

There is a statement that's fairly well known concerning a question that Pilate asked Christ on Passover, that last Passover that he was on this earth in a physical body, in physical form. Pilate asked him, he said, "What is truth?" This sermon today is entitled just that, *What is Truth?*

For all who are in God's Church this is a question that must continually become more fully clarified in our minds because we're ever growing, we're ever learning, God is ever molding and fashioning us. That's our desire, to learn more what is truth because it's the mind of God, it's the word of God, it comes from God, and we want to be in unity and oneness with Him. So we're ever growing in that; at least that's our desire. That's a marvel to see and to understand, if we can grasp that, because God's spirit that works within His Church ever leads us more and more, especially within the Church. Because God worked individually or with individuals more on an individual plane throughout the first 4,000 years, and that's a marvel in itself, but they were worked with much more differently than what the Church has been worked with in the last 2,000 years in an organized manner with more knowledge, understanding that's been given to them about God's very plan.

The period of time of the vast majority of the 144,000 being called has been within the past 2,000 years and God has ever led His people to greater understanding and knowledge at various times throughout the Church but people have had to go through different things at different times depending on how God is molding and fashioning them. Because even in different periods of time God has chosen people out of those periods to mold and fashion them for a unique place in the temple. We're not all the same. We're not all fitting in the same place. We all have different places where God is molding and fashioning us to be in His temple and obviously that's going to change dramatically as time goes on throughout the Millennium and the vast numbers that are going to be added to the Body in a spiritual plane waiting for a time when they're resurrected.

Again here, it's an incredible thing to understand our calling, to understand how God works with us, and so there is that desire, again, to have truth in our life, to want the truth. We are a very unique people, especially at this end-time, because of everything we have gone through in the Church. So as Christ said in **John 17:17**, it's recorded there in one of his prayers to God, as Christ was praying to Him on that Passover that we just spoke of, he said to his Father, **Sanctify them through Your truth**. That means to set them apart for holy use and purpose. That's what sanctify means, set them apart for holy use and purpose, and that's God's purpose. Our desire is to be sanctified, and if we understand that process it's a matter of being able to come to repentance, to be able to repent of sin, to be able to be forgiven of sin. That's a major portion of what it means to become sanctified, because God will not dwell in sin and so our desire is to be cleansed, our desire is to, as the example is given in scripture, to wear white raiment, clothing, and then

God will work with us. As He works with us He blesses us in our growth and our spiritual growth, and it has to do with His word, His mind, His life that we're able to share in more and more.

We're very unique because there has never been a time in 6,000 years where anyone has ever been able to share in more. Never. This is incredible, what we've been blessed to have.

Again, this matter of being sanctified through the truth is awesome as it works in our life. We grow at different rates in our life. We grow in different ways in our life. There are different things that, again, that God molds and fashions each one of us for or into. This, again, sets us apart from all others. The truth of God makes us unique in the world. You can't give it to anyone else. You can talk to different individuals at times about it and some may have interest at different times and they may have a seed planted that God will use later on at some point in time, but it has to be in God's time when He begins to truly open up their minds for more understanding, for more ability to grasp and comprehend.

Let's turn over to Revelation 3, because the Church, in the last three eras of the Church, testifies to this truth about the history, the three eras, if you will, to the truth of an experience that we have had through time here that in many ways began with Mr. Armstrong's calling at the end of the era of Sardis that this matter of truth is an incredible thing, of how it works in our life, an ability that God gives us to see it and to understand it on a spiritual plane. He has to give it to us. We can't have it any other way. Not only does He give it to us He has to maintain it within us. That means we have to continue to stay close to Him if we want that and desire that.

But anyway, it's good here to go back to the history of some of the things that have happened in the Church and to grasp what God has been doing over these periods of time because after Thyatira, which was the longest period, well over a thousand years, an era within the Church, the Church went through all kinds of things through history and migrations at different times. Then we finally came to the era of Sardis, and basically a period of time that kind of coincides with the invention, if you will, of the printing press, the ability to print Bibles. With that came trouble, problems because there had never been this in the world. There never was a time when people were able to have Bibles, and they still couldn't afford them, but they were more abundant and they were in different languages.

It wasn't just one great church, as it was known at that time, who did most everything in Latin, now there were some things being printed in different languages, in German and English and so forth, and when those things began to happen and different ones who could afford those things, because they were exceedingly expensive, and they began to read them then different ideas and different thoughts began to come in about Christianity and those things that began to oppose then that great church, the Catholic Church.

There are different movements that we're aware of that took place through time but that coincides very closely then with that period of time that Sardis began, and because of that it didn't go well for the Church because that kind of ability or freedom that people were

experiencing by being able to read scripture and see that it didn't agree with what they'd been taught through this great church, they began to come up with all kinds of ideas, different ideas, and that caused the Church to become weaker and weaker through time. It's an incredible thing that took place. The Church actually became weaker and weaker and the Church began to lose truth.

By the end of that period of time we come on the scene where Mr. Armstrong in the 30's was called of God to begin to work, to teach, and to learn things that had not been given for a long time, or known for a long time. Basically we came to a period of time where we understand in the Church the Church had a particular name. Let's just read this about this portion of what it says about Sardis.

Revelation 3:1 it says, **And to the angel**, which is just a word for messenger. It really has to do with "Here is the message to Sardis." It's not about, specifically about an angel or a specific individual or anything along those lines at all. It's about a message that was being given to Sardis. So each one records this to the era. This is the message. So messengers, in that respect, as far as those who might have read these things, we don't know to what degree any understood even who they were. Some used to call themselves of Sardis, the Sardis era, so we don't know how much people, how much God gave to them to understand and know that this was a part of their fulfillment.

So it says here, **These are the things said by him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars...** Now, when you start going through a lot of these things to the different eras you realize very clearly that it's speaking of Christ working with the Church, the head of the Church. He is the head of the Church. There were things that were prophetic that were given starting with John, of things that Christ, from God Almighty through Christ because Christ is the one that leads, guides, directs, and teaches us, teaches the Church, works with us directly, and that becomes very clear as you read the book of Revelation. It comes from God the Father, given through Christ, in this respect, to John, and now to the seven Churches as well, the seven eras of the Church, seven periods of time.

So it says, "These are the things said by him who has the seven spirits of God." In other words, there are going to be seven eras, there are going to be seven periods of time. They all have a different spirit of how they are worked with, how they function, because a lot of it has to do with what they were going through and the kinds of trials and so forth and the way the world was at that time, especially the world of that one great church I mentioned a while ago and some of the things they experienced because of that. So their experiences through time changed and because of that they responded differently. People, human nature responds differently to different kinds of trials or hardships or difficulties of life. This is what it's discussing. This power then is, has been, was given to Christ to lead, guide, and direct the Church. These are admonitions and warnings of what's going to take place.

I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive... Well, we should understand what that is very quickly, very clearly. What is that name that you are alive? The Church of God. We belong to God. We are God's people. God calls us, God opens up our mind, and we bear the name of God. That's why when we start talking about the commandments and not taking God's name in vain most of the times when we first come along people only see this on a physical plane because it has to do with the words that come out of your mouth like a curse word or whatever. It goes way, way, way beyond that on a spiritual plane. When you're called how you live your life and how you respond to God, how you respect, honor, and desire that sacrifice of our Passover in your life and respond properly to that and repent of sin, and God using that to give His holy spirit to you then, this is what it's about, of not taking God's name in vain but utilizing that, what God has given to us, the calling that we have, the relationship that we're able to have with God the Father and His Son and with the Body of Christ, with the Church of God.

So he says here, again, **I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.** Spiritually they had come to a point where over all, speaking of not everyone, because it explains some of this, but over all you're an era, an age that you reflect what is dead spiritually. There is just no growth. On the contrary, you're losing the truth that God had given through time that they had during the period of Thyatira.

