see that. They just see this horrible, hard God. God gives life and God can take it. God knows what's best for life, particularly human life. That's what God is doing.

When you look at all the creation of life around the world as far as animals and insects and that, well, God made it all for a purpose. It's all about a family! It's all about Zion. It's about creating spirit beings from mankind. Well, if mankind knew that, which they don't and they can't, things would be different. Well, we understand it. This is the best thing that could happen to this group of people, both men, women, infant, and nursing child. Now, it is best for the nursing child in particular because it has no pollution of the mind. They'll be resurrected in the hundred years and given an opportunity to know the truth. They won't know error! What a great act of mercy by God! But mankind can't see it.

Now, mankind would look at this verse, the natural mind will look at this verse and say, "That is not fair! Those poor children! Those poor babies! What did they do wrong?" Well, given time they would have been brought up in the pollution and the perversion of the mind that is taking place within that culture. That's actually the truth. That's what's wrong, that given time that's what would happen. Now, this applies still all over the world, that given time all of the children, if given a life, will end up with perversions of the mind, false gods, worshipping idols, perverted thinking. Some may go so far as they cannot be saved because their mind is set on evil and they just will not repent. They refuse to repent.

Well, isn't it more merciful to destroy them so that they have an opportunity? We know that; mankind doesn't. They do not know God's plan for salvation. They don't fully agree that all life belongs to God, and given time (may not get to it), it's about the potter and the clay, that it's God has His hands on mankind, the clay, and He can mold and fashion it to whatever He wants, but if He wants to destroy it He can do it. It's His! God owes us nothing! It's only out of His great mercy that we have anything anyway.

Verse 4—So Saul gathered the people together and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers and ten thousand men of Judah. 210,000 in total. And Saul came to the city of Amalek, and lay in wait in the valley. Then Saul said to the Kenites, which is another tribe of people, Go, depart, get down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them. For you showed kindness to all the children of Israel when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. And Saul attacked the Amalekites, from Havilah all the way to Shur, from the east of Egypt. He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. So that's not what God had said, because here we have where Saul is making an opinion or creating a view that he thinks differently than God. Danger! Warning! To think differently than God is sin. It's just its pretty straightforward for us, but he's lifted up in his pride and he thinks he knows what is best, which we know is a problem.

But Saul and the people spared Agag, the best of the sheep and the oxen, the fatlings and the lambs, and all *that was good*, in their eyes, in their opinion, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, to them, their judgment, their view, everything that was worthless and what's useless, they utterly destroyed. So this is a human judgment that we're talking about. It's a reasoning that you think, "Oh, it's my opinion that this is worth something. We'll keep it, and this is worthless. Look at the leg on that one," or look at the color of its face or look at the wool on that or look at this, look at that, just making judgments and reasoning from the natural carnal mind, which is contrary to God's view on a particular matter. So this is human judgment based on human reasoning. Human reasoning comes from self-interest and self-opinions, selfishness. Another word for it? Pride. But it comes from this rationalisation of the mind, making judgments based on experience and not listening to God, in other words, what they're doing.

Verse 10— Now the word of the Eternal came to Samuel, saying, I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me. It's like turning away from a calling. It's the same thing, where we're given instructions, we know what we should do, but we turn and go away. Now, a lot of people have left the Body of Christ because of the attitude that we're covering today, which is one about being fair. There have been a lot of people that think they know better. They know better about doctrine, and "It's not fair that 'this' happened," and "'This' ruling is not fair," and "It's not fair that I've been suspended," because it's an attitude that develops with pride and pride is opinionated. Well, people turned from God's Church for various reasons and one of them is this attitude.

...and have not performed My commandments. And it grieved Samuel. So Samuel's concerned now because he had a special love for Saul, but he realizes now Saul is going astray from where he should be, because Samuel desired that Saul followed God, and he's not so there would be a distress here. **...and he cried out to the Eternal all night.**

Verse 12—So Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, and it was told to Samuel, saying, Saul went down to Carmel, and indeed he, talking about Saul, set up a monument for himself. Now, without knowing it that's what we do; we set up a monument for ourselves if we start to develop this attitude that that's not fair, that this decision is wrong, or this ruling was wrong, I don't agree with it. We're setting up a monument to self. Pride because we're setting up a monument to our opinion, the way we see it, the way we view it. Now, we have to be on guard about this because it does happen and it can happen and it could happen in the future when things start to happen. **...and he has gone on around, passed by, and gone down to Gilgal.**

Then Samuel went to Saul, and Saul said to him, Blessed are you of the Eternal! I have performed the commandment of the Eternal. "Right in our own eyes" is another way to say it. "Look, I haven't done anything wrong; I've done exactly what God said." It's self-deception for our selfish advantage. **But Samuel said, What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?** So in other words, there's evidence. "You're supposed to

have killed all of these, but I can hear them all.” Generally when you have the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen it’s normally to do with food.

