

Today will be the continuation of the series entitled *God's Righteousness*, with this being *Part 3*.

Now, we ended in *Part 2* by addressing a misused and misunderstood area of scripture in Romans 10 and we're going to quickly review just a bit of that before we continue here today.

Romans 10 and going back and looking at verse 9, beginning there. To me it's amazing how you can read some of these things. I couldn't help as I was just reviewing a little of this before we started, how that there are those things that were left in scripture to be a little obscure.

Everything wasn't written in a way that is fully plain and fully clear, and it's very much like what Christ said why he spoke it to them in parables, so that they wouldn't understand certain things, so that they wouldn't be able to piece together various things. And yet, or I should say, actually, because of that they would come up with their own ideas about what was written and what was stated.

God allowed for that to take place. He allowed for that which was somewhat obscure, somewhat unclear, some things that could be interpreted in different ways except for His intervention, His blessings, and His help. And then, of course, once called into the Church it goes far, far deeper than that because that which is on a spiritual plane you can only see with God's spirit anyway.

So there are some things, nevertheless, that could be clearer, in one respect, as far as the world is concerned, that aren't. That's by design and that's for a purpose. So that's what we're reading here in verse 9.

Romans 10:9—Because if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Joshua... So right away the door is wide open for what this could be used for, what it could be misused for, actually, as it has been by traditional Christianity and by the Catholic Church. It's a lot more than that which is on a physical plane just to confess in what you say, "Yes, I confess the Lord Joshua," and as it says here, **and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead.** "Yes, I believe that." Well, yeah, you can say, "I believe those things took place." "Yes, I believe that he lived." "Yes, I believe..." But it doesn't mean anything in many respects, obviously, as we understand, because this isn't what this is referring to at all for us, when God opens up our minds and gives us understanding of what these things are actually talking about.

So people can look at things physically, which is really all the capacity they have, they can only interpret it in that manner. God knows this. God knew this long, long ago, how things would be, how things would be given, and what He should give to mankind, because it's to give man leeway to go ahead and do what He's going to do because of his nature. He's going to misuse what he's been given because mankind was made to be at enmity with God, to be against God. Because of selfishness, because of our thinking, because of our way we'll automatically misconstrue and

misread things, and misuse things to our own advantage, to how we want to do it, to the image we want God to be like. That's why scripture is as it is.

Again, God gives that ample opportunity for people to stumble at what they do - by design. Some could say, "Well, that's just not fair." Oh, yes it is, because if you accept God as God, the Great Creator, the one who made us, the one who put us on this earth, then we should be (if our minds were right), very quick...or very slow, depending on how you want to phrase this, but you want to keep your mouth shut at things that God says, not speak against it, not speak against God. If a person really had that attitude and that feeling, that thinking, we would be very cautious to speak anything against God.

But people aren't afraid. They don't care. So again, God gives that full latitude for people to misuse what is there. He spoke in parables knowing full well that they're going to misuse what is said.

If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Joshua... We went into 1st John and other areas. There are so many scriptures that talk about some of this, what it's really talking about. It's not about a confession you make that "Yes, I have accepted," as they say, "the Lord Jesus," and because of that then you're going to be saved. What a formula! That's all you have to do? What does that mean? So it's very, very unreal for life, very shallow.

If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Joshua, and shall believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you shall be saved. What a horrible thing that's been done by a very powerful spirit being to confuse people, to focus on this in even greater physical way than what is actually here. So again, just showing that you can't give these things to people, and no matter what it was going to happen with time anyway. But what an incredible thing to be able to see what you see, to confess by—it starts with the mouth—by what you say.

What do we do? Well, so much of it begins with obedience to the Sabbath day, to the annual Sabbaths, and because we live a certain way then, because of that we do with our mouth, "I'm not going to work anymore from Friday sundown, or on Saturday." People have to tell their employers this thing, if they work later in the evening, or whatever, in their job or if they worked on a Saturday, because of what they believe concerning Joshua and the good news that he brought and how he said we should live life as he gave the spirit intent, even, of the law, not just the physical.

...and shall believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. Well, we understand this means a whole lot more than to us because it has the understanding here for us that we believe because God gives us the ability to believe. We are unable to believe what is true unless God gives it to us. You're able to believe things about the Sabbath, the holy days, the plan of God, the Passover, that Christ is our Passover, and on and on it goes, and why.

See, the world stops at what they're getting ready to observe here before long, that he was raised on a Sunday morning and salvation comes through the fact that he died for us. The reality is it goes far, far beyond that. That's just a beginning of something. God gives us the entire story then because of Passover and what happened afterwards. Yes, he was resurrected from the dead, but why did he die? Well, to be forgiven of sins. Why? Why do you need to be forgiven of your sins? So that, as he said in John 14, he could dwell in us, that he could make his abode, that God the Father and Joshua the Christ could make their abode, their dwelling place in us. It's a beautiful thing, and so few in the world, and frankly through time so few in the Church, have been able to understand that to that same extent.

God is immensely blessed us with what we grasp. Not because of who we are. Not because we're great, but because we live in an incredible time just before Joshua returns. God is revealing these things now to the Church so that we're established, so that what we have goes on into a new age without great transition. Incredible!

So we turned over to 1 John 1. I'll just read these quickly again. We looked at that to help clarify what Paul is referring to here in Romans 10. **1 John 1:8—If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** We have to come to a point in life where we begin to acknowledge, yes. What is that sin? Well, we haven't kept the Sabbath or we didn't do 'this' or we didn't do 'that,' and we begin repenting. We begin tithing because we didn't understand. We begin whatever, holy days, observance of holy days. So we begin a process that starts with some of the most basic of things that we should do.

Then it goes far beyond that. We finally come to a time, as we mature and grow, to where we come to understand our nature, that it's evil. It's just evil. It's against God. It's at enmity with God. Our carnal, human nature is at enmity with God. It's an enemy to God. So we have to fight that. We learn that. We learn that we have to fight that nature, that we resist God. We don't want someone, as human beings, telling us how to do things, what to do, and that there's a specific way of doing it. We don't like that.

Look at what it's like when it comes to things like Christmas and people who aren't being called and how they respond to that. They hate that, that you no longer observe that time with your family and you won't come over and observe it with them any longer. That riles people up, it truly does.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Well, what is truth? The famous question that was asked from the very beginning there with Christ. What is truth?

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins. So we've gone through and talked about some of that. What an awesome thing that you can acknowledge your sins because of what he did, and you're clean. You don't have to carry anything with you anymore. You're free, as long as you don't misuse that, as Paul talks about, not using it as a liberty to sin, to continue in

sin, but to realize we have a responsibility then to fight against it. But we're going to fail at times because of our nature because we have this nature until we are dead or changed. For most it's death.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And that's what this sermon, a lot of this, is about. How does He cleanse you from all unrighteousness? Because we're unrighteous. Our nature is unrighteous until you get rid of your selfishness. And when does that happen? When you're no longer in this physical body. Then you no longer have to worry about living in unrighteousness. You no longer have to worry about having any wrong thinking toward others. You no longer having this lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life in you.

Pride...pride is big. Pride is something that you will ever come to see more of the longer you're in God's Church. It very much controls and rules human life, every phase of human life because it's how we lift ourselves up above and beyond that which we should have. Instead of humility we raise up our ideas. Everybody thinks they're right. I'm right. My opinion is right. I see something on TV, my opinion is right. I can judge that and I determine that's right. Who are you?

That's why I loathe TV anymore. They'll ask questions of different ones, "Let's hear what your opinion is about this." Like we're supposed to be in awe. "Oh, did you hear that?" You think, give me a break! Who cares what you think? I don't care who you are. They're not even in a particular field of, sometimes, of importance or experience in life.