So it says, **Be watchful.** Now, the message to the seven eras isn't just to them; this is to all of us at all time because this is a message, but this is one that they really needed to be aware of, should have done, should have responded to—they had a responsibility in that—but they didn't. But the message then becomes clear, "This is what you should have done. You should have been watchful. You should have been on guard to hold on to what you had from Thyatira, but you didn't. You became weak. You turned away from it. You began to lose the truths that God had given to you."

So it says, "Be watchful," which means to be spiritually alert, spiritually on guard. We understand that. So again, "Be watchful." So that's an admonition for us at all times in God's Church. We need to be on guard, alert spiritually. That means to desire to stay close to God, to be alert to our weaknesses and the pulls around us because those are the thing that can take us away from God's spirit, from God, from the truth.

...and strengthen the things which remain. So at whatever juncture it was, whether it was at the beginning of Sardis or toward the end the admonition that was given to them was, "Strengthen what you still have. Whatever you were given; hold on to that and build upon what you've been given." **...strengthen that which remains that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember, therefore...** You know, this is a marvel when you read through this. Something prophesied 1,500 years earlier, given to John to record, God knowing the things that were going to transpire through the ages, knowing full well there would come a time when there would be the ability to read His word that was inspired by those of old and then to the apostles and so forth and recorded and that they would be able to read those

things and the impact it would have upon them, and the condition of the world and what that would cause with this one great church by other smaller groups popping up, teaching things that people tended to, if they had an aversion to that great church, if they had anything at all going on for them and they were drawn to some of these different groups out here that began to spring up throughout Europe, then there was all kinds of confusion, ideas that began to creep into what we refer to, I refer to as traditional Christianity.

So again, he says here, **I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard.** Again, another thing here that is important to remember for people in God's Church. Remember how you received and heard the word of God. Why is that so important? Well, because you didn't come up with it. God doesn't work that way as a whole. Very rarely. He worked with Mr. Armstrong in a very unique way to come on the scene at the end of Sardis where those three basic doctrines were out there, in that respect, and then God gave to him, very powerfully so, things to give to the Church, to restore within the Church. But again, God drew him to those things and began to reveal more to him for a purpose, because He had a great purpose in restoring truth to the Church through the period of Philadelphia.

But as a whole it doesn't work that way, any other way, where people just somehow because they open up their Bible all of a sudden they come to understand all of God's truth. The only time that ever has any impact on people's lives, maybe about the Sabbath or something someone has read, is because God is drawing them and He begins to work with them to bring them to His Church. I have visited many, many people in times past who began to be lifted up because they came to understand the Sabbath, because they came to understand some other doctrine. You think, "No, you didn't. If you came to the Church, if you're coming to the truth God is leading you there. He might use different avenues." I've known many people who have gone from one group to another group to another organization just to learn and to be shown what was wrong in some of the different ideas that are out there. They experienced those things and then God brings them to the Sabbath or brings them to the Feast period, you know, holy days to see and to understand, and then all of a sudden, they're ready for it. So God knows how to work with us and He works with us all in different ways.

So again, going on here, "Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard," because once God truly begins to work with us it's through the Church. The organization of the Church is very clear in Ephesians; God makes it very clear how He functions and how He feeds and leads and guides and directs in the Church. There is order in it. It isn't confusion. God brings us into unity and oneness more and more with them by whatever He's given to the Church.

Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard; and hold fast and repent. So it's up to us to hold fast to whatever God gives to us, to whatever He's opened our minds to see and understand, and to repent wherever we see something that isn't quite right, quite on track. Wherever He leads us, whether it be something personal we're doing or something we have

weakness in or having to do with His word, whatever it might be, God tells us to repent, hold fast to what is true, hold fast to His word, His way of life.

Therefore, if you will not watch, if you won't be on guard spiritually, in essence, **I will come upon you as a thief**. Now, a lot of this, that's why there has been a lot of confusion about some of these kinds of things, because that was a particular era that was over in the 30's. It came to an end. Those people weren't to live on until the time of Christ's coming. That's not what it was about. It was about the fact of what it means for anyone, especially over the last 2,000 years, if you don't watch and you're not alert you don't know when something is going to come into your life and you're going to come to a point where, candidly, you're judged. You're judged by what you've done or God isn't going to continue to work with an individual or allow them to continue on. That's why I think of the scripture, "Many are called and few are chosen." Few have been able to go through all these things. So for those who weren't able to be a part of being chosen by God, as being saying, "Now I know you," that the many, if you will, that Christ came to them as a thief. In other words, it's something they weren't thinking about, they weren't on guard.

It's like if you know (the example given) your house is going to be broken into you're going to make sure this doesn't happen. If you were to have, somehow have word somebody is going to come in at a certain time you would be prepared for it. You would have the police there, you would have things barricaded, whatever it might be, you would have it done. This is a warning: Don't let down. Be on guard spiritually. Be alert because there is going to come a time if you're not doing that you're going to be caught off guard, just like a thief coming and taking from you what you have, or what you think you have, as one scripture says. It's happened to a lot of people. It's happened to a lot of people since the Apostasy.

Therefore, if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. And that, basically, has to do with a time that finally God says, "No more. That's it. No more. You're one of the many who has gone by the wayside. You're not going to have the opportunity that you were called to receive." Now, if they haven't gone too far with destroying and perverting the mind, which most of the many never have, they're going to have an opportunity in the Great White Throne. But what a horrible thing to have to live in a human body again, and for a hundred years.

Anyway, **verse 4—You have a few names in Sardis...** So there were a few who came through all this, **who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white.** What's it talking about? It's Christ speaking. "You're going to walk with me in white," **for they are worthy.**

He who overcomes, and that word is the word that means to conquer. That's what the word is. To overcome is to conquer. It's about a battle. It's about a warfare. It's about conquering. **He who conquers** (he who overcomes), **shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life.** See, that's his responsibility. He's been given power over the Church, responsibility over the Church, and far more than that that we're going to go into some other sermons and talk about as well. Just happens that we're going to discuss some of that.

It says, **but I will confess his name before my Father.** If you do the right things then it's going to be clear before God. "Yes, they have come through this; they have done as You have stated and they're responding properly," and whatever it might be that's communicated. ...**and before His angels.**

He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches. So again here, to have an ear to be able to hear means we have to be close to God. The ability to hear these things at any particular time is a spiritual matter. It's a matter of God's spirit within us blessing us so that we can hear what is given on a spiritual plane, not something just by physical reading of a matter.

So Mr. Armstrong was called by God to be an apostle who would restore truth within the Church. There was a time that God knew toward the end of the age that this would be necessary. He knew what was going to happen when this new found freedom of the printing press came along and all these different organizations began to spring up, which has caused greater confusion because then when people heard about certain things of the truth then all these other groups that they had never heard before would say certain things and it was more easily to be drawn into those things and to be deceived by those kinds of things because before this they hadn't even existed. So again, it was not an easy era to go through, in that respect, on a spiritual plane.

Revelation 3:7. So Mr. Armstrong came along. This is the message, in essence, that was about him and about the work he would be involved in, the things he would do, about the Church during his lifetime. It says here, **And to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia write, These things saith he who is holy, he who is true...** Who was that? It's Christ; **he who is holy, he who is true.** He receives this from God. ...**he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.** That's a marvel in itself to realize what had happened, that God made it clear there is going to be a work that is going to be accomplished during a certain period of time, during Philadelphia, and there are going to be people who would like to stop it, who would like to end it, who would like to bring it to a close and it's not going to happen because he's all powerful, almighty with his Father. His Father has given him that power, that authority, that responsibility.