We live in an area here where we hear the cattle lowing, which is the mooing that’s going on, and they’re looking for food because they’re looking to be fed and they see a trailer or a particular color car and they start. It’s the same with the sheep. If the sheep hear a trailer, which is how they’re often fed when it’s dry, they all run to it and they start bleating and yelling and one yells and then another one yells and they bleat and they run to anything sometimes.

Well, it’s obvious what’s happened. They’re all alive when they were supposed to have been destroyed.

And Saul said, They, the people, have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen. This is just justification. He was the king. He could have made rules and commands, but he didn’t. He’s saying, well, it’s the people, it’s not me, which is a form of justification. It’s them! It’s what they did and I’m just giving in to them, you know, I’m doing the right thing because they wanted that and I thought, well, it’s them, not me. So this is justification. Why did they do it? Why did they justify it? **...to sacrifice to the LORD your God;** not “the LORD my God,” the Lord your God. So they’ve justified rebellion. It’s no different than Lucifer would justify his rebellion, no different. There’s a justification that takes place in the mind, and it’s the same for us. There’s a justification of why we rebel against God, why a person leaves the Church, why we sin, why we have unrepented sin. We’ll justify anything. We justify environments. We justify decisions because it’s something that’s in our human nature, a justification that I’m right. Pride just doesn’t like to be shown up and self just doesn’t like to be wrong and it will justify anything. It can be little things. We justify most of our life in a mode of justification, why I did it, why I was speeding, why I reverse when I shouldn’t have been reversing, why I said this, and why I did this. It’s just the way we are; we defend self, which is exactly what he’s doing here; Saul is defending self and he’s saying that the people did all this because they wanted to sacrifice to your, Samuel, your God.

...and the rest we utterly destroyed. Now, this is human reasoning at work: “We did it all for a good reason.” That’s what we do, we do things, what we think is for a good reason. “I left God’s Church because I know that the doctrine’s wrong. I know it. Look, I know it.”

Verse 16—Then Samuel said to Saul, Be quiet! And I will tell you what the Eternal said to me last night. He said to him... So he’s now going to say. He’s talking to him and Saul at least says here, “Speak on.” He’s probably a little scared here. Saul is pretty scared because he realizes Samuel’s been a friend to him and now he’s saying just be quiet and let me tell you. So he’s going, “Okay, speak on.” He’s scared of it all.

Verse 17—So Samuel said, When you were little in your own eyes, when you were humble, teachable, didn’t have all these opinions, **were you not head of the tribes of Israel?** Yep, he was. **And did not the Eternal anoint you king over Israel?** Wasn’t it God that did it, because this

is the issue? Wasn't it God that did it? We've forgotten God and he's now forgotten God. He's lifted himself up with a view or an opinion. **Now the Eternal sent you on a mission, and said, Go, and utterly destroy the sinners.** The main word there is sinners. Sinners, destroy them, because it's in their interest to destroy them. ...**the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed. Why then did you not obey the Eternal?** Now, it's the same for us. We can develop views and opinions that are contrary to God's Church. We have to ask why would we do that? Pride. The end result is pride, but there are other drivers, but it's about pride. It's about opinions and developing our view or opinion that's contrary to God's.

Now, a lot of things can happen in God's Church that we may not understand and we may not fully see why that's taking place. Well, we have to be careful not to move into a state of challenging or a state of questioning a decision. The why it's happening and everything will be revealed in time, and not everything's obvious straight away. It's no different than the Apostasy that when we look at it we didn't know what had happened or what was going on, but God revealed it in time. Well, it's no different than everything else. God will reveal it in time. It's about us staying in a right attitude.

Verse 19—Why did you then swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the Eternal? ...which is this sin of rebellion. And Saul said to Samuel, But I have obeyed the voice of the Eternal, and gone on the mission on which the Eternal sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. It's incredible what the mind can do. **But the people took of the plunder!** It's not me. It wasn't me. It was them. **But the people took the plunder, the sheep and oxen, and the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Eternal your God in Gilgal.**

So Samuel said, Has the Eternal a great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Eternal? So obedience is the key. Obedience. We understand we sacrifice self. We sacrifice and there's sacrifice of praise, which is giving credit to God. There are lots of different sacrifices - sacrifice ourselves. Denying selfishness is a sacrifice. These are the things God is looking for, but God says here that He wants obedience to the voice of the Eternal. **Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.** So to obey God, to do what He says is what is required. Now, we're told here to obey. We have to love one another. That's a command. It's not a suggestion. We are told to love one another, to love the brethren. That's how we know whether we have God's spirit, whether we love the brethren, whether we'd lay down our life for the brethren.

