

We've been going through a series entitled *Trust in God* and last week was *Part 5*. Today we're going to continue with some of the same theme but adjusting the title somewhat. The reason for this is because I really didn't want this series to become as long as it has, and sometimes that can distract if you have a series and some, depending on the subject matter, can distract from certain areas of a series that needs to stand out or stand alone. And this one does.

So *Part 5* was the last of that series last week. Today we're continuing with some of the same theme about learning to more fully place our trust in God but this new series has a singular focus attached to it. It has to do with the subject of healing. So this sermon today is entitled *Healing and Trust in God* with this being *Part 1*.

So we've come to the last area that we're going to focus upon, about more fully placing our trust in God, and it's this matter of health and healing, if you will. This is an area that needed great change in the Church during Philadelphia. Needed to be addressed. But you know, that's in God's hands when He wants to bring us to another level of understanding or give us greater understanding of a matter. And yet there were things that happened that didn't seem right but didn't have answers for it. And in time God helps us to better understand what we've experienced and why, why we go or have gone through some of the things that we have because He's always using whatever it is at any moment in time of some change or something that comes along or something we're not experiencing because we don't fully understand the truth so we experience things that aren't good, that aren't proper, and then in time He teaches us through that process. He helps us to gain deeper understanding on a spiritual plane that really we couldn't develop in another way.

So it really is an awesome thing how God works with us as a Church, and has since He began restoring truth through Mr. Armstrong back in the 30's, but also how He works with us individually. Because He works with us in that manner. There are things we all go through in different ways at different times, but if we continue to repent and look to God for guidance and direction He will use those things that happen to us or that we do that aren't right to help us to learn soundness of mind and balance and His way of life more fully, to become more convicted of it.

And it isn't a matter of just saying no to certain things that we're going to change, where we first come along and we're going to say no to Sunday and we're going to say yes to the Sabbath. It takes time to come to understand why the Sabbath, why the seventh day, what it means fully. And I've seen the Church grow in that through time as well. It's not just a matter of keeping the seventh day but it's also a matter of becoming more deeply convicted of it, of God's way as you grow. And that doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't happen as a matter of a do or a don't and

you're going to do as God says because God says it. That's right, but to understand it, it takes time. And so this is a particular subject matter that has taken, candidly, a lot of time.

So again here, this is an area that needed great change within the Church during Philadelphia and Laodicea. This was needed in order to achieve far greater balance and soundness of mind, and it still need some refining in the minds of many in God's Church.

There is a section toward the beginning of the series of *Trust in God* (that we've completed), that I'm going to repeat here; has a great deal to do with the subject of healing. "In God's Church He teaches us a proper balance of how to trust in Him and yet do for ourselves where we can." That takes time to grow in that balance. It truly does. To trust in Him and yet do for ourselves where we can.

I think of so many things flooding through my mind right now that Mr. Armstrong had to say about some of that and I think about the work itself and him talking in the vein of doing everything as thought you're doing it yourself but it's a matter understanding that God is doing it and trusting in God as you're doing it, but you have to throw yourself into it and do what you can. And different subject matters bring out different things that we can do. And to understand how God has worked with mankind, as an example, using technology and the balance in that. Because this is different. This is different than the time of the disciples, the early Church, or any period of the Church, as it were, until we came to the last 100, 150, 200 years when things began to change in the world just because of technology. And that has caused change within the Church and some teaching within the Church as well.

So "in God's Church He teaches us a proper balance of how to trust in Him and yet do for ourselves where we can. God teaches us soundness in such things and He warns us of real danger when it is potentially before us and of knowing when we are to more fully place our trust in Him and to flee from placing our trust anywhere else." Especially in this, in ourselves, because that's what we tend to do; we trust ourselves.

"How much of our lives," then it was asked, "do we truly place in God's hands, His care, as a matter of trust?" And so I mentioned during that series as well about this matter of healing and I brought up the matter of anointing. And we've had a huge uptick in anointing, which is good, because that's the way it should be. If we're not doing well then there is something God commands us to do. It's not a suggestion, it's a command. It truly is. And there are things that that teaches as far as the Church is concerned. It's about government. It's about God's government within the Church and what He has established and how we're to focus upon certain things even in a physical matter like that.

It's akin to the snake on a pole. We either listen and obey God or we do something different. And the snake on the pole was a matter of life and death in this particular case so that's a little different.

So going back a little bit in time here, thinking about the time, the period of time when the remnant Church became established God began to give us much needed balance in this subject matter about healing. And much of the reason that the approach to healing was as unsound and unbalanced as it was during Philadelphia and on through the era of Laodicea is due to the fact that the focus through that time was very heavy upon the physical rather than the spiritual of what God was teaching in His word. Because the physical aspect of that teaches us or leads us to understanding things that are spiritual as so many physical things do. It's just like, I don't care whether it be a Holy Day, Days of Unleavened Bread, let's start there, Passover period, taking of Passover, bread and the wine. It teaches us a lot. They're very physical things but God uses very physical things with physical human beings to begin to teach us and help us to learn things on a spiritual plane. And on and on....

I think of the temple. The more you learn or know about the temple and the purpose of different things within the temple the more you can learn things that are spiritual because everything that God did in the temple, everything that was built has a spiritual intent. And, candidly, we don't know all of that yet. I think of Mr. Neff who used to give at one period of time here, I was in this area at that time, and the Feast site in Dayton and he was talking about that very aspect of the temple itself and the construction of it. And it's an awesome thing. It's very intricate. Well, God's spiritual Temple is far more intricate, but those things on a physical plane that He had Israelites build, every facet of it has to do with the Church and on into the future of things that God is building. They all have meaning on a spiritual plane.

So our focus was very physical rather than spiritual because that's the way we are. We tend to be physical first. Again, I think of the book of John. I love the book of John because from the get go so much of the theme through the book of John is the focus of people is first upon the physical. I think of Nicodemus in Chapter 3 where Christ was talking to him; basically told him you can't understand spiritual things because you don't have God's spirit. That's basically what he was telling him. You can't understand the things that I'm telling you because they're spiritual. And then Chapter 6 where it goes on and talks about Christ saying that you're going to have to "eat my flesh and drink my blood." Blew their mind! And it said, "After that many of the disciples," or people who were following him, those who were following him at that time to learn from him, "not speaking of the twelve," it said, "they quit following him." Because to them drinking blood.... And that's all they could hear. They didn't know what the meaning of it was yet. They didn't know what it meant. They didn't know about Passover and the partaking of those symbols, to eat his flesh, the unleavened bread, to drink the blood, the wine as we do. They didn't understand those things. But to them that was "You're nuts! God says don't drink blood.

It's very clear in Leviticus 23... Leviticus 16, I'm sorry. I think its 16, doesn't it? Deuteronomy 16? I'll get it right here in a minute. You know what, it's been so long since I've actually gone back to look at the clean and unclean meats. Let me get one of them right. There's both places. It's Deuteronomy and in Leviticus. Does somebody have it at the top of their head here? Is it Deuteronomy 16 or Deuteronomy 14? Or is it either one? It may not be either the way I'm going

right now. Deuteronomy 14 and Leviticus, what (?), 11! Man. I probably haven't pulled that one up for I don't know how many years. So you can see the last time I was over there. It's been a long time.

We tend to be physical. And as John continues then it goes on, it talks about the woman at the well—I love that one—Christ basically told her about the water of life (that's what it's talking about), and you'll never thirst again. And that's the one she wanted because she didn't have to go back and forth from the well any longer. Funny things that we do as human beings and how we think. And on and on it goes throughout the book of John.

So the same thing is true about healing. We are very physical and it takes time for us to learn the spiritual. And that's really in God's time because He can't just give it to us. It's something we have to learn through experience and various things that happen. We can receive knowledge of it but you really learn it, to really see it and understand it spiritually, it takes time.

So let's turn over to Isaiah 57. Isaiah 57, this is where we'll begin.

