

We started a new series last week that we're going to continue now with *Part 2*, and that series is entitled *God's Righteousness*. As usual we're going to pick up backing up a few verses from where we left off in *Part 1*.

We're going to jump right in here to Romans 9:12. Again, to me, though we've talked about things like this in times past, God's righteousness or things related to it in some of the flow of series that have led up to this point in time, to me this one is especially inspiring because of a little bit more depth in the sense of being able to see things that God is giving to us and helping us to understand and what that really means about God's righteousness in a personal way for each one of us. Hopefully that comes out as we continue to go through there.

But anyway, in **Romans 9:12**—it was said to her, speaking of Rebecca, **The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, I have loved Jacob, but I have, it says in the King James, hated...** and it's not the word "hated." Even if you go back and look in Malachi where this is quoted from, because it is a quote out of Malachi and what is being explained there, the word is sometimes translated as "against; to be against." But this concept of "hate," it's not God. God does not hate. He loves His creation; He loves all that He has created.

It's choices and free choice that He's given to mankind that has caused a big problem in the sense that God will not work with mankind until it's His time and that's the bottom line. Until it's His time, because of His predetermined purpose and what He's working out in His plan there are times then that God intervenes and begins to give us grace, mercy, favor, help, intervention, a calling if you will. And others, it's not their time. He doesn't give them that love. That's all it's talking about here. To me, it's good to have that balance and to understand what is being said here.

So again, to the **elder, that he shall serve the younger. As it is written, I have loved,** and this, as we talked about is not the word agape, it's agapaō, which just means "to love." It doesn't say how, what kind it is. It doesn't describe whether it's philia or agape, God's love, but we know that's the only way that God loves because it's His being, His mind. That loves comes from Him. There is no selfishness in it. It's not philia whatsoever. Philia is selfish and God is not selfish.

Again, I love the ability to look at this a little more deeply, in that respect, to be able to explain it or to see it more clearly. Where it goes on to say, "I have 'hated,'" and it's a word that sometimes we recognize or it's been translated as by some in the Church as "to love less." It is to love less. But it doesn't necessarily specifically mean that in Greek or in Hebrew when you look at the words that it's quoting from when you talk about Malachi and sometimes it's just a matter of not giving love or not showing love. That's what this is about. It's not their time. That's a difficult thing sometimes for people to grasp. It's just not God's time to love or show love to the world.

They are allowed to go in their own way. Only when God intervenes in people's lives and begins to draw them by His holy spirit is God giving them His love, which includes grace, mercy, the blessing of being able to be forgiven of sin, all those things that go along with that. He pours favor out upon them.

For us in the Church we should be able to understand that clearly. He's not giving that same love, He's not showing that love to others, to your family, to other family members who have not had their minds opened yet. They have a time for that. Some it'll be at the beginning of the Millennium, others it'll be in the Great White Throne. That's when God will begin to love them. It's not that He doesn't love them, it's just not their time yet because of a purpose He has. To me that's very simple but something that needs to be clarified in our minds and in our thinking. There is such a disservice sometimes by some translations because people who translated don't know God; they don't understand God's plan and God's purpose.

Again here, going on, it says, **What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid!** It's God's creation. He can choose when, because of a purpose and a plan He's working out, when He begins to give love or show love to others. That's what's so incredible with us, is that we're able to receive of God's love now. We did when He began to draw us. He drew us to a point where we could begin making a choice and a decision, did we want to be baptized, did we want to be a part of the Body? Because that's what He offers when He called us.

**For He said to Moses, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy.** In His time. Others He lets them go their way for mankind to learn things that need to be learned. ...and **I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.** It's His creation! Incredible that mankind should think otherwise.

**So then, it is not of him who wills,** in other words, by or through one's own ability in righteousness, **nor of him who runs,** in other words "works to accomplish a work or a service" towards God, **but of God who shows mercy.** Nobody earns it. There is nothing we can do to get it. It's just God's timing and God's calling and when He chooses then to begin to draw us. It's totally up to God.

I love the way it explains it here then in Romans and the things that follows: **Verse 17—For the scripture said unto Pharaoh, Even for this purpose I have raised you up, that I might show My power through you.** Incredible! He was humbled at points along the way and as soon as that which was humbling him, bringing him to a point of humility, that he didn't have much experience with in his life, but as he went through some of those things then God withdrew what brought him to that and he just, he became more hardened, his nature, his thinking, until finally his own son lost his life. Then that was the one finally where he said, "Get your people out of here! Take everything with you that you've said."

Then it goes on to say, **and that My name may be declared throughout all the earth.** So at that time it was. In the nations around there, the peoples around there, they heard these stories.

They heard things that had taken place. This was not a small thing. Egypt was an incredible power in the world at that time, the greatest power in the world at that time. When we think of different kingdoms that have risen and fallen that are spoken of in Daniel that was long afterward, obviously. But one that came before that that was very powerful then was Egypt.

**Therefore, He (God) has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and upon whom He will He hardens.** It means He allows them to go their course for whatever purpose. Because, just because of human nature people will become more hardened through time; the older people become the more hardened they become. It's a difficult thing, if you've lived all your life in this body and in selfishness, it becomes a task when you're resurrected, whenever that is, is to deal with that. There is a lot to overcome. There is a great blessing.

Again, I think of different ones who have lost their lives, children. Through time children, when the Israelites went in and killed everyone including children, that they have far less to deal with when they're resurrected because they're going to grow up in a world and they're going to have experiences in God's world. They're not going to have the kinds of battles that some others have. They're very, very blessed. It's hard to see that sometimes, to understand that, but it's very true. It's a beautiful thing because of God's plan, but human beings have a hard time dealing with that even when they know the truth.

**Verse 19—Then you might say to me, Why does He yet find fault? For who has resisted His will? No...** I'm not going to go through, explain all this again. It's in the last series here. So, in other words, he's saying here, "No, that's not the case" or "Don't say that," but **O man** (mankind), **who are you to reply against God?** The audacity of anyone to speak against God, the one who created them, who has a plan and a purpose and people don't even know what that plan and purpose is. They don't understand the God family. What an incredible thing when they begin to see it.

**Shall the thing formed say to him who formed it, Why have you made me this way? Doesn't the potter have power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another to dishonor?** But in God's time He's going to offer, or He will offer, as a whole, honor to others through time. In the Great White Throne, as an example, or going on to the Millennium. All who live today who live through what's coming, who live into the Millennium are going to have an incredible opportunity to receive of that honor, to be lifted up, to be strengthened, to receive of the mind of God in them. Incredible!

Now going on from where we left off: **Verse 22—What if God, willing (desiring) to show His wrath...** Again here, it's not as we think as human beings. It's a word that has to do with the execution of judgment. God is the one who judges. He determines when He's going to execute judgment upon mankind. We see some of those cases of intervention with the Israelites and what He did to them. We see what He did in the time of Noah, and so forth. As a whole, though, He's let mankind go his own course. Truly.