To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of lambs or rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. So we are to be very careful that we don't move our minds into a state of rebellion by this opinion that we develop that "That's not fair," because once we do that we're moving into this state of rebellion. ...**and stubbornness, which is pride and opinions, is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Eternal, He also has**

rejected you from *being king*. So we have to be careful not to raise ourselves up and have opinions.

For the Church, this attitude can affect us. It has happened before and it could happen again. It can happen easily if we're not on guard against the way we think. So what happens is we don't bring God into the picture. We believe a decision that is made doesn't involve God.

Let's look at Ezekiel 18:20.

When I first did this recording pre-Passover I went through the whole sermon and at the end of it, the camera had broken. The LED screen had broken. So we'd had a lot of trials up until pre-Passover and this was one of them. I did the whole recording, got there, and got the little card out, and guess what? Nothing's there. The whole thing had broken. Then I went through the trial and tribulation of trying to get it repaired and Panasonic had turned around and said, "Well, you didn't buy it from an authorized dealer," which I never knew it wasn't an authorized dealer, so then I got in touch with the company believing they were an Australian company and then I found out they're owned by an international company in Hong Kong and they turned around and said, "Panasonic will fix it; we won't." Basically, "You need to go to Panasonic." I went to Panasonic and Panasonic said, "We're not going to fix it." So in the end nobody wanted to deal with it. And of course, I managed to get it repaired now, which is in April, but managed to get it repaired.

Well, prior to that period of Passover we had a lot of things going on in our life. The last two or three weeks we had a particular recorder, TV recorder, because we live in an area where the trees have grown quite tall and the TV signal, (it's considered a remote area almost), the TV signal can't get to the house, to the antennae because of the pine trees and the gum trees that are around that have grown, plantations. So then we had to get in touch with the government body and they provide a digital service via satellite, but you have to have a special unit and we get what's called "Northern Territory," which is about a thousand km away, but we get their TV and all their ads. We don't get other local areas in Victoria or New South Wales; we get another state's TV network. Well, that unit broke down and it wouldn't work either so that went away for over three weeks, and then it was brought back and it still didn't work. So I had to send it away for another two. So it's just ongoing and other things are still being repaired. The Internet crashed and it went on for a month or more where we just couldn't get it to work. Then one day it was just completely useless and nothing would happen. There was no upload speak, no download speak, anything. I took it back and yes, they've got it but they don't give a repair unit or a second unit, you've got to have your own. Fortunately, I kept the original one that I had and it's working fine, but that's been gone three weeks. I still haven't got that. So we've been through all these different things.

It has been interesting because there were lots of other things going on in our life as well where we knew it was pre-Passover. So when these things went wrong what it did was it drew our attention that it was Passover coming, pre-Passover. So rather than distract us and turn us away from God and God's way of life all of those things that happened were for our good because it

turned into that we were drawn more to Passover. We were fully aware of the time period we were about to enter. So every time something really went wrong and there were different issues going on around us we knew what was going on, we knew who was causing a lot of the problems. So we knew what it was about. We knew there was a heightened awareness. This year was probably the worst year that we've ever had since we've been in God's Church where things were going wrong and people were reacting and there were all sorts of things going on. Well, every time it happened we knew where this was coming from.

Interestingly, the moment we'd had Passover and the first day of Unleavened Bread things went just quiet. Everything has gone quiet. All that stopped. Repair things have started to come back. It's quite incredible. So it had the opposite effect. I'm sure that a being probably thought it was going to distract us. It actually forced us more to be highly aware of the timing of God's Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread.

Ezekiel 18:20, just go through some scriptures here. **The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son.** What God is saying, it's individual. You can't blame your genealogy. You cannot blame somebody else, "They made me angry." "They did 'this.'" "They did 'this.'" "They caused me to speed." No, whenever we break God's law it was an individual choice. It was our decision. It had nothing to do with our parents or our heritage or our genealogy, nothing at all. We made it. We decided based on our selfishness. He says here, God is saying, "Nor the fathers bear the guilt of the sons." So it's individual, whereas Israel had felt that, oh no, there was a justification, "Now, I'm doing this because of my genealogy... because of my father. That's the way I was brought up." No, it's about individual guilt. Sin is individual; you cannot blame others.

The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, those that yield to God now, talking about those with God's spirit and here, although they were carnal, there were still laws to be followed. Well, that was considered to them doing the right thing, that that was their decision to do the right thing. **...and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. But if the wicked man turns from his sins which he has committed**, which is repentance, **keeps all My statutes**, which listens to God, **and does what is lawful and right**, **he shall surely live and shall not die**, which is repentance, which is what people are going to have to do ahead of us. They're going to have to make a decision.

