

In this current series entitled *To Build For God*, with this being *Part 3*, the question being asked throughout this series is what kind of a house (dwelling place) is in your heart, in your mind, to build for God, to build to God?

We'll read the last verse of *Part 2* where we ended and quickly move on from where we were. But I wanted to hit this verse again, couple verses anyway where we ended last week. It's in Colossians 2.

Colossians 2:6, mentioning that again here in verse 6. It says, **As you have therefore received Christ...** That means a lot just thinking about different words. Sometimes if we just pause and think about a word it can really hit us in a unique way. We can grow in understanding of something. There are those moments in times when we think about specific definitions or what it's telling us rather than just reading rapidly through something. We tend to do that with scriptures. We go through them too often too rapidly rather than really thinking about what is being said and what we can learn from it.

It says, **As you have therefore received...** Well, how have we received? You look at your life. That's a time to think about your own life and the process that God has blessed you to receive, first of all in calling, and then on and on it goes, your ability to repent, to be forgiven by God. Incredible, what God has given to us.

It says **As you have therefore received Christ Joshua the Lord, so walk in him.** We should understand all those things, what that means to walk in him. It means we better be in him because he's in us. The only way to be in Christ, to be in God, is if they're in us. Then we can walk in this way of life through their help in our life.

That's how the process works as far as living in, dwelling in God, in Christ, and then dwelling in us. It begins with this process there of what we receive from God, the opportunity to be forgiven of sin, and if we strive to live what is right, repenting of sin, then God's giving us that help all along the way. It's something that has to come from God through the power of His spirit. Then if we respond to those things then that's what it means to dwell in them. It's our choice.

That doesn't just happen in life. To dwell in God, to dwell in Christ isn't something that's owed to us. It's something that's lived and it's lived by how we do, just like it says here, "to walk in him." To live what they said to live. On and on it goes.

Verse 7—rooted and built up in him... Again, admonished by different words.

I've always marveled at some of these things throughout the New Testament—Old Testament as well—but even more so the New Testament. Different words are used sometimes saying exactly the same thing as other scriptures are but it's with a different focus. God wants us to focus in on very specific things in our calling so we can learn from that, so we can grow from that. So it is here. We strive to do that in sermons we go through.

So, "rooted." Well, what does that mean? When I think of that I think of huge trees that have been there for a long time, or even a short time, it doesn't matter; they're both the same, because the reality is in life we want to be able to endure to the end, and if you don't have the right kind of roots in your life, you're not rooted in what you've been given, you're not going to be able to continue to sustain life, to be able to grow in life. You know, the root system is where all the nourishment comes from.

So do we understand what we're to be rooted in, in God's way of life, to walk in it, to live in it, to do those things that we're able to receive then of God's help, and God's favor, and God's spirit in our life?

Again, “to be rooted in.” I think of when a windstorm comes along and you see gigantic trees blown over just because of the winds. They’re not able to stand because the root system, something’s happened to it oftentimes; it’s become decayed or it’s gotten old or whatever.

Even though we get old physically we shouldn’t be getting old spiritually. That should be something we grow in because it’s going to be forever. We just should become stronger and stronger as time goes along, not weaker, not to a point where we’re blown over.

When I think of that I think of all the people I’ve seen go by the wayside. We have that witness in the Church of God. Everyone that’s here has known of people who are no longer here because they weren’t rooted in this way of life. Something came along and they weren’t able to stand. That’s what that means.

So it goes on to say, **rooted and built up**. So it’s the building. What are we building to God, for God? So are we engaged in the building process? God is. He called us for that purpose. He works in us. He desires to transform us in every way. But we have to respond to that. That’s what this is all about, we have to do things. We have to build unto God. We have to be involved in our own life if we want to be a part of what He is constructing, what He is building. All choices. All choices. Choices, choices, choices.

...**built up in him**. Again, there is no other way to live this way of life except to do it exactly the way God shows us. Too many have tried to do it on their own. Too many have relied upon their own abilities, their own talents, what they think is talent. You know, their own ability, their own ability to see things that they think they see in scripture upon their own understanding.

It isn’t about intellect, this way of life. I marvel at that. God has to give it to us. There is nothing we figure out. There is nothing we can come to know except that God give it to us. So people wrestle with that some times, not too much, as much as they should, and they’ve gone by the wayside.

So we’re ever to be learning in these things and always to be reminded of these things, of what it means to be built up in him. There are specific ways to accomplish that and God has shown us how to do that.

...**and established in the faith**. I love this, “established in the faith.” God gives us that which we’re able to believe, and we can’t know it unless He gives us that ability to see, to believe, and then we make choices. When something is in the mind and God has given us the ability to see something that we otherwise haven’t been able to see then we make choices. Are we going to do it? Are we going to implement it in our life? Are we going to be a part of this process?

That’s where so much of the building comes in. Am I a part of this process? Am I working to build upon what God has given me to build? He wants me a part of this. He wants each one of us a part of this building process.

That’s what faith is. Faith is a matter of making the choice to live by what He’s given us to see, to believe. It’s a beautiful thing, it really is. Then the more that we live by that way that He’s given to us, that truth, the more it becomes a part of us.

Even from the very beginning, the Sabbath, in time the Sabbath just becomes a part of our being. The holy days become a part of our being. We wouldn’t think of doing things on God’s Sabbath day, on the seventh day or on annual holy days. We better be focused on those days than any other day on God and God’s way of life and what those days mean in our life. They’re unique to our life, but we’re able to live it and it just becomes a part of us. It’s a beautiful thing, it really is, that God has blessed us to experience, because it is something we experience.

...**and established in the faith**. I love this word as well, this word “to become established.” It literally means “secured.” So everything it just said here, “to be rooted and built up in him,” is how we become secured, fully secured in this way of life, able to stand, indeed, but “set” as the

word means, “firmly set in place.” That’s what it means. “Secured; fully set in place.” We should all desire that with all of our being, to be firmly set in the place that God has given us to be because He has a place for all of us. He’s called us all to be in place. Awesome!