So he went on to say, **I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept my word, and have not denied my name.** So that's quite a thing to be said, and why is that? Why was that the product, if you will, of a particular era? Because of what God did. Because of what Christ did. He began to give truth to the Church. It's through that power that these things began to happen, God then giving more of His spirit to those individuals who received it as He molded and fashioned them. The more at one with God, the more we are, then indeed we're going to be able to have this greater relationship with God, a more insured relationship, if you will, than what people did during Sardis or even Thyatira - especially because of the printing press. *The Plain Truth* magazine, *Correspondence Course*, *Tomorrow's World* or *The World Tomorrow* or whatever the magazine was. I really don't care. I say I don't care because some have corrected that. It doesn't matter; you know what I'm

talking about. Doesn't matter whose magazine it was, *The Good News* magazine or whatever or the telecast that was out there and so forth, all that material, all the things that people had. You could write in any question to headquarters and a booklet would come out to you. Incredible! Any question that people had back then. You might have to wait a while. You might have to be patient but eventually you're going to get something that answers your questions, a booklet of some form.

Verse 9, he goes on to say, **Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie...** Who is that about? Well, it's the difference between one true Church and all the others, all the others that hate the truth if they come in contact with it. There were groups that hated Mr. Armstrong and the Church and the materials and they would print vast amounts of material against what was being said. Because they had to. They had to combat what was being said. It was like in the time of Christ. The Pharisees and the Sadducees, they were fearful of losing people to Christ, that they're going to start following him. I mean, look at the hundreds, and even of thousands that began to talk about and began to move in that direction. It was known in amongst the leaders of the Jewish people, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and so forth. They were fearful out to the degree that they really wanted to put him to death because he was such a threat to them, to their authority, to their power, what they perceived as that and how much they deceived themselves into believing they were right. They so hated the truth that they just believed he was a heretic, he was wrong, he was evil. Not all of them did but they got pulled into it and they wanted to put him to death and finally did.

So I think of when we used to have *Plain Truth* magazines that went out. It was organized throughout the United States, maybe up in Canada, I don't remember for sure, different areas where there were magazines that people could go into, different groups could go into, a chain perhaps or a particular store and ask for permission to put this magazine out there at the entrance. This was done massively, tens of thousands. I don't remember how many we used to get down in Houston every month that went out to three different Church regions around there, but the garage, when those things came in, tonnes and tonnes of magazines. Then that would get distributed to different ones who volunteered to go out and put them in racks on the stands and keep them full. There were Church organizations that would come around and pull the things out and throw them away, and sometimes they would take the racks and take them out back and demolish them so that you couldn't use them anymore. So it just shows the kind of hatred that was there for what was being said. Other groups put stuff out and it doesn't get treated like that but the truth does, the Church does.

So again here, he says, **I will make them (those) to come and worship before your feet...** Now, that's an awesome thing to say, Christ saying that, that they're going to come and worship before your feet. Why? Once you're in the God family you're a part of the God family, and that's an incredible thing to grasp and comprehend, what God says to other human beings. To come and worship before them? Well, that's what God says. That's what Christ says. **...to worship before**

your feet and to know that I have loved you. He was right. They're not going to know that until that time.

So whether that time be for some who live on into the millennial period? Because we still, you run into people out there who used to get *The Plain Truth* magazine. You run into people who knew about it, who watched the telecast, who knows the name even to this day after all that time, 1986, when he died. Incredible! And so whether they are some who live on into a particular period of time or those in the Great White Throne, when they're resurrected, they're going to still have to address this in their life. Anyone through time who has ever treated God's people wrongly, persecuted them and so forth, will have an opportunity to see, to know who they were, who they became.

...and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept my command to persevere... The King James says, "You have kept the word of my patience." It means a lot more than that. It means a lot more, the word does. It's a word "persevere." Basically, he's saying, "You've kept my command to persevere, to keep moving forward." You think of the very epitome of Mr. Armstrong, the very mind. He was driven. He drove himself, and talk about persevere.

I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. The Church is a part of the world, and the world. So he was spared. He didn't have to live through and see what happened to the Church that he'd worked so hard, so dedicated, in such a dedicated manner, to be a part of its growth, to see that, three colleges came about as a result of that, to see the things that had happened, all of a sudden come to a point of an apostasy, to see how people scattered and people he knew, people he taught, how they betrayed the truth, how they betrayed what he taught them. Because he taught many of them face to face at the beginning of Ambassador, speaking of the different ones there who were evangelists that betrayed him, and basically just betrayed God and Christ.

But again here, what an incredible thing. He didn't have to see all that. I'm so thankful for that. He's not going to see, either then, what comes upon this world that many of us think we want to see. We don't know what that's going to be like. Now, we're actually looking beyond that because we want to see the coming of Christ, we want to see his return, we know that we're in that period of time, time called the end-time. Mr. Armstrong knew that we were at that time that was coming upon the world but he didn't have to see those things that happened to the Church and he didn't have to see the things that are going to have to take place at the very end here. Of course, because of his age God worked with him for a long time, but still, it's stated here in this manner so that we can learn from this, so that we can profit by this and grow as a matter of this.

So, "I will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell upon the earth." In other words, it wasn't going to happen anywhere around the period of Philadelphia. That's just the bottom line.

Verse 11—Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no man take your crown. There was a time when some read some of these things and felt that they're a certain era and whatever because these are the promises they have. And yet, again, this is a message for all the Church, for all time. It's written about things about Philadelphia, but the reality is it's up to us once we're called how we respond to what God has called us to. The reality is, don't let anyone take your place. Many have been called and few have been chosen. Someone is going to take someone's place.

If there are 144,000 and different ones don't respond to the molding and fashioning given by Almighty God and they can't be perfectly fit into the temple that God's going to fit them into then they're rejected as a part of the building, at least at that time. Maybe later on in the Great White Throne they can be worked with, and so forth, and obviously have a part in the family of God, but not in the primary part of the temple that God is building right now and has been building for the last 6,000 years that's a matter of His government that's going to reign with Christ for 1,100 years.

Again here, it says, "Don't let anyone take your crown." This has happened to a lot of people even up to recent time.

He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write upon him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God. So again, Christ talking about these various things and speaking of his Father in those things that we have opportunity for. So it says here, **and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God.** So again, when does that happen? At his coming, the beginning of it, the beginning of the Kingdom of God reigning and ruling on the earth, the beginning of the construction of the temple being made manifest to the world.

It says, again here, **which comes down out of heaven from my God; and my new name.** So, in other words, we don't know fully what that means but it's about Christ.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says to the Churches. So again here, an incredible period of time that some of us were called to, to be a part of. Some were called in the period of Laodicea. Some didn't come until after those periods, until we're in a final time of counting, and I'll speak more about that as we continue on, because we're still counting, because we thought that, I thought and taught the Church to look at various things as far as periods of counting because they're fascinating when you begin to learn and see things that are taking place and you see things that there is no possibility of something being able to be accomplished save that God has done it. God does things meticulously so and you see a pattern that God reveals. Just like the 1260 period days, 60 period of time, 1260 days that are a period, end-time periods of time and to see how many of those we've lived through already and dates they come out on and other dates that coincide with them. I love numbers. I love periods of time like that. So to me it's exciting. Some of you don't find it as exciting, and I appreciate that, but it's awesome.

I know Mr. Armstrong, which we're going to read a little bit later of here, felt the importance of 19 year time cycles for him and what he was doing and how God was working with him. I don't feel that applies to me in the same manner, but it did to him in things he was inspired by, things that moved and motivated him, that he saw God working in his life in a certain pattern. There are certain things I see as God working in a certain pattern and I strive to yield myself to those things to benefit the Church as well.

But anyway, continuing on then. So we see a period of time that God restored so many truths to the Church. We had three basic foundational truths in the sense of the name of the Church, the matter of first tithe, and the matter of the name, the name of the Church and the Sabbath. So those three, the Sabbath, keeping of the seventh Sabbath not the annual holy days. God began to restore truths then to Mr. Armstrong to see and to understand things about the holy days and the like, and the Church began to grow, powerfully so, because God used that to give truth, to raise up a work at the end-time to accomplish an incredible thing, which has a lot to do with the building of the temple during that period of time as well.