"The wicked man," they're all wicked. Everybody out there without God's holy spirit hasn't been called, given the gift of baptism, given God's holy spirit through the laying of hands of a true minister of God, they're all wicked. Well, if they repent and turn and start to obey God, "All My statutes and commandments," if they do that, "surely they will live," because God has a purpose for them which is based on "If you will listen, God will listen to you." That's what it's about.

None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. So once you're baptized it's

covered. Then we have God's holy spirit and it's based on our repentance. Well, we will live, we live a new life, spiritually; we're living a new way of life, a new way of thinking.

Do I, talking about God, have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? says the Eternal. God wants us to change. God has a plan and He gives us the opportunity. God doesn't want people to leave the Body of Christ. God doesn't want people to develop an attitude that Lucifer had, who is now Satan. God doesn't want that. He wants us to see God for what He really is - fair. God has a plan. He does everything for our benefit; that depends how we use it. ...**and not that he should turn from his ways and live?** That's what God wants. That's what God desires, that we should live!

But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, which is somebody is in the Body of Christ and he doesn't repent, and does according to the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? He can't. Cut off from the flow of God's holy spirit he's heading for death unless there's repentance. **All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered.** So it doesn't matter how long a person's been in the Body of Christ, if they then leave God, if they then come to a decision that they think, "Well, this isn't fair," or "That decision's not fair," or "That ordination's not fair," it'll be held against them because of their attitude. So all that he did prior to that, all the person (he or she) did will not be remembered because sin cuts us off from God, and unless we repent the wages of sin is death. ...**because the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.**

I want to go now to Matthew 19. This is going through an attitude and it's the way we see things, really. We by nature look at what affects self and this is how we come about our judgments. This attitude or thinking comes from human reasoning and incorrect judgments. This is what it produces because of the way we think. We just think wrongly.

Matthew 19:16—Now, behold, one came to him, which is this young ruler who was quite wealthy and said to Christ, **Good Teacher, what good thing,** because he's just thinking about what he had to do to inherit eternal life, **shall I do, that I may have eternal life?** So he thinks he can earn it by human effort, basically, is what he's saying. "What action do I have to do?"

Verse 17—So he (Jesus) said to him, Why do you call me good? No one is good but one... One God. It's pretty obvious now when you read this compared to previous beliefs. "No one is good but one, that is God." One God. So only God is good and only good can come from God. That's why we need God's holy spirit. We need God's holy spirit in us because then that will produce good. Of and by ourselves we cannot produce good. Nobody can. **But if you want to enter into life,** which is spirit life, **keep my commandments** in spirit and truth. Now, it's about our intent and motive, why we do what we do.

Now, God commands us that we obey His voice, which means it's about an attitude. It's about the spirit of why we do what we do. Now, a person can, as we said, a person can tithe and still be

sinning. A person can take Friday and Saturday off, which a lot do, and still be sinning. So there's a lot of God's law that can be kept on a physical appearance but sin is still involved because of the motive and intent, the real attitude that underpins a person's thinking. That's what we've been called to, to judge our intent.

Only good can come from God. We as humans have no good in us. It's just pure selfishness. The only good that can be in a human is when God dwells in the person and gives His power, the power of His holy spirit. It's God's thinking in us so we view things differently. Now, with God's spirit, now we can make judgments of what is fair and what is not fair. Because God is fair, we're not, but now with God's spirit we can go, "Ah, now I see, this is what should happen in this situation," because that's what God says should happen in the situation, not what we think or our view or opinion.

The only way to enter Elohim is by obedience to God's thinking. The only way to enter Elohim is by obedience to God's thinking. We need God's spirit to be obedient. We need God's spirit to be obedient.

Verse 18—He said to him, this is the young man saying to Jesus, Which ones? Which commandments do I have to keep then because what do I have to do? And Jesus said, You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal, which is about motive and intent. You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother: and, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. So this is all physical to him. He doesn't have God's spirit so he can't make a judgment on whether or not he's doing this, whereas we can. It's about the spirit of the law, not the physical. So it's not about this physical obedience; it's about the spirit of the matter.

And the young man said to him, All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I lack? So he's still looking at it physically because we can honestly say, if we have God's spirit, that we have not kept any of these things in spirit and truth from our youth. Even with God's holy spirit we still fall back to our natural mind and we still don't keep all of God's laws, the 10 Commandments. We just don't, because every day we sin. Whether we're aware of it or not we do because of our motives and our intent in everything we do and say because deep down we're satisfying self.