...as you have been taught. From the very beginning we’re taught, whether it be through word, through hearing, through whatever means, we hear this way of life or read about this way of life. When we begin to be drawn to the truth or as we grow through time. We still have to be taught.

There is something here that we can’t just get into this book, the Bible, when God begins to call us and all of a sudden come to understand the things that are said here. Because a lot of things are just written in here to be complicated. That’s the reality. There are things written in parables.

I think of writing in the book, writing the book here. I was going through a particular flow and because I am accustomed to speaking to the Church and because all the training and so forth in the Church, especially when you’re going through things in Revelation, there is a flow in Revelation that goes back and forth in various things - subject matter, time, and the like.

So in part of the book, in one of the chapters, I was going through that. I was following that flow and explaining that, and for someone who had a background in the Church they would understand a lot of those things just because of that flow. Some, though, might even become confused. But obviously, in a scattered Church that was scattered, there would be ability to perceive some of those things, but that’s been my habit pattern, to speak in that particular form or to explain things in that nature as it goes through scripture.

Well, anyway, to make a long story short I was through with the chapter, happy with it, it had been edited and sent it off to the last editor (I won’t mention his name), and he hit it pretty hard explaining to me that people in the world, people reading this, it’s going to be difficult for them because they don’t know what we know. I’m accustomed to speaking to people in the Church, as a whole, and writing in that fashion as well, thinking about the Church that was scattered. Well, they’re so weak anymore they wouldn’t grasp that either. They just wouldn’t be able to they’ve gone so far away from the truth.

Anyway, when it was all said and done, I realized, yeah, this is out of order. The flow is out of order because the best way to explain it is in a matter of an order. I was doing it more as it is through Revelation and realized that, wow, you know, something you take for granted, the things you know, but you realize when someone else is hearing it they can’t follow that.

So when I started putting it in different organization of the whole thing it’s like, “Uh, duh.” So that’s why chapter six became chapter seven, chapter seven became Chapter six, because even the chapters had to be changed around.

So it’s an amazing thing in our lives sometimes going through these things that we’re able to learn and learn how to communicate God’s way of life. So going through some of this reminds me of all that. And anyway, it’s awesome what we go through to learn what we have to learn, and just like it talks about here then again, becoming established, secured, fully set in place of what God has given us to believe. That takes time. There is a process in that and we have to be taught it. So we don’t just learn it. God, His spirit, is involved in our lives.

So even people in the world, I don’t care if they read a book or read something else or hear this, they can’t. They won’t have any interest because they’re not drawn to it because God has to do that. God’s spirit called us. He has to call us to the truth.

You know what? That’s been one of the most exciting things to see that’s happened since the Church had an apostasy. God does the building. Organizations might come together, might have a lot of money to do a lot of things with, but if God isn’t in it people aren’t going to be called to the truth. They might be called to an organization that’s totally physical in nature (not that God’s doing it), but they feel this in their mind, “Oh, I like that,” or “I like what I heard.”

Somebody understands about Israel and they see something physically about a physical migration of people and think, "Yeah, that makes good sense. I can see that." That's a physical thing.

So just like in the world people are drawn to different organizations, different churches, but it just happens to be that the roots of so many that are out there, it's in the truth. That doesn't mean that people are able to see it.

That's the way it's been in our lives within the Church. You can know what God is doing by just looking. We saw a period of time in 2005 and 2006, and then especially by the time we got to 2008, a bit of a process of different ones being drawn to the truth. Now, that's God's work. God has to do that. Then you realize God is using this, God is drawing individuals, because He has to open up the mind.

So no one comes into God's Church spiritually unless God draws them spiritually, because He has to give the truth in the mind. So there is so much that can be learned by looking at that.

That's why you know right now God isn't calling people. He hasn't been for a long time, as a whole. Here and there a little bit, but very few, very few in the last 12 years, 10 years at least. So you can learn from that. That's what God does. That's God's job, it's not ours. But we have to be there to strive to serve, to strive to be ready, to give the best we can for whenever God determines to do that. That's why we realize there is going to come a point in time here, and sadly, God has made it very clear that for most in this world it's not going to be until people really begin to be shaken up.

Look at this coronavirus thing. I've made some comments about it some time back and people are, "What are you saying?" Basically, I was saying we have to wait and see because we don't know. Because I was moved by the fact of how many people died in a year time, more than automobile accidents, in the United States of just flus, and we don't get all hyped up about that and yet it gets passed around and thousands and thousands and tens of thousands of people die every year. So we had to kind of wait and see. Are they telling us everything out of China? Which it appears very clearly they haven't. So we're learning from it slowly. It could be a horrifying thing.

But God also gave prophecies about things of how people would run, be afraid of things that they didn't have to be afraid of, in one respect, if you understand what I'm saying, on a normal plane. It's going to be because it's kind of a sign of the times, the age we live in.

But when you think about some of this it could be much worse. The percentage of deaths could be much, much higher from those who catch it. It seems to be exceedingly easy to catch. So it's unique to our time we live in. But again, people are shaken up by it to a degree, in some places a lot. Because I think of China. I think of how it's starting to affect trade. There are companies saying, "We are hurting, and if they close down much more over there we're going to be hurting a lot more." So just in trade alone, because so much comes out of China and people rely on those cheap products being made and then having them over there. So a lot of companies doing a lot of business. It's starting to affect some things. Well, sooner or later it's going to cave in, but not until it's God's time.

But I'll tell you what, if you're watching it ought to be sobering. Any time. Literally, any time things can break loose. But it's going to be God's time.