So coming down through that period of time we came to another period. I know I've talked about these things but you really need to drink them in. You need to be able to grasp and understand things about God. The more you grasp and see how God has worked with us as a people, especially in the last three eras of the Church, the more inspiring that can become, the more uplifting that can become, and the more you can learn the lessons that need to be learned, because they're there for a great purpose. They are some of the greatest lessons ever taught in 6,000 years, what happened in the last three eras of God's Church. That importance, again, is not something that you just glean by reading. It's something that God gives by His spirit that you grow in over time, that you come to appreciate more and more of through time.

God knew what would happen to individuals who over a period of time, starting with the 1930's up to 1986, what people would do because of the advancement of technology, which was very powerful in all this. God knew exactly because He gave the technology for a purpose. He gave radio for a purpose. The Church. Because radio was so incredible in the world, an ability to communicate and it be in a home hundreds of miles away and turn in to something and listen to it, hundreds of miles away, being broadcast was a marvel for the earth, was a marvel for mankind. It hadn't been done before!

It's hard for us to grasp that because it's like, who listens to radio anymore? But for them, for man, it was so powerful and so important that the Church's name carried that with it, The Radio Church of God. It was The Radio Church of God before it was the Worldwide Church of God. Because the tool was so powerful in reaching out to people God used that tool to reach out to different ones in different regions of the world. Awesome to understand that! To have the name of the Church associated with that, that's how great it was.

We might look at something like that without that knowledge and think, "Radio Church of God? How corny can that be, really?" That's how people really, as a whole, look at that now a days.

They began to look at that in later part of Worldwide. They began to look at that and “Can you believe we once were called the Radio Church of God?” and they didn’t get it. They didn’t grasp the importance of why it was called that and why later because of that it became known as the Worldwide Church of God, because God began to raise up people all over the world, and a ministry. Mr. Armstrong had to address those things. Awesome history we have. Truly is. You live in incredible times to be able to look back at those things and to glean from it if you can, because not everyone can.

Again, I think of the magazine. What was it called? *The Plain Truth*. *The Plain Truth*. People make fun of that. Think, well, that’s what it was, God’s truth being made plain. Things that were being told to the world that even on a physical plane that people could grasp many things that were being said. Not with God’s spirit, because they weren’t being called into the Church, they weren’t being called to see everything on a spiritual plane, but they began to see certain things physically and to realize, yeah, there is no one else out here saying that and that really agrees with what the Bible says. It’s just that their minds weren’t yet being opened up to receive it all yet. They weren’t being drawn into the Church. What a blessing when you have been, when people have been, to be a part of that.

I think of people who were called as co-workers. Thousands and thousands and tens of thousands through that period of time. We have people today who are co-workers but they’re not in the Church because that step hasn’t been taken in their life for whatever reason. Perhaps in most cases God just hasn’t brought them to that point yet, but God’s been merciful with them, working with them, blessing them. I think of all those during those periods of time. Awesome to grasp what took place. To be able to see things that were true, *The Plain Truth* magazine.

It wasn’t until Mr. Armstrong was dead - this is going to become important later on when we go through it - that a tribute, if you will, and a remembrance of the things that God used him to restore began to be looked at and they began to be summarized into 18 truths. Now, the reality is, the truth is that there were many more. There were many things within the revelation of the holy days that could be put down as truths. If you really wanted to start counting them they’re the truth. But there were certain things that were listed that stood out, in that respect, that were recorded as such, which was good for the Church and for what would happen later on in the Church, the Apostasy. God inspired and blessed certain things to be done, to be written, to be recorded for the purpose of molding and fashioning different ones at different times.

So again, a matter of truth. What is the truth? It says God’s word is truth. God’s word is truth. Our ability to see it and grasp it is an awesome thing. But when we began to categorize various truths there were certain things that applied to different ones at different times that were more meaningful. I think of different truths that God began to give to us to understand after the Apostasy and they became exceedingly important for the Church. It’s also an important part of our history so those things are all recorded.

But sometimes if we're not careful we can get into a rut with that as well, and that's a part of the purpose of this sermon, this being *Part 1*.

Let's turn over 2 John. Because the reality is we should ever be seeking to be in the truth. This sermon really brings that out in a very powerful way that that's our calling, that that's what God has given to us.

2 John 1:1, it says, **The Elder unto the elect lady**, now, that's speaking to the Church, **and her children**. So at that time and those who would come later, her children, those who would benefit from reading this and other scriptures and so forth because the Church doesn't quit. It continues on. God continues to draw people into the Church at different times. At this time when John was writing it was to the Church and so it was addressing this "to the elect lady," meaning that which God has selected, has called, those whom God has called to be a part of the Church at that time, so he refers to it in this context as "the select lady," or "the elect lady," **and her children**, meaning those who would come later, **whom I love in the truth**.

Now, to me that's a beautiful phrase because we're able to love one another in fellowship because of the truth. We have fellowship because of the truth. You're here because of what God has opened your mind to see and grasp and comprehend. We're able to share in fellowship together because of that. That's why sometimes we're able to better deal with things in the world, relatives and others. I came to see a long time ago that those closest to me are in the Body because it's a spiritual thing. It's of the mind that goes deeper than physical ties in human life.

Now, we can have that desire, we look so forward to sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, relatives, different ones being able to receive the truth, but the reality is we can't have the same kind of relationship with them as we do with one another within the Body because in the Church we share something that is so much greater. It's age-lasting, if you will. It's true. It's right. It'll always be there as long as we have it and we'll have one another as long as each individual has that truth. So we are very unique in the sense of being a part of a family. It's a spirit family, a spiritual family, and that is incredibly unique. Doesn't matter who we are, where we are, what our background is, what we've done in the past, those things that are forgiven in our lives and God has brought us to this point in time, He desires to live and dwell within us and everything that's past is past, and this is our family. God is our family. Christ is our family. We have one another within the Body, the Church, that we're family. Those ties and that relationship is incredibly important. The series that follows this fits into that in a powerful way to drive that point home even more.

I was going to give a different sermon today, but I got an email from Wayne over in Australia telling me about something of one of the truths and I realized right then and there I have to give a different sermon because this needs to be addressed immediately. So I started to focus on this. So now I'm way ahead on sermons because this is going to have two parts to it, another one has three parts to it, and now I have the time that I really need that I don't have to focus on sermons

that are going to be given Sabbath by Sabbath that I can more fully focus on Feast sermons, which excites me. Anyway, I'm going to be able to get those done more quickly and have the time to do that without massive stress.

So anyway, this verse is beautiful, of what it's talking about here, "Whom I love in the truth..." Because it's only because of the truth that we're able to love each other. This is a kind of love that comes from God. It's not a philia love. That's what Philadelphia was known for. It was a fraternal kind of love that people had. They still, many, obviously, had God's love working in them, but the body was known for the philia, if you will, the fraternal kind of love which is beautiful when it's done right, when things are proper and so forth. So a unique subject in itself.

So it says, **Whom I love in the truth, and not only me, but also all those who know the truth...** In other words, we're all able to have this relationship. All who know the truth are able to have it and have this kind of gratitude and thankfulness that we're able to love them in the truth. Because, you see, when people leave, when they start going astray you can't love them anymore with that love. God can't love them with His love anymore. I've explained those things. It isn't that God doesn't love everyone, God desires that His people, that His children, especially, obviously those whom He's called will hold on to, hold fast to what He's given to them.