Verse 21—Jesus said to him, If you want be perfect, go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven: come follow me. Now, this is not about saying, "Oh, I'm going to sell all of this that God has allowed me to have and I'm going to give it all away and going to give it to the poor so that I'm poor and I'm going to need help and support. I'm going to give it all away and I'm going to follow God." This is not saying that at all. This is about a priority of whether it's physical or spiritual.

So the priority in life cannot be physical. The priority in our life, because we're called to it, has to be spiritual. So we can't go weeks and weeks and weeks without focusing in on the spiritual

component of life. We should be doing this every day, every hour, every minute, looking at our intent, “Why am I doing what I’m doing? Is there an improvement?”

There was something that happened to me today where I was doing a test on the camera just to make sure that it was working. And, because we don’t really see ourselves - the truth of it is we don’t really see ourselves. We like to think we see ourselves, but we don’t. As I was setting it up and I was asking my wife to do different things, something hit me that I saw that I’d never seen before about my tone and the way that I asked, and it shocked me, and it really just shocked me. I deleted that. Now I’m aware of it I’m going to have to work really hard at this because I’ve seen something that I hadn’t seen to the same degree. I have seen aspects, but this one really shocked me. So now the accountability is on me. God’s revealed to me something that I was aware of in a way, but not like this, when I actually saw it on camera. I saw the physical component of it; it was horrible. It was ugly! So now I realize, “Oh, I’ve got to work on this. This is not going to be simple.” Because I’m aware, that’s the most important thing.

My wife has always said when talking to people that one of the greatest things in God’s Church is you go through stages about how things happen, how you have spiritual growth. Well, one of the greatest things is the awareness. You know, when you’re aware that something is wrong in you, well, you’re nearly there, because you’re aware, because once you are aware you can do something about it. If you’re not aware of a particular attitude or a sin you don’t do anything about it. You can’t. You’re not aware of it. So awareness is everything. So now I’m aware, I’m going to have to do some work, extra work.

So what God is really saying is it’s about a priority. It’s God first no matter what. That’s what Jesus Christ was pointing him to. To follow God means we will obey Him. It’s not about giving up everything; it’s about a priority, spiritual first. But following, “Follow me.” What is that? Well, that’s obedience. To follow God means we’re going to be obedient to what He instructs.

Now, this is the opposite when we develop a view or an opinion that’s contrary to God’s view or God’s Church because it’s God’s Church. So we have to be very careful that we don’t develop opinions or views on matters or judgments that are contrary because we’re not following God if we do. So if God makes a decision in God’s Church through an apostle the accountability we have is to support it and agree with it even though we may not understand it. Will we be willing to give up all, to give up our selfishness to obey God?

Just hold your place there in Matthew 19. **Luke 14:26—If anyone comes to me, now, that means they’ve been called, and does not love less his father and mother, wife and child (children), brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.** So it’s about a priority. This is what was happening in this particular event that Jesus Christ is going through. It’s about a priority. We must sacrifice our selfishness, number one. We must learn to love and only learn to love because it just doesn’t happen instantly. It’s something we have to learn because we’re working on self and our selfishness, we’re willing to sacrifice our self; therefore, we can love because of this sacrificing. We must overcome any wrong thinking.

So we must follow God. So where God's Church leads, what decisions are made, we should follow. This is what this parable is about, and what this event is about, and this is what Jesus Christ is saying. "If anyone comes to me he must give up everything." We don't worry about other people's views and opinions. We've got to give it all up. And yes, we will be seen as weird and odd and gone strange. It's all irrelevant, but if we want life that's what has to happen, we've got to give it all up.

Back to **Matthew 19:22**—**But when the young man heard this saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.** So now he had a choice to make, was he going to give up the physical to put the spiritual first? He couldn't do it. Now, underneath this there is an attitude which is not obvious, but possibly in his thinking it would have been, "Well, that's not fair what you've asked of me. It's not fair that you want me to give up all this. It's not fair that you want me to give up my wife, or give up my mother and father and my children because I'm going to live a different way of life. Well, that's not fair what you're asking of me." Some haven't been able to do it. Some start - remember the parable about the seeds - some start but people get affected by different things in life and they just can't do it. It's just not within them. It's not their time at this time. Well, we have to be careful that things that are asked of us, that we don't turn around and say, "Well, that's not fair." It's a decision, a judgment. We should be in full unity with all things that are given to God's Church through an apostle.

This young man was saying, "You want me to make a choice. You're asking a lot of me. You want me to set you as a priority over everything else? That's not fair; not when I've got all this wealth and possession." So you can see how an attitude can develop.