But sadly, what I was getting at was that people in this world really aren't going to begin listening to God, have a desire to hear what is true. God has made it very clear that people aren't going to be drawn to what is true until they're able to be shaken to the core of their being. Because this is the time spoken of throughout the Bible of a time of judgment, God's judgment, which means the execution of judgment because of 6,000 years, the way mankind has lived. It's just that mankind happens to live in this age of technology and this is the time that these things are going to be implemented, done, accomplished to fulfill a great purpose that God has.

I was struck in one part of the book writing about certain things and struck by the fact that after each war, WWI and WWII, speaking of those, there were people in nations who really had a desire to do something because they saw the beginning of technology. They saw things in WWI that had never happened in any other wars, as they had little airplanes flying around in the sky, you know. I keep getting visions of this Red Baron type thing with the biplane type thing. They knew what this could mean for mankind, that this is just the beginning and it can add mightily to the horror of war. To have devices that can fly through the air that aren't able to be easily reached. Anyway, so people had a desire, let this not happen again. So they made feeble attempts.

But as time goes on people get weary and they're not as motivated and a younger generation comes along who didn't experience those things and the horrors of those wars and things begin to change.

Then we have another great war. After that one there the technology was even more so at the forefront, especially because of what happened in Japan with two. Two little bombs, little, small, puny compared to what came later, just a few years later that mankind had the ability to do. I think of that one that went off that the Russians did—the greatest explosion ever that put things in the atmosphere that went around the earth as it did. You don't hear much about it but incredible power that can be unleashed on mankind that's horrifying.

So sadly, until some of those things happen, until people are shaken to the core of their being to where they're really scared - not the coronavirus; that's just a little fear - but when they're really, really scared because they see massive death, then they'll start listening. Awesome, the age we live in.

Anyway, I hope we're sobered by those things and keep abreast of things that are going on. Sometimes I'm not able to keep up in certain things in the news because you have to do a lot of digging and don't have time for some of it, to a degree, depending on what's going on in a particular week.

But I think of last night just going through a list of things that had been sent about things that have happened this past week. You think, man, this world! In one week, these crazy things that just keep going on and on and on.

Well, it ought to stir us to respond more to God, to be more involved in the building process because we want to stand, we want to be deeply rooted in what God's given to us, because of getting this close and then losing the opportunity, which some are going to lose. Think, why? Why not fight for this? God's given us the ability to see it so we have to make choices. Are we really going to fight and keep fighting day by day for what God has given us to hold on to? The roots, hold on to it with all of your might, with all of your being. That's a personal choice. No one can make it for you. You have to determine that and decide that between you and your God.

As it says here then, **as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.** So that's where we were. Again, going through some of that. I hope I didn't go past that.

Now, continuing on; let's go on. Boy, it's just going over the last part of last week.

2 Corinthians 5:17—Therefore, if anyone is in Christ... Well, who is? Well, we know we are. We're blessed to have that opportunity. **If anyone is in Christ they are a new...** It says "creature" in the King James Version, but it's the word that means "creation." ...**they are a new creation.** Like we read earlier in Colossians as well, in the last part there, that it's incredible what God is constructing, what God is building. It's referred to as a "creation made without hands" meaning it's not done of man. God is doing it and only God can do this creation. It's a spiritual creation because it's taking us from the point of begetting to the time we're able to be born into God's Family.

So only God can do that, Him and His Son. It's God's creation and we're blessed to be a part of an ongoing creation. I love that when you look at that, a physical creation that started 6,000 years

ago, mankind put upon the earth, and we're the product of its purpose, of the purpose why He made us physical, carnal human beings with carnal, selfish human nature. Then God begins to open our minds and we make choices from that moment on and judged accordingly. It determines whether or not we grow, whether or not we're able to be rooted and built up in Christ, in God.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ they are a new creation; old things have passed away, or are passing away as it really is. Old things. Thank God! I want to get rid of the old. You know, the old person that was buried at baptism, those things are passing away, and not only that but even of time spent of 6,000 years, all that old garbage of mankind ruling himself, that's passing away too and God is making things new. So for the next 1,100 years there is going to be a continuation of a creation that God has purposed before He ever created anything - into the billions potentially. Awesome to understand those things that we're blessed to see and to understand, that God has given us the ability to see.

God making all things new, a new creation. It's about what He originally desired to create from the very beginning, His family. Beautiful.

Old things have passed away, or are passing away, again; know that all things are becoming new. Do we know that? In our life are things becoming new? Are we continuing to grow? Are we continuing to overcome? Are we maturing spiritually?

Now all things are of God. So again, going right back to where we started in the beginning of the series. It starts with God. Everything begins with God. In our calling it begins with God. What an awesome thing to understand that God is the one who looks upon billions of people on the earth and He looks at you and said, makes a decision, "I'm going to call them. I'm going to love them early." Because He's not loving the world. He's not giving His love to the world, which means giving them grace, mercy, the blessing of being able to be forgiven of sin, the blessing of the truth about His Son, the blessing of truth, period. He determines to call different ones out of this world.

Truly, we really can't grasp the depth of what God has offered us. We can strive to appreciate that, and the more we grow the more we will come to embrace that, but it's so much bigger than us, than what we can see. God has to give us the means and the ability even through His spirit to see that, to grasp that, to appreciate that, as we read earlier, to be able to abound in thanksgiving to God.

Now all things are of God who has reconciled us unto Himself. It's God's desire because that has to be a part of the process in order to bring us into His family, for the reason we're made physical in the first place. **God who has reconciled us to Himself—How?—by/through Christ Joshua,** because of the beginning process of him that we're going to observe here next month. Month after that. We're still in February. Getting close.