So it goes on to say, **and to make His power known**, so if He does determine at some point in time, like He did with Pharaoh, the point being, to show His great power to mankind, to put mankind in awe, and hopefully to stir up a sense of fear as well. How did that go with the rest of the nations around there? Well, only to a certain degree. The still determined that they were going to go up and fight. They were still going to go up against the Israelites even though there were things that they had heard and the like.

So it says here, **in order to make His power known endured much longsuffering the vessels of wrath**, in other words, fit for judgment. I mean, mankind, everyone has sinned. Everyone is worthy of what? Death. That's the reality. But God has to call us and open our minds to help us to learn that, otherwise people really don't believe that. But that's what we're worthy of for going against God because everyone has sinned and sin has to be paid for. It's whether we do or whether we surrender and embrace what God offers and desire, indeed, that Christ did pay it for us. That's how we're paid for. That's how we're purchased.

So it says here that **He endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted, made, or prepared to destruction**. As soon as we were given human nature that's why we were created that way, because God knew the kind of mind we would have as human beings. He made us this way for a purpose, as it talks about in other scriptures here. He made us this way for a great purpose. So that we in time could make a choice between His way and our way, the selfish way.

So from the very beginning Adam and Eve were made this way, prepared this way, made physical knowing full well they're going to sin because they're selfish. Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is what they're subject to. They're not in control of their lives in the way they think they are, or that we think we are.

To me that's a marvel, to understand all this. To understand the beauty and the brilliance of this, that that's the only way through time that we can begin to choose and begin to repent of sin and begin to want God's righteousness, His mind, His thinking, to want nothing that is selfish, nothing that would hurt others, nothing that we would do, think, or say that could ever hurt anyone else. Do we want that kind of a mind? I do. We grow in that and we desire that, we embrace that. We want that mind. You can't have it with the human mind of and by itself. That's why we have to have God's help to be transformed, to be changed. It's a beautiful thing.

Again, **fitted or made or prepared to destruction**, as the word means here, **fitted or made or prepared to destruction**. Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life? What's awaiting you? Destruction, unless there's a way to be saved. God has made that possible through His Son, Passover. ...so that **He might make known the riches of His glory**, to show how great His purpose and His plan is. To show that there is a way to have real freedom, that there is a way to be saved, that there is a way to have His mind, His thinking.

...to **make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy**. God has to begin to give mercy and we begin to learn that and if we're receiving that grace, that mind, that mercy from

God you know what we're to learn in turn? To be merciful. To be merciful to others, not to be harsh and judgmental and condemning. That's not the mind of God. God's mind is not one to condemn though He has to execute judgment. He has to judge.

If people will receive Him and want Him He makes the way possible then all the way, all the way into His Family. That's what He wants. That's what He desires. But we have to make the choices along the way over and over again - over and over again. Every time we repent we're agreeing that God is righteous and we're not, that we need and want His way, His mind, His being. God is right and we are wrong. Our nature is wrong. It's destructive, fit for destruction, made to destruction. We have a choice when He calls us.

Again, **so that He might show, to make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He had before prepared unto glory.** So God's plan before anything was created was for a great purpose, to be made a part of the God family, to be made in a relationship with God that God would always dwell in them and we be able to dwell in God and His Son into time. Incredible that God had such a purpose and such a plan. Far, far greater than the angelic creation. Far, far, far greater than the creation of mankind. It's not just this life. That which is beyond is so incredible. The God Family.

So again, God had planned this **...which He had before prepared unto glory.** We are created to receive glory, the glory of God, the life of God, a relationship with God, made of spirit, but not just that, but in agreement with and unity with and oneness with the mind of God, the being of God, with God in us.

To me that was an incredible thing that God revealed, that the angelic realm has never been able to drink in, have, be offered the holy spirit. Only those whom God has called have. God's purpose is that, that spirit, that mind will be able to dwell in us for all time in His family, never to sin, never.

**...even us whom He has called.** So this is where it begins. It starts with a calling. **...not of the Jews only, but also of the gentiles.** So Paul was dealing with something rather unique here because he was sent to the gentiles and continually talking to groups primarily of gentiles, but also Jews who were mixed among them at times, which caused its own share of unique situations at times with Paul.

**Verse 24—As He also said in Hosea: I will call them My people, who were not My people.** Esau. He wasn't called to be loved at that time, to be shown the mercy and the grace of God. Others of the gentile world didn't have that. That wasn't their purpose at that time. Only one nation was going to begin to be worked with to begin teaching certain lessons, one of the biggest out of all that. How special was Israel? Very few through time have been called out of Israel considering the numbers of Israel throughout the earth since they came into existence. The point being is, is that they were given the law, they were given things about God, but they couldn't do it. Their whole example is a bad one.

No matter who had been called as a nation of people the example would have been the same. You're carnal; you're selfish and you can't keep that way of life, the intent of the law in any fashion or form without God's help, without His holy spirit. So they were proof of that for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years...and still are. Can't do it on your own. Only if you're called, drawn into a relationship with God.

**As He also said in Hosea: I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved,** or "to be loved," agapaō. There's a time that we can have a relationship with God and to be loved by God.

That's what's so dangerous within the Church if we tolerate and allow certain sins to continue and we don't address them when God reveals them to us and we don't fight them for whatever purpose. I was talking before services here. I think of how large this area was after the Apostasy - Toledo and Detroit - and I think of what's left. Not much. The percentage is quite small. Incredible to understand that, but to understand that the Church has been very much that way through time. Many have been called and few have been chosen. It is at this end-time. Few have been able to be awakened and to continue on, let alone others to come into that relationship. Incredible to understand.

All those who made various choices through time here are no longer loved. Does God love them? Absolutely, as I tried to explain last week. Do you love them if you know them? Yes, yes you do. You don't love what they've done. I hope and pray every one of them is able to come to a point that they don't so damage and destroy their mind that at some point, whether it be before Joshua returns or shortly after he returns or in the Great White Throne that they're going to be able to come back into a relationship, which means able to be loved by God and by God's family. That's why when people are separated from the Body they can no longer be loved in the sense of showing them love by God's family. They can't have fellowship anymore. They're cut off from fellowship and that's what we're talking about. We learn much through that process, or we can learn much. We can learn much more through that process too.

So again, **I will call them My people, who were not My people, and her beloved,** or "to be loved," or "to love," **who was not loved.** They just weren't loved. It's the same word. They just weren't loved. They weren't hated, they just weren't loved. It wasn't time for them. You can't have that fellowship in that relationship until it's God's time.

**It shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, You are not My people...** So Esau, as it talked about here before this, and different ones through time, they were not yet His people. They weren't brought into a special relationship with God to be worked with by God, to teach, to set things, to establish things so that others could learn from it. Primarily the Church. The Church just gets bigger and bigger in the Millennium, the Great White Throne. Incredible!

**You are not My people, That there they shall be called sons of the living God.** So their time is coming. There's coming a time. Right now we're blessed to be called the children of the living God because we're called into that relationship by God to where He begins to show us love, mercy, kindness, favor, forgiveness of sin. Incredible, and that He will dwell in us. He wants to dwell in us. He wants us to dwell in Him and His Son.

**Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: For though the number of children be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.** The reality is this is physical and it is spiritual because Israel, when we come to understand it, is far more than just a physical people. The purpose of it and the name has to do with the spiritual people, a spiritual family. There are times that there are those things that are a type or a duality, if you will. But here it's making a statement here that "the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." In other words, there is going to be a residue, something remaining who will be saved. Not all. Not in the beginning. Not in the beginning of this process through time.

There have been so many who have been a part of a physical Israel, but how many have been able to become a part of the spiritual Israel? Just a small amount, a residue. That's all it's saying, just a very small amount amongst them, let alone the gentile world. But here it's speaking of Israel. So there will be something remaining, or some remaining as the word means here, a residue, who will be saved.

**Verse 28—For He will finish...** Now, sometimes because the translators had no idea what Paul was talking about because they don't know God's plan and it wasn't time for God to reveal it all. You know, that's why it's such an incredible thing to understand that the farther we go and the closer we get to His Kingdom coming to this earth that He just reveals more and more and more. We just keep building as though there is absolutely no end of things we couldn't see before and all of a sudden we see more. That's the way the word of God is. That's the way His plan and purpose is. He just gives more and more and more.

**For He will finish,** meaning to complete, **the work.** The word is not "the work." It's logos. So much is missed in this verse because people haven't understood what's being said. What is the word, the logos of God? What is He doing? What is His plan and purpose? Well, that's what this is all about!

**For He will complete His word.** What does that mean? Well, Paul is talking about that through here. We can describe it in various ways. There is a process of 6,000 years. Though Israel as a physical people was worked with there is a very small amount that's going to be saved out of that. But God has a purpose in saving a small amount out of that, and amongst the gentile world as well, to bring them into a relationship to where they're able to be loved by Him in a calling, as he just talked about, that we're able to be called. We're able to have this take place in our life. The word of God begins to work in His purpose and plan and it's being accomplished. God is accomplishing His word.

We have much understanding about God's word when it comes to His plan and purpose and what He predetermined about the family, His Family, Elohim, the God Family, the Church of God, the Israel of God, on and on it goes, Mount Zion, Jerusalem. All these things that picture what we're to learn.

**For He will finish (complete) the word,** His word. There is going to be a thousand years. The "seven days," which is seven thousand years. So God is completing these things in an orderly fashion. We're almost at the end of the six days now and the next is about to dawn.

**...and cut it short.** Again, an unfortunate translation because of what it conjures up in the mind in thinking. It's a word that means "together with." So something God is going to do in His word together with/in righteousness. It's about God and His righteousness and what He is doing and what He's bringing to pass. So there is that which God is doing within the Church and that which God is doing in 144,000 in 6,000 years that He's doing in His righteousness, that righteousness that can dwell in us, in His family.

It's His righteousness. We're not righteous! We're far from righteous! We're selfish as all get out! But we're blessed to drink in of God's mercy, God's patience, God's love, and choose those things and fight and repent and continue to repent and agree with God we want His righteousness, His mind, His word, His life, and that word then dwells in us and grows stronger within us and we come into greater unity and agreement and oneness with God. We come into greater agreement that all the filth of selfishness, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, it really, really stinks, every bit of it. Every bit of it.

Selfishness is a hard thing to see in ourselves. It's a hard thing to combat in ourselves. The reality is we can't do it without God's help and so He reveals various stages to us of what it is. Then we have choices to make. Are we going to repent of it and become sickened of it? That's the best, one of the best things you can pray about, is to come to hate whatever the sin is, is asking God to help you to hate and loathe the sin and to love what is right. Because as you do you're coming into greater agreement and unity of mind with God. That's one of the greatest of gifts you can have in life, to be in agreement with God, to loathe the sin and to love the good that comes from Him, His righteousness.

**He is going to finish or complete His word together in/with righteousness, because together with His word will the LORD make or do this upon the earth.** By His power. By His word. By His plan. By His purpose. 6,000 years, the next 1,000 years, then the hundred years following that, and God's accomplishing it, God's doing it and bringing us into unity with His word, into His righteousness. That's a beautiful thing that's being said here, but it's been marred badly, mightily because of translators. Some of the ideas then that sometimes people get from all this is not what is true or right or sound at all. Sometimes it might get kind of close, but not really there yet until it's God's time.



Scriptures here in Isaiah 10, we'll turn over there for a moment, because this is from Isaiah 10. Just to read it in how it's translated here because this is what Paul is talking about. Isaiah 10:22 then we'll come back to Romans here.

**Isaiah 10:22—For though your people, Israel, be as the sand of the sea, that's what we just read, a remnant (a residue) of them shall return.** Now, Paul used the word "saved," but as Isaiah here says, "to return," or "to turn back," to turn to God. It's about a process we go through when God begins to work with us. There are a few that God has blessed to be able to turn to Him, to return to Him or to turn toward Him. **The consumption...** Again, very unfortunate word used here. In some places because of how it's used in some verses in Hebrew, words of destruction or whatever are used, but it's a word that means "a complete end."

Now, depending on the context and what is being said it might mean a complete end to something or someone or whatever it is, but here it's talking about that which God is doing, a complete end, as it says here. That's what Paul was talking about "He will finish," "He will complete His word." That's what it's talking about, a complete end. God's going to fulfill what He has said, what He has spoken, what He predetermined long ago. That's all it's talking about. Beautiful!

So a **complete end decreed**, means "determined," "predetermined," if you will. That's what it's talking about here; God determined it, decreed it. Well, it's from God but it's the word for determined. God made a determination of what He was going to fulfill through His word, through His purpose, through His plan and He's revealed those things to His Church, as a whole. 7,100 years of it to bring His Family to reality.

**...shall overflow**, a word that means "to wash off or over," if you will, **with righteousness**. He's doing it in His righteousness and He's blessing those He's calling, the residue. He's accomplishing that in righteousness. Paul is talking here about righteousness and how it's attributed to us, how we're able to partake of God's righteousness. It's an incredible story of what he's talking about throughout these verses and the verses that follow and the process that takes place.

So it's like that which is able to wash over us in our lives, to cleanse off that which is not righteous and to bless us with His mind, with His being, with His Word because He's doing it through His Word, see.

**...with righteousness. For the Lord Eternal of hosts shall make a complete end** (accomplishment), same word, "shall accomplish this," "make a complete end," even "determined." It's the same word again here as before that was translated "decreed." **...determined in the midst of all the land.** So again here, sometimes translators have messed up because they haven't known, so they can't help it. They have done things word by word or what they think the word is used as. If it's used the majority of times in a certain way "consumption" "destruction," then that's what they translate it. You think, no, that's not what the full Hebrew word means. You can come to that conclusion because of how it's used in some

places, but here it has a different meaning and it's a beautiful thing when it has to do with what God is accomplishing and what God is doing.

So let's go back to Romans now. **Romans 9:29—And as Isaiah said before: Except the LORD of Sabaoth (LORD of Hosts), like an army; that's what it's talking about here. The LORD of Hosts had left us a seed, it's a Greek word that means "that which was sown," we would have become as Sodom and would have been made like unto Gomorrah.** Destroyed. Indeed, mankind would have been except that God left us that which was sown.