I want to go to another parable in **Matthew 20:1**—**For the kingdom of heaven is like a land owner.** Now, this is a physical parable being given, but it points to spiritual things. So we can insert different things here, which I will do as we go along. **For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner, talking about God the Father, who went away early in the morning to hire laborers;** it's like a calling. So they've been called, they're going to be hired to do a role, fulfill a role, put something to do. They're called to work on themselves in his (God's) vineyard, the Church. So we're in God's Church, we've been called, we're placed in here, we are workers. We're working on self. We're working on self. That's what we're here for. That's why we're in the Body of Christ. That's why these people were going to be called into the vineyard - to work—different times, different roles, different things, but that's what they were called to do. We're the same. We're called at different times, for different work, but we have to be working on self.

Verse 2—**Now, when he had agreed with the laborers, so they're called, for a denarius a day,** called, and the one thing that's promised, the denarius a day, is the gift of life, spirit life. That's what the calling is about. So everybody that is being called has the same payment - spirit life. That's what you're working towards. That's what I'm working towards, at a time. We all have to labor differently in the sense of time, but we're all laboring against self. We're working.

Now, when he had agreed with the laborers, he called, baptised, for a denarius a day he sent them into his vineyard, which is the Church. Now it begins twelve hours. It begins the beginning of a day. He went out about the third hour, which is nine hours of work, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace. So the first lot are called. It's twelve; that's a long day, twelve hours of work. Well, there's another group he's seen. He calls them and gives them work; they're laboring, but they've only got nine hours of labor. And he said to them; You also go into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. Now, this is important: "Whatever is right." This goes back to this whole opinion and views and this attitude about not fair because you can see this now developing. If you're physical in the world you can see this, "I've been working twelve hours. These people have been working nine so far." "But I'm going to give you what is right," which was a denarius a day, what was really promised, but "I'm going to give you what's right." Now, mankind will struggle with these types of things because they can see this is not fair. It's the way they view it. The natural mind of selfishness says, "What about me? I've been here twelve hours working." ...and they went their way.

Now, the key to understanding this parable is once called a person must work on themselves for as long as God requires it. That's the key, as long as God requires it; some more, some less. They are given time to grow spiritually to fit into a certain part of the Temple, Zion. It's about the building of Zion. It's about the Temple of God. Everyone fits in differently. Some don't have to work as long as others, but they get the same reward, a denarius a day. But if we use human reasoning this is where the problem is. We have all been called to be placed into the spiritual temple as God sees fit. People have problems with that. People have problems with "Well, I don't want to fit there. I want to be something else." No, this is God's Church and God knows what He's doing and God knows where we would fit best based on lots of things.

There is no set time for this to be achieved in a person. There is no set time that says, well, everyone is going to take thirty-five years. No, some can be achieved reasonably quickly. Now, we're very fortunate that we live in a time where God is working and giving us so much and so much opportunity for spiritual growth by tests and trials, by different things that take place, that we can develop quickly compared to some that had been around thirty, forty, fifty years and never had the opportunity we have today to grow. They never had to face half of the things we've had to face, many tests and trials. We will fit into the spiritual temple as God has established.

Now, tests and trials are about personal choice. Normally what I've found in life, tests and trials from physical things generally, well, scripture says everybody goes through it. Nothing has happened to you that hasn't happened to the world. People lose children. People die. Parents die. Fathers die. Mothers die. All different types of things happen on physical level. It's not uncommon because everyone out there, the same thing happens. But spiritual tests, when it comes to God's Church, doctrine and changes, that's what tests the mind. What do we really think? Do we really think this is fair or do we think it's unfair? "Who does he think he is changing that or doing 'this'?" So that's the test. It's about the spirit of a matter, what we really, really think. Physical things, they happen. They happen to all, but spiritual things don't happen to all

because they're not in God's Church. They can't happen to all. We have just been so blessed that we've been given opportunity of rapid spiritual growth, maturity, spiritual maturity, the way to see things spiritually, have more of God's mind at this time than any other time of God's Church. We see incredible things compared to what other people have seen and probably would have desired to have known more but weren't given the opportunity. We have.

No one can say to God, "That's not fair. What about my efforts? What about me?" You know, "I want to be in 'this' location." "I want to be in 'that' location." No, we belong to God. God does with us what He sees best for us, but our minds struggle with those types of things.

Again he went out the sixth hour and the ninth hour, which is six hours of work and only three hours of work left now, **and did likewise. And then about the eleventh hour**, so now there's only one hour of work left. Now, you can imagine if you look at this physically, because that's the natural mind, we'll only look at it physically not on a spiritual level, and say, "Oh, I've been out here twelve hours in this hot sun laboring away and look at that guy, he's only been one hour. Boy, he's not going to get much. I'm getting a denarius; I wonder what he's getting. He's not getting a denarius, obviously." That's just natural reasoning. "He's only working one hour; he can't get a denarius, surely."