But awesome, the Passover. He's our Passover. Just what we understand about Passover is a marvel. I think of the Church that lost so much understanding leading up to an apostasy and afterwards, some who they don't have that knowledge anymore. Just the beginning; you have to have the Passover before you can continue on in your ability, if you will, of being able to respond to God as far as what the rest of the holy days picture. You can't come out of sin unless you have a right relationship with the Passover, unless you understand the truth about him and everything surrounding what he did and how he did it.

To think after the Apostasy one organization, probably one at the beginning there that had the most, in the sense, in their favor, of being able to see certain things and do certain things, come to find out that half the ministry, nearly half the ministry, came out in time, believed in a 14/15th Passover. So what did that mean for the Church? Disaster! Continuing disaster, continuing heartache and hardship, because with that kind of teaching, with that kind of belief by the ones who are teaching you, they are already away from God. They already don't have God's spirit dwelling in them because they rejected things, they turned away from God, they turned away

from the things that God clearly gave to Mr. Armstrong, that he gave to the Church, that he taught.

So when they by their intellect turned from that because they intellectually came to a point (because it wasn't done by God's spirit), of deciding something else that was not true, what a horrible thing! Because that means they're teaching other false things as well - things that aren't balanced, things that aren't true. So how can you grow in that environment? You can't. Eventually, like a famine, you begin to die. You just begin to die. In famine, people die. They become weak. They're no longer strong.

So how blessed are those of you who had that opportunity as well to be shaken out of that, to be blessed to come through that process? To realize once again God looked down and He chose a very small percentage to fulfill His word of what He said was going to come to pass anyway, that there would be a remnant, a small remnant to the end. Incredible!

That's why I love that scripture about being plucked out of the fire. Like a branding iron you're plucked out of the fire. God plucked us out of the fire, otherwise, we'd be where everyone else is. It wasn't because of anything we did that was good and right and whatever, it's just that God had a purpose so He called us to that purpose, just like He did when He first called you.

Old things have passed away; know that all things are becoming new. All things are of God, okay, who has reconciled us to Himself by Christ Joshua, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. How blessed are we? Just like I mentioned about Passover, that we still understand, that we not only understand it but we see it more deeply than we ever have. If you really want to get down into the nitty gritty of it and you start looking at the Hebrew words and what they mean you can have incredible ability of knowledge that God gives to be able to see how far off base everyone else is because they just don't see those truths.

"Bane ha erebyim"- between the two evenings. Just that one there alone that's used twice. "Bane ha erebyim," between the two evenings. It took going through all that and finally God bringing us to a point in time where He said, basically, He's like, "Duh! What two evenings are we talking about when we talk about Passover or when we talk about Atonement?" Which it makes very clear then in scripture, between two specific evenings, that's how we keep the Sabbath. Yeah, duh! So it's a way to count time.

So it's a simple thing, but people have made it hard by intellect, by human intellect, and screwed things up because of their reasoning. That's always blown my mind. You go through things in Deuteronomy and the farther you get away from it the worse it gets. I'm talking about thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands and tens of thousands of people who once sat in Sabbath services just as you are today with God's spirit, who had access to God's spirit, and in time, when these things begin to work on the mind, if you hear them from someone preaching them and they're off base, what's going to happen? You're going to go off base because you're not being fed what is true. You can't help it. So we learn through that process.

"The ministry of reconciliation" - Passover. What's the truth about Passover? And if you don't hold on to the truth that God gives to you, you know what? You lose the ministry of reconciliation because the one teaching you is teaching you a bunch of crap, a bunch of lies for their own gain to satisfy or—I don't even know how to describe this—their own ego, their own ability of seeing things, being raised up, puffed up.

I'm amazed at what God has said about those kinds of things. Rich and increased with goods. Puffed up. Rich. It means rich in how we think about ourselves, our own ability to understand. We don't understand diddly-squat except for what God gives to us, and if we don't all understand that we're in trouble. I believe we understand that today far more than we ever did. Everything comes from God. Thank God, thank Christ for what they've given to us and helped us to hold on to, because we didn't do it on our own.

...that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. God's great desire, to reconcile the world, to be able to forgive us of sin, to have a means whereby we're forgiven because we're always going to sin. That's the point. You'll always have sin in your life because of your selfish, carnal human nature. We all have it. Selfish, carnal - I hate selfish, carnal human nature. I loathe it. The only reason we can see that is because we see a different nature that God has, that Christ has, and the more we're able to drink of that and have that in our life the more we see what is good and right and want to hold on to it and the uglier then the other thing becomes, and that's good. That's a process we grow in.

...that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Because once He calls us, whenever our time is, whether it be now, in the Millennium or in the Great White Throne, we have the ability to become something different, a part of His family. First having to live in this body for a long, long time so that we can come to acknowledge and admit certain things in our life and to come to see things about God that we understand that are not possible any other way except that God give them to us. Always understanding it takes a spirit of humility and meekness to go through this process. The day we lose it is the day we lose God.

...by not imputing their trespasses to them. Passover, Passover, Passover; he paid it. What an awesome thing to understand. Then it's by our knowledge of that and acceptance of that and in gratitude for that that we realize we can be forgiven of our sin because of what he did.

...and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation. God has shown us how to be reconciled in a lifelong process of change and growth and conquering and overcoming and making right choices.

"Has committed unto us," the word means "placed upon." To place upon us, to set upon as a responsibility that goes with it. To place upon us, to set upon us with the responsibility that goes with it. So we're all responsible. Something has been committed unto us—that's what the word means in the Greek language, in essence—something has been given to us and it's how we use it, it's how we treat it, it's how we think about it. Because that responsibility goes with it. If something in power is committed unto someone there is a responsibility. God has committed unto us His word, the word of life, the truth.

Again, are we responsible with it? Are we fearful of straying away from it? Are we fearful of adding to it and taking from it?