So let's repeat that, Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Is that right? Okay.

Isaiah 57:13. I love these verses, what God brings out as we go through here because it tells the entire story, what this is all about in the first place and where something like physical healing that God grants on an individual basis, not by promise to everyone by any measure, but on an individual basis for different purposes at different times. There are times God will intervene quickly. There are times that God won't intervene at all. And there are times that God will have us wait. And you know what? In all those cases we can learn if we experience it. We can learn. We can learn things from God that are on a spiritual plane not just something physical. The physical part is if we're doing better, if our bodies are healed or whatever it might be. So there is so much to learn but we have to trust in God and look to God to teach us, to mold and fashion us, to transform us, and on and on it goes.

**Isaiah 57:13—When you cry, let your companies deliver you.** This is a chastening here that's taking place as far as what's being said out of Isaiah here in Isaiah 57. And the word "companies" here, it's kind of like a military. If you trust in, as an example here, a military for your strength of a nation or whatever, that which you trust in and been placing your trust in rather than Me, God is saying, "Let them deliver you." "If you're not going to look to me than whatever you trust in here, fine, let them deliver you to see how far that gets you."

**...but the wind shall carry them all away.** If God's working with someone, whether it be a nation or individuals or a people, as the Church, if we trust in something different than what God said we should, if we look to something different from what God said we should, then if we do that we're going to suffer. We're going to suffer mightily. And He says in time the wind will carry it all away. It'll become nothing and you'll become nothing.

...vanity shall take *them* away: but he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land. Now, it's not just physical here, but possess whatever God has placed before them. They'll have what God wants them to have. For the Church we'll have that which is needed on a spiritual plane, on a spiritual level. And then in time as time goes along we'll receive greater blessings, a body, a change in life, a change from that which is physical to something that's spiritual, a spiritual body and in a spiritual realm and as a physical realm. We'll live and dwell in a physical realm but we'll be in a spirit realm as well, things that are difficult to understand. Being spirit, being able to manifest one's self physically to be seen by others physically just as Christ did, as he was able to be seen by others when he wanted them to, and when he didn't he was in a spirit realm because that's where that which is spirit dwells. And until we're there we won't fully understand it. We believe it but we don't understand that at all.

...but he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land and shall inherit, see, it goes on to say it, **My holy mountain**. Because that's what it's all about, "My holy mountain." Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God, we'll be there.

**Verse 14—and shall say, Cast you up, cast you up, prepare the way, take up/take away the stumbling block out of the way of My people.** This is a beautiful expression too, here. It's hard to understand just by what it says here in English but it's like building a road. That's what it's referring to here. "Cast you up," "Build it up," something you can travel on. Build it up. It takes time to build up a road. Generally some of the custom has been to take dirt out of one side where there's going to be a ditch and build it up.

I saw them build roads like that in Kansas where I lived and grew up, as a whole. And that's how they would do it. They'd go along, dig up one side, put it up and pack it in the middle - and we're talking about dirt roads here, we're not talking about... But some of the same process was used there for other types of roads as well. And build it up so that vehicles could travel down it. And when it rained the water would go off into the ditch and then flow out some other way.

So it says "Cast you up." It's about building up something. It's about work involved here. "Cast you up, cast you up, prepare the way," highway, a road. That's what it's talking about. But this case we understand it's about the way that God has given to us. We can't just sit back. We can't just exist. We can't do like the Protestant world does where they go and come home and then forget basically everything that was said; and what was said has nothing spiritual in it anyway, so what can they do? And so that routine of going back and forth, it doesn't build up anything because the rest of the week they live ever how they want to and they know that they, whatever they do, they can go ask for whatever it is on Sunday and everything is past and they'll go right....

I had a friend I remember growing up with who was very much a particular big religion. And kind of always blew my mind here, the attitude, the thinking. Well, you can do basically anything during the week because all you have to do is go in and say "I did this," or whatever and then you have to, you know... It's a simple process! Every Sunday everything is wiped clean.

Verse 15. Well, as it says even before this, “Take up (take away) the stumbling block out of the way of My people.” These things take work and it involves work that we have to do. And the same thing as preparing the way, we have to work for this way of life. I’ve made comment that you have to fight for this way of life. If you want it there are things you have to do. We understand that. That’s a part of trusting in God. It begins at the very beginning with the Sabbath and the Holy Days and tithing faithfully, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe. And we do those things so we can observe the Holy Days, primarily the Feast of Tabernacles in the abundant way that God wants us to. And on and on it goes.

And I’ll be candid with you, I’m still blown away how I know there are people still aren’t doing 1<sup>st</sup> tithe as they should. I know there are people who are not saving up 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe like they should. I know there are people who dipped into it this year because, well, there was an emergency here and an emergency there and it’s an emergency in my mind so God understands if I use it and, well, if I can’t pay it back... Something will work out. I’ll get it from maybe a tax return, you know, get some money back from that. I’ve known people who talk like that, “I’ll get some money back from the tax return, from taxes at the end of the year, and then I’ll be able to, because I used up some of that, so I can... It’s there and it’s not until I do it. That’s not putting it aside like God says. It’s as good as giving it to God and saying, “Here it is,” but it’s not given to Him until we observe the Feast and it’s ours to use.

I’ll be candid with you. I have a hard time sometimes understanding some of this! Coming into the Church when I was 19, making some of those kinds of decisions of things that you have to make at some point in your life that you become convicted of, and you just do it because it’s the most basic part of obedience to God. And if we’re not doing what God says...? Again, I have a hard time with that, why anyone would mess around with those kinds of things, because you know that this is going to hurt your relationship with God, or at least you should, and that lying to God, playing games with God, it doesn’t work. It doesn’t work.

And so all of you, any of you who are doing that? You’re going to pay for it. You’re going to pay dearly for it. In this sermon and the one you’re going to hear on the seventh day of the Feast, well... Because I’m giving it the Sabbath before the Feast in the Netherlands. They get to hear it first. You’ve got to wait. Anyway, it’s because of the juggling of sermons and so forth. But I’ll tell you what, this is not a time of playing games.

This is not a time of messing around with God, it really isn’t. I mean, there are some things going on in this world that should have us sobered. There are things going on in this nation right now that you don’t really grasp where it’s headed. And it’s not a pretty thing. Truly isn’t. You talk about a nation divided and things getting worse and worse and worse very rapidly so, we’re at a point of destroying ourselves. And when some of that comes out in the open what does that do to an economy in the world? What happens? What takes place? Something that’s over inflated already? You talk about the stock market, it’s over inflated. The longest they, what, what is it, the longest bull market in history? Well, that bull is going to run out of juice at some point. It

always has in history. It doesn't keep up. It turns into a bear and things get nasty...and maybe even a Russian bear before this is over with. Anyway, crazy.

Why we aren't placing our trust in God and wanting God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our being at this point in our life boggles my mind.

So, "Take up the stumbling block out of the way of My people." How? You start with self, because we're the ones that have to work to prepare the way in our own lives. We have to yield to what God tells us, to strive with all of our being to live what is right, to fight a fight.

**Verse 15—For this is what the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity says, Almighty God.** How much does that move us when we read such words, "the high and the lofty One, the Mighty One, Almighty God," whose name *is* Holy? He says, **I dwell in the high and the holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit.** God's letting us know those who can, candidly, dwell with Him. Because that's His desire, is to dwell in those whom He calls, those whom He works with, and when He gives them of His spirit there is that desire of a fellowship that He desires to have with us. And He wants to dwell, not only just with us but in us and we be in Him. That's what God desires. That's why Joshua the Christ died! So we could have that ability to have such a thing be true and real in our lives, the true experience, a real experience in life, God dwelling in us.

And so He says, I will dwell with the contrite and the humble. Not the proud. Not the haughty. Not those who are trusting in themselves. Not those who aren't listening. Not those who are doing things their own way, trusting in something... It's about trust. Isn't that what we read earlier, the verse before, two verses before? It's about trusting in God, placing our trust in God.