**What shall we say then? That the gentiles, who do not follow/pursue after righteousness, have not attained to (seized or able to lay hold of) righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.** Incredible. So even gentiles here, there is that which they're able to have as a part of their life because of a calling. Paul was sent to the gentiles so he's showing here there's a picture here much larger than the physical nation of Israel. It has far deeper meaning in what God is giving to the Church.

**Verse 31—But Israel, who followed after...** Now, the gentiles weren't following after God. They didn't know God. They didn't have a relationship, but the Israelites had been worked with and so they pursued after it in their own way. How did that go? How did the Jews do through time? Well, they have held on to the seventh day Sabbath. They have held on to certain holy days that they have renamed or called different things at different times, and even moved the times, like Passover, played around with various things like that. So didn't fare too well, obviously, but they have done it on their own ability, physical ability.

So they pursued after something because of their past, because of their history. The rest of Israel that was taken captive haven't. Well, that's another story, what happened with traditional Christianity, and so forth. But considering what came out of Israel, speaking of the Jews, and so it's talking here, that's what Paul is talking about, **who followed after/pursued.**

**But Israel who pursued after the law of righteousness, has not attained,** they have not arrived at **the law of righteousness.** They pursued it by their own ability to keep the Sabbath and just try to, in their own way, to have a relationship with God and what they think that relationship is. Just like traditional Christianity has in its own way. But it's not God's way and it's not what God intends at all.

So it says, **Why? Because they did not seek it by faith.** So it goes back to this thing of Sarah and Hagar and what Abraham and Sarah tried to do on their own by determining that the child is going to come through Hagar. Didn't work that way. That wasn't God's purpose and He revealed that to them later on.

So again, that lesson that we started with follows all the way through here, this example about Israel and things that went back to Abraham, because he goes back and he talks about Abraham. These things that came from there were done in a very physical way, that you can't pursue God

by physical means, by the way you think it's right, by what you think can be done or should be done. And today look at Judaism. There are all kinds of ideas in Judaism about how to worship God and how to please God and how to draw closer to God, and in traditional Christianity all kinds of ideas about how to be saved, and so forth. And who knows? The Church does. God's Church does.

It says here, **But Israel who followed after/pursued the law of righteousness, has not attained to it.** They haven't attained to the law of righteousness. **Because they didn't seek it by faith but by the works of the law.**

It's the same thing Abraham and Sarah did. It's going back to that same example here. The Protestant world tries to use this in a wrong way and saying, "See, the law has been done away with. You can't be saved by doing the works of the law. So you don't have to keep the Sabbath, the seventh day. You can worship God on any day." Then why do you do it on one day? What do you believe? Why do you do it on the first day of the week if you don't think, if you really believed that? "Well, it's more convenient because you have a two day weekend." Why don't you do it on Saturday? "Well..." They can't answer it.

**For they stumble at the stumbling stone.** That's been the problem. The Jews did. Oh, did they! They wanted him put to death; stumbled in a big way at the very one through whom God can offer righteousness, the forgiveness of sin, the ability to be saved, and they rejected. Stumbling stone to them. Stumbling stone to traditional Christianity because when you come along and you say this thing about Sunday, "Why are you...? Why don't you...? If the law has been done away with what about those last six? Are they bad?" "Well, yeah, those are good. I mean, those are how you should really live your life toward one another."

But what about toward God, this thing of idols and idolatry and having these things on the walls and kneeling down before statues and stuff, and kissing a toe until it's almost gone? Well, not gone but this big fat toe of supposedly Peter in the Vatican, and it's been kissed so much that it's worn way down. You can see it. I've seen it. Saw a picture of it and then got to see it. You've got to be kidding! That takes a lot of lips. That takes a lot of lips to wear that much stone off of a toe. I mean, it boggles the mind, it really does! How many lips? Can you imagine? I mean, if you go up there with sandpaper and start going at it, to get it down it's going to take you a long time. You're going to have to keep replenishing. And you think, how smooth is this? And yet it's worn down. It blows the mind!

So you ask them, "Then what about the seventh? Why don't you do it on the seventh day Sabbath? It's so clear. You know, the places it's used, Sunday is used, the first day of the week is used in the New Testament, there is nothing about God changing it, nothing about Christ changing it. There are certain things, if you're really willing to look at it in scripture, they are there. They're clear."

That's why it's an amazing thing that even the Catholic Church acknowledges there is no scriptural proof whatsoever in the Bible that it was changed, the observance was ever changed to the first day of the week. But the rest of the Protestant world doesn't believe that. They believe it was changed to the first day of the week. They believe when they read those scriptures that that's what it's talking about, it's talking about worshipping God—and it's not—on a particular day, that somehow it was changed. So Christ is a stumbling block to them.

To tell them it was Joshua? You want to talk about a stumbling block and how they would think of you if it came out of your mouth even? That's why it's better not to even get into it. Don't do it. Don't do it. What's the purpose? Unless God is opening their mind what would be the purpose of telling someone, "Well, we call him Joshua." In times past I could see this in the Church, different ones coming, "Well, you know, we just found out his name is Joshua. You should be calling him that. It's not Jesus! Don't you know where the word "Jesus" came from?" You think, why would you do that? Why would anybody do that? You just want to be beat up the side of the head with a 4x4 or bigger by them? Because they're not going to be happy about it. They already think you're nuts. They already think you're stark raving mad. You know, you keep the Feast of Tabernacles, Passover, and you're too good to put up a tree and have gifts and give them to your children!

There are just things there is no point of ever getting into a conversation about unless somebody is being called and drawn. Do you know that they are? Well, be careful.

I remember my family, when a bunch of family members, relatives, before baptism, before we'd been to services yet. Didn't even know about it. We thought Pasadena was the only place where there was a Church, and we were ready to go out there if we had to. It's the only place you can get baptized. Come to find out that within about a 3½ hour drive we could get to a service, that there are people out here in the Midwest even. Crazy things we've been through in the Church, that there is no point in talking to others.

I remember talking to them about it because I wanted, I had an excitement: "Look what I'm learning! Look!" I didn't say it that way, but, "Do you know who we are in this country? We're Manasseh!" "What's Manasseh?" "Well, let me tell you! Ten tribes were taken captive..." You go through the Sabbath and you go through things about the Christmas tree and Christmas and Easter, and they're kind of in awe until they start thinking about it, because if they really believe it and accept that they've got to make some changes. So they can't. They begin to think of you as an absolute nut! You've lost it! He was such a nice kid growing up. I thought he was such a nice kid, you know, and what's happened to him? Not so nice anymore. Don't really want to be around him too much because I really don't want to hear that stuff. That's what happens. Sometimes we do it to ourselves.

So an incredible thing here being revealed, things that we grasp and we understand. Again, Paul is explaining this thing, this to the gentiles and to those Jews who were mixed in amongst them. But mostly it was gentiles that he was addressing.