We are so blessed for what we have, we truly are. "...and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So God accounts us as righteous because of His truth, because of what He gives us. He gives us the ability to believe what is true, and then if we choose to act upon it and we embrace it and we learn to love it and we live by it that's faith. If we live by faith what an incredible thing. Though you have sin in your life God counts you as righteous. That's God's righteousness, something that is difficult sometimes to grasp and comprehend, what He offers us, in spite of what we are, knowing full well what we are, but because He's given us the impregnation of His own life in us, and because we embrace that and because we love that and because we learn to love His truth and we grow in that.

That's why I marvel at things that have happened in times past in church, in the Church, in Worldwide and during the Philadelphia era, on into Laodicea especially, but of this thing of truth. How much was it really loved? How much did people truly love the truth? Because that's God. I hope you can see that. Every truth you have, that's the mind of God; it's the thinking of God, it's the Word of God that He blesses us to see, that He shares with us. What an incredible thing to be able to see the Word of God, to know the Word of God. That's His mind. That's who He is. That's how He wants us to live toward Him, toward His family, toward one another, toward others in the world around us who are not called.

There is a certain way of life He wants us to live and it reveals who He is, it reveals His thinking. That, to me, is a marvelous thing to understand. What we have is what's in the mind. This is a precious thing, the mind. It truly is. That's who we are. How we think, that's who we are. God doesn't have to let us see Him. We don't have to be able to be made spirit in order to see Him to love Him. It's the truth! It's the Word! It's what He reveals to us in the mind that helps us to see Him and to know Him. That's an incredible thing, it really is. Then the more we love His truth we truly are learning to love Him more. That's what it's about.

1 John 4:1—Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out in the world. By this you can know the spirit of God. There are those who say things, that it's not from God. There are those in the environment of the Church who have always been in the environment of the Church - some maybe not in the very beginning, but at some point have chosen to do something where they turn, they begin to turn against what is true, what was given to them. They come up with their own ideas. They come up with some different way. Paul had to deal with this. Peter had to deal with this. Different ones in scripture. John had to deal with this in the Church, in the early Church. It's been that way ever since at different times. So some turn; they come up with their own ideas and begin to raise them up in importance, what they think they see and understand.

“...many false prophets are gone out into the world,” so what they begin to say to others, what they begin to say that is wrong, that is not true, and yet what they should be able to see and know. This is about the Church. This isn't about the world. This is about people who have been in the environment of the Church or who have been actually in the Church who have had the blessing of baptism and the impregnation of God's spirit. That's what this is about. That's who it's addressing. It's not addressing people in the world. They wouldn't understand any of this anyway. It's addressing people who have been in the Church.

So he's saying be careful because this is going to happen in your environment. This is going to happen. That's why God has allowed various things to exist within the Church. Especially if you want to look at Laodicea during that period of time, there was so much that was wrong and so many who were doing things that were so wrong. So many in the ministry who were doing things that were so, so wrong, and God allowed those things to exist so that He could teach us. For those who wanted to learn, for those that wanted to hold fast God blessed them. For those who wanted, who had itching ears and wanted to hear something different, something new from somebody else, God allowed that. A wrong way to exist within the Body and you can learn from that.

So I've said this so many times. So much of my training has been to see wrong things, has been to come to a point in time of conviction that this cannot be of God, this is not the mind of God, this is not the way God is. God doesn't want things lavished upon Him. Everything is His! In other words, He doesn't look for that like some do. Some want to be raised up in importance, see.

Some want to sit up on a higher area and look down upon others. That's not of God! What a horrible thing! Some want to eat out of china while you ate out of paper plates. Is that of God?

So we learn that there are things that aren't right and how people treat each other. God has allowed things to exist within the environment of the Church, things of how people treat each other, mistreat each other, horrible things that have taken place. I don't even want to tell you things that have taken place, things that have happened in the world have happened within the Church. Horrible, horrible, horrible things!

When we were transferred up to Pennsylvania I had to deal with some horrible, horrible, horrible, sick, perverted things that crept into the church in time. Things that some people practice. Things that some people did. God allowed that to happen. I think of one that was so heinous and so sick. Put them out of the Church and they began writing these letters to headquarters about how unfair I was to them. And basically they started putting pressure on me to let them back in. I even got a visit from headquarters that I should let them back in. I said, "Because of what they have done, they have not repented, they're not coming back in." Basically, my attitude was do with me what you will, they're not coming back. After we left he came back in. How sick!

It got to a point where even some within the ministry who did certain things, it was not a long way from what a big church has done when they just transfer people to another area. Where is God in that? If they do something wrong here should they serve the Church like that? Should they be in that kind of a position to serve anymore? Think, that's just sick! You don't transfer somebody to another area to do more damage!

I'm sorry, but it's just we live in such a sick, sick, sick, sick world. God has allowed many things to exist within the environment of the Church for a purpose and for a reason and we can learn from that. We can learn. We can grow from that.

So it says here to try to spirits, for many that are false have gone out in the world. They were called out of the world, now they've gone back into it. That's a large part of what this is about. You begin living something that's wrong, you're going back to the world that God drew you out of and called you out of and said you're to be different. You're to be different. You're not to be like the world. You're not to rub shoulders with the world and be like the world. What you confess, it's not about specific words. That reveals how we think, yes, but your actions, that reveals what you're actually confessing, in that regard, as far as what you really believe, if you will.

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. How do you do that? Well, does their life reflect that he is living in them or not? And so that's what I was talking about earlier. If things are being done wrong, they're just wrong. Does that reflect the mind, the being, the life of Christ living in someone? It comes to a point in time where you can say that's not right, that's not of God. Christ isn't like that. So what's the answer? It's right here.

Every spirit that confesses that Joshua the Christ is coming in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Joshua the Christ is coming in the flesh is not of God. So, in other words, if their life doesn't reflect that, doesn't show that then there's the evidence, you can see it.

If someone doesn't pay 1st tithe, you know what, it's not rocket science. That's a very physical aspect of it. It's not hard to see that, hey, you either are or you aren't. You're either wanting Him and desiring Him to live His life in you, and if you are, then your life is going to reflect that, it's going to confess that. It's going to be that way. It's going to be evident that Christ is dwelling in you, and if you're doing things that are opposite of that it reflects the opposite. So it's not a hard decision to make.

So through these things here it should be clear what Paul was saying about confessing with your mouth the Lord Joshua. It's about how you live your life and truly what does come out of your mouth. Because there are things you can't say about people. There are things you won't say about people if Christ is living and dwelling in you. If God's spirit is living and dwelling in you, if something happens and you slip with something and you misjudge something or you judge something you shouldn't have judged you can repent of that and you can change that. It's not going to be something that's constantly coming out of you in the sense of total disregard, that this is what's happening and you just let it happen, you know, you don't care, you're not bringing it into check and you're mistreating people or saying things wrong to people, especially within the Body of Christ, the Church of God. So it's going to become evident - are we living this or not?

You know, people come in, it wasn't hard after the Apostasy to judge like this, to come to this point in time where you saw, okay, you want to believe in a 14/15 Passover? Now, that is a no brainer. That's not hard to discern. Where is Christ? He didn't bring you to this conclusion. If you want to hold on to something like that you're separating yourself from God's spirit, you're separating yourself from God living in you. So what do you do? Get away from them as fast as you can. Get away from them as fast as you can, warn them, perhaps. "This doesn't work in God's Church, so you have to make a choice and a decision, because God's Church keeps the 14th Passover. It's in the 14th day and not in any part of any other day." Incredible.