**I dwell in the high and the holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble.** He says it in a specific way because of what it means spiritually. God cannot revive or work with someone who is trusting in themselves. God cannot revive nor work with, because it's contrary to His spirit, it's contrary to His way. He can't work with us if we're relying on self, if we're proud and haughty in attitude and spirit. And that's reflected by this matter of trust. If we really trust in God we'll be of a humble spirit, we'll be of a meek and a quiet spirit, if you will, a desire to want God's way of life, a desire to receive guidance and direction, and even correction from God because we know we need it, we know what we're like, we know we're selfish as human beings. But He wants to heal us of that. He wants to take that away. He wants to help us become transformed, to have a different mind.

So, **I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him of a humble and a contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive,** to make alive, really alive because it's with His spirit dwelling in us. "I dwell," okay, God says. He wants to dwell in us and truly make us alive because we're blessed to have physical life. We're so awesomely blessed to experience things that God has given us on a physical plane by itself, and yet man robs himself of that experience and doesn't appreciate it to the degree that we really should because we don't acknowledge that God

created it all and we didn't climb up out of some slime, out of the water, whatever it was, and changed through time in evolution.

God created us; created everything that's out here. But to the degree we look at those things and think about God, that's another matter. People in the world, they don't think about God when they're outside or in their house and they see a tree growing or they see a river or they see the blue sky or they see varying flowering plants that are out there and the joy just by, you know, as the expression goes, "Sometimes you need to slow down and stop to smell the roses." The smell, the aroma, the sight, the sound, things of God's creation that are soothing and peaceful and beautiful. But because we don't acknowledge God and look to God as human beings we don't enjoy those things as deeply as we could and should. Sometimes even in the Church. We have to grow in that.

How much more on a spiritual plane to make alive spiritually? Because that's when we really begin to come alive. That's when there is life that has the potential for everlasting life. When we begin to receive the... When we receive the impregnation of God's spirit we have that ongoing process of God coming into our life through the power of the holy spirit coming into us, dwelling in us, abiding in us, living in us, continuing in us as all those words mean, that's making us alive in a way that the rest of the world isn't around us. But we have that opportunity and such blessings to experience that.

**...to revive the spirit of the humble, to revive the heart of the contrite ones.** And that word for "contrite," it's better in Hebrew. It's "as one who expresses remorse and is affected by guilt." It's a horrible thing if a person gets to a point where they're not able to express remorse, repentance, or be affected by guilt. You know, we can sear the conscience if we're not careful, and that's by ignoring God and continuing in our way, doing our own thing, whatever it is. Horribly dangerous if we do that.

**Verse 16—For I will not contend,** the word means "to strive," in essence, **forever**, in other words, with mankind. God's given us a limit. He's given a limit to His creation. 6,000 years for mankind to govern himself by all the governments that have existed and gone. And we can look at a history book and look at some of those governments and all of them have gone in time.

And Great Britain that used to be great, it was a very great... It was an empire. And it's not so great anymore. It's really pretty bad. You look at some of those buildings. Thankfully they go through on occasion and take off all the black soot and everything else that was there from coal burning in the city of London. But some majestic buildings that were built, things that were built to last at a time when it was more of an empire. And today it's run down and it's not what it used to be.

And that goes into other nations, nations that have risen and nations that have fallen. And this'll be no different, because everyone collapses in time because it's not God's. It can't endure because it's not based on right principles. Only God's is based on the truth and right principles.

Only God's city, Jerusalem, holy Jerusalem will last forever. Only that city that God is constructing.

That's why I love the expression, it talks about those in Hebrews, those who looked for a city whose builder and maker was God because it'll continue on, it'll abide forever. But mankind, because of being selfish and divisive and everybody thinking that their way is the best - and some know their way is the best - and so there is all this gamut of difference out there. And "If you will agree for me and put me in office I'll take care of it. I'll go to Washington and I'll take care of everything for you!" I'm sorry, but that stuff just really aggravates the tar out of me. And how anyone ever believes that every election that comes along. You think, *déjà vu*. It's like groundhog day over and over again saying the same things and you believe that? But people, that's where they have their hope because what else can they hope in until you know God, until you know the truth, you know what God is building and constructing and you look forward to a time of a new government?

So that's what He says. That's why He says "I will not contend or strive forever with mankind," "Because I've put a limit on it." Thank God! 6,000 years of the misery of mankind governing himself, sending people off to war. I'd like to have a good conversation with the first ones who said, "Oh, no, no. We want a king like all the other nations around us. We don't want Samuel to rule over us anymore." So God gave them Saul and that was the beginning of disaster. He said what would happen to them. "You're going to be taxed. You're going to be taxed so much. He's going to take your young men and send them off to war to die, to suffer."

That's one thing that really, really, really gets to me. People who are patriotic, people who desire the best and they have good desires and good intentions, willing to sacrifice, they think... you know, that's what is in the mind, noble. I was there at one time. I know what that mind is like; 16, 17, 18, ready to go off to war, ready to go off to Vietnam. Wanting to do so with a jet, however, because I didn't want to be on the ground with just a measly machine gun; give me some rockets. Give me some big machine guns and a jet that goes really fast and I'll destroy a whole lot more people. And that's what my goal was, candidly. And then you learn there are no answers.

And so thousands and thousands are sent off to war, hundreds of thousands, and they're brought back home after it's all over with, and especially like Vietnam, they were spit upon because people began to change and certain parties began to change and turn against, and turned against them, took it out on them. A shame, horrible shame for a nation to do something like that.

And then I think of so many homeless people today that are vets. You talk about a shame, that's the greatest shame of a nation that I can think of. Truly is. To let something like that happen. You build it up. You advertise about it. "Look at these tanks." "Look at these incredible... the power we have, the jets and helicopters and everything else that we have. And the greatest power on earth, the greatest fighting force of..." And it's easy when you're young to get caught up in that

until you have an IED or whatever it is and your vehicle blows up and several of your friends are killed around you and you yourself maimed. And you go back handicapped, not whole.

I tell you, I'm sorry but that just irritates the you know what out of me. It really does. You talk about an incredible shame for a nation. If you're going to build it up then you should take care of them. If this is such a wonderful thing, such a heroic thing, such a great thing for a nation, then why not take care of them when they get home? To be out on the streets in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and here in Cincinnati and different places because their minds are messed up. People go off to war; it's not such a pretty sight. Some, a lot of them came back from Vietnam. We've had, still do in the Church, still dealing with that. Still dealing with that war. Still dealing with things they saw, horrible, horrifying things. But "Oh, it's a great thing to go off and fight for your country," and they forget you. Or they might build a great monument, that I wept over when I saw it, a wall of all those who died in Vietnam, because a good friend of mine was on it. You think, what a sick, sick thing. "We'll never forget you. There's the stone out there to prove it." Didn't do much good.

I'm sorry, but that just flat makes me mad, angry, indignant, disgusted. So I'm thankful that God has a different government that's coming to this world. One that's filled with peace. One that's filled with righteousness. One that has swift judgment and not the kind of garbage we have in this world.

Lost my place. Okay, the contrite ones, those who are able to experience remorse. Going on. I **will not contend or strive forever**, yes, because thankfully there's a limit on it. ...**neither will I be always wroth**: it's a word that means "to be provoked or led to act against it." It's not like we think of anger. In this case it's something that God has to do because it's gotten so bad. And so even the word "provoked" doesn't really get it, but it's more of the one of "having to take action," to act against something, "led to action," "led to act to where there has to be correction."

And with correction, in many cases, it means death; the flood, or different things that have happened in history where God's intervened and said, "No more. This has gone too far." And so there's action.