So it said if there hadn't been a seed left, that which was sown, there wouldn't be anything left. It'd been like Sodom and like Gomorrah. Again here, it says, **The gentiles, who did not follow/pursue after righteousness, that they have attained to it, even the righteousness which is of faith.** Then it goes on to talk about Israel, that they pursued after it and they haven't attained to it because they didn't do it by faith because that's the only way to receive what God has for us. Righteousness comes by what we believe. God opens up the mind. We didn't earn it. He blesses you to be able to see it. He opens up your mind and gives His Word in your mind. He does it by His Word. All of a sudden you can see things that you couldn't see before. The first time when you saw the Sabbath, that's embedded in my mind as about as deep as anything can be and not because I was able to prove anything. I couldn't. I just knew it was true. You come to that point and then you have to make choices and decisions.

So God gives you His word a little bit at a time. You begin to grow in it. You begin to see seven days is seven thousand years. It's true. I believe it! A hundred years is the Great White throne. I believe it! How? Because God's Word opens your mind and you're able to see things. Then you have to make choices about what you're going to do with it. Then as we make those choices we come to a point of repentance and we believe what God says, that Joshua paid the penalty for sin, that he is our Passover. As you believe these things God attributes that to you for righteousness. We aren't. He is.

Righteousness comes from God. It is of God. It comes as a result of making choices of being in agreement with God, of wanting God, of believing God. That's what faith is about. First comes belief, your ability to believe by the word of God. Then as you act upon it that's what faith is. Because you believed in the seventh day, you made choices about not working on that day, that's what faith is. God attributed that, accounted that to you for righteousness. We were not because we still were sinning day in and day out, our selfishness, things we didn't even see, things we can see now that we couldn't begin to see when we were first called and drawn. Things of the mind, the intent and how we think that we can see now that we couldn't begin to grasp back then, that we see now.

God continues to work with us and continues to pour out His spirit upon us. It's an awesome process, it truly is. But the righteousness comes from God. Nothing earned; you can't do it by works though you are supposed to work, see. We don't just sit back on our laurels and say, "Okay, God, just give it all to me and change me." We have to act upon it. We have to make choices.

You have to act to keep the Sabbath day. You have to act to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. You have to act to keep 1<sup>st</sup> tithe. You have to act to keep 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe. You have to act not to work on the Sabbath and the holy days and to change your budget and to address things in your life and because you're acting upon those things then God accounts that to you for righteousness. Not that we are, but that's how He looks at us and He has a relationship with us, and He gives us His holy spirit, and He lets us dwell in Him and experience His life, a fellowship with Him and His Son. Awesome!

**Because *they didn't seek it by faith but by the works of the law.*** See, that's the problem with the Protestant world. You have to have works, but you're not saved that way. It's a result of living by faith. It's a simple thing isn't it, really? It's just a result of living by faith. You're going to have works because you can't be changed any other way. That's what faith is; you act upon what God has given you to believe. You go to Sabbath services. You go to the holy days. You tithe. You act upon what God has given you. Works. Works of the law. But you can't rely upon yourself in doing those things and somehow think you're going to be right with God and make yourself right with God because of those things by themselves. It's the faith. It's the living by what God has given you to believe and seeing ourselves in the proper light.

We have nothing to be haughty and lifted up about about how good we are about certain things, how well we can do certain things, because it's not about that whatsoever. If it was I wouldn't be standing up here. Someone else would be who's far, far better, far more eloquent, a far better mind. It's not about that. What comes into this mind, it's because what God gave, only because of what God has given, not because of any great abilities I have of using a Strong's Concordance or reading the Bible and all of a sudden now I see something and I want to share that with you. No, it's because God gives it. It comes from God.

**For they stumble at the stumbling stone. As it is written: Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense.** It was intended to be that way. Because of human nature it was going to be that way. It's just the way it works. People don't want what truly comes from God. They don't want it. They want their own way of worshipping God. They want their own way of molding God into their image. It's totally backward, you know, totally backward. "This is the idea I have about God." To some it's a big, fat, bloated being lying down, you know. How you think you could worship something like that I don't understand. Buddha. Looks like he blew to be blown up. Concepts that people have that are just outrageous. Or that somehow you can spin this wheel and somehow these prayers are going to go up toward God. Or that you can put this little stick in the ground and light it at the top and somehow this smoke goes up and now you can pray to God and He's hearing you and these prayers are going up. Somehow it's kind of the smoke more than anything you think or do, but it's like you're doing this great thing. All these crazy ideas that human beings come up with.

But you tell them what the truth is and it's a stumbling block. It's against human nature. Totally! Totally contrary. It's so different. That's why we have so much confusion in the world even, obviously, in traditional Christianity and in Judaism, those who might have a little bit of smattering of something. But look what's been done to it? That's why it's such a heinous, ugly, hideous thing.

That's why I'm so glad to be free, truly, of all that now. All of it! There's not a bit of it we have anything to do with. Nothing! Nada! Zilch, thank God.

**For they stumble at the stumbling stone. As it is written: Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense and whoever believes on him shall not be put to shame. And so, God's Righteousness, Pt. 2**

see, then there are certain ones in the world in traditional Christianity, Protestantism that talk about, “See, all you have to do is believe on him. He was a baby. He was born in a manger in December.” They go on with the story. It’s about stories. They like to talk about the stories but not believe what he had to say.

**Romans 10:1—Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved** (delivered). That’s God’s purpose, to deliver them, to deliver all into Israel, and to deliver as many who will receive it out of the literal, physical Israel, but the gentile world as well.

**For I bear witness of them that they have a zeal...** It’s not “of God.” They don’t have a zeal of God. It’s not of God whatsoever. They have a zeal... The word means “toward.” In other words, in their own way **toward God**. I mean, look at Judaism, the Jewish world since the time of Christ, for the past 2,000 years, not counting the time even before that, but they’ve had a type of zeal. Some have had a zeal, but it’s of their own making, you know, whatever they might do, the little things that hang down on the side of a robe, perhaps, if they do that, and the little lock things. Some have even more zeal than others and certain type of attire that they feel that they must wear, and bobbing their heads toward the west wall, or whatever it might be. I’m not trying to make fun of these things; I’m just saying that there is a zeal there.

That’s what Paul is saying, they have a zeal in what they, how they’re worshipping. It’s just not based on understanding. He’s saying here **they have a zeal toward God but not according to knowledge**. They don’t understand. They don’t see what you are blessed to see. They don’t understand. They don’t grasp. It’s not a matter of ritual. I don’t even want to go into all the rituals, but some have a tremendous zeal. They start observing the Sabbath way before the Sabbath. They don’t start doing anything other than the Sabbath until at least an hour afterwards. Like the sirens in Jerusalem go off an hour before and an hour afterward because they’re going to make sure we don’t mess up here.

Unleavened Bread, if you’re in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv is a little different because it’s more liberal, but if you’re around Jerusalem for Unleavened Bread three days beforehand, forget it. We did find a Pizza Hut afterwards and there were a lot of young people there because they didn’t care. They don’t believe all that stuff so they were there. But that’s all. But others around the city and so forth, three days before they’d already started. Hotels had already gone through and thrown out all the plates. Had to get new ones, starting at that point. They get new plates every year starting at that time. Totally replace everything because it may have touched something leavened, so it’s got to be brand new and start all over again. So I don’t know what they do with the other. They probably take it home and use it themselves. Like some give leavening to neighbors and then afterwards go back and get it after Unleavened Bread is over. To me it kind of misses something there, but anyway.