Let's go on in verse 11. **Romans 10:11—For the scripture says, Whoever believes on him shall not be put to shame.** So if you believe what is true, indeed, it's something that is a matter of the future as well as to what is going to happen in one's life, as to how you live your life, but here where it says, "Whoever believes on him shall not be put to shame," you know, if you believe what God has given you, if you have the ability to believe what God has given you, that you have the ability to believe the truth then what an incredible thing.

So if you're able to believe it and you choose to live by it, that's what faith is, then you're never going to come to a point of shame in your life. When you do sin you're going to be able to repent and move forward. Those moments, yes, are shameful, but you repent of them and you continue

to move forward and you continue to cry out to God and He's merciful and forgives you. And the goal then? To be in God's family.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the gentile: for the same LORD who is over all is rich unto all—who what?—who call upon Him. Why do you call upon God? Well, it's a matter of praying to God about various things in life, but do you know what the most important one is, as a whole, as a part of your keeping a right relationship with God? Making sure that if there is something to repent of you put it at the front of the line and you repent of the sin before God, you call upon God for that purpose. Because what's the story here? It's about Christ. It's about why he died. It's about understanding that he is to live his life in you, you're to yield yourself, you're to want that in your life, and so you cry out for that, that God will continue to dwell in you and that you'll be able to dwell in Him and His Son.

It says here, "for the same LORD is over all, is rich unto all who call upon Him." So it's a matter of prayer life. It's a matter of a relationship with God, indeed. **Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.** So why do you call upon the name of the Lord? This is very specific in what it's talking about. Prayer is one thing, but to call upon a specific thing here, that's another, because it is about our Passover; it is about the need to be forgiven of sin. It is about the need to acknowledge and to accept and to be thankful for the fact that he spilled his blood so that you could have a relationship, so that you could call upon God for anything. But it always begins here. How are you saved? Through that process.

You're not saved by not just being able to talk to God and pray to God about various things. "I need 'this.'" "I want 'that,' blah, blah, blah," or "Please, be a part of 'this,'" or "Be a part of 'that.'" What does that mean? Well, the relationship comes as a result of the first part. The first part. It's not a holy day, but it's the beginning. It's before all the holy days begin. It's Passover. Because everything is about Joshua the Christ. Everything is about understanding how you're able to have a relationship with God in the first place. All these things continually take us back to the beginning. Over and over again in your life, every time, every day during the week, or whenever it is when you ask God for forgiveness for something you're coming back to the Passover over and over again. That's how you're going to be saved. What an incredible thing to understand. That's the process.

Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. It's about salvation. It's about how you're able to be saved. From what? From what you are. How do you do that? Through repentance and through the fight, fighting against your own human nature, wanting a different nature, wanting God's nature or being in you.

Then how shall they call on him who they have not believed? If you don't know what is true then how can you call upon him? If you don't know what is true about the verses we've just read here in Romans that just talked about some of this thing, some of this "because if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Joshua, and shall believe in your heart," this is what it's talking about. Are we able to believe? Well, we do in the Church. Why he's our Passover, why he died, it's

so we can have a relationship with God, so that God can dwell in us. It's not just to be forgiven of sin. The purpose is so that God can be in us and we can be in Him.

So then, again, **verse 14—Then how shall they call on him whom they have not believed? If you don't believe that, the most basic of things, then...? ...and how shall they believe on him whom they have not heard? ...and how shall they hear without a preacher?** Because that's how God works. There is a way that God teaches His people. So if we don't have that or haven't had that then we can't know the truth, we can't know the truth about Joshua, why he did what he did.

All people can hear is meaningless things about a Sunday morning sunrise worship service and these fuzzy feelings. There are feelings that people can get. Don't misunderstand. People can go to a service and have feelings that they can't understand. They're not from God. God doesn't work that way. But they can have this feeling like what happened during the Apostasy when all of a sudden there was this wave that went through the audience and some were saying, "Hallelujah! Praise God!" and different things like that. You think, where is the door? You know, I should have gone to the door right then, but I didn't, because I thought by staying around some would surely ask, "Why are you resigning?" But that didn't happen.

...and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? ...and how shall they hear without a preacher? ...and how shall they preach, except they are sent? It's God's work. It's what God does. It's what God chooses. It's not anybody - it's God!

As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, and bring good news of good things! Again, it's the truth. It's what is the truth.

It goes on to say in **verse 16—But not everyone...**and it's not the word "obeyed." The Greek word, it's a compound word that means, basically, "has chosen to listen." If someone is given the choice, the ability, and something has been said, whatever it is, maybe it's a telecast, *The World Tomorrow*. Maybe it was reading the *Good News* magazine or *The Plain Truth* magazine and God was drawing someone, giving someone the opportunity to see something, to hear something, to know something and they made a choice at some point not to listen anymore. That happened a lot. A lot!

But not everyone has chosen to listen to the good news. Some go to a certain length and so far and then they won't go the rest of the way. Usually because of family, finances, because they know that to do that it's going to require taking a stand and it's going to totally change their life. The reality is people have to make choices as to whether they're going to raise up God in their being, in their mind, to be who He is, to be God, to be the one who created them and made them and that we should listen to Him as to how we live our life, and if others choose not to, that's their choice, but if a choice is being given to me at this time I have to decide. Am I going to embrace this? Am I going to make the choice to obey what I now see as clearly the Sabbath day, as clearly the matter of tithing, as clearly the matter of holy days? Because this has happened to tens of thousands of people just in the last thirty years. Tens of thousands of people who never

came on into the Church. It's happened to many who did come on into the Church, sadly, because after a time people can come to a point where they choose not to listen any longer.

Even as Isaiah said, Lord, who has believed... It is "a report," but it's not really. That takes away from what's being said here. It means...**what was spoken** or **what we have spoken** is the proper translation. **Who has believed what we have spoken?**

So then faith comes through, it's the same word as "report"; better translated **faith comes through hearing what was spoken**. So very few have had this in the last 2,000 years. They didn't have Bibles. They didn't come around for a long, long time and then when it did people couldn't afford them. Some ministers, some churches acquired them and basically told from their interpretation of what was being said, but it didn't exist and so when the truth came along it was by those whom God gave the truth to. It came through what they heard.

My first account was through what I heard. Not from a preacher but from someone who had read certain materials that did come from God's apostle, from Mr. Armstrong. My mind was opened up and I knew it was true. What an incredible thing when the mind is opened up and all of a sudden you just know it's true.

So faith, what you're able to believe, God gives you the ability to believe something, just to know it's true. The Sabbath. The holy days. The migrations of Israel. Why God did some of the things He did and so forth. The holy days. Everything. It's like, wow! You know, to have the mind that's in the world, that sees only that which is traditional Christianity, or whatever it might be, and then all of a sudden to see what is true, to see the difference between Sunday and the seventh day of the week, to all of a sudden to see the difference between Christmas and Easter, and all of a sudden Passover, Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Tabernacles and all those things, and they all fit into a plan. You see 7,000 years. You see what God is doing. What can you say? Wow! How incredible is that to know what we know? To all of a sudden know something.

So again, this is what it's talking about, the ability to believe that just comes into the mind from something you heard someone say. That's how God has worked as a whole. It comes through what we hear. It's not like it used to be so much for so many in, especially by the time I came along in '69, in the time of Philadelphia where it was like, "How good are you at studying your Bible? And how good are you using a Strong's?" Those are great tools. This is great to have the Bible. It's great to be able to have the tools of a Strong's Concordance or other things of that nature that might help you to study what you have been taught. But you're not going to come up with something different. You're not going to come up with something new. You're not going to do it and learn it on your own. You might enhance the quality of what you have been given already. But it was being misused. People began to be lifted up with pride. We got to the point in Laodicea where we were rich and increased with goods because of how we thought about such things like this. Incredible, what took place.