But that hasn't been the case over time, and certain things begin to pull at people and they begin to value other things more highly. They begin to cheat God, to rob God, to lie to God, to lie to others, begin to live lives that are a lie. There are all kinds of things out here that pull at people, that have pulled people away. You know, sexual relationships, a relationship with someone else they know is wrong, and so they go ahead and do it, robbing God from tithes and so forth. It still blows my mind how people can do those things and yet it's like, "Don't you grasp that God knows you, He sees you, and you're just cutting yourself off."

Because we still have people doing those things in the Church after everything I've said. There is still lying going on and cheating and robbing God! You're not going to get by with it. I don't get it. I do get it, please understand. I do get it but, see, the point in time comes sometimes when I have to disfellowship people or suspend them, and we just had another one suspended recently - disfellowshipped actually. Just goes on and on and on.

So nobody in the Church now can love them in the same way anymore because they're not in the truth. That's what this is talking about. We can love each other with God's love in the truth, when everyone is in the truth. If you're not in the truth, if you're lying, even that you hurt yourself because you're not receiving the love you otherwise could receive, you've not receiving the love from God. So God has loved us by calling us. He's poured out His spirit upon us. He's given us His Son and His Son gave himself to us and we're able to be forgiven of our sins. And if we don't treasure those things and keep fighting with those things then what happens? Well, we're no longer able to receive that love in that family because it's a spiritual thing. Agape is from God and we can only experience it and have it to the degree that God's spirit is in us. If that begins to go by the wayside the truth goes by the wayside. They're right there. They're together. You can't

have one without the other. It's a matter of God's spirit, the truth, the word of God, the mind of God, the love of God. It's all from God. God is the source.

Whom I love in the truth, and not only me, but also all those who know the truth because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever. As long as we're in this Body, in the Church, and then spirit in the family of God, for all time. It's what this is about, this life can be in us, we can experience this life. We're able to have this, it abides in us, that which is forever, in essence.

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Joshua the Christ, the Son of the Father, in the truth and love. That's the way they are. The truth is the word of God, it's the mind of God, it's the being of God. It's in Christ and it can dwell in us and be in us.

Verse 4—I rejoiced greatly that I have found your children walking in truth. That's a beautiful thing. When people don't walk in the truth it's not beautiful anymore because that hurts the family, it hurts relationship, it can pull others away from the truth, which it so often has in times past. Go back to 2013, different ones did certain things and others were pulled away from the truth. Some almost got pulled away from the truth because of those relationships. Incredible, what can happen. So it says, in essence here, it's a beautiful thing. I rejoice in see people walking in the truth. That's what's being said here. Well, that's a beautiful thing to see God's people walking in what is true, holding on to the trunk of the tree, holding on to those things that have been given and delivered to them. **...as we received commandment from the Father.** We are to walk in the truth. We are to hold on to it, hold fast and so forth. That's what it's talking about.

So again here, it's an awesome thing but again here, we're talking about the word of God, the mind of God, the being of God that we're to hold fast to and recognize what it is.

So again here, our history also shows us that when we come to see that we are not fully walking in the truth but have come upon error then we have to change. So it might be in your own life personally; there are things that we grow in and don't even see in ourselves until a later period of time, and then all of a sudden we can start seeing things on a spiritual plane in our mind and our being that God exposes, reveals that we have to work on. That becomes an incredible thing. You can't see everything in yourself. God sees it. He knows what's in us, but He can't show everything to us all at once because we're incapable of dealing with it with this mind that we have. It's only with God's spirit working in that mind and transforming it can we grow to points where God can then begin to show us things that are more deeply imbedded in our life, that hold us in bondage. God's desire is to bring us totally out of it, but it's a journey, it's a direction we move on a continuing basis as we respond to God, but we'll never be out of it in this physical body. We'll never be fully free of this until we're no longer in this. Truly. Then we're free once we are able to receive of a spirit life, the mind of God forever in us. Incredible!

So again here, there are things we just don't see. Just like all the sermons you've heard over the past year, there have been things, prayerfully, that everyone has been able to see in their life that they couldn't see before that they've had to repent of. Now, certain things we have been able to see and just realize the need to make sure we're on guard and continuing to work on them, but there are periods of time when God will show us something more deeply embedded in this mind that's more on a spirit plane because it has to do with the thought process, how we think, the intent, the mind that thinks in a certain way. What is it that causes something to come out of our mouth that's wrong in the first place? Well, it all starts in the mind. The clearer we can see some of these things that are embedded in this mind it's an awesome thing, because then you can begin to deal with it, with God's spirit, to overcome it, to conquer it.

So whenever those things happen individually we come to a point where we are to change and we are to address it, and so forth. So again, because it's a desire to be in the truth, to be at one with God. Something that disagrees with God, and we all have things in our minds that disagree with God. Our carnal human nature is a disagreement with God's way. It's a process growing and seeing ourselves for what we are, it really is. This is the process whereby, and it's only in this manner, that we can have, come to have greater unity and oneness with God, to become more at one with God. That's how He's working with us. It also happens within the Church, has happened forever, as the Church has grown, whenever it grows, whether it be through Mr. Armstrong's time, through Philadelphia. Laodicea was a different matter because the Church began to lose, began to become weak, began to become lethargic, began to become lukewarm, lifted up with pride and so forth. I'm not sure why I didn't read those verses. I thought I had that written down here, some about what actually happened.

But anyway, that period of time was a unique time for God's Church in what happened but then we came into a time past the Apostasy which it's a period of its own because it's in a final phase. I marvel of what was revealed about 2 Thessalonians 2 because there is a lot there. When it starts talking about don't be concerned by certain ones telling you various things concerning the coming of Joshua—is what it's about; it's about Christ's coming—because it won't happen, it's not going to take place until something happens within the environment of the Church. And basically, as we've done in sermons in piecing all those things together it's about the end-time and the end-time would not begin, Christ's coming and the countdown, if you will, to that wouldn't begin until a specific moment in time. It was about the Apostasy in December of 1994.

From that period of time we have been in that final phase of God working with the remnant, working with a people, and that's what this story is about, of things we've had to address as well, what we have gone through and come to see and come to understand. We've had to address a lot of things. God had us address little things, what I consider a little thing, but still big out there in some of the scattered groups, like Petra. There are people who still think they're going to go to a physical place of safety when everything starts happening.

It's like the rapture. You see these stupid stickers, you know, "Where are you going to be when it takes place?" Are you going to be whisked away and if you're in the plane and you're the pilot all the rest of the people on that plane, they're dead? Tough cookie because he's been whisked away to some safe place where he's not going to have to suffer and they're going to watch the suffering of mankind for that period, whatever that period of time is, and they're not going to have to be in the midst of all that.

Well, the thing of going to Petra wasn't really too much farther away from that. It's just that we had a physical location and felt that the Church was going to be protected in a physical location. No, we're not going to be protected. We came to understand that that is about God Almighty. It's not about a physical location. That is our safety no matter where we are in the world, at what time we're in the world, and God has called us to deliver us to all that He's called us to, whether it be the Millennium or whether it be a part of the 144,000.

So anyway, we changed those things. We began to look at various things in the very beginning of the remnant Church, if you will, things that God began to show to us when we came upon them. But anyway, we'll come back to some of the things here as we go along.

But it's always a desire to come into a greater unity and oneness of God. There is nothing more beautiful, nothing more exciting to be able to see and understand more the mind of God, the being of God. There is nothing that fills my life more than being able to do that and have that opportunity.

So again, from the beginning of the era of Philadelphia Mr. Armstrong had to continually address error that existed in God's Church and he did that from the very beginning, from the very outset, began to show, preaching to people who were a part of Sardis, but they didn't want it. They especially didn't want the holy days. He had to continue to preach and God began to open up doors of different ones coming and different ones being called to hear the message out in Eugene, Oregon, and slowly but surely the Church began to grow. Incredible, what took place as he continued to preach what was true. As God began and continued to reveal more and more, more and more people were drawn to it, but it became very clear Sardis was over, something new was started; God is doing something new within the Church that hasn't been done before.