Again, I’m not trying to make fun of it; it just shows what human nature is like. Human nature does silly things until the truth comes along, until God comes along and shows what is true and what is right, and makes it beautiful. They have a zeal toward God. I think of people, I remember **God’s Righteousness, Pt. 2**

times past when we had Bible study in Church areas because we had large enough Church areas in different regions. It got to a point about the time we were transferred from Cincinnati up into Pennsylvania, up in that region, and served in a couple Churches up that way for about seven years, that about that time the Church began to experience something unique. Here we were approaching 1986, the end of Philadelphia, and something began to happen in God's Church right away when Laodicea smacked us. All of a sudden people tried to use novel ways or guilt trips and various kinds of things to put on people to get people to come to Bible study. Because people, it's like, nobody is hungry anymore. Nobody wants to sacrifice to come together once a month.

Then I drove by various buildings, various places and you see people out there every Wednesday night coming together in their Bible studies. Had a zeal toward God. Not according to knowledge. But, man, they made us look bad because there were many who just got to the point, many, the vast majority didn't want to have Bible studies anymore and the only reason they came a lot of times was because out of guilt, you know, "If I don't do it and "so-and-so" is not going to see me, and I won't get this..." Subconsciously that's how people think...and sometimes consciously.

So anyway, we went through that in the Church. It was a problem and it was addressed by headquarters; it was addressed when we'd have a refreshing programs. What's going on? Well, we know now Laodicea was becoming full swing. Like Mr. Armstrong said there toward the end, "I wonder if 10% of you get it, if you're really doing it!" Because Laodicea, it looked like it had appeared already. He knew it. He saw it.

**...but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant...** In other words, they just don't know about God's righteousness. They don't know how we're able to attain to it because they haven't been shown yet. They haven't yet been brought into a relationship, a fellowship and love from God. Not even Israel. Not the Jews. So, not just Esau, but even them!

**For being ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish their own righteousness.** People do that in the world. They have various things, less and less it seems now a days, but even in the world of those who have a type of zeal toward God; there aren't as many people who have that in the world today. There isn't. It's a waning thing in society and so we see it. We see it in this country. We see what's happening to this country. You can go to various other parts of the world, Australia or whatever it might be, or to Europe, and you don't talk about God with others like are done in the southern states here. People talk about God, you know.

To have a president or different ones talk about God is kind of unique in that respect, as much as takes place. I'm just saying it's kind of unique. They don't understand according to knowledge. But it's kind of gone by the wayside even in a physical world. So this zeal toward God is waning more and more and more the more corrupt this world is getting.

So it says here, again, **For being ignorant of God's righteousness they go about to establish their own righteousness.** So there are things that people go through to feel better about themselves. They go down and get a black mark put on their forehead and appear on the news



because this is Ash Wednesday. That's what they believe and so they do it. They have a zeal toward God but not according to knowledge. They don't understand where all that came from. They don't grasp there's no cross anyway; it should just be a line if you're going to put a smudge there. But they don't understand that so it's not according to knowledge.

**...and have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God**, have not made themselves subject to because they're unable to unless they're called. Not until someone is called can you begin to make that kind of choice in your life. And then, sadly, the vast majority turn away from that. The vast majority have turned away from that. The vast majority since the Apostasy have turned away.

**Verse 4—For Christ is the end**, the completion, the fulfillment of God's purpose. That's how it's being accomplished, in and through Joshua the Christ. See, what was he talking about earlier? How God is going to complete, finish His Word in righteousness through/with righteousness. It's through His Son. That's how He accomplishes it.

This is the story of Paul. This is what He's telling. Christ is that fulfillment because this is where your ability to believe begins. It starts with him. Because if you don't come to that point and understand and believe he is your Passover and that you must be forgiven of your sins in order to be loved by God, to receive of God's love, God's mercy, God's kindness, and everything else that can come from God, you're never going to come to baptism. And if you come to baptism you've made a commitment to God that he is, Christ is, your Passover. That's where the real relationship begins.

It's a matter of acting upon, living by faith, as to whether or not we really believe that and if we follow through with it that means that in order to come to baptism you've already determined other things as well. The keeping of the Sabbath, the keeping of the holy days, not working on those times, tithing, some of the most basic of things that we determine from the get go, things that you would never consider going against. You would never consider working hour, two hours, three hours after sundown. You would never consider working on a high day, into a high day. You would never consider cheating and lying and robbing from God Almighty. It wouldn't enter your mind! It would be so appalling, so horrifying to your thinking. That's why those things are so dangerous.

So again here: **so Christ is the end/fulfillment** of God's purpose, if you will, **of the law, of righteousness to everyone who believes**. Because that's how, because of what you believe, it's accounted to you for righteous, righteousness. You believe God; therefore, you do, you work in a certain way in your life. You did when you said, "I want to go under the water." You had to walk over there. You had to say, "I want..." You had to talk to the minister about it and then you had to go through the process and want and desire to go under water and to be brought (and hopefully, yeah), be brought back up again to walk in newness of life.

Now, Romans 10:9, dropping on down. Paul interjects various things he's dealing with and in the story we're following here. It says, **Romans 10:9—But if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Joshua, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead...** This can be so misused, and has been, by traditional Christianity. It's this syrupy, unreal, lack of reality way of taking this. But again, it's without knowledge. They can't help it. So they do it in a physical way to feel better about themselves and what they're going through and what they're doing. One day they'll be able to have it. What an incredible thing.

But what is it saying? It's not saying just believe, you don't have to work. "You just believe in your heart. Just confess with your mouth," is how they say it. Just confess. I don't know if I ought to tell one story or not.

We knew of someone that a couple people traveling along in a car and there was this homeless guy (or I guess he was homeless), but anyway, on the side of a road and so they were going to give him whatever, a dollar, five dollars, ten dollars, whatever it was, small amount. Anyway, the one person said to the other, "Well, don't give it to him unless they've said that they accept Jesus. Now, if they say they've accepted Jesus, then go ahead and give it to them. But if they don't say they've accepted Jesus they've got to." It's like you've got to confess it with their mouth, but they're not going to get it.

People live like that in life. It's like, "Do you accept Jesus?" Don't ask us that. You mean Joshua? No, anyway, there you go, you've done it! "Are you talking about Christ?" See, wisdom. "You talking about Christ? Oh, absolutely, we believe he's our Passover." "Passover! What are you talking about?" There are things you can't give to people, you can't give to the world. You have them yourself. You have them to yourself. What a treasure. What an incredible treasure.

So what is this saying? **But if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Joshua...** So what is it saying? Just say, "Oh, yes, I confess. He died for my sins." Is that what it's about? Ah, it's much, much more, much more. Scripture shows much more. It's not about just saying certain words and people having to say this and somehow it's like if you do certain things that you're saved. It's not what it is saying.