So again, what an incredible process here, how we're able to learn the truth, to know the truth. God gives us the ability to hear something. It's not in the Bible; it's in the mind. It comes through the Bible, we hear it, but the ability to believe it, God gave it in your mind. **So then faith comes through hearing what was spoken, and what was spoken through the word of God.** That's what it is here, the words, what they mean. "...and hearing what was spoken through the Word of God."

So all of a sudden here it's an ability to grasp and comprehend things in the word of God of the Word of God that couldn't be comprehended before because God has given it in the mind, the ability to believe something and then to make a choice to live by it. Because it's a matter of choices. So not all have chosen to listen to what was given when given the ability to.

Verse 18—But I ask, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound, or their voice, or in other words, **what was spoken went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.** It's a quote from Psalms 19. So through time God has had different ones go throughout the world into different parts of the world. It started from Jerusalem in a big way, obviously, when it started going into the world, when it started going into the gentile world through Paul, an apostle to the gentiles. Then from there different ones travelled into different areas.

There are all kinds of stories, even of how some went into places throughout Europe, went into England, stories about Peter that went—I believe them—into areas of England. Steeped in some of the things that have taken place through time and recorded of different ones who travelled. It began to move into various regions. Paul, primarily to the gentiles, and candidly, some of the others to some of the ones who were scattered through various areas in various regions.

Then the most incredible thing of all is what began to happen when Mr. Armstrong was called and God had a purpose in timing. Sardis had come, the Church was dying out through time here, and it was time to revive the Church and to restore truth that had been lost. God began to do that through him.

So then, especially, because of God's purpose it started going through all the earth; all kinds of translation in different languages and so forth, and *The Plain Truth* magazine; God calling different ones in different parts of the world. Incredible, what took place.

So again here, **Yes verily, their voice, what was spoken went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.** Then I asked, **Did Israel not understand? First Moses said, I will make you jealousy of those who are not a nation.** What an incredible thing! There is something here that though Israel, or Judah if you want to look at it that way, of those who continued forward came to a point in time where indeed they became and will become more, as it is, jealous.

Let's read this rest of it: **Then I asked, Did Israel not understand? First Moses said, I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation, and I will move you to anger.** Do you know who it's

talking about? It's the Church. He's going to make a nation. Not a physical one, it's a spiritual one, a nation of people by the same name, Israel, to become a part of the Israel of God. It has nothing to do with lineage, has nothing to do with what tribe you might have come from or what drop of blood you might have from some other tribe. Not that at all! It's about all mankind, indeed, and what God is doing and why God is doing it and a different kind of nation that God is bringing to pass, bringing into being.

So it says, "I will make them jealous, who are not a nation, and I will move you to anger." Not the word "by" but "upon/toward a nation without understanding." So what were we in the Church? Well, just like the rest of the world, we had no understanding of what was true and what was right, but when God calls us that changes, changes quickly.

Then Isaiah very boldly stated, I was found of them who were not asking after me. So what happens? Now, if you want to look at traditional Christianity or Judaism, they're seeking after God in their own way. If they go to services on Sunday they're seeking after God by what they've been raised to believe, or whatever it might be, or maybe they're trying, jump around from different groups, or whatever it might be, as well as they try to find some kind of peace or some kind of answers to certain of life's problems that they're going through.

It says here, "I was found of them not seeking after me." So people who jump around even in looking at different religions and the like, it's not about God's Church, but if they happen to stumble across it, that's not what they were looking for, okay? They weren't looking for God's Church.

So basically it's talking about those who, doesn't matter who they are, they weren't seeking after God, because when they did hear about God, see, when they heard about someone who believed in the seventh day, most got rid of that one right quick because "I know some seventh day people and..." or whatever it might be that people come up with. Or, "You mean you don't believe in Christmas and Easter?" Well, they don't want to have anything to do with you if you don't believe in Christmas and Easter, so they'll wipe that one off the map. So they're not seeking after God and the truth of God.

So Isaiah said, I was found of them who were not seeking after me. How does that happen? By your calling. By God drawing you and calling you. You weren't wanting this. You weren't actively desiring to keep the Passover, to keep the days of Unleavened Bread, because you didn't even know what they were. You weren't actively desiring to start tithing all of a sudden, but God showed you this is right and so you started doing it because you became convicted this is of God. So you start doing it. You stop working on Saturday, even Friday at sunset you stop working. You make those choices and those decisions. You weren't seeking to do that; you weren't seeking to change your entire budget, you know, and how you live your life.

So that's what this is talking about, **I was found of them who were not seeking after me. And I was made manifest unto them who are not asking of me,** inquiring. Now, God can bring you to

that point because of what you might go through, as I related not too long ago. I finally got to a point because of what I was going through and getting hit up between the eyes here with a 4x4 a few times, week after week, a few weeks later, and then finally I came to the point where my jaw had to get broken and wired shut for ten weeks so that I was listening. But before that I did ask, "If you exist...?" I didn't know if God even existed because I kind of believed that maybe if there is a God out there He used science, He used evolution to create man and we did climb out of that swamp, but He did it, somehow worked with that to accomplish it. Because that's all my mind could conceive of and the science world, and whatever. How stupid! How shallow. We come to see ourselves and what we believe.

So God revealed, "Yes, I'm here and you need to shut up for a while and listen when I start speaking to you." So, took a little bit of time, because as soon as my mouth was healed went home and heard the truth. I was ready to listen. I was of a humbled spirit. Before that I wasn't of a humble spirit. So God knows how to humble us and work with us so that we will listen. Incredible! So that we will seek after Him. We weren't really seeking after that. We didn't know. Seeking after a Passover? Seeking after changing my whole life? You know, something in the Protestant world is not going to be so difficult, to keep Easter and Christmas, and if He's out there somewhere in one of those groups, you know. But to do this? You're going to change everything. You're going to change everything about what you've ever believed, because you've never believed any of this...never even heard of it.

And to Israel He said, All the day I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and contrary people, or as the Greek is, a contradicting or speaking against people. That's the way we are as human beings. How does the world react to you? Oh, they speak against it. "You don't keep Christmas and Easter? What is wrong with you, really?" "What...? Unleavened Bread seven days? You are really strange! Unleavened Bread? What does that mean? You've got some weird ideas." "Won't eat lobster anymore? Won't eat shrimp? Come over here and you won't eat ham? What are we supposed to feed you? Beef? Oh, fish that have fins and scales? Huh. No frog?" Anyway, sorry.

You live a different life. You become different. But He says, "I have spoken to a contrary people," speaking of physical Israel. They always resisted Him, always fought against Him. Only when God raised up different ones, different kings or different prophets did they at any point in time respond somewhat in a physical way because of oppression, because of other nations, and all of a sudden, they were going to be given victory because theirs was very physical. It was about being safe at home. It was about prosperity and whether you are blessed in the land, and so they would look to things like that. It wasn't because of fully what they believed about God.

Romans 11:1—I say then, Has God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite... So he's continually dealing with a gentile world with Jews interspersed because they were in various areas that he was in. But mostly he was speaking to and working with gentiles, but still there were Jews around. **For I am also an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the**

tribe of Benjamin. God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah? How he pleaded to God against Israel, saying, LORD, they have killed Your prophets, and torn down Your altars; and I alone am left, and they seek my life. That's the kind of life they lived at different times. You do certain things; they're not going to be happy about it. You tore down their altars! This is what they wanted. This is what they liked. They don't like you now.