Just like what God did that led up to the Apostasy. We allowed ourselves to drift off to sleep. We didn't listen to the warnings that God gave. And because of that He pulled back - because we sinned, and because of our letting up and because of our letting down on a spiritual plane. It was our fault! And so God spewed us out of His mouth. This is what this is about, things like this. He has to take action. There comes a point in time where we're so far off base, where we're doing so much harm, whether it be on a physical plane in the world and nations and what they do to each other or spiritually within a Church, that's what God does. He has to take action.

...**for the spirit should fail before me, and the lives which I have made. For the iniquity of his covetousness...** And it's a word here that doesn't mean something that a person just covets and

desires, it's a word in the Hebrew that goes farther than that. It shows the person took action in their being of this mind, coveting, because it's a word that means "dishonest gain or gain by violence." So you have gained. You haven't just desired it in your mind, you did it, you gained dishonestly and by violence, evil ways, whatever it is it's speaking of here. That's the way mankind is.

**For the iniquity of his covetousness I was wroth, and did strike him.** In other words, God acted against it, God struck out at different times against different ones. ...**and did strike him: I hid or concealed Myself.** You know, not going to have anything to do with that. Just let them go for a time and if that's what they're going to do that's what they're going to do, so hands off, not going to have any part of it.

...**and was wroth, and he went on backsliding, turning away in the way of the heart.** Now, you know what? As it goes through here it's a story about God and Israel, as a whole. That's the way it's portrayed. That's the way it's given. But it's much deeper than that. It's way beyond that. It's about the Church. It's about anyone whom God calls at any time through time, anyone whom God has worked with over the last 6,000 years, those whom God will work with during the next thousand years, those whom God will work with during the hundred years.

Hard to understand how there could be people who would be backsliding at that time but it's going to happen in the Millennium. It's just going to be a world under God's government. But there will still be backsliding. There will still be people who go through the motions and deceiving themselves. Because human nature is human nature and it's ugly.

**So they went on backsliding or turning away in the way of his heart/their heart.** So it's the heart. And it's why we read those verses in Colossians in this last series and talking about the circumcision of the heart and by that which is an operation of God that God can do in changing us. It's about the way we think. It's about the mind. It's the mind that needs to change. It's the mind and the thinking process that's the problem. And as long as it's carnal and toward self it's wrong. That has to change.

That's why I love the way Mr. Armstrong explained it. There are only two ways of life. There are only two ways; one is get and the other is give. They don't mix. It's one or the other. There are some world leaders who got that when they listened to Mr. Armstrong and responded. They got that. Simple message. "Oh, he never talked scripture to them. He's not giving them a witness. He's not telling them like he should and preaching to them like he..." I heard that kind of garbage, that kind of absolute stupidity. You have to deal with people... They weren't being called. They weren't of a spiritual mind. But he knew how to communicate with them because God gave him that ability and so he talked to them in terms that they could understand. And some of them got it. Give and get. Yep, that's the problem with mankind. And as long as we want to get we're going to have problems because it's selfishness and that's where problems come from. The world... Because they could see things on a world level. Sometimes that helps people

see things in a way that is unique because they see the suffering of those whom they work with. I think of some of the leaders he spoke to.

Anyway, going on, **verse 18—I have seen his ways.** Who's? Mankind's, the way of Israel, the way of all mankind, the way of selfishness, the way of get. **I have seen his ways and I will heal him.** Only God can heal us. And it's not about physical healing. It's not about something physical happening in life. It's about something far, far greater. But the things that happen to us physically that we experience as human beings can teach us about that which is far more important and about trusting in God, looking to God.

**I have seen his ways and will heal him; I will lead him also.** That doesn't mean that individuals are going to respond, but this is about those who will respond. Because there's a choice in all this. We have choices along the way. "I will lead him also." So God is the one that has to lead us, to lead us to the water, to lead us to the truth, to lead us to the tree of life. God is the one that has to.... We have to make the choices along the way whether we're going to follow wherever He's leading us. And if we make those choices in a right way then God can work with us because we're of a meek and humble, contrite spirit.

**I have seen his ways and will heal him; I will lead him also and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.** Love that one too if we understand what it's talking about when it's talking about mourners. Because to change you've got to come to a point where you are of that kind of mind and attitude of a mournful spirit of the way man is, of the way "I" am, of the way selfishness is. You've got to feel bad about it. You've got to... It's got to move you because otherwise change won't come. If we don't see it like we need to then where is the motivation for wanting to change? We really have to see that. And fasting talks about some of that. There is an attitude and spirit that has to be there for God to work with it.

And so it is with coming to this point where there are times that you have to be mournful, as it were, about what we're doing, about what we're like, and to loathe it. I think of what it says about Lot. He vexed his righteous soul day by day because of the things he saw. That's what we're talking about. It's not talking about rejoicing in what we see but being of a different spirit because we see the evil, we see the terror, we see the pain, we see the suffering and we want it changed. And we have to see this [self].

God says, **I create the fruit of the lips,** that which produces fruit, that which is good, that which is right. It comes from God. The only good that exists, true good, comes from God. Truly does. If it's true it has to come from God. That's why Christ said there is no one good, but there's only one that's good, in essence, there is—How did he say it?—no man good; no one but God, in essence. That's what it's referring to or what he said.

**I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that's afar off...** That's God's purpose because it's talking about time. This is going to take time to bring individuals and bring mankind

to a point where real peace can exist. That's why I love the expression "Jerusalem." "City of Peace." It's going to take time to create that, to have that. And this is what it's talking about.

**Peace, peace to *him who is afar off* and to *him that is near*...** And when is it near? When God's working with you or whoever it was through time. That's when God is near and that process of healing can begin and that change can begin. Because this is what He's talking about here. So that's when the peace can begin to come into our lives, a peace of mind, a peace of being able to...

Just like with death. We're not like the rest of the world when it comes to a matter of death. We understand time. And as we grow we come to better understand it and to embrace it. Like the hundred years; that's an incredible time. And all the suffering we've seen of mankind, whether it be young and old alike, it's a horrible thing. Death is just a horrible thing. That's why it says in Corinthians it's an enemy. Because it's against us, it interferes with relationships and life; obviously, it's a cessation of life. And it's hard. And it's a hard adjustment. It's traumatic for human beings but we can learn so much from it.

But the more we understand about God and understand about whether it be the first resurrection or whether it be the Great White Throne that gives incredible peace. We don't have to worry about whether someone went down to this hot place and they got these little red demonic beings with sharp ears or whatever they are, pointed ears and going around with these three prong pitchforks shoving, you know, jabbing people in the rear end as they're running around on the hot coals and lava running around them. How stupid, you know. There is a being that wants human beings to think they're going to suffer like that, and to believe in something like Dante's Inferno or you know, to have these ideas about hell and this suffering that takes place.

I wish I could think of the sign we saw the other day driving down a road here, at some church, and it was about along those same kinds of terms. And I don't even want to remember the expression I guess, I don't want to tell it to you, but some of these stupid sayings they get out here outside on some of those buildings sometimes because this week it's going to be about... And you think, oh, man, that would be so bad. But it sounded like one of these hell fire type things that were going to come about. Oh yeah, the sun... Anyway, it came back to me. It's so bad I don't even want to repeat it. But some of that's still going on where people still have this hell fire thing. You know, they want to build it up that it's so bad you don't want to be there, you want to do better, because that's where you're going if you don't do the right things. You think, what a sad thing.

But to understand death is just death. It's the end of life. People go back to the dirt. Dust we are, dust we return. You know, its like, was God conflicted when He told mankind that? "Well, you're not really going to be dust. You don't return to dust because you're up there or you're down there." "Well, He didn't mean that. What He meant was the body turns to dust but you get to go someplace else right away because you have this immortal soul." I'm sorry, but some of this stuff just really riles me up.

So God says here, again, **Peace, peace to him that's afar off, and to him that is near, says the Eternal; and I will heal him/them**, whoever they are. God does the healing. What's He healing? Because this has to change. That's why the scripture is there in Romans about being transformed, metamorphoo. Awesome! A complete change in something in the mind, in the spirit.