Verse 20—Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ... We know what that means. Whatever we do, wherever we go we're to be different from people in the world. We're to reflect something that's different. We know that they don't understand it or see it, but they better experience it. They better experience it on the job and how we respond to difficult times, to things that people might say, or whatever, and just realize like Stephen did, like Christ set the example of there because Stephen followed that example, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing. Don't commit this sin unto them. Don't..." So it's that attitude of desire for others and an understanding that they can't help what they're engaged in, what they're doing.

Now, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did exhort you through us. Again, being taught, how we receive exhortation. **We implore you in Christ's stead.** So he's not here, he's saying, but we are for a purpose that God has put us there, as Paul is talking about here, that this is how you learn. You have to be taught this. Then we're to live it and be ambassadors then. It's just a way of life. We walk in Christ. We strive to live what is right.

We implore you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God. So, in other words, he's saying this is his desire for you. This is God's desire for you. It's Christ's desire for you. This is what he would tell you, "Be reconciled to God."

This word "reconciled." It's a compound word with one meaning. It's "to change," to change to God, toward God, for God. That's our life. That's what transforming is all about, being transformed in the mind, this change, repenting, change, change in the way we think, change in

our life and how we respond to things, change in wanting to get rid of sin because we need to change, we need to get away from that. So change is constantly something before us. We need to change! That's what it's talking about here, "Be reconciled," changed to, if you will, "build unto God." Build for God. Change takes building. It takes work. It's up to us to do that, to be a part of that.

For He has made him to be sin for us. Incredible! Very early on he knew why he was there. He knew what was before him. He was going to have a ministry, 3½ years, and then toward the end knew what he had to go through, knew what Isaiah said, that he was going to be so beaten that people wouldn't even be able to recognize him by appearance. He was going to be beaten, skin ripped off of his body. Incredible!

He has made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made, again, this word means "to come into being," so that something different can change. There is something we're to come into being different from what we are. Awesome!

...the righteousness of God. That's what we're to change toward. That's why we can't tolerate and ignore and allow sin just to exist in our life. That's why we've got to fight against it. That's why we've got to cry out to God and be honest with God about the sins we see when they pop up, and just acknowledge. He knows what we're doing but we have to be able to acknowledge it before God, to be honest to God. Because if we can't be honest to God, we're not being honest in a lot of other things in our life, and we're most likely then in that process deceiving self by some other means, whatever that is, of how the creepy, carnal, human mind can actually think and work sometimes in reasoning - which isn't reasoning at all, just perversion.

Sin is perversion. That's against God's way of life. It's opposite of God's way of life. Anything that's different and opposite to God's way of life is just perversion, it's sick. Carnal human nature, selfishness, is perversion as far as God's Family is concerned, that which will never be in God's Family.

Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, in Christ and in God. So we have to always be in God and sin cuts us off from that. It cuts us off from that process, that relationship. That's where repentance has to come in before God, because as soon as sin comes in we have to ask God for help to repent, in our repentance, to even to repent, to ask God to help us to have a repenting heart, a desire, because we want to be pleasing to God. He wants us to have that kind of a spirit, that kind of a mind that wants to repent, that wants to see the sin, that wants to see the error. Then once you see it, boy, what a responsibility because then you've got to make some choices and you know you've got to have the help because you can't do it on your own.

That's what Israel was all about. They received the truth of God, but they couldn't do it on their own. No way! It's a spiritual thing. The source of that power comes from God Almighty.

Then it goes on here, **2 Corinthians 6:1—We then, as workers together...** Awesome! Beautiful! So whether it be collectively in what we're doing as a Church, we're in this together, we're all striving against the same thing, our own carnal human nature, but workers together with God and Christ because they're working. Their desire, their work has always been for those drawn and called, and when they're called to work with them in their life. Then it's up to us to respond as they do.

We have to make the choices because God doesn't force it upon anyone. He doesn't make anyone. He didn't make tens of thousands when we came up to the Apostasy. He let tens of thousands, all of us, experience what it means as a Body even, to be spewed out of God's mouth, to be separated totally from God. Incredible!

We then, as workers together, implore also that you do not receive the grace of God in vain. So again, we go back to this thing of when God looked down, called us, and made a choice, "Now I'll love them. Now I'll give them grace. Now I'll lead them to repentance, then I'll forgive them.

Then I'll begin to dwell in them and they'll be able to dwell in Me." It's a beautiful thing Even before that, obviously, "And then I'll give them the impregnation of the spirit." Powerful!

So much of what we're talking about today is Passover and Unleavened Bread season. Amazing.

Romans 5:1—Therefore, being justified by faith... Beautiful! Justified by faith. We're not righteous. We're unrighteous. We're to grow in righteousness, but we're not righteous. We have carnal human nature and every day it's selfish. You can't help it. Every day you're selfish. It's just the way you are. That's the way I am. It's just the way we are, a spirit, an attitude, a mind that fights against, that resists God. Incredible. I don't even know how do you express that? Such an extreme. Yet that's who we learn, that's how we can grow. God's given us that method. All of that method requires what? Choices, choices, choices, choices and being responsible for those choices.

That's why it's best to go before God and acknowledge all "the you know what" that comes out of our minds in our life, in our thinking, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," which is a bunch of you know what.

Therefore, being justified by faith... God gives us the ability to believe and see what is true. Choices to live by it. It's not just the choice that you do it and somehow you're going to have God's love in your life because you wake up and you're going to do this and that and rely on yourself and your own ability. It's knowing that you better go before God and ask for help to do it because that's the only way it's going to get accomplished, to be convicted of it, to live it, to grow in it. God has to be at the forefront of this process of growth.

So because then we choose to do it that's what faith is. Beautiful. I hope that's deeply embedded in our mind, in our thinking. We're given everything that we have to believe and then you live by it.