**...and shall believe in your heart...** Believe what? That all you have to do is confess of him, the Lord Joshua, that's what you're to believe and that's it? There is no more to it? No tithing? No Sabbath keeping? No holy days? Nothing else? Is that what that means? **...and shall believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead...** So that's the beginning. But to understand the whole story is what this is all about. **...you shall be saved.** Hmmm.

So is it the way the Protestant world says? Well, obviously we understand it's not. There is a lot more to the story and it's about him being our Passover and why he died, why he had to die. It's for our sins. We believe that. We understand. We understand why he had to die as our Passover. We believe that about what he accomplished and what he did in his life, to die and then to be resurrected by God. Exactly three days from the moment he's put in the ground, resurrected.

**For with the heart man believes unto righteousness.** It's a beautiful thing, actually, what's being said here and what's being explained by him. "With the heart man believes unto righteousness." Now, we understand the truth, so what does this mean to us? What does that mean to you, that you're able to believe unto righteousness? Because it's what God has blessed you to have inside, in your mind, or in your heart because it has to do with the emotion, the feeling, the gratitude, the thankfulness, of everything that's wrapped together about a possible relationship then with God and what it means that you could be offered such a thing, and what it means that you could be forgiven of your sin and begin this process of being in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God and have God dwell in you because that's why he died.

He died so he could dwell in you. That's why he died. He didn't die just do you could be forgiven of your sins, like the world kind of thinks. Like that's it. No! It's about why you have to be forgiven of sin. So that God Almighty and His Son can live in you and you dwell in them.

**For with the heart man believes unto righteousness.** Do you believe? Then God attributes that to you for righteousness and you act upon it, you live by faith; that's what this is talking about. You believe unto that process. You act upon it. **...and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.** I'll tell you what, sometimes it takes a while to get that garbage out of your mind that was put there by a Protestant world or a Catholic Church. It takes time sometimes to get those things out of the mind if you've been indoctrinated with some of that thinking because you hear these things in your mind.

So what does all this mean? Let's turn over to 1 John 1. So what Paul is reasoning about with both the Jews and gentiles, or Romans, is being done so with a different focus than most take this when they read it because they've been indoctrinated with Protestant thinking or traditional Christianity thinking.

So what is this confession one can make by what they say? This should be so simple to understand. Is it a confession that Joshua is our Passover? Well, they don't even say that. So what is it about? Or that he just died? Is that the confession? Is that a confession or an acknowledgement? So where does this thing come from? What is it talking about here?

So it's given in direct terms here in the book of 1 John. **1 John 1:8—If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins...** That's what you have to confess. It's not about making an acknowledgement about Joshua the Christ. It's understanding here indeed why he died and so forth, but it's about this ability to be forgiven of sin, and if you believe these things what do you do? What did you start doing before you were ever baptized? Why did you get baptized? Because you wanted to be forgiven of sin. You wanted to be cleansed of sin and from that time on to be able to come under that ability, to pray to God on a daily basis and ask God to forgive you of your sins, and you acknowledge or you confess those sins before God. That's what leads to salvation in and through Joshua the Christ who is our Passover.

That's what this is talking about. That's what Paul is talking about here.

**If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins.** We've gone through that and discussed some of that in part, that once we have done that it's gone. With God, what a beautiful thing; you don't have to carry it around anymore. You don't have to be burdened down with it anymore, and you believe what God says, that you're freed. There is a freedom and a peace that you can have that is awesome!

**If we confess our sins...** Once you're brought into a relationship with God, with your ability to believe that he is the Passover and why he died, so that God the Father and Joshua the Christ could live and dwell in you and you could dwell in them, that's what you want. You don't want to be cut off from that. This is what you do. You confess your sins.

**He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** That's what it's about. "Unto salvation," that's what it's about. It's about being saved. It's about this process of how God's made it possible for us to be saved.

**Verse 10—If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.** So we have to confess it, we have to acknowledge the reality we have sin, we have selfishness. We have to be forgiven on a regular basis. Thank God He made a way for us to be able to accomplish that so He would continue to be in us.

**1 John 2:1—My little children, these things I write to you, so that you don't sin, that you sin not.** You're not to sin. Don't sin. Fight against it. And when you do, repent of it. Confess your sins. That's what it just talked about. **And if any man sin, we have an advocate.** The word is parakletos. That's what it talks about in John 14. The only other place the word is used when it talks about the power of the holy spirit, so that it can come into your life, so that God can come into your life, so that Joshua can come into your life, to live and dwell in you. It's through that means that we're able to have the strength and the help we need of not just being forgiven of sin, but becoming more deeply convicted of God, of God's word, of God's righteousness.

**So, if anyone sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Joshua the Christ,** because that's the means and the way that we're able to be forgiven so that we can have the holy spirit dwell in us, meaning God the Father to dwell in us, meaning Joshua the Christ to dwell in us, and we are able then to dwell in them in a spiritual relationship.

**And he is the propitiation (the atonement) for our sins, and not for ours only but also the sins of the whole world.** We believe that. We're thankful that we have that ability and opportunity now and we look forward to the time that others are going to be able to share in the same thing.

**1 John 4:1—It says, Beloved,** those of you who are loved. Who is loved? Those whom God has called, those who are able to come into a relationship with God. Not the rest of the world yet. Not Esau. Not the gentiles, yet, until God calls gentiles, which He calls, and some out of Israel

and some out of whatever. But that's what this is talking about, those who are able to be loved by God. "Beloved." You've come into a relationship with God.

**...do not believe every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world.** So again here, a warning to God's Church that started very early on. **By this you can know the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Joshua the Christ is coming in the flesh is of God.** We understand what that means. How do you confess that? Well, it starts with words through repentance of your sins. It comes through actions of how you live your life and how you choose to live your life. It has to do with believing God and living by those things that God has given you to believe - living by faith as we've talked about here - and to understand that it's only accomplished, that those things are accomplished by God dwelling in us, that Joshua is coming in the flesh, into our lives. It's a beautiful expression here - to dwell in us, to live in us and we're blessed to dwell in him.

**Every spirit that confesses that Joshua the Christ is coming in the flesh is of God.** In other words, you can't live this way of life in truth and in spirit without God in you. The things that are reflected in your life about what you're doing and how you're doing it, it's going to come out. Things come out in our lives. If we're fighting the fight, you know what? We'll be here. We'll still be here if you keep fighting the fight, keep repenting, keep seeking God's help, continuing to believe what God gives to you in making changes in your life and growing thereby. This is what this is all about, a desire that God dwell in us, a desire to have a relationship and a fellowship with God.

**And every spirit that does not confess,** it's not just by words. That's only the beginning point. This here has to do with how you live. **And every spirit that does not confess that Joshua the Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God.** So, see, it doesn't take too long to understand that if someone begins working on the Sabbath, say, or begins to have wrong kind of conduct sexually in a world, if someone begins to rob God of tithes, if someone begins to rob God of 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe, it doesn't take very much to say, "Whoa, whoa, wait a minute. Your life does not reflect that Christ is dwelling in you. You're reflecting the opposite. You're resisting and fighting against God. You're disobeying God. You're not repenting of sin. He will not dwell in sin so either you change and repent, and that becomes obvious, or I'm sorry, but you're gone. You've done it to yourself."