Let's turn over to Acts 2. Now, this is right after Christ had been with the disciples for the forty days. And they had a few more days remaining. He told them to stay in Jerusalem and talked about Pentecost. So here we are at the period of Pentecost and the disciples are experiencing something so incredible, the power of God's spirit and things that God was manifesting in a unique way on a one time basis.

See, sometimes people get mixed up in these things and so they have to "call down the holy spirit so they can have this fire above their heads," and whatever else it is when they get the holy spirit. No, that was the day of Pentecost and God manifested something in a way that is speaking in tongues - happened in a very powerful way, more powerful then than happened later on, speaking in different languages.

And the Protestant world takes this off in a different direction, or those who want to be... I just should say Pentecostal world, okay? But this was a unique experience for the disciples and those who were there, those who were present. A one time thing on that magnitude and that way because God was manifesting something.

I'm saying this and I'm stressing this because this has a lot to do with understanding healing, okay, as we go along here in how God is working with mankind. And the same sort of thing was something physical that shows something spiritual that we can learn.

And so here it is Peter is responding and saying to them, in essence here, **Acts 2:38—Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you**. So this is an answer to how they're to live life. This is something that God gave in a very powerful way on the day of Pentecost that began to be taught. Because it was going to be the beginning of, and it was the beginning of the Church.

The Church was being established then on that day of Pentecost in 31 A.D., and so anyone who would be brought to this point in time, be drawn and called by God, could do this, could be baptized, **every one of you in the name of Joshua the Christ for the remission of sins**. It's through Christ that one can be forgiven of sin. There is no other way. It's through our Passover, not through our Easter. Through our Passover, see!

**...for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the holy spirit**. So God is making it clear here our physical lives is a gift because of a purpose that God has if the time comes, when the time comes and God draw us; and if we make the right choices it's all made possible, being a part of His family is possible, being a part of that great family of God is possible. And so along the way many gifts are given by God because we can't get them any other way. We can't earn them.

They're not owed to us either. They're not owed to us. They're always a gift from God, whatever we have that takes us farther. Life, physical life then is a gift, it starts there, but a spiritual life is far, far more because it takes us to that next level. It's the beginning of it, the impregnation of God's spirit, the begetting of God's spirit, a new life begins inside of us, a mind that can be transformed now that can eventually be born into not physical life but spirit life. Awesome to understand these things! The world doesn't understand this process.

**...for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the holy spirit. For the promise,** this is about God's promise back in Isaiah 57 that we read **...for the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off,** because, see, it's about God's purpose through time, the promise of healing, "And I will heal you," see, God says. "I know your ways and I will heal you if you'll respond, if you'll choose properly when the time is given to you." And so this promise of God's spirit because it's about God creating His own family, it's about the Kingdom of God. And so there's this process.

**...and all who are afar off, and as many as the LORD our God shall call.** It starts with a calling. God has to intervene and decide when individuals are drawn to Him, when individuals are going to be given the opportunity for begetting. He makes those choices. It's when He decides to begin giving spirit life to someone and allowing a change, a growth, like an embryo, to begin growth until it can be born. Awesome!

Well, there are a variety of churches within traditional Christianity that preach about healing, and they look to and talk about examples in Christ's time. And some of those things spoken of afterward by the apostles, they talk about those. They talk about things that happened during the time of Christ, and then they talk about some of those things that you can read about in scripture of healings and so forth. And they read them and they talk about them but they don't understand them and they don't understand what was going on. They don't understand the purpose of it. And they use some of those things in an attempt to give credence to their practice and their teaching so it's credible (they think) in the eyes of others who are hearing it and listening to it. But they go off on tangents like basically all doctrine in the world. They just go off on different tangents and their interpretation of what they think it means. And so they misuse a lot of those things.

And, candidly, there have been times that that's cause people in the Church problems because that's the world God called us out of. And different ones who went to Ambassador College, who were trained and taught very early on, some of them developed their own thoughts and ideas about some of these things and about what God was doing, and began to teach. I've already mentioned some of that. But even about healing because they didn't grasp fully what God was doing and they began to teach some things that weren't sound, and weren't right and it crept into the Church because those individuals are the ones who became teachers.

See, Mr. Armstrong taught a group of people who by all rights in thinking would be, well, they're going to receive that and teach that faithfully to others. But they didn't. They put their own little twist on it here and there. And those little twists take people off course because if it's not right

down the line that's going to mess people up. And that's what happened. And this is one of the subjects that really got messed up in a great way within the Church, primarily because of one evangelist. He had a tremendous sway over some of this and taught things that weren't balanced and things about faith that weren't true when it comes to the subject of healing. Really messed up a lot of minds.

So even in the world of traditional Christianity there are just things that are spoken of and talked about as far as what, Christ did this. Well, yes he did. But why? Do you understand why? Do you understand the purpose of what was going on? Because that has everything to do with the story of what's taking place here.

See, there are TV shows, programs out there - don't watch them - but sometimes they'll have this huge arena, just thousands of people, and someone talking down there and generally wearing a white coat, and bringing people up on stage or having a moment of certain prayer and this one there, and "There are certain ones that are going to be healed now of blah-blah-blah," and all of a sudden things happen. And they don't understand there is a world that plays around with those things. That's a bad... That's a dangerous thing. There is a spirit world that plays games with people and they don't understand the power of that. And then sometimes, you know, they come up on stage and they [preacher] puts their hand up there [on person's forehead] and they can't stand up anymore, you know. Those are some horrible, dangerous things, but supposedly individuals are fully healed of different things that have "come from God." And you think, you don't understand, and no, they weren't. Not by God.

There are beings that can do things with a physical body, okay? They can even possess it. And that's something that's difficult for people to understand or comprehend, and again, it's a horrible thing, but there is a demonic world that exists out there and they play games with human beings. And they especially do when things are being taught that aren't right and they are in those areas and work with those areas.

And just like those that can speak in (supposedly) in tongues and they don't even know. They don't even have enough understanding to know that that just meant in different languages. So they have to come up with a different language of their own and someone else has to "interpret" it sometimes because they're the only one that can understand that strange language because the person speaking it doesn't even understand that strange language, and so there is somebody over there, and it sounds like a bunch of gibberish because that's what it is, and then someone else over here is "interpreting" what's being said and they tell everyone else, "Well, this is what was said, because this is that language," even if they have a little bit of understanding of what this is. Again, a lot of things at work there.

I don't know if I should tell the story. Anyway, I guess I will. Ambassador College, we had a class called "Comparative Religion," and one of the assignments one time is we had to divide up by three's and go out to different churches on Sunday. And one individual was responsible for finding out the history of that particular group, organization. Another was to, if I remember rightly, write

about the doctrines of it. So one had the history, one had the doctrines, and then one about their experience wherever they went. Well, I was really fortunate to get one where as soon as we went into the building back in a room back there there's this woman going nuts and screaming and hollering and this gibberish that was going out. And I really wasn't that excited about walking up toward the middle or the front because that's where they want to take you. "There's somebody new. Those three guys, those three people that are new, let's bring them up front." I'm just glad it wasn't one of those where they start passing out the snakes, you know.

Has anyone ever heard of Jerry Clower? Because that's really old. Jerry Clower? No one here? Okay, just one...two. You've got to be old to remember this. But he was on the radio and Deep South, basically, and he had this friend and both of them went to one of these churches where they pass around the snakes and whatever, and they didn't know this. They got in there and all of a sudden these snakes were starting to be passed out toward the back and they were coming to the front. And he talks to his friend, this friend says, "I don't see a door around anywhere," and Jerry says, "Well, where do you reckon they want one?"