Then, as it says here, **we have peace with God through our Lord Christ Joshua.** Isn't that an awesome thing? Though we understand our sick, sick, sick human nature there is a peace we have with God because we realize, "I'm cleansed of that. I'm forgiven of the sins and I've been given the ability to know truth and I want to live by it. That's my choice. But then I find this working in me at times that fights against that and resists that and I've got to fight it because I want something so very great. God. I want to build unto God. I want God. I want to be pleasing to God." So, choices all along the way.

That helps you to fight against sin. That helps you to resist temptation, to turn from, to do something contrary to God, whether it be in something that verbally comes out of our mouth and the way we respond to something because our nature tends to be selfish and protective and tries to paint a picture of something better than what it is (because it's really just a big pile of you know what by itself).

So we make choices all along the way, "I don't want to be smelly. I don't like that smell. It stinks." There is a reason why we get rid of it and don't keep it around, you know. We get rid of it. We flush it, whatever; bury it, whatever, used to be a long time ago. But you get rid of it because you don't want it in your tent, you don't want it in your house. Anyway, I don't need to get more descriptive than that I don't think. But it's about seeing self and what we're like.

So again, we have peace. What a beautiful thing. How do you describe that except that you live it and you know what it is in your own life to have a peace before God, a peace of mind, that kind of peace that God gives to you. Even though we know we have that nature we don't mourn over it, we don't become disgruntled by it, we don't get to the point as some have done where they have said, literally, "I'm tired of hearing Sabbath by Sabbath how bad I am. I'm going to leave." What they're saying is, in time they talk about or do, "I'm going to go some place where they don't talk like that. I don't want to hear that about myself because I'm not like that. I'm better than that."

Isn't that horrible? You resist God so much so that you think you're better than what He says you are? That you don't believe about the piles?

...by whom also we have access by faith. Access to God Almighty. What a beautiful thing to know you can go before God any time of day and night and to know He's there, He hears you. He wants to hear you, as a result of faith, because God's given us the ability to believe what He said about this. We believe it. "I know He wants to forgive me of my sin if I'll repent. I want to repent. I want to be closer to Him. I want to be filled with His holy spirit. I want to dwell in Him." So again here, incredible process here.

...by whom also we have access by faith unto the grace wherein we stand. We're able to stand. We're able to stand in the truth. **...and rejoice in hope of the glory of God,** that we can become more like God, godlike in how we think.

And not only that, but we glory in tribulations also. It doesn't say when, because a lot of times we don't do it as we're going through it. I was having a conversation before services here about certain things we go through sometimes in life, and until we go through some of those things we learn through that process and then we're able to look back on it and see what we've learned as we responded to God and made some of the right kind of choices in our life. That strengthens us. We realize there's a growing process that we go through and so we can be thankful for the hardship of whatever it was we experienced.

That's why I've made comments many, many of time I wouldn't trade any hardship of anything I've ever gone through for anything. Because, you see, once God calls us and works with us there is a process we go through in life that if we recognize what's taking place He's always there and He'll use whatever it is we experience, whatever it is we go through.

It doesn't mean that He brought it upon us by any measure, because the vast majority of those things we just bring upon ourselves because of normal human life and time and chance of things that happen in the world, in many cases. But then whatever those things might be because of choices we make, sometimes good and sometimes bad, whatever it might be there can still be difficult things that come our way just because of that.

When we go through then a difficulty and a trial there are things sometimes we don't grasp until later on. Glory in tribulations. Most of the time when you're suffering you don't tend to think that way, "Oh, I love this. I'm so glad I'm here. I'm so glad I'm experiencing this." Well, you know, that's just not human nature. "I like to suffer!" No, no we don't. We don't like to suffer.

Afterwards, though, you see what God has done through the process to teach you because God uses those things as opportunities to mold and fashion us. So often the things we go through are the things that God will use to mold us, to knock things off of this stone that we are, to make us look like something that we're intended to become. Some of that doesn't come off easily, but God will use every opportunity to mold and fashion us, opportunities of human life that we go through. It's a beautiful thing. It really is.

...knowing that tribulation works patience. What is it like when you're going through tribulation, when you're going through some really hot trials, hard things, things that just yank at your guts, things that it's just like somebody has got a hold of your insides? There are times when you go through some of those things that it affects your health and it's such a battle of the mind because of what's coming your direction.

There are things that you can go through in life that are so difficult to face you don't want to face. If you had your choice you would never had faced it. So? You go through it and you learn a quality that God wants us to learn in this life about patience. Because patience has a lot to do with putting things in God's hands. It's bigger than you are. Patience. Waiting for God. And if He doesn't intervene immediately?

It might be a matter of health. People have had things that happen and you're at a point. I've knocked on that door a few times. It's like, just going to wait. You have to go through it. It's just what it is and it's in God's hands because it's bigger than I am. I can't solve this. I can't resolve this. So whatever it is you go through.

I think of what we went through when we didn't understand some of these things in the Church about healing or whatever it might be and people were kind of afraid of technology, afraid of knowledge that mankind was growing in and understanding things about the human body. It's like, "Well, I don't have enough faith if I go there."

I'm so thankful that we got through those things and went through a great deal of that to get things balanced. Now days when I see something on TV and I see something that someone won't do something in a hospital because they don't want to take somebody else's blood or whatever it might be it's like, "And I can't have that," or "I can't have them do anything to me." Or what was one here recently? Oh, yeah, one little girl was asking her mother, "Are you really going to let them do something? It's the Sabbath." Because it's the Sabbath day they can't do anything for you so if you live until sundown then maybe they can do something for you. But they can't right now, evidently.

So you think, screwed up thinking of the human mind and we become sometimes unbalanced and don't understand the spirit of matters.

Anyway, we grow and so we learn and we learn patience. It's a beautiful thing because there is so much to learn about this, of just waiting upon God. God will intervene. God will give us what we need.

But what is the best thing about that process? It's what God is giving you in the mind because of what you're experiencing. It's because of what God is molding in the mind, in your spirit, that's more important than what He can do to help you through a physical trial.