And about the eleventh hour, one hour of work left, he went out, and found others standing idle, and said to them, Why have you been standing here idle all day?

Verse 7—Then they said to him, Because no one hired us. He said to them, You also go into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, you will see, which is the key. Whatever is right, whatever God decides, because it is God's plan. We only exist because God allows us to exist. He created us; we exist because God's giving us the opportunity. If we never existed we wouldn't have this opportunity of a denarius a day. Spirit life, we just wouldn't have it. So, "Whatever is right you will receive." Now, God is not unfair. "Whatever is right you will receive," because God has a plan. We have to keep that in our minds.

Verse 8—So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to the steward, Call the laborers, and give them their wages, beginning with the last to be first. Now, the last had only worked one hour. Well, they were called up first. Now, they would have, in their mind, would have thought something out (and being a parable), but they would have thought something out. The natural mind would have thought, "Well, we don't know really what we're going to get because he hasn't said. He said, 'What was right is what we're going to get.'" **And when those came who were hired about the eleventh hour**, which were the last, **they each received a denarius.** Now, you think, wow, one denarius. It's the same reward as the people that had agreed to it that worked twelve hours. Now, the natural mind instantly goes, "That's not fair!" because it's natural. It's based on self. It's the way we view ourselves, the way we see it. It's our view or our opinion. It gets, that's not fair. This is the problem, how easy it is to develop an attitude based on human reasoning and human judgment.

Verse 10—But when the first came, they'd been working twelve hours out there, **they supposed...** Now, I've bolded this, "They supposed," human reasoning. It's human reasoning. You can see why. **They supposed that they would receive more** than what they had agreed to. They had agreed to work for twelve hours for a denarius a day. Well, now they've seen these others that had only worked one hour, "Well, of course, we're obviously going to get a bit more. Wouldn't that be fair? Would that be fair? We're going to get more." So you'd be there pretty confident about it. ...**and they likewise received a denarius**, which is what they had agreed to. It's the same with us. We agreed at baptism to do something, which is obey God, Jesus Christ; We accept Jesus Christ as our Passover sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin so God could dwell in us. We agreed that we would stay in this fight against self until the end, whatever that was - ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years, sixty years, ever how long it takes.

Well, we have to be careful that we don't get into a mindset that gets to thinking, "I've been around forty years, therefore, I should receive 'this,' because I've been around a long time." Well, careful how I say this - but maybe you need to be around thirty, forty, fifty years because of your hard-heartedness or because of the sin that's so ingrained in your mind. I know that I've been around a while, but the sin that I've seen I would never have seen in ten years. I know that I didn't. I need to be around a long time in God's Church to overcome what I am, my selfishness. The more that God has shown my selfishness to me I think I'm going to need a lot more time. I really do. That's what I think. I think I'm going to need a lot more time because there's so much that I've got to overcome, that has to be overcome within me. So laboring twelve hours means nothing, the end result is the same, but the position that God has appointed us to for the shaping in the temple, you know, that stone that is placed perfectly into the temple will fit perfectly, and each individual will be content with their denarius a day.

But this expectation is the problem within human reasoning, the expectation. It happens with ordinations. It happens with a lot of decisions in God's Church, things that are changed. It's interesting when somebody is ordained - I don't want to go into much about this, but this has happened - so when someone is ordained it's, oh, it's a great blessing from God that that's happened. And it is. It's a great blessing from God. But when a person is removed or retired, whatever happens, if we're not careful the thinking can change. Do we say, "This is a great blessing from God? I had an opportunity to serve. I had an opportunity to fulfill a role of service and now God is going to use somebody else, or maybe I've learned what I was supposed to have learned, or maybe I'm still to learn it. This retiring or this removing or being taken down or out of the ministry, we have to be careful that we don't develop this attitude, "Well, that is not fair." Because, you see, we've lifted ourselves up in our minds, that we think we deserve something. God makes it clear in scripture we don't deserve anything. We cannot earn anything. Everything is a gift from God; anything of any value is a gift from God.

Well, these people, they supposed, which is this human reasoning, that they would get more. And they, because they'd labored longer they felt that they deserve more. Well, that's a wrong attitude. That's virtually saying, "God's not fair."