That's how every disfellowshipment comes along. Because this becomes a reality. The judgment of this becomes a reality. It's an ability to see and perceive things that otherwise we wouldn't be able to see. Does that mean one is able to see everything? No, but God has a way to manifest things. In His time He will manifest, especially as we see where we're living in time now. We've seen it in a great way within the Body, within the Church.

I have never seen a time of the likes, if you will, of God strengthening the Body and cleansing the Body and helping us to cleanse our own lives if we're responding. It's a beautiful thing. Because the more at one we are with God, the tighter, the closer the family, the better the family, the more richly blessed the family.

If one does not acknowledge by how they're living, basically, if it's not reflected in their life God is in you, because you can't live this way of life unless He's living in you, that's what it's all about. He died so we could be forgiven of sin, yes, but so that He could dwell in us. He has to be coming into our lives without being cut off. We can't cut off the flow of that spirit or we're going to go off and do our own thing. We're going to justify whatever it is and cease to repent and not be with God anymore, not be in fellowship with God's family anymore.

What a blessing to have fellowship with God's family. Sometimes we don't grasp how much we have. Doesn't matter how small we are, the fact that we have it we are exceedingly blessed. Because this is where it is. This is where God is. This is where God dwells. We're blessed to have that with one another.

So again, if that isn't being confessed by one's life, it says **that he's coming in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you have heard from the beginning, and is now already in the world.** So again, the warning from the very beginning had already started. He refers back to things that Paul had said and what he'd said about antichrist, but he said there are already many antichrists. Not the antichrist, but many antichrists. Not the one prophesied by Paul that it would be that which would reveal that he's now returning, his time to return, that the countdown has begun, that that has to happen first, but something else. That there would be those who would turn once they had their mind opened.

I think, what a horrible thing. I think especially after the time of Christ in the Church of God, how many? That's when Christ talks about "many are called and few are chosen." To me we had to live that. Every era of God's Church has had to live that where they have known people, they've walked to God's house side by side, been in the House of God, the Church of God, and had a fellowship and loved and then in many cases just betrayed so horribly. Because when people leave, turn against God, it's horrible. That's what it means to be antichrist; against God, against Christ, working against them, working against their plan and purpose. They work against the Church then, against the family.

It goes on to say then, **verse 4—You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, conquered them, that's what this is talking about, because greater is He that is in you than he that's in the world.** I love this verse. That life, that power that can be in us, that's what gives us the strength, the ability to see, the ability to fight against a spirit world that's out there. Truly. That helps us to remain strong, to be strong.

**They are of the world, therefore, they speak of the world, they can't help it, and the world hears them.** It doesn't hear you. Doesn't want to hear about Joshua. Doesn't want to hear about Passover. Doesn't want to hear about the Feast of Unleavened... What? Doesn't want to hear about Trumpets and Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Last Great Day. Doesn't want to hear those stories.

**Verse 12—No man has seen God at any time.** Impossible. He's spirit. **If we love,** it's the word agapaō again here, **one another, God dwells in us,** but He shows what kind of love this must be. If we love one another God dwells in us, **and His love,** agape... See, it's about His love. That love must be working in our lives toward one another in how we think toward each other, in the mercy we're willing to show each other, the compassion we're willing to show each other, the care we're willing to show each other, and on and on it goes. The same of what God has shown to us we must be willing and desirous of showing toward one another. It's a good thing. It's a beautiful thing. Only possible by God's spirit. **And His love is perfected in us.** We become more at one with God. More godlike.

**By this we know that we dwell in Him...** This can give you confidence. This can give you boldness. This gives you strength when you know and see these things in your life and you know them to be true, of how you feel toward every member of the Body. **...know that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His spirit.** Because there is no other way to accomplish such a thing. There is no other way to have such a fellowship and such thinking.

**And we have seen and testify,** in other words, witness by what we say and how we live, **that the Father sent the Son to be Savior of the world.** What a beautiful thing. This is what our lives witness and testify to, that this is how God's saving the world, by His holy spirit, by Christ coming in, dwelling in us in the flesh. That gives us the ability then to think differently. That's why I love the word in the Greek, "repent." It literally means "to think differently." What a beautiful thing that we have the ability to begin to think differently, to think like, more like, to come into unity more and more so with God Almighty.

**Whosoever shall confess that Joshua is the Son of God...** So how do you do that? You indeed start with a process, "He is my Passover and I acknowledge my sins before God. I cry out to God to forgive me of those sins." And then you continue on, that you cry out for Him and His Son to dwell in you, "in me," see, each one of us praying that way, that we want that life in us because that's the only way we can have strength, and focus, and truth, and continue in the truth.

So that's what it's talking about. "Whosoever shall confess that Joshua..." in other words, by how you're living your life, that he is in you; **God dwells in him, and he in God.** There is no other way to live this way of life in the Church save by God, His righteousness in us. He's the one that strengthens us. He's the one that purifies us. He's the one who cleanses us. He's the one who helps us to become in greater agreement with Him. He's the one that helps us to come to a point where we hate sin more and more, to where it becomes more ugly.

Just like this thing of drama. I hate and I loathe drama at its very beginning stages. God has blessed me to see it and the more I see it in my own life the more it's not going to be there because I agree it's one of the ugliest things on earth because it's the opposite of peace. It's the opposite of peace, the exact opposite. I've come to loathe it and hate it more. The more you hate various kinds of sin in life it's not going to be a part of you.

You would hate the thought of robbing from God if you're living this way of life. That was taken care of at baptism. That should never be a problem. If it's a problem what a horrible thing to do. I don't even want to go there. I've been there enough crying out about some of those things.

Or to work on the Sabbath, or to dishonor God on the Sabbath or a holy day. We should have a greater zeal toward God on the Sabbath and the holy days than any other time because He should be more in our mind on this day than any other day. You should have actually greater strength of obedience on this day than other days because He's really more in your mind. That's the way it's been in my life. Sabbaths are always the best because there is greater conviction toward God on the Sabbath day than the other days where I'm more prone as a human being to give into selfishness. So I strive harder on the Sabbath day. I wish I could do that all seven days but that would be relying on myself. The reality is I'm incapable of it so I cry out to God for help me to grow in that and become stronger in that.

**And we have known and believed the love that God has for us.** We are loved by God. That's what I was able to talk about at the Feast this year, that God loves us far more than we can grasp and comprehend. That's what it's talking about here. He brought us into a relationship to love us. Now, He only loved, even then, when you want to talk about Isaac and Jacob, only loved them to a certain point. They weren't called. But He did show them various measures of mercy at times, various favors at times, but only as a physical nation not as a spiritual one.

That's why Paul goes through some of this and talks about some of this. To be called - that's when you're truly loved by God. Because the Israel spoken of that's prophetic is a spiritual one in a true relationship with God.

**And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who dwells in love dwells in God and God in him.** What more could we desire? What more could we want?

I think with that we're going to stop there. We'll stop there and pick it up in *Part 3*.