Whatever hardship it might be, I don't care what it is. Finances? Doesn't matter. Whether it be a relationship. It's what is able to be molded in the mind that counts more than anything else. So to go through some of those things sometimes to get us to a different point, because this is able to be changed, what a blessing. What an awesome thing!

Knowing that tribulation works patience, a reliance on God Almighty and having a peace that comes from that that doesn't come any other way. ...**and patience, experience**. The more you have those things happen in your life when something else comes along the easier it is to endure, the easier it is to endure and to realize it's in God's hands. "I know that everything in my life is in God's hands. If I go through this and He doesn't intervene right now to take it away I know there's a reason for that because I know the love of God, the love that God has for me and is working with me in my life, and I know that it's for my good!"

Boy, can we live like that? Because that's what we're to live like. So we grow in that experience over time so that the time something else comes along you're able to better deal with it in a mature fashion.

And knowing that tribulation works patience, and patience, experience, and experience, hope. So how do you describe that except that you have experience and you know what it is. You know what it is to have that hope that God has given us, that regardless of when things might take place (as we think about the end of this age), we don't lose that hope. We know it's going to come, but we know it's in God's hands, in His perfect timing. We know that through the process we're going to be able to learn more. I marvel at that. I truly do.

Now, hope does not bring disappointment. The kind of hope that God helps us to grow in, because it's a hope of those things that are true. Because it's something we look forward to, it's something we desire, but we know, we know it absolutely. There is something about hope then in

that process then that gives us strength and gives us encouragement and gives us motivation and gives us focus and the desire to keep moving forward, to hold fast to what God has given to us.

So, **experience, hope. Now, hope does not bring disappointment because the love, the agape, God's love (that's what it's about), because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit which is given to us.** So again, it's a spiritual thing this process of growth, this process of change that's taking place in us. What an awesome thing to be able to experience God's love that's above and beyond anything that's philia, you know a fraternal kind of love.

That's why it's a beautiful thing, talking in services as well before it began, about how there are sometimes when you just come through the door it's like there's a fellowship there. There is something unique and special that God gives us spiritually in our lives of something that just gives us strength and help and we know it. It's a beautiful thing.

Verse 6—For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good someone would even dare to die. So we can see that in the world. We see that especially in war when people have a fraternal love that's so close, in that respect, there is a brotherhood that's there that people are willing to sacrifice their life for others. They're willing to do those kinds of things in a time of heated warfare, if you will, and on and on it goes.

But God demonstrates His love, agape, God's kind of love, toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, in other words, our minds, our attitudes were against God. It was against the Messiah. It's against everything that God has ever taught. That's the way we are as carnal human beings. So, **while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.** So that we could be forgiven of our sins. So that we could begin to change and not be that way anymore. Awesome!

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. Now, the word "wrath," I think of some of the translations sometimes, that people have given certain words because they don't understand God and they don't understand it's about a judgment. It's about the execution of judgment. Man looks upon things when certain things are done to people as being wrathful, almost like angry. That's why in the Protestant world God is oftentimes looked up as a wrathful God "but Jesus isn't like that." That's what they say. "And he came to show us a better way." Think...huh? Anyway, they don't understand.

But, **we shall be saved from that judgment** because of the blessing of being able to be forgiven of sin, and without that ability we have no hope, you know, of being able to be forgiven of sin, to be able to grow in spirit and spiritually before God.

I think of what God has given to us in this end-time in recent time about the Great White Throne and all the people who are going to be resurrected, and the stark reality that of a spirit world, if a third of an angelic realm can rebel against God do we not grasp the potential of mankind with selfish, human nature, and having live that for a lifetime with all the heinous things that human beings have done because they have so corrupted the spirit that's in them, the mind that God gave to them, that some are so far along in that process that there are going to be masses of people as the sand of the sea who will not receive God.

God does not owe it to save everyone. His desire is to be able to do so but we have the choices to make. So we really didn't have a good balance in some of those things in ages past because we didn't see them. God hadn't brought us to that point yet in thinking that during the Millennium, and especially the Great White Throne, everybody, as a whole, really is going to be able to be saved. You think, no, they are not. No, they are not.

It's not a fake utopian, weird, zombie kind of world where people just walk around obeying. If you don't have that, someone is tapping on you, "Don't do that." That sure changes the heart and the mind, doesn't it, if someone is always there on your shoulder? "Don't." "You can't sin." "You can't do that." Does that change their heart and their mind? No, they still want to do it. They're just going to look for a way to get away from you to accomplish it. Amazing.

For if when we were enemies... When was that? Well, first and foremost as carnal, human nature before we're called, but the reality is our human nature is still at enmity with God. Just because you have the impregnation of God's spirit doesn't mean you don't have that human nature that's at enmity with God. Because it is. That's why we sin. That's why we live selfishly because we're selfish. Because it's not God's way. Selfishness is not God's way. It's not outgoing love and care and concern for others. It's incoming love and care and concern for self. "I love self."

We love self. We're always right. We always justify. That's the human nature that wants to do that. That's the way we want to be. We want to have others see us in a specific kind of light, of how we think we should appear and be to them. So often then it's hard for human beings just to be themselves. That's probably one of the greatest areas of change that takes sometimes a long time within the Body, just to be who we are. We have our weaknesses, our faults, and who doesn't? So to try to put up this facade of something that's not real, it takes a lot of time to break through some of that.

You need a jackhammer, you know, because you want to break through that facade. It's hard to break through. The only way we can is with God's holy spirit. So it's difficult. It's not easy. But to understand we still have that nature. It's always in us.

Verse 10—For if when we were still enemies... And we have to acknowledge and realize, "My nature still is. I'm not. The choices I've made aren't. Mine is a desire to please God, to love God, to build..." To have that heart of David, to cry out for that, to be as a person after God's own heart, to be pleasing toward Him, to love Him, to love His way of life.