And when they had received *it*, they complained against the land owner, against God. The attitude is “God is not fair. What about me?” Deep down that’s the spiritual attitude that they have got, **saying, These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us.** That’s a big problem because they’d already elevated themselves up that we’re the laborers and you’re what? You’re doing that? This is an attitude that is definitely not fair. ...**who have borne the burden, tests and trials in the heat of the day.** It’s the same within God’s Church; we’ve been through lots of tests and trials. There’s an opportunity for growth and we needed it. We needed those tests and trials for growth. Now, that’s something that we all can take to heart. We all need tests and trials to grow. It’s just the way that it is. That’s what the Church is about - test and trials to see the way we really think. Do we put God in the picture or do we put self in the picture?

Verse 13—But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, Am I doing you no wrong? Am I being unfair here? Did you not agree with me for a denarius? So at baptism didn’t you agree that you would endure to the end, that you would work on yourself, and that you would continue in obedience? Didn’t you do that? Did we agree on a timeline when you were baptized, is another way to look at it.

So it is like what we agree at baptism. God is first no matter what, no matter how long it takes, no matter how long God requires of us. Now, if you look back God says three score and ten, seventy years, that’s a blessing and by that strength after that. There have been people that have lived for 600, 700, 800 years, 300 years, and there are others that have lived for 30, 20, 80, different, you know, humanly. Now, when they’re resurrected in the Great White Throne there will be an opportunity for people that have lived 800 years to turn around to those that have lived 30 and say, “That’s not fair! I had to put up with all of this for 700 years or 800 years and you lived what? 6 months?” So this attitude will exist. It’s something that’s in us and it has to be overcome. Now, we’ve got to be very careful of the way we view decisions within God’s Church.

Verse 14—Take what is yours and go your way. I, it’s referring to God, **I wish to give this last man,** the one who had worked one hour, **the same as you.** Both are going to be given eternal life. **Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own thing?** Is it not lawful for me, because I created it? It’s like a potter and the clay. “This piece of clay, I made it and I can do what I want. I can shape it to this vessel. It can take me this long. It can take that long. I can make it into a vase. I can make it into a plate. Isn’t it lawful for Me to do that? It belongs to Me so why can’t I do what I want with it,” is what God’s saying. That’s an attitude you’ve got to be careful of, not to think that we’re owed anything. We are owed nothing.

Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? It is lawful. **Or is your eye evil, because I am good?** Because God’s judgment is just and God is fair, but we’re not. “Is your eye evil?” Yes, it is because we use human reasoning; we use human judgment.

Now, there's more to this statement than what we understand fully at the moment I'm sure. **So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, over 6,000 years, but few chosen, to be part of the 144,000.**

Now, this is a spiritual matter. This is a spiritual matter. This attitude that we develop and can develop and people have developed and we potentially could develop this attitude during this time of stress coming, we need to be careful of it. We all have the capacity to do it or to think it, decisions that are made or what happens to family or friends or whatever. People are going die; that's just a given. So we have to work on ourselves and we have to be very careful that we don't develop this type of attitude.

I want to just conclude by going to 2nd Timothy 3:1. Now, we can avoid this attitude, and there's a particular way to avoid it, and it's about involving God in every decision, involving God in our life and the way we view things. If we can match all our judgments with God's word we'll never have a problem. But if we want to go out on our own opinion or our own view of the way we see it there's going to be a problem.

2 Timothy 3:1—But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come, now, times of stress, times of danger. Now, this, in some ways, partly happened with the Apostasy, times of stress, times of danger in the Church. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful... and here is the secret to never having this attitude of “It's not fair” - being thankful. The sacrifice of thankfulness is what is required of us. ...unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, because they don't put God first. They're not sacrificing themselves.having a form of godliness but denying its power, because there it is, “denying the power of God,” the mind of God because when we get into this attitude we deny the power of God. God is creating a family and He will create a family, and He is creating a family. It's almost complete, the first part of it. The 144,000, it's almost complete to the point of sealing. It hasn't happened yet. For such people turn away. They give up on God. Well, we have to be very careful that we don't give up on God.

I was going to go through another scripture here, but I won't at the moment because of time.

In the end, brethren, it's a choice that we have to make. It's the way we view things. Now, the first point of it all is that we can view things using a natural carnal mind of selfishness and we'll get it wrong. But if we view things by putting God first and using God's word as our guide, the Church makes decisions, and what we think about that decision is important. We're either in unity with God and His Church or we're not. It's pretty simple. We must remember always that we by nature are unfair. We are unfair. But God is fair; therefore, we should never, ever get to the attitude where we say, “What about me? That's not fair!” The way to overcome that is always to be thankful for every single thing that God has done. Be thankful for our calling. No matter how long it takes to overcome self where God says, “Now I know you,” it doesn't matter. We are

to endure to the end, and in the end God will say, “Now I know you,” and we will be placed in the Temple of God, which is the purpose of life.