You go out here and do something? I didn't even want to suggest something because somebody listening may go off and do it; but I was thinking about seeing a whole yard full of Christmas trees and it would be better if they just went up in flames. Anyway, I'm just kidding (in part). Sad, what people believe. You know, we live in a world today that somebody will listen, hear something, and go off and do something stupid like that.

But they lived in a different period of time and different things that happened around them. I think of different ones, Gideon, some of the things that happened in their lives.

But it says here, LORD, they have killed Your prophets, and torn down your altars; so again, this is something that Elijah is saying. ...and I alone am left and they seek my life. So that's all he could see. They were out to do him in and he knew it, and he thought he was the last. I can't imagine that. But God said, He gave an answer to him. He says, I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to *the image of Baal*. Now it doesn't mean they were a part of God's Church. It doesn't mean they were a part of those whom God was calling and working with and molding and fashioning, although there may be some in that. We don't know. But on a physical plane there were those who still desired to obey God. There were still those who desired to hold on to what they had been given, what had been revealed to them, and they weren't going to do what others around them were doing. They weren't going to bend the knee to a sun god. They perceived and were able to understand that was not right and they chose not to do it. So He's telling Elijah there are still 7,000 out here who have not bent the knee to Baal.

Even so then at this present time also... So He's showing here that even in a carnal physical nation of people there are still those who have not given themselves fully to what most have. Most have indeed done this, they have bowed the knee to Baal. They have gone worshipping other God's and not God any longer in a physical type of world, ceremony, or life.

He uses this as a comparison to something on a spiritual plane now for us to grasp. Even so then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the selection of grace. So Paul is explaining to them about prophecies here that have to do with a remnant through time of people –not a remnant like we are a remnant of God's Church right now—but there will always be a smaller portion in number with whom God has worked with through time in different ways, whether it be the prophets or different ones that God has called over 6,000 years. Even on a physical plane within a nation that Elijah thought he was the last one, that no one wanted to listen to him, and He said, “Yes, there are several thousand out here who have not bowed the

knee to Baal, that are still reserved, a portion, small portion.” So some was done on a physical plane, but what he’s explaining now is a spiritual one, giving that comparison, a type.

Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the selection of grace.

Now, these are awesome scriptures of what is being spoken of here. A selection. God does the selecting. “Election,” I think it has in several Bibles, but it’s a selection. In other words, it’s God’s selection.

So God decides (determines) who it is He’s going to love. This is going all the way back in Romans when it talks about Hagar and Sarah and who it is that He will love and who it is that He is not going to give love to at this time. Not that He doesn’t love them, but for God to love someone, to intervene into their life, means that they’re going to be given mercy, they’re going to be given help, they’re going to be given favor, they’re going to be chosen for that purpose, to be worked with for a greater purpose. That’s an awesome thing. God has that power, prerogative, and right because of His plan, plan of salvation. All the rest are going to be in the Great White Throne. That’s God’s plan. Time is nothing to God. Time is nothing to God; we need to be very patient to wait because it’s His plan. The work that goes on to prepare for that is far beyond our ability to comprehend.

The ability to work with humans, and the ones, and the numbers He’s worked with over 6,000 years to prepare to be a part of a government is so much greater than we can grasp in God’s Church, it truly is. It’s far beyond our ability to comprehend, what it takes to get this mind to a point in life where God says, “Now I know you.” See, it’ll never be a mind that will do the kind of betrayal that Satan did, and the third of the angelic realm that betrayed God. God brings human beings, carnal human beings who are at enmity with Him, who are against Him (because He made them that way to be that way), that when He opens up their mind to see Him, to know His word and know His truth, they can make choices.

Through time, through constantly making those choices, for us in the Church we make those choices every time we repent: “God is righteous, I am not. I need God’s favor. I need God’s mercy. I need God’s patience. I need and I want God’s holy spirit because that’s the only way I can think right. I need forgiveness of my sins.” What an awesome thing!

That’s a matter of grace that is given to us because God is giving us His love now. Others, it’ll be in the Great White Throne. For most it’s purposed to be in the Great White Throne. So God chooses the time. That’s why it’s such an awesome thing to understand if you’re called to be in the number you’re in, not because of who we are but because of God’s selection, and just be so thankful that you’ve been selected. We don’t grasp the honor, the blessing that we’ve been given. We don’t understand, truly, how great that really is, what it means to be given such a thing from the Great God. But the more we do seek to grasp that, the more we do seek to understand that, to the limit and the degree we do grasp it we should always be giving God thanks. “Thank You. Thank You. Thank You.” And then hold on to it with all of your being. What is more important?

Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the selection of grace. So in the Church that's what it's speaking of. This is what Paul was addressing here. There is that which does fulfill the prophetic things we read earlier in this series that is about a remnant and what God is doing through time, through 6,000 years, meaning a small number, a small portion. Because it wasn't intended that all Israel be worked with, just small portions of it. Even in the time of Christ just a small portion of individuals were going to have the opportunity. And those before that out of Israel? It wasn't going to the gentile world. God was working with, as a whole, Israel, once Israel began, and before that it was people who obviously didn't know Israel. Abraham didn't know Israel, so all those things before that period of time, and Noah and the like. But when it finally became a nation that God was working with then God began to work with a certain group of people to work within that environment of people who had heard about Him, who knew about Him, who had scriptures about Him and about what He had done for them, taking them out of Egypt and the various things that God did, and then the ones who God raised up through time. Then the time finally when Christ came and more was given. God was still working within the realm of physical Israel, primarily Judah at that time then.

Then all of a sudden, what an incredible thing, a Church began. 31 A.D. Still not going out to the gentile world. Still to the Jews, as a whole, a few other tribes. Then God struck blind the one who was after them to kill them, to put them to death. He was there and gave the authority for them to kill Stephen. Incredible to understand that. And how would you think toward him if you saw him then? "Oh, you're Saul?" "No, I'm Paul. Yes, I was Saul, but I'm Paul. My name is Paul now. I go by Paul. Not the same person. I'm one of you and this is what Christ did to me and this is what I'm to do now. This is my calling. This is my job," whatever. So there was a lot of distrust in the beginning of Paul working with them, but he was going to the gentiles. God opened up a door. What an incredible thing, that now more of His plan was being revealed to the Church, though most couldn't grasp and understand the depth of that at this point in time.

Then dropping on down to **verse 25—For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, unless you should be wise in your own opinion; that blindness or as it is, hardness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the gentiles has come in.** God has a plan. So there is that which God is doing, not just within a physical nation of people now. He's gone into other parts of the world, to a gentile world and calling different ones out over the past 2,000 years, to mold and fashion them to prepare them to be a part of His government at the return of His Son. How incredible because most have come out of that period of time. Most have been molded and fashioned to be a part of that government in the past 2,000 years and a very large portion of them are gentile.

It's not a matter of physical lineage. It's not a matter of whether you're a Jew, or Manasseh, or Ephraim. You can have a big smidgeon of Assyrian blood in you and be worked with by God. That's why I'm standing up here.

And so all Israel shall be saved. What does that mean? Does it mean every person who's ever been a part of the physical nation of Israel is going to be saved? Not at all. It's a choice. They're going to have opportunity, as a whole, for it, but this is far greater than that. God's Israel will be saved. God's Israel is His nation. God's Israel is Mount Zion. God's Israel is the Church that lives faithfully to the end and is resurrected into His Family, spirit.

And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. So it's a process. Ungodliness, sin, living the wrong way, a process begins in life where we become a part of spiritual Israel.