But some of those environments you don't want to be in. And when I was in college I didn't really want to be in that environment. But we did it and came back and reported about what it was like and everything, but I'd already seen that kind of thing in the world. Not because of a church but because of someone I knew of one time that had this thing take place in their life. And they don't realize what is really messing with them because they get into a trance; they're not in control of their own minds. There are some who literally get into a trance and they don't have control of their own mind.

God's spirit doesn't work that way. God's spirit, everyone who receives of God's spirit is always in control of their own mind. God doesn't possess. God offers His spirit, which is a spirit of love, which is a spirit of outgoing care and concern for others, and a spirit that helps us to come to repentance and desire and want His way of life and to live by His truths. But never one of control. God doesn't control us. And it's just the opposite. He lets us make choices because there is no other way to change and grow except by the choices we make. And so it's always free choice on our part. That's why we're made this way, created this way. And that's why God works with us in the manner that He does.

So again here, repeating some of this or talking about some of this, of stories that people take out of the Bible and they don't understand what's being said. They don't understand the purpose of it.

So all these groups have one thing in common that do this. Healing to them is a very physical thing which focuses upon the here and the now. And the bottom line, in most cases, it's about this [money]. That's what it's about. And so it's on the here and now with a desire for some kind of intervention in life to deal with physical ailments, disease or accidents, but they misapply and misuse these things, as I said, these accounts. So they've created a kind of pseudo faith in healing.

And sadly we had some of that in our past, pseudo faith in healing, that if your faith wasn't strong enough something was wrong with you. You shouldn't worry about having a gall bladder operation. Was that what she had, a deaconess that I mentioned here in this area? Because we went to visit her and she was torn because the minister that she was under, she felt guilty for being in the hospital. He made her feel guilty for being there because her faith wasn't great enough to just be anointed and just wait and trust in God. I don't read that in scripture but that was his interpretation of what healing is all about.

And so that's why I've given some of these examples, of a parent that I mentioned in one of those sermons, that I believe it was at the Feast that this happened at, wouldn't take their own child, their own daughter into a hospital who had appendicitis because it's like this stubbornness. If you have enough faith... It's like just being bullheaded enough—that's what it amounts to—to believe that... And so you're just not believing strong enough, or something. And that's... And so she died because he wouldn't take her in. Think what a sick, sick, sick thing.

Because God has given human beings ability to deal with things of a physical body that didn't exist 2,000 years ago, that didn't exist 1,500 years ago or 500 years ago or 200 years ago, you know? There are some things they did on me that didn't exist 13 years ago that have made it a little bit easier for recuperating faster. You think it's a marvel. But it's almost like some have believed that if you use that you're putting your trust in doctors.

Well, it's kind of like being as dumb as saying, well, if your car breaks down on out on the highway, if you can't fix it yourself or God miraculously fix it because you pray about it, and you trust in a mechanic you're putting your trust in a mechanic. How could you do that? I'm sorry, but... So it's like you're putting your trust... No, there are things we can do for ourselves. That's why I mentioned what I did at the beginning of the sermon and read what was in the first sermon about trust. There are things we can do for ourselves but there is a balance in all this. There is a matter of trusting in God, of looking to God in every facet of our life, but there are things we can do.

When I was up there having all this done, being opened up, you know, and going in and having four bypasses put in—course, I didn't know any of that was going on at the time and I didn't have to worry about it. And if I didn't come back out of that I'd never know it until I was resurrected, you know, so the problem would have been with others that would... their battles and their hardship. But before I ever went in there, obviously it's a matter of looking to God and trusting in God, that if, candidly, for me, it was like "If I'm to go on I know You'll bless me in going on. And if Your purpose with me is fulfilled and something else must happen, primarily even with the Church, then so be it, because we're Yours." That's trusting in God. Your life is in God's hands. Whatever God chooses, why argue with that? Why fight against that? That'd be foolish.

So God will fulfill His purpose in all of us. That's what He promises, whatever that purpose is. You can pray for something different just as Christ did, "If there be any other way, take this cup from

me. Nevertheless...” and he said that for us, “Nevertheless not my will, but Yours be done.” Trusting in God.

We can want something hopefully to turn out a little different, which I have done at different times in my life. I remember one time when I was told I’m going to go off for a while, but if there’s any other way I’d like to see that...but not my will but Yours be done. Well, it wasn’t His will that I didn’t go spend a little bit of time. And so be it. So be it. There’s a purpose in it, whatever God’s working out. Would I have liked it at the time to work out differently? Yes. But now looking back would I have liked it? No. See, that’s why I’ve mentioned over and over again, whatever things that I’ve gone through in life they’ve helped to make me what I/who I am, create something within me that otherwise couldn’t be there to the same degree.

So again, with the world it’s very much a physical focus because we’re physical human beings. And so that’s what took place very much so in a process of time because we were still being drawn out of so much truth that had been lost in the past. And Mr. Armstrong then adding 18 more, being blessed to restore 18 truths to the Church and then the Church going on from there. But here is one that still needed to be addressed in that respect.

So, again, this kind of misguided thinking about the subject of healing, so often it’s just based on things that are physical that’s taken from scripture also has a continuing impact on many in the Church that was scattered after the Apostasy. There are people out here that they still have some deep-rooted problems, because, see, that was carried on. It didn’t stop. It went on through Laodicea. It’s gone into the scattering in some cases, of how people think and how they’ve had to address some things in their lives.

So understanding what God has to say about healing tends to be a very physical focus for many, and in large part, again, that’s easily understood because that’s just the way we are, as I mentioned about John, in the book of John.

Now, the reality is we all get older. Right now I think I feel badly about that in many ways because (for the Church’s sake), because there is that desire to see this through and there are some who are suffering immensely so, their physical bodies. But that desire to see something take place is so intense, so great within them that so be it. But you know, we get older, our bodies decay, we begin to fall apart, and different ones, you know, some can go 80, 90, 100 and just fall asleep and no ailments, as a whole, not much going on. Others of us, we have some struggles along the way because of different make ups of our genetics and whatever else. And so we go through this process and we can learn from it mightily so. But along the way and the older one gets, this thing of healing becomes a little more important in life. But how you think becomes even that much more important, how you think about the subject.

Let’s turn over to Matthew 8. So, in large part, again, things are very physical to us because the creation simply does get older and in time it begins to decay, begins to weaken, and then death. But one doesn’t have to be old either to be struck with severe physical ailments, and there are

many diseases and disorders today that—and they always have been in large part—strike all ages in life. And obviously those things when they do hit in a big way can very much consume our lives, which they should because they're major things; they're not small things because of how they impact everything around us.

Matthew 8, let's begin here, verse 5. And we're going to look at some of these different kinds of scriptures and things that happened during Christ's time as we go through some of this, and some of the things of others here, but let's notice this. **Matthew 8:5—And when Joshua had entered into Capernaum, a centurion came to him pleading with him.** This is an awesome story. A centurion, soldier, **saying, Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed and terribly tormented.** In great pain, suffering. **And Joshua said to him, I will come and heal him.** Awesome! "I'll be there. I'm going to come and I'll heal him because you've asked."

**The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof. So merely speak the words and my servant will be healed.** Awesome! Now, this is really an incredible story. So, yes, it wasn't one of the Jewish leaders. It wasn't one of those who professed to be a Pharisee, a Sadducee or Zealot or whatever else. It was a centurion.

So he said, again here, awesome, **Just merely speak the words, and my servant shall be healed. Verse 9—For I am a man under authority...** Awesome what he recognized here, government. There's a matter of government involved here and he's bringing this out. He said, **I am a man under authority having soldiers under me: and I say to one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it.** **When Joshua heard this, he marvelled, and said to those who followed, Assuredly I say to you, I have not found such faith, no, not in Israel.** Awesome! That for whatever purpose that God had placed in this individual's mind, in his thinking to recognize something about Christ, and to believe it he had help. And how he responded then is what's reflected here. Because there were Israelites, he said, "In Israel," which includes Judah, that didn't respond in the same way. But quite evidently here, him believing that he was the Messiah from what he heard, from the stories he heard.