Even as the Church grew, God's Church grew in greater and greater truth as God worked through Mr. Armstrong to restore truth within the Church and all were judged according to whether they would receive the truth that was given. I think of a lot of examples. The biggest one to me is Pentecost because people were judged if they jumped ship and decided ahead of time what his decision was going to be, because a year ahead of time he said what he was going to do. He was going to study and research into the subject, have the theological team as well dig into the subject, give him materials and so forth, and he was going to make a determination about the day, whether it was Sunday or Monday that Pentecost should be observed. There were people who jumped ship. They couldn't wait. Some condemned him for not doing it immediately, for making the change. Other's condemned him, thinking "Why could you?" because you know why. This is a

rut, can happen when people think that “This is absolute truth.” All that’s absolute is from God and we don’t know everything that’s absolute yet. We are not perfect by any measure as human beings and God allows us to experience that.

So the Church for many years kept it on the wrong day, on a Monday, so we could begin to learn this great lesson that there are individuals because they believed that was the truth and that God wouldn’t have given to the Church through Mr. Armstrong anything at that particular time, “If we have Pentecost... I believe Pentecost. I’ve kept it on a Monday and God wouldn’t have given it to me unless it was the truth, so I’m keeping it on a Monday.” There were two evangelists went with that. Two evangelists and a lot of people within the Church followed them. They weren’t going to accept a change. There were people on the other side because he didn’t do it quick enough they started keeping it then on Sunday and they went by the wayside and went off on tangents and teaching other things as time went along, farther and farther away from the trunk of the tree because they cut themselves off from God’s spirit, from the Church, because they didn’t wait on God’s apostle and the method by which and the means by which God has always led His Church, and what He did back then. Same exact thing of what He gave to Sardis, “Remember through whom,” basically, “and how you learned this, where and how you’ve learned this.” Because that’s how God works.

People were judged according to whether or not they would receive what came to them when it was given and the Church lost several hundreds if not a few thousand people, if I remember rightly at that particular point in time, back in 1974.

2 Peter 1:12, you don’t need to turn there. That’s why I’ve come to really embrace this verse and I think the Church has too, where he says, **Wherefore, I will not be negligent to always put you in remembrance of these things**, the things he had been talking about and giving to them, **though you know them and be established in the present truth**. Because that’s what we’re judged by, what we have at any moment in time. God could have given Mr. Armstrong whatever He wanted to at any moment in time. He could have told him from the day that He revealed that there was an annual holy day called Pentecost what day of the week it was supposed to be kept on. But He didn’t for a great reason, for the very thing, the test the Church went through later.

We’re tried and tested by those things as to how we think, how we function, how we work by what we’ve learned to any moment in time, and so today.

So probably the most, again, notable day within Philadelphia, again, concerning this matter of the present truth, again, was that holy day of Pentecost and the wrong day for observing it. We’ve learned much, I’ve learned much because we can learn from our history and see how God works. We come to understand how does God work. So by the time the Apostasy came along there were certain questions that just seemed obvious. The only reason they seemed obvious, again, was because of God’s spirit, because of God’s blessings. This is God’s Church, what happened? How could this happen? A third of the people going back to what they were called out of? A third of the people just giving up? How could this happen in God’s Church? There were questions that needed

answering and as God blessed us with the answers we came to understand where we were and why it happened.

So now the reason we're going through this sermon is because we need to come into greater unity with the truth, truth that comes from God. God's Church must always address error when God reveals it so that's what I'm doing, because I'd be amiss if I didn't. That's why I knew immediately when I got that email; I realized this has to be addressed. It's God's way. It's a part of a charge that God has given to us to walk in the truth, just as much as what happened back then, just because something isn't true does not mean that God is not working in a specific way or through a specific individual or whatever it might be within the Church. There are important lessons to learn from all this.

So one of the truths listed in the 57 Truths needs to be addressed; it's going to be removed because it's just not true. It's not true so I have a duty and a responsibility to address it, to tell the Church. It's like, a truth that's not the truth? Then how can this be God's Church? How can you be God's apostle? How can you be a prophet? Well, things you'll have to answer.

So again, one of the 57 Truths needs to be addressed because it's not true. Now, we're still going to have 57 Truths now. Awesome. It's not going to be plus 1 anymore. There's going to be 57 and I find that interesting; it's the truth about our High Priest being Joshua the Christ. But there is one listed as Truth #47. It's going to be taking a bit of a change because just move everything down the scale there and it is what it is. What's true is true and something isn't, it isn't and it needs to be seen for what it isn't.

It says, and this was changed before, too. It said something else at one point but it had to be addressed because at that time as God's servant I believe that God was doing something differently about the period of time known as the Day of the Lord and we still don't know what it is. I'll just be real candid with you. We do not know how long it's going to be. At a particular time under certain conditions it would have been a certain length of time. Right now we just don't know and God's not showing it. For whatever reason God just isn't showing it. I have to live with that. You have to live with that. It's like during the Apostasy, why? What are the answers? You know, in time God gives them. Just like here.

There are things I have learned as a result of this sermon overnight that I haven't seen before, that I haven't understood to the degree I see them now. And to me, I'll be candid with you, that's exciting to me because it helps us to draw, it helps me to draw closer to God, to become more excited by what He's doing, how He does things, and the way He does and to be moved by that. Because you can only be fuller, richer spiritually when you draw closer to God. That's just a part of a process of our lives.

So #47 says: 47 (26) God has revealed the actual duration of the prophetic "day" when the seven vials of the Seventh Trumpet (Seven Last Plagues) are poured out upon the earth. That "prophetic day"

consists of the “fifty days” that lead up to and are finally fulfilled in Christ’s coming in Pentecost of 2019.

Well, obviously that’s not true. We’re past that. Obviously it didn’t happen. So the reality is just accept the reality of the truth. It wasn’t true. I am not infallible. I am not, as one calls themselves and different ones who have come down through a period of time since about 325 A.D., infallible. They consider what they say as infallible. There is no human being that’s infallible. I have errors. I have mistakes. I have things that I have done wrong and so do you. There is no human being who is perfectly righteous. There is no human being that’s perfect. I hope we understand that because it’s a simple thing. Mr. Armstrong wasn’t perfect. I’m not perfect. Isaiah wasn’t perfect. Daniel wasn’t perfect. John wasn’t perfect. Paul wasn’t perfect. Peter wasn’t perfect. They weren’t always perfectly right. Certain things that are recorded, they’re perfect because it’s the word of God. God gave it for a particular purpose, for a particular reason, to go through time without error. It’s just that people haven’t understood what they are.

We don’t understand much of what is still written in the Bible. There are things you can read about. There are things in the Old Testament you can read and you think, what on earth is this talking about? You don’t know and you can’t know. And candidly, there’s a lot of it not going to be revealed until much later on into the Millennium. It’s not going to be revealed right away in the beginning of the Millennium. There are things written there that will be shown and revealed that are even about those periods of time that we don’t know about yet, and in the Great White Throne that we don’t know about yet. God has given us a certain window of being able to see things, and we see things a lot more clearly than anybody at any time. But we don’t grasp it all and there are still things we’re wrong in that we don’t totally understand yet. God will show that in time. But for what is present, for what we do have, for what God has blessed us to have we embrace that and God holds us accountable to do so. It’s just the way it is. Sometimes it’s a matter of simple things. Well, I don’t even want to go in there. I’ll go into some of that later on.

So it’s a simple thing to say, hey, it’s not true. Nothing to feel bad about. Nothing to put your hand over your mouth and gasp. It’s just not true. Nothing of shame about it whatsoever, it’s just not true. I don’t have a problem with that and I hope no one else does, because the reality is if you’re not close to God you’re going to have some problems, and you have to examine that in yourself. Think of the sermon I gave last week and some statements I made. Now I know why.