Verse 27—for this is my covenant unto them, when I take away their sins. It's all about that process. It begins with our Passover. **As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the selection...** In other words, God's calling, God's choosing, God calling into the Church, **they are beloved for the sake of the fathers**, for those things that have been spoken before through time, through all the prophets, through all the things that God has said and had recorded in His word, that God brings it to pass.

Their lives were not in vain. They were pioneers. They were at the forefront. They were at the beginning. They lived some very difficult lives. We have it pretty plush. Go flip a switch, you've got electricity. I was thinking about that the other day. Kings of ages gone by have never had what we have. They had many servants in many cases, but they couldn't live like this. They could light some things and give you light, but not like we have it. Incredible! You can push a button; you can have so many things by the push of a button. Incredible! You can push a button and talk to someone half way around the world and see them and have a good conversation with them as though they were right there with you. Incredible what you can do. No kings have ever been able to live like that. No queens have ever lived like that in times past. But we live like that. Incredible, what we have as far as a physical world is concerned.

You don't have to worry about going out and worry about getting from one spot to another on the Sabbath, in the sense of something that's smelly and getting on the back of it, or riding behind it. I don't know if you've ever gone on a little ride sometimes when you've been in some areas that have these little horse drawn carriages and you're sitting back there. The aroma's not always that great. You know why? Because a lot of streets, they don't like horses to do what they're prone to do in the street so they have these great big canvas type things that come up around the back of the horse and it catches all that stuff, so that when the tail goes up in the air it goes in there. You are back there in a carriage smelling it. If you're not used to ever being on a farm or being behind a horse it's probably going to bother you more than it would somebody who grew up on a farm, as that's just the horse. Be thankful it's not a pig because they really stink! Because of what they eat. So different things that are eaten produce different aromas, if you want say that. I guess aroma, or smell?

You don't have to worry about that. You go out here and you can press a button before you even get to the car, click, click, click. Some people even start their vehicle. They start the vehicle

before they get outside so it warms up. They can do that! Go out into a warm car. I don't even have that! But of course, it's in the garage. But still, it's cold! It's incredible what we can do. We're so blessed. We have such comfort it's hard to grasp what it was like to live a hundred years ago, fifty years ago and beyond. We can't grasp that because, as a whole, because most haven't lived that. Most of you haven't lived without electricity. Some of you have. Not very many. And indoor plumbing. Not many.

But again, how incredibly blessed are we? Now the truth we have above all things that make all this that we have seem puny in comparison. The truth of God, the word of God that we can grasp and see and know.

So again "...I will take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sake; touching the selection..." Okay. "...beloved for the sake of the fathers."

Verse 29—For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance. Now, some of these things in some translations are kind of hard to grasp what it's talking about. What is it talking about here, "The gifts and the calling of God?" This is what the whole story of Romans is going through and talking about. From the time of going back and talking about Abraham and Sarah, how they tried to be saved by their works. They tried to bring about the fulfillment of God's plan by what they could do, not by what God could do. Not by God's promise. God was left out of the picture a lot.

I think of what happened in the Church during parts of Philadelphia and on into Laodicea, how that so often people had different ideas how they could do various things. I think of what has happened since the Apostasy, of people who don't grasp and understand the work went into all the world to the extent that God wanted it to. It was not God's purpose from that point forward that there should ever be a great telecast that would go out to all the world, to worry about all the TV stations, to worry about a magazine.

Because there is that that doesn't grasp and comprehend the work, that work was finished when Mr. Armstrong died. It was done. It was completed. Well, some are trying to accomplish it and fulfill it, God's promise. What God promised He fulfilled to the exact point He wanted to through His servant Herbert W. Armstrong. Incredible!

"The gifts and calling of God," basically saying here, "are before any repentance." You didn't repent to receive the truth of God. It wasn't because you repented. It wasn't because you were turning away from sin. It wasn't because you so wanted God. You didn't know God! There is no one that knows God until God blesses you to know Him. That's why sometimes I've marveled in times past of people who have come along and think, well, they discovered the Church because God was working with them to know truths and that somehow He revealed all these things to them. Well, God does draw people to be able to understand. Perhaps it was to go to a Seventh Day Adventist Church to begin learning that the seventh day is right and maybe they were given that ability to perceive that, but it was almost like leaving Mr. Armstrong and what God was doing with him out of the picture.

No, you're drawn to where God is. You're being drawn to His Church and it wasn't by anything you did! It wasn't because of how smart you were that you figured this out and if you bounced around to different areas and different churches, God let you go through that and maybe even worked with you in part of that, but you didn't do it. God did it! I hope you understand what I'm saying, the difference here. God did it. If God draws someone you may go through many different things, but it's not because you figured it out. God has to put it in your mind, and anything that comes into it is because of what God did and gave to you. Then when you come to His Church even more so you surrender your life to Him, to His Church, to the truth He's given in His Church. Incredible to understand that.

For the gifts, that which God gives, you didn't earn it. You didn't do anything. It's God's selection. It was because God chose you to be able to have an opportunity to do something, to be a part of something. All because of His selection, only because of His selection, and nothing to do with us, as to our being special or "good," because we're not. We're not special and we're not good above anybody else on the earth, period, except for God in us, except for God's calling and God's truth. Awesome!

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as you were once disobedient to God... It is "disobedient. It's not "have not believed," as some say. But again here, your ability to believe is given by God anyway. ...**yet have now obtained mercy in disobedience**, is the best way of quoting this. It's not through disobedience, but it's in your disobedience, is the word. It means here that you're disobedient to God because you don't know God; you don't know the truth of God before you're drawn, before you're called, before you're selected. So this is what it's talking about here. There is that which God gives to us, apart from repentance, before repentance, or as it says here, in how it's quoted, "Your calling and gifts of God are without repentance." So it's not something that you're able to achieve by any measure. It's by God's mercy. It's by God's grace. That's what it's talking about.

...even so have these also now been disobedient in, not through, in the mercy shown you, that they also may obtain mercy. So it's just going through here and kind of awkward some of how this is even translated, but it's just showing a process here of how God works with us and we're called in disobedience. Everyone is called because they're in sin. We're all in sin until God calls us, and then we can begin making choices.

Once He's selected us and called us then He starts giving us gifts. The truth is a gift. The ability to see and know the truth is a gift, the ability to be told that you can be baptized and have all your sins forgiven if you choose to listen to God, to go under the water, to come back up and have hands layed upon you, and you come to that point where you say, "Yes, that's what I want! I want hands layed upon me. I want the impregnation of God's holy spirit." Those are choices. It's a process of coming out of a mind of disobedience to God to one that wants to obey God. It's a matter of God's mercy.

Verse 32—For God has committed (placed) **them all in disobedience**, in essence, because of how He made us we're disobedient; lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. God made us that way, to be disobedient. All of us in time, until God begins to work with us, until God begins to call us, we're in disobedience to God, to God's truth, to God's ways. **For God has committed them all in disobedience, that He might have mercy upon all.** God has to show mercy. That's the only way toward His family, is because of His mercy. You can't earn it, can't work for it, can't learn it on your own ability, can't attain it on your own ability. So this is what Paul is explaining to them, Jews and gentiles.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! Every time I see the word "wisdom" I think of Proverbs. I think of how that correlates to understanding fully the mind of God because it's about the mind of God, the Word of God, Logos in the New Testament, but wisdom in the Old Testament. The mind of God. Wisdom? It's God's. It comes from God. True wisdom comes from God.