He saw something here. He believed something that moved him and he believed by what he had experienced to this point in time, that Christ had that authority. He's healed others. He's done certain things. Perhaps he witnessed those things, we don't know. It doesn't have the whole story here. But it makes it very clear here there was something in his mind that he believed it. Well, you can only believe certain things to that degree with help. But he had to make choices. And what he had to say here was a matter of faith. Not that he was being called into the Church but God gives help to different people at different times to accomplish different things and this individual here as well.

And I hope you understand a large part of the reason why. God knows the human mind. He knows how every individual thinks. And He can work with individuals; He can work with people to bring about something like this, to bring about someone who would respond in this manner. This wasn't an accident. There are things that happened in the life of Christ so that they'd be written in here

so we could be moved by them, so we could be inspired, and people have been in God's Church for 2,000 years when they hear a story like this, to be moved by it. God has recorded things for us for a purpose and they weren't all by accident. It didn't just accidentally happen and take place. God designs things. He mold and fashions things so that they can exist, so that they can be here all for a purpose.

Because I'm inspired by this, I'm moved by this. I'm amazed at this. Here is this centurion given the ability to believe. There are others who believed he was the Messiah and a lot of them left. When they got to this thing about the eating of the flesh and the drinking of the blood, they left. But they had hopes. They believed. There are people all the way up to the time that Christ was taken in, as I should say, as he was going into Jerusalem, if you remember the account there and they were throwing out palm branches and hollering out hosanna and praising the one that was coming in, the Son of David. Because they believed he was the Messiah. And then as soon as he died it's like, now what do we do? Even the disciples. Do they go back fishing? Do they go do this, in things they were doing before? What are they going to do now? Amazing.

And so he said, **I haven't seen such great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say to you that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of heaven.** Awesome! So what is this about? Well, it means like the centurion; there is something being given here for a purpose to show something of a greater magnitude. And that is this isn't just for the Israelites, this isn't just for Judah. This expression of "the east and west" are peoples far away who are not related to them, who are not a part with them in that respect, who are going to be able to sit down at a point in time with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, out of which Israel did come.

And it says, "In the Kingdom of heaven." So we know what this is all about. We understand that in time all people on earth are going to have the opportunity—well, depending on what they've done to this [mind], but as a whole that's God's intent, that everyone be able to have that opportunity to be drawn, to be called to Him, and to have the opportunity to go through what we're going through in the sense of choices we make of the truth that God places into our mind by speaking to us spiritually in the mind. That's how you receive it. We don't figure it out on our own. God has to pick a time and a place and then He starts giving it to us. All of a sudden we start seeing the Sabbath, we see the holy days, we see different things. Its like, "That's so clear," just by hearing it.

**But the children of the kingdom,** interesting how it says this here, **But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.** It's is kind of a sobering thought here of what it's talking about, "the children of the kingdom." So is this just talking about a physical reference here to a physical nation? It's a lot more than that.

So this can have, in part, a physical reference to those of physical Israel in the sense of only a portion of it, because that's kind of the context of some of them. But that's not what it's about. It's far beyond that. It's kind of like the physical healing. It's not about physical healing that's

what God is teaching. It goes way beyond that. Healing, He wants us to grasp much, much more far beyond. And there's much that's learned along the way about placing our trust in God.

So again, those of physical Israel who received certain knowledge about God and His ways, they reacted in certain ways, and as a whole only those who were specifically called really made changes because they were the only ones who could. But as far as the rest of Israel and Judah was concerned, they weren't called to be able to make those changes in their life yet. They just lived out a physical, carnal life.

But there are others through time who have been given the impregnation of God's spirit. That's why the expression here "many are called and few are chosen." I've experienced enough in God's Church since 1969 to know beyond a shadow of a doubt certain things about human beings who have been called into His Church. And I think of a period of time to be called during Philadelphia, one of the easiest in many ways in the 6,000 years of time because of being such a large group, in that respect, and all the material and all the ability and the size, the size of congregations and so forth, it really made the ability to change, to grow, to receive God's word was really, in many respects at its peak. It really was.

Name a time in 2,000 years where it was better. It wasn't in the beginning. People had to hide. People had to flee. People had to be careful what they said. They did. Government through time was after them wanting to kill them. So it was a struggle through time. But here, one of the freest nations that God had given to the earth—because God gave it—one of the wealthiest nations that God ever gave to the earth, one of the most powerful nations that God ever gave to this earth, that's when some of us had the opportunity of being called. Awesome!

So those called during Philadelphia, in that respect, is pretty smooth sailing. "Many are called and few are chosen." I think back through that period of time and wonder how many really came through in the period of 1930's up to 1986, because it definitely wasn't the number of people that were in the Church. It was far, far less. So how many really are going to be a part of God's Kingdom? The first resurrection? Over 2,000 years that's where the majority of people have come from, and this was a short span, in that respect. We don't know. A few thousand? I think that's all. But we'll know in time.

Sometimes we think everybody is going to be there, everybody... Doesn't work that way. Doesn't work that way because a lot of them went on through Laodicea, a lot of them are scattered out there right now. And a lot of them... well, first resurrection.. Millennium, physically, physical lives? Yes. "Many are called and few are chosen." Sometimes we just don't grasp what we have. We don't grasp how blessed we are to have the kind of pearl of great price that God has given to us, to treasure it in that manner, truly.

So I think of those who have been called through the last 2,000 years, many, because most weren't chosen. Why? Because of their choices. Because of their choices. They weren't chosen because of their choices. They didn't choose to keep fighting for this way of life. They chose,

instead, to do something else. They chose, instead, to whatever it might be that pulls human beings away, that makes people weak, that creates weakness, became lethargic, whatever it might be, became lukewarm, if that be the case, whatever it might be, began to sin, whatever that sin might be, and most of it with human beings. It's always been with other human beings they shouldn't be with. That's what's happened throughout history that's been the greatest pull and problem with human beings. Because we want something and so much so that God says, "Okay, that's your choice." That's your choice. So that's gone on for a long, long time.

So again, there will be those who **come from the east and west, who shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of heaven.** That doesn't mean it's in heaven. It's because it's with God because it's of God, because God creates it, because it's the Kingdom of God. And we know the timing of when that Kingdom comes to this earth and is established on this earth to govern and rule on this earth for 1,100 years. And after that we really don't know fully all that God has in store because He hasn't shown us. He may not show us until the end part of that hundred years, I don't know! But He's always going to be teaching us things that we don't know, even in His family, because we can't learn it all. We can't learn it all. There is so much of God, about God and things that He's done for billions and billions and trillions, if you want to put it in earth years. We can't comprehend that. We can't comprehend the magnitude, the greatness of Almighty God. We can't even come close. And yet He wants it all for us. Amazing! Awesome!

**But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness.** The word "outer" here is, as it's translated, is really poor. It gives the wrong thought. It's a word that comes from a word that meanings "without, outside, apart from, away from." And so sometimes we can read certain words and kind of have our own thinking in it, and especially considering different teachings that have existed and so forth. But this thing "cast into outer darkness," what is that? I'm sorry. But it just basically means same thing that happens to someone when they're disfellowshipped from the Church. You know what happens? You're cast away from, you're put away from, you're separated from the Church, from God; something that started long before has taken place in a way that is manifested now.

Because, see, these things don't happen overnight. People who have left here in times past - I think of those going back to 2012, 2013, in through there, what happens to them, it didn't happen overnight. It happened... Sometimes it's taken place over years where people begin to cut themselves off from the flow of God's spirit, begin to have their own kind of thinking, and then something comes along that ignites a change or a response to that thinking that's already there because they've been cut off or so long or so weak, if there be anything there whatsoever, that all of a sudden they respond to something in a way that shocks others. I never knew they were like... I didn't know that existed. But to most people it's like this just happened last night; they changed last night.