There was a great occasion, if you will, within the Church where Mr. Armstrong had to address a matter of error that we had considered as truth. I came in in 1969 and there were certain things that I looked at, that different ones were looking at at that time that had a big impact on our lives. But it wasn’t the truth, not about Pentecost. It came later. That didn’t come until 1974 when that was addressed. There was something addressed much earlier that needed to be addressed and we’re to learn from those examples and grow from those examples and I hope we understand that more once we get through the sermon, the sermon series.

So Mr. Armstrong addressed this in the only truthful and wise manner that he could have done. It's beautiful. It really is. Because he just addressed it truthfully. He just addressed it for what God was revealing to him, for what God was giving to him at that moment in time. Candidly, I'm striving to follow that same example.

Now, I've gone through some of this before but I didn't grasp as much as I do now. That, to me, is an amazing thing because God is the one who works with us and molds and fashions us and just like I mentioned earlier, there are things in each one of your individual lives that sometimes you don't come to see until maybe a certain trial or test you've gone through. Then all of a sudden you see something in you that God helps you to come to detest, candidly, to repent of because you realize how ugly it is. If you don't have those experiences in your life ask God to help you to experience it because it's a matter of growing spiritually because we have to address those things when they happen in order to come into greater oneness and unity with God and that's a beautiful thing. To become stronger in God's spirit, that's what it amounts to.

Anyway, here is what Mr. Armstrong had to say. I'm going to go through this and read it and make comments that apply to me now, to us now and to the Church now because, candidly, I understand more clearly now how God's working with me in a way that I have struggled with some of this since I wrote the first book, *The Prophesied End-time*, and now I see things because I have had no one to tell me, no one has come down to tell me (God has His way of working with us), no one within the Church could tell me how to do various things, what to do in various instances, and so the reality is I look to God and always have, and Christ, to lead, guide, direct me, to reveal to me the things I need when I need them, and I continually refer to the fact that, "It's Your Church. It's Your people and I don't know what to give Your people. At any moment in time I rely on You to give me what they need." God has blessed us in that. That's how God works.

So here is the Personal, a Personal from Mr. Armstrong that was in the magazine (here is what it was called), *Tomorrow's World*, because I had it written here, *Tomorrow's World*, of February 1972. So this is after I'd been in the Church for three years, this came out. I remember it very distinctly, the timing and what came out at that particular time and I find it very inspiring to go back.

The headline, some of the title here underneath the main title, it says, *The 19-Year Time Cycles*. Now, here again, he was very moved by this. He didn't have anyone to tell him how to do his job. He didn't have anyone telling him you're to do this; you're not to do that. God doesn't work with the Church now in the manner that He worked with it in the first 4,000 years, where He went and spoke individually to Abraham, to different ones at different times or sent messengers, angels to speak to them. He doesn't work that way. He hasn't worked that way primarily within the Church over the past 2,000 years.

That's why I marvel at this factor, this method, this process we refer to as faith. God gives us the ability to believe various things that He has given to us in His word. His word wasn't established in the days of Noah or Abraham or Moses. It wasn't established. Most wasn't even written. Then

we went through the time of the kings and king David, and then the prophets of old, and then to the time of Christ, and then the disciples, the apostles began to write and God then had that which was recorded and written for us to benefit from, but primarily the Church then has been worked with as a matter of faith, as a matter of God giving to them the ability to know and to see what is written in this book to whatever degree He's given it. The present truth at that moment in time, whatever they were given to be able to see, then they have to make choices and through God's spirit their ability to see what was given becomes a marvel.

That's very much about Mr. Armstrong's life then, what happened, and then what has happened in the period of time of the remnant Church.

The 19-Year Time Cycles – What HAPPENED January 7 (another subtitle here or lining here, and then it says) – *What My Commission IS!* So he's going to address those three points under the title of this in the *Tomorrow's World* magazine from the personal he had.

It says, SIGNIFICANT THINGS DID happen on January 7th! I don't look at any 19-year time cycles in my life. They have no meaning for me. Do you know what has meaning for me, when it comes to certain timing? It's what started, and candidly, my job primarily started with the period of time that followed the Apostasy. That was the end of a period of time and a new period began. That's when God began to work with me and that becomes very personal to me, and what God began to reveal and give to the Church. I didn't understand it for a long time and then finally began to understand there are periods of time here that are absolute. 1260 days to Pentecost and the Church being established and what God said the protection He would give from Satan for a period of time, that 3½ years, and then the periods of time that have followed that have led up to some of the greatest trying within God's Church leading up to 2012 from 2008, to mold and fashion things within us we don't grasp yet.

You're not going to know it until you're there, and then you're going to be able to look back and say, "Now I know why, because we had to be molded and fashioned." We had to be molded and fashioned differently than people during Philadelphia or Thyatira or Ephesus because we're in a different part of the temple. That's God's job. We just have to yield ourselves to the process and strive to be faithful and hold fast to what He does give to us.

This did have an impact on him then, 19-year time cycles. Some SIGNIFICANT THINGS DID happen on January 7th! In this Personal I want to tell you what happened — but also to make PLAIN and CLEAR: 1) What my Commission IS, and what it is NOT!

He was struggling with this. He was learning about those things too through time. He didn't have anyone telling him, "Your commission is..." but he came to understand it through scripture and in time he began to see what God was doing and then this began to ring true in his being in a powerful way and he knew it by God's spirit in his mind. He came to understand what his commission was and he knew what it wasn't. That's why I marvel what he read as a part of his

commission and stopped at a particular verse and didn't go on. Because the rest wasn't about him, it was about us.

The second thing he points out: 2) What are the criteria for determining through whom God is carrying out the Commission which is HIS WORK on earth today. So he's going to address some of those things and talk about some of the time cycles and something that has to be addressed in the midst of all this that's pertinent for us as well. You know, it's just like things we can read in scripture at times, like we went through recently. We've gone through many series where we've seen that there are things, whether it be the time of Hezekiah, whether it be the time of Gideon, there are things that at certain times that fit us so perfectly, that happen on a physical plane that apply to us on a spiritual plane that we can learn from. So was this that happened to Mr. Armstrong because it's pertinent for our time as well.

So he went on to say, Thousands know that I, personally, have been called and chosen for a very definite commission in God's service. But I have definitely NOT been called to be a PROPHET — except as the word, Biblically used, does sometimes refer to a minister or speaker — one who proclaims the Gospel of Joshua the Christ.

But anyway, just going through some of this now. This was what he was addressing in his life at that particular moment in time and he goes on to talk about it and later on he did give a definition more so, that I referred to in that book, the first book, the black one, *The Prophesied End-Time*, because I was struggling with it. I have been struggling with that ever since because I've had no one to tell me so I have to learn through time and experience and God shows then in time and God's showing some things right now that to me are exciting.

So he says, Emphatically I am NOT a prophet, he understood that, in the sense of one to whom God speaks specially and directly, revealing personally a future event to happen or new truth, or new and special instruction direct from God — separate from, and apart from what is contained in the Bible. Now, candidly, I haven't either. I have never been given anything that's different from what is here. It's already in here. There is nothing different that hasn't come out of here. You say, well, what about the Thunders? When I first talked about them and wrote about them I tried to explain they're in the Bible. God let me say them but they're in here. It's not something new. It's not something different than what's not already here, it's just God revealed they're already in here, okay?

So yesterday I was blessed to be able to come to grips with some of these things, to see some things I haven't understood in the same level or same plane as I do now. I'm trying to share those things with you.

So he said here that he wasn't given anything that was as new truth. So you say, well, you've been given new truth. We have from, what, 21 on. They're all in the Bible. I haven't written things that are recorded in scripture. I haven't written things that are going to be a part of scripture. Those things were done a long time ago, and therein in an important distinction to be

made about different jobs and responsibilities God has given some of His people to lead, guide, and direct His people.