It says, **O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!** We can't even begin to grasp the greatness of Almighty God that made everything, that sustains everything, that made a wall, that made physical matter; that that wall is moving so fast it boggles the mind. The space, there is more space in the wall than there is matter you can see, if you were able to see it. There is more space there. We can't understand that, but it's moving so fast and combined together in such a manner that our minds can't even grasp that. Truly, when you look at what we have grasped and understood today about the atom and how it works, and how various kinds of compounds exist, it's incredible. It's incredible.

The speed at which things move? Have you ever seen a propeller of a plane? It's moving so fast it can look like it's everywhere, but it's not. Now, that's just a puny comparison of something that is far greater because the wall, you can't see through. The propeller you can still see the separate blades, but if it was moving that fast as the wall it would be a solid mass. It would appear as a solid mass, one piece. But it can't move that fast; it would disintegrate or fly apart. It couldn't take the forces. God made it so the wall does move that fast. How do you understand that? Knowledge. Knowledge that hundreds of years ago, not too far back, they really didn't grasp and comprehend that we can see and understand today. "Oh, that's mostly space? Right." Incredible. Then the conformity of it all in the universe - most of it's space. And how massive is it? We've talked about that, how great some of these stars are out there. Like the one, I know it's puny compared to the one I used to have, but hundreds of suns in the diameter of some of the stars that are out there and suns that are there, and ours is made to look like a puny little dwarf. We can't comprehend that. So when it talks about these things we can't comprehend how great this really is, of what it talks about.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments. If we can begin to grasp and learn things about a physical world, a physical plane, physical creation and those things, how much greater it is when it comes to that which is

spiritual? **How unsearchable are His judgments.** That's why for us we should strive to learn about God's judgment, His mind, how He judges.

It's like mercy. We should want to become more like God when it comes to a matter of showing mercy, and then judgment, because there comes a time when you can be merciful to a point, but you have to judge when, okay, this has been long enough and you have not made the right choices. So you have to act.

How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out. You can't. He has to show it to you; He has to open up your mind. He has to continually give you more and more and more. That's why I think about what we've been blessed to grasp and see within this period of time of the Church since the Apostasy. God just has given us more and more and more to the point, if we're not careful, we can very easily become spoiled and very much like what it was in Laodicea, rich and increased with goods to the point where we're always wanting or expecting something new.

Oh, you don't have to worry about that. There is so much out there already to build upon and to learn that we don't yet know. We see the surface of what God has given but we do not grasp it all yet by any measure!

All the truths, I'll just say given since Mr. Armstrong, let alone the ones he gave, because it includes those, too, if we grasp it, but we don't grasp it by any measure. We only see it to a degree, to a point that God has blessed us to grasp it and see it. It's like the number one that was attributed to Mr. Armstrong - government. I heard so many in God's Church through time talk about government who never, never, never understood the government of God. For if they had they would never, never, never have moved one iota away from what Mr. Armstrong gave to them that came from God Almighty. But they did. Some of the very ones who sat at Mr. Armstrong's feet in the first classes of Ambassador College, every one of them did, as a whole, moved away. There were only two or three. Incredible to understand that.

How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! It's up to Him what He gives us and when He gives it to us and where we are, for we're all different...through time, in other words, through experiences and what God is molding and fashioning us for. We're all different. We're not going to be placed in the same part of the Body. We're not placed in the same part of the Temple. But wherever we are it's beautiful, it is awesome, it's more than we could ever begin to grasp or comprehend.

For who has known the mind of the LORD? That's laughable. We're so far from it. We barely see the things of God, but we see enough that we can make choices and decisions and God can mold this mind here to become a part of His family. **Or who has been His counsellor?** I think of Job when I read that one. He humbled Job quickly. Job was not converted until he went through that. It was only because of what he went through that he came to conversion.

Some in times past have thought, “Oh, Job was converted.” No, he was just doing things on his own ability, by his own works, and he felt very righteous about that. He felt very justified and felt that what was happening to him was very unfair and he was very harsh in his judgment toward God, in that respect. God helped to humble him. “Where were you, Job? Where were you when I did ‘this’? ...when I did ‘that’? Where were you, Job? You’re not so great.”

So he had to be brought to that ability on a physical plane to come to see something that, no, he’s not so great. That’s what we all have to come to see. That’s where humility has to reign first before we can receive God. It has to start, at least, the process.

Or who has first given to Him, and to receive an equivalent back again? For from Him, and through (because of) Him, and into Him, are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen. Beautiful verses here, what it’s talking about and what it’s saying about God, the mind, the power, the glory of God and how we should think toward Him.

Continue on here, some of this. So we’re to grasp more fully, more deeply the righteousness of God. That is what God is offering to us, to come to a better understanding of God’s righteousness, of how God works with His creation and what He grants us in that process as He leads us to become a part of His Family.

Paul has covered much of this story as he goes through here, but now he begins to show how we can become transformed into a oneness and a unity with God. It’s beautiful.

Romans 12:1—Brethren, I therefore urge you, by the mercies of God... Everything that we have, because of the mercy of God. To be selected? By the mercy of God. To be in the Great White Throne? By the mercy of God. No one deserves any of God’s plan but He loves us and He has a purpose for us to be a part of His family. That’s why we were created, to give us opportunity through time, in His time. Not our time, in His time.

I urge you, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice. So what we live is to be as a sacrifice. And candidly, when we come to understand that, that which you have to sacrifice is self; your wants, your desires, your ideas. On and on it goes and to embrace God’s, to embrace God’s way and not our way.

It talks about this. He says, **that you present your bodies, your life, in other words, a living sacrifice, holy...** Well, how do you do that? Well, it requires God’s holy spirit to have something that’s holy in your life, set apart for holy use and purpose. God is first. We seek to live this way of life first. ...**acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.**

So I think of baptism. We gave ourselves to God at that time. We made a choice, “I am yours. Whatever You want to do with me, whatever I’m going to go through in life, whatever I’m to learn in life, whatever, thank You and help me to receive it. I am Yours.” That’s our mind. So to do anything that’s contrary to God, to choose to live things that are contrary to God, that’s a horrible, horrible thing.

...*which is your reasonable service*. And do not be conformed to this world. So that becomes a battle for people when they come into the Church because the human nature part of us doesn't want to appear to be different. So sometimes we shy away from standing up for what is true.

Now, we don't have to be obstinate, because some people go the other way where they're almost obnoxious and abrasive to others. "Hey! I want the chef out here! What is in this? No, no, no. I've been to some of these restaurants and different chains and you all do something different. What's in this? How did you make this (whatever this is, whatever you're saying)?" Now, that becomes obnoxious, becomes, oh, it'd be better not to order it if you have any questions than to make a scene. "I am righteous. I don't eat that!" I think, well, okay. You don't want it to be cooked beside the shrimp. You know, if you go eat at a Japanese place they always do the shrimp first, and we tell them we don't want it. Well, there may be a residue of a little bit of a shrimp on there still when they didn't get it all off the thing there and they're going to put your stuff on top of that area, and you make a big scene about it. You don't want to do that. It's not going to kill you and God didn't call us for that purpose, to be that kind of obnoxious individual.

So if you have doubt it's better to be quiet about it and keep your faith and your belief to yourself because we're not called to make a scene. We're not called to make a scene. We're not called to be obnoxious to the world. It's better if you don't know and it hurts your conscience to say, "I'm really not hungry, the rest can order... I like this glass of water. I love this glass of water." "I'm really not hungry (for what you have out here)." You don't want to tell them that, you know, but "I just want this glass of water tonight, thanks." It's better to do that than to make a big show of something of your being different.

God didn't call us to do that. He didn't call us to sit around the table and everybody hold hands and bow your heads before you eat out there in public. That's about you. That's not about you and God. That's not about a relationship that you have with God. It's about making a scene and feeling better about yourself. It's not about while you're on an airplane all of a sudden you put this thing around your shoulders and you're bobbing your head back and forth to pray.