Now, the only time I've experienced some things where some people seemingly did "change last night," because the change was so great, was at the Apostasy. And we used to talk about this

thing about the body snatchers because I talked... I think of some ministers. I think of one in particular I talked to one day, the next day I didn't know him. I mean, I did not know him. He was a different person, believed things totally different. Blew my mind. But those things didn't happen overnight either, see. Laodicea happened through time, people became weaker and weaker, and you become weaker and weaker and you're not strong enough to do certain things in life anymore, because strength and power to change and grow and fight comes from God.

"Be strong and of good courage." That doesn't ever come out of you. Doesn't come out of me. I don't go work it up. To be strong and of good courage? That's the way we can sometimes take scriptures like that, in what was told to Joshua, "Be strong and of good courage." It's like you can work this up. "I'm going to be strong and of good courage! There's a hundred thousand people out there ready to kill us. We're down to nothing." Gideon. I think of different ones. "And be strong and of good courage? Let me have a couple bottles of wine so I can deal with this better." Because in the mind you can't deal with something like that. A hundred thousand out there against a few hundred? It's like... And God says to be strong and of good courage.

Well, you know what? It comes from God. And that's where you take your strength in. That's what he did. That's what the others did. They believed God. They believed Gideon. The ones who went into the promised land, they believed Joshua, that God was working through him in what was given to them. So that expression there, we can take in a wrong way if we're not careful, but the way we do it, the way we're able to be strong is what? Your prayer life had better be right with God. You better be praying to God on a regular basis and trust in and know that you need God in your life daily. That's why I pray. Because I know I need God. Because without Him I'm going to give in to my own carnal human nature, I'm going to be more selfish.

Be strong, good courage, confident, bold in this way of life; it comes through that close relationship with God, by striving to live what is right but knowing that you have to work, you have to apply yourself, but to know that the real help, the strength to accomplish it comes from God. You can't do it on your own. Human beings can't keep the law on their own. They can't keep the commandments on their own. Judah, of all nations that has done the best of any people, has done a lousy job. Because it takes God's spirit when you look at it on a spiritual plane. Physically, carnally, they've done a great job...sort of. I'm talking carnally, physically, without God in the picture, okay?

So again here, this word "outer" means "without or outside or apart from or away from." It's about being cut away from, cut off. You can't have part with it. "Are cast into/cast away." That's all its saying, they're cast away. Look at all the people who are not able to be a part. They've been cast aside, cast away, separated. That's what this is about. They're not somewhere out in outer darkness, you know. That's really kind of a dumb translation, "outer darkness." Well, it just means what happens when you're not in the light. That's more of what it's about on a physical level here. It's about if you're in the light you're in the light, God's there, if you're talking about that which is spiritual. If you're not in the light and you're relying on yourself and your own

thinking and your own reasoning you are in darkness, so you are cast aside, you are cast away from the light. That's what it's about here, separated from the rest.

**But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness, or outside or away from, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** I'm amazed when God first began to reveal what that really meant, this weeping and gnashing of teeth. And really couldn't know it fully until after the Apostasy and what had taken place and understanding what's going to happen when so many of those individuals are resurrected in the Great White Throne - weeping and gnashing of teeth - when the true definition of that began to come out and be understood. Because it's a matter of a spiritual reaction, or a physical reaction too, in that respect, but it's a human reaction, this thinking.

I mean, if you could turn your shoe around and bend your knee the other way and kick yourself in the ... then you would, to think that "I lived in the greatest nation the earth has ever had, the wealthiest nation, when times were the best, had the greatest ability to worship God and I did... Yeah, I did, I gave it up for what? For a little season, whatever that was, that I gave it up for." Think, now, let's see, age-lasting life -10 years. I gave up and had my own way for ten years, went out, betrayed my family to marry or be with someone else so that I could have that for, what, how many years in place of a life in a spirit body, a life, age-lasting life with God Almighty and what He's going to be doing through time."

And the example I just gave has happened to hundreds and hundreds if not thousands of people in the past 2,000 years who have been a part of the Church of God. It's happened to hundreds and hundreds of people in Laodicea. Probably a lot more during Laodicea than Philadelphia. It happened in Philadelphia as well but it happened a lot more in Laodicea because people were getting weaker and weaker spiritually, and because of that it's easier to begin drifting and giving in to carnality and sin and so forth.

And I mention that one because that's the biggest one. That's the one that drives people more than anything else. There are other things that drive human beings to sin and various kinds of sin but that's a big one. It's up there. It's way up there because of the way we think as human beings.

Look at Israel. You know, when they had that little party when Moses was up on the mountain and they had that little calf that they made? It's more like what we'd compare to some rock band crazed people kind of a little bit on drugs and playing a guitar or whatever and having this crazy music and people going and letting loose. Let loose. Drink more so that you can let loose. You know, smoke more, whatever it is, do more so that you can let loose, so that you're not... you have no inhibitions whatsoever. And so what do you do when you're like that as a human being? Well, you're probably going to end up somewhere with someone that's just flat wrong. That's where that lifestyle ends. That's what those people do. They go from one town to another town to another town sleeping with someone else or several people in each town. And people flock to

them. And you think, what a sick, stinking world this is. Now, see, that's human nature. That's the way human beings are.

You think any kind of nature and thinking is in your mind in any facet or form? You think you have anything like that in your mind as a human being? "Oh, no." Well, you must be a spirit being already. Because if you're a physical human being there is selfishness that exists in you, and selfish human beings will do selfish things. And so if the timing and things were right it's scary what human beings are capable of doing.

People who work together on jobs. It's scary what people will do. And a man and a woman begin talking to each other, sharing some time together, talking about, "Well, I can really talk to you. I can't tell these same things, well, to my wife," or "to my husband." That happens. That happens every day and several times a day not even in the whole city but just in this little area right around where we are meeting today. Every day these things are happening on job sites where people are, and every day there are people who are cheating in those things. That's why divorce rate is so high in the United States. That's incredibly high because that's the way human beings are.

So we have to recognize what our nature is like and we have to fight against it, and we have to realize how people have stumbled in times past. And this has taken a great toll upon God's Church through time - selfish, carnal, human nature, what people do.

And so that's what it's talking about here, people make wrong choices and they're not going to be in the first resurrection. They're not even going to live on into the Millennium in so many cases, and depending on when they lived anyway, if you go back in time. But there will be a Great White Throne and there's going to be some weeping when they really come to see face to face what they gave up, what they did. Because you want to talk about a stark awakening and a reality? There is no greater check on human life than that one. Because when you're resurrected for a second life and you know it and there are those standing before you who tell you various things, give you certain information and what you must do now and what your choices are now and it hits you like a tonne of bricks? There will be people who lose it right then and there. They'll just lose it. And the agony will be so deep, to think how absolutely stupid was "I" (or "I" was, whatever)?

**So there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Joshua said to the centurion, Go your way; and as you have believed, so it will be to you/done to you. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.** Don't need to be there, it's done. You believe this? It's finished. In essence, "I say it, just like you said to your soldiers, 'Go do this, Go do that.'" It's a matter of government. It's a matter of order. It's a matter of the way things are. And he recognized that you have that power, that ability, that government to command something and it'll be done on a physical plane, it'll be accomplished, to heal, to command an individual to be healed and it's done. Awesome! To change the elements, to change whatever it is in a body, of something that was diseased, decayed, hurting, in pain, and all of a sudden it's gone. Had the power to command that. And so Christ basically told him that, "What you have stated, it's done. It's taken care of."

And when Joshua had come to Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laying there sick with fever. And he touched her hand and the fever left her: and she rose up and served them. So just goes on and on and on, things that he's doing. All for a purpose. All by design. And something that was not to continue on for the next 2,000 years in the same way. Because he died and he was resurrected and he had a job and a duty and a responsibility that certain things were to be done and they were to be written through time for a purpose.

Anyway, kind of gave some of that away as where we're headed. We'll stop there.