So I've learned a lot through what Mr. Armstrong had to say here. I thought I understood everything he wrote but I didn't grasp it because I wasn't there yet, because there were some other things we had to go through in order for me to learn more deeply what we have to come to, which we're there.

Anyway, so he said he hasn't been given anything that's separate or apart from what's contained in the Bible. So you go back and look through all the truths there and see if you see something—if you do, let me know (please, send me an email)—that's different, that's not in scripture, that's not from the Bible, that's not from God's word already. Say, well, what about some of the things about certain things that are going to happen in the end-time? They're still going to happen. They're becoming clearer, God has made it clear different ones are going to be involved, how they're going to be involved, what's going to take place. They're going to happen still. There are things recorded that are going to happen still. Now the timing, specific timing of various things, don't know. That's up to God and He hasn't fully given those things anymore. I don't know. I really don't know.

We've gone through a period of time where things were so absolute up to 2012, and after that, that's why we began to think about the extraordinary 4½ years, things that God has taught us, things we've learned from, and a lot of that because we haven't known. That's just a reality because we want to know. Then if we're not careful we forget about everything else we have that makes us who we are.

He says, And I have never claimed to be. It's a simple statement. He went on to say then next, THERE IS NO SUCH HUMAN PROPHET LIVING TODAY! And I'm not that kind of prophet either. God hasn't given me to write things that are going to become a part of the Bible. God hasn't given me things that are different, from what have not come out of the book, in that respect, about things that John has written about; it's a matter of being able to see and discern various things that John has written about and so forth, but it's not a matter of something different. It's adding to in the sense of building upon what we have. They're there. It's there.

It's like the things God gave to Mr. Armstrong to understand about the keys of David, to understand things about what happened to Israel, to understand what happened to the 10 tribes and the scattering that took place and to grasp some of those things that fit into things that we need to grasp for the end-time and why things are going to happen in the U.S., and then Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and then western Europe and on and on it goes, to grasp and comprehend and see those things in a clearer way. God's been continually revealing more and more of that by inspiration, but they are things that are in here. They've always been in here, recorded in here. But to understand them, to see them we haven't. It's just like various kinds of doctrines. You can't see and know certain things until God shows them to you. But they're in the

Bible. 2 Thessalonians, the great falling away, the Apostasy, we didn't know it until we had it, and then God helped us to see, ah, it's started. That's what this is all about. But it's all come out of here.

He went on to say, The Bible is the written Word of God — and, for our time now, it is COMPLETE! Now, this doesn't affect you in the same way but just to share this with you, this gives me peace because of what lessons can be gleaned out of this that Mr. Armstrong goes on to explain. I can't give that to anyone because I just can share with you what I have experienced. He's sharing what he has experienced and how God worked with him in working with the Church, and it's not a simple thing. That oftentimes then affects the Church because as God works with the Church, leads and guides and directs, there are things that we have to address in our own lives that we don't know and don't understand until God shows it. We want to know, we want to show, but can't until God gives it.

Never have I believed or claimed that God reveals to me new truths not contained in the Bible... It's good. Go back and look at all those truths, from number 4 on up to 21. Now, he didn't put those together like that fully. He referred to a lot of different truths before things were done but he didn't put them numerically in an order like what came out afterward in the Church once Mr. Armstrong had died in 1986. But the Church benefitted from that because, oh, yeah, these are truths. It benefitted me later on when God began to show look at what He's been revealing that's in this book that we haven't grasped and understood to the level we do now. The numerical part of that to me was exciting.

Now, that meant a lot to me as well. Not 19-year time cycles, but that meant a lot to me and gave me encouragement. It's kind of like what God told Gideon, go down there and listen and hear what's taking place and come back and then run down this hill with whatever number, 300 people, whatever it was, and do things in a certain way. It gave him courage. He told him be strong, be encouraged, and he was after he heard some of those things. So all of us react and respond to things in different ways so it's good to be encouraged.

Anyway, so he says, Never have I believed or claimed that God reveals to me new truths not contained in the Bible — in addition to, or apart from the Bible. Now, the reason this is so important is because it's good to understand how the Bible was written and the jobs of certain individuals, responsibilities they had and how they were looked upon. Because within the Church we've had a difficult time because God hasn't shown those things. He hasn't really revealed those things to us to grasp them and understand them. I think that was probably one of the hardest things when we came to a point in the Church to address God's working with me in a way that's different and unique and it's not the same as what was done before, and to use the word prophet to people who are in the scattered Church, this is going to be like, "Yeah, right," you know, because it was so foreign to us. It was like the first time we had a Feast of Tabernacles. That was a hard thing to do. What do we do? Where do we go? There is nothing there. So all we can do is strive to do the best we can with what we have at this point in time. So we did, because we tried going elsewhere and it

wasn't good. So that's how you learn. That's how God works and molds and fashions us sometimes, is by going through different experiences to convict us of what is true and what is right, as He's doing now.

And so he went on to say, In a special group festival held at Belknap Springs, in Oregon, in the autumn of 1951, I was shocked — and so were those there — to hear Herman L. Hoeh, then recently graduated from Ambassador College, say with conviction, as if with authority, "Mr. Armstrong IS NOT A PROPHET..." Now looking back, Mr. Armstrong should have been shocked because what Herman Hoeh did was wrong. He had no right. He had no right to get up and speak as a minister teaching something, saying something that didn't come from God through his Son through his apostle. I hope you understand that. Anything new that comes along, anything different has to come in that way. If it's not it's done presumptuously, it's done out of time, maybe true even, but it's wrong.

That man has done more damage to God's Church because he was undercover for so long, sat at Mr. Armstrong's feet, taught people at Ambassador College, most ministers, numbers of ministers who went out, and he taught them sick, perverted, distorted things. He started right here. He started right here. As soon as he graduated from Ambassador College he began to be used in a distorted way by a being. That's what happened.

God allowed it. God allowed it for a great purpose. He is the one who began to teach 14/15th Passover in Ambassador College to large numbers of ministers, to where when we first were a part of a group called United, nearly half that ministry believed the same thing, taught the same thing when they could. But they didn't so often because, well, they couldn't until they had what they considered to be a bit of a freedom now to do things that they really believed all along but couldn't do. Think, what hypocrisy. No wonder certain things happened in the Church the way they did and why God condemns in the Old Testament the manner He does, the ministry. Those things rile me up because it's a matter of God's people.

So he said, Herman Hoeh said, Mr. Armstrong IS NOT A PROPHET — but a man called to the same kind of commission as the original evangelists and apostles of the first century Church of God — to proclaim the Message — the Announcement — the Good News of the Kingdom of God — the Message that Christ brought from God and taught His disciples. So, truth mixed with truth, but from a lie, if you understand what I'm saying.

So he said here, I shook my head...that he would make that statement. I KNEW WELL I was not a prophet. Mr. Armstrong was a humble individual, in that respect. He was willing to receive that and have that said, not yet really fully grasping what really took place, because he allowed certain things to take place. Anyway, I don't want to get into this too long.

I simply knew I had been called to proclaim Christ's Gospel of the Kingdom of God — to get a job done — but I had no illusions about being an evangelist, or an apostle, or anything more than my own part in proclaiming and publishing this Great NEWS, as a witness, to as many as I could reach. I had no vision then of a worldwide ministry.

We're going to stop there today. Maybe there'll be three parts to this. That would be awesome. I always love it when there are extra ones ahead of time.

Anyway, enough to begin to mull over, to think over, because this has an impact in our lives because we all have to come to be able to see certain things that God reveals and shows and to measure ourselves. What do I see? What do I think? What do I believe and why? And that's always been important in God's Church. So here is another one of those particular times that even though we've gone through some of this in times past it's more refined now and it's more revelatory as well at the same time, which I find inspiring.

So with that we'll have *Part 2* next Sabbath.