I'm not trying to make fun of those things. I'm trying to explain it's not about a show of religion. If you show something in your religion, you know what it is? It's about confessing the Lord Joshua. And this is how you do it. It's about how you live toward the world. You love them. You don't want to be obnoxious toward them. You don't want to make God's way look stupid or foolish, you know, or whatever it is. He called us to be an example, and sometimes that might mean being a living sacrifice. Maybe not eating as to not make a scene about something. I hope you understand what I'm saying. I don't know why I went off in that direction.

But sometimes people, I was showing people go to different sides. Some people don't stand and some people stand a little bit too much because they want to be seen, they want to be recognized for what they believe. "I don't eat pork. What kind of stuff do you cook these french-fries in back there? No, I want to see the label. I want to see the label, and then I'll be happy. I'll

be satisfied.” Well, why go through all that? You don’t have to have your rotten french-fries. Eat something else on the menu if you don’t want that.

So I’m saying these things because it probably still exists to a certain degree in God’s Church and it should not exist in God’s Church. Because I’ve seen it through time. I saw it a lot in Philadelphia. In Laodicea they didn’t care as much. People just kind of did whatever they wanted to do and felt okay about themselves no matter what because they were rich and increased with goods. That’s the way we were and became. So we have to be careful what kind of example we set and what it means to be an example. We bear the name of God. So how do we do that? How do we reflect the life of Christ in us? Well, it better be Christ-like. Christ was not obnoxious. He wasn’t obnoxious in any fashion or form.

There is that which stands up for God’s way of life, which we should strive to do in placing Him first. Again, all these things are a part of a process, as it talks about here.

So again ...**which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world.** So we tend to be conformed to the world. I’ve talked about, and it’s not wrong, to have jersey with numbers on it that maybe somebody wears and you like the colors and you like that team. It’s not wrong to do that, but some people almost can do it to a point of it being wrong. I remember labels, when they used to be so important on blue jeans. I don’t even remember what they were but you had to pay extra for them, whatever they were, just because they had a certain label on there. So it’s as though if I don’t have ‘this,’ or I don’t have ‘that’ then I’m not accepted by others and I want to dress like, I want to be like others. I want to be thought of well by others.

Now, there’s a balance in that. You don’t want to be obnoxious, but you don’t want to go to the point where you begin to compromise what you’re wearing. So you go to the beach and you don’t want to wear what they wore in the 1920’s, because you’re not sure if they went to the beach or where they’re going with that now-a-days if they wore something like that, but on the other hand you’re not necessarily wanting to see a bunch of cheeks go by you either that all you can see are cheeks, you know, as they’re passing, after they’ve gone by. So there is a balance in there.

But some people want to conform to the world. God tells us we’re to live modestly, to be modest. So whatever exists at any point in time we’re to be modest in that area of life. Not to be like the world, but not to be weird either. But you might think, well, that’s weird to wear this or to wear that. People look at it, “It’s just I feel naked wearing those clothes.” I’m sorry, but in other words if you’re wearing more to cover your body it’s like “I feel naked in public because they see I’m wearing too much!” You think, give me a break!

So we tend to want to conform to the world. It’s a battle. It really is. It’s a battle. It has been in God’s Church from the beginning. “Do not be conformed to this world.” We’re called to be different from this world and that becomes a difficult thing sometimes, especially in families and rearing children and so forth, and you strive to maintain a certain standard, and indeed you should. But it’s not easy.

...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So the most important thing is to realize you've been selected, your mind has been opened, you have made a commitment to God to be baptized, to receive the impregnation of His holy spirit, and you want your mind to be changed. I still think of the time I had a prayer before God after being called early, and I was on a ladder painting a house. There is that which all of a sudden was in the mind and I thought, how can the human mind...? and I asked God, just like taking the strands of my brain, just like your intestines when they're stretched out (you have several feet of intestines in here), and you have this up here in the brain, that if it could be just stretched out, just take it and just like a knife, take it and scrape off all that garbage. I don't want it! I don't want it to come into the mind even.

And yet in a satanic world they still bombard you with things and we learn through time that's not your mind and you say no. Those are the kind of choices people have to make. You can still be broadcast to and you have to say no, you don't want it in your mind, to think in a way that's contrary to what God gives. Again, this matter of changing and being transformed and the renewing of your mind is a lifelong process of what you go through in life. You don't change the way you think overnight. What an incredible thing that God has called us so He can work with the mind, because the mind is the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and you have chosen to reject that.

You get to a point where you loathe pride. The more you loathe certain things in your own life because God has shown them to you the more you can see them you have to be careful, because then you can judge people in a wrong way. Because you see things that God has revealed to you you're going to be more alert to the beginnings of any of it. Pride, oh, you can see the first few phases. You can see it so quickly when you're at that point in life, in that respect, of a battle you've been fighting and God has helped you to hate it and loathe it in self.

Because you have to hate it in self first, and then you have to be careful not to misjudge or to judge early or to judge unrighteously because God works with all of us, especially within the Body, in different ways at different times, and you didn't get there overnight. You've been fighting for a long time. I've been fighting for a long time. So we all go through this process and we have to be very careful then how we judge because it's how God works with us as well.

...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That's why I love the word "repentance" in the New Testament in Greek. It means "to think differently." That's what it means. That's what the word comes from in the Greek, think differently. That's what got you into trouble, because you're thinking wrong, so if you want to do God's way and reflect God and Christ in your life, if they are there, then you better start thinking differently. Repent of the wrong thinking and ask God to renew your mind.

...that you may prove what is that good... So again, how do you prove it? Well, there was this concept in times past that you had to prove it in the Bible. "Now, let's see, that's in verse... Romans 7 verse..." That's not what it's about. It's about how you're living it, that you're proving it by applying it to you life.

Whether it be first tithe, second tithe, or as it used to be, third tithe, you prove it. It works! It works in life, powerfully so, things you can put on paper. I still remember one year, well, we were coming up to the seventh year of release, but the one before that is a big year. The sixth. It's another third tithe year and all the things you start writing down, that it doesn't work on paper, but all the blessings of things that have financially come to your way that you've been blessed with. It used to boggle the mind. I remember this yellow tablet, legal paper I wrote these things on—I wish I'd kept it—how God so blessed us. That's how you prove; you live it and you learn from it. Because you strive to live it faithfully God will bless you and help you to see things.

This is awesome! This is awesome, to live, to see, to learn. **...that you may prove what is that good, the good that comes from God, whatever that might be, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly than one ought to think, of self. Be careful. ...but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every person the measure of faith.**

We're all in different places within the Body. We're all being prepared for different places within the Temple and we yield our self to that and we learn how to live and strive to live God's way of life in a way that's right and just with Him and leave the judgment to God and seek to live after His kind of love toward others.

We'll stop there. I don't know if there is going to be a *Part 4*, but that was *Part 3*, and in many ways wraps up the subject matter in so many ways.

But again here, it's a matter of learning about what God's righteousness is, to come to understand how God counts righteousness to us, accounts it to us. How blessed are we? We're not righteous. It's an incredible thing. We weren't, as Paul went through and explained here, we weren't called because we were obedient to His word. We didn't even know His word. We weren't called and drawn to Him because we were good. We weren't and we're still not. We're striving to become better, to become more at one with God. There's a long process there that God blesses us to go through.

We were called during a time of disobedience and we still have disobedience that we have to battle and to fight. Again, to understand about a calling, to understand the righteousness that God has toward us and toward His plan and purpose is a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful thing.