So if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. That doesn't stop when we're first called because we still have that nature within us so we're still going through a reconciling. We have the ministry of reconciliation because it's an ongoing thing as long as you're in this human body.

We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled... So what does the last part mean? ...**we shall be saved by his life.** I hope we all know what that answer is. Dwelling in us. That's how you're saved. We're blessed in that process because of his life that lives within us. So we're saved by his life. That's the process we go through.

Ephesians 4. So when considering the context of our focus being how we build for God, because we have to be very much a part of that, we have to be doing things to be a part of the building process. God builds. Christ builds. The Church works to build. But we have to respond to what God has given to us, that we be involved in that building. So how we build for God and the kind of motivation that needs to be in us, in our hearts and minds as we're talking about as we go through this, then hopefully the following scripture will have more of an impact on us although we're very familiar with these. But we need to think of it in the context of what we're discussing.

Ephesians 4:11. As a part of a structure within the Church, within the Body it says, **He gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints.** So there's a process. That's where the teaching comes in. There is a way that God works. There is a way that God functions and we're to learn to respond to that and respect that and be in awe of what God has given in that. Through imperfect human beings, but we have to do that. That's a part of our response then as to whether or not we're going to be able to grow and mature.

So, for the perfecting of the saints... So there is a process there. So if it's being done right, properly so by help from God and God is in it then this is the process that's going to happen. It can't happen when people go astray and begin to teach things that are wrong and themselves cut off from God, like 14/15th Passover, etcetera, etcetera.

...for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ. That's God's desire, that the entire Body be edified and strengthened. So we know that's God's will for us on a continuing basis.

...until we all come in the unity of the faith. That's why I love this time, in that respect, more than any other time I've ever experienced in God's Church, because there is a unity and a oneness of faith and the belief that God has given to us with all the truths we know then there ever has been in God's Church.

There are many reasons for that that God has given us the ability to grow in that, to have that. But He's given it to us; it's something that God has given to the Church and for a great purpose, if we grasp the rest of the story. Why? Because of where we are. Because we're so near a period of time where this Body is going to continue on in a new age and then become massive in size as it grows in ways we can't even begin to fathom yet. But this is the building, the base of it, if you will, of that which is going into a new age with the truths that God has given to us. So He's clarifying those things and giving those things and giving them to us in a very special way - so they can be multiplied massively so when the time comes.

...for the edifying of the Body of Christ until we all come in the unity of the faith, of the knowledge of the Son of God. Can you imagine the ability, just the knowledge alone as soon as things happen and hear what people begin to see? I can't begin to imagine that. 144,000 with Christ as they return? For the first time God begins to reveal His mystery to mankind, that which has been hidden from mankind for 6,000 years. Because we can think of different times, you know, different ones saw a representation of something, Melchizedek, if you will, different things, you know, a bush burning and a voice speaking out and different things that have happened through time.

But this, for the world? All of a sudden, it's for the whole world and for the whole world to come to a point in time where they learn quickly it's the Messiah. Yeah, he came 2,000 years ago but his name was Joshua and not that Christ that you were taught or that others in different religions have different ideas and things they believe that are so far out, things that man has created to worship. You think they've got to carry him around, that big, fat statue if they want to move it. They keep it in one location because it's so big and so fat.

And so you think, what a thing to make, to think that this has something to do with a god that you want to admire and grow in? What do you learn from that that helps? It blows the mind what human beings have made, like the fatted calf. The calf they wanted to build, "This is the God that brought us out of Egypt." You think, duh! But human nature.

...until we've all come in the unity of the faith, of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect, in other words a maturing person. We're never fully there, but we're growing in that, being perfected, **unto the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ.** So that's the goal.

What does that mean? Well, it means that when it's all said and done we're going to have the blessing of being changed, inheriting with him all things - to be in the God Family, to be with him, to be of that stature. Not him. Not of who he is and what his purpose is but to be with him to share in those same things, to be of the same creation in the God Family.

...that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, because that's happened throughout time. It's happened in the Church throughout time, things that have happened, and what a battle for 2,000 years, truly.

...by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness. Oh, when I read that one I think of one man in particular, an evangelist who was always spoken of. I think some tests he had taken as well, and such an incredible IQ and so much knowledge. I'm not talking about the one who led everybody astray concerning Passover and so forth. It was another one who left with Garner Ted. But supposed to be a very intellectual man. I always think of his sermons because you talk about cunning craftiness. He would give a sermon that you could agree with 99%, but at the end... It

was like fishing and you have a hook, and he would catch you and pull you in with some stupid, off the wall, perverse, distorted thinking. Dangerous, that you could agree with so much and then all of a sudden have a hook in your mouth and being pulled in and receive the rest of the garbage that he wants to give in other sermons. That's the way it was.

Those things happened within the Church. It's happened to us at different times in our lives. Knowingly sometimes and unknowingly. Anyway, cunning craftiness spiritually.

So again, **carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love.** That's a beautiful verse there, agape, speaking the truth. What a blessing that God gives us the ability to know the truth and to hold on to it with that kind of a mind, the love of God. **...that we may grow up into him in all things.** So it's a process of growth. Whenever you see the word "growth," it means building. You're building something. Something is being built. You're growing. You know, in all the travels, especially when we went through a period of time in 2008, 2009-10, you'd travel to different places and you'd see in some places some huge buildings just abandoned. They started constructing and all of a sudden an economic thing happens and people had to pull out and you think of all the millions that went into some of these kinds of things.

So it is with us. It's a building process, growing, **that we may grow up in him in all things.** Hopefully and prayerfully we never come to a time like that in our lives. Yet I still see a measure of that at times within the Church, of some that some things that I've said over and over again and I hope they come through it. But as long as this is going on there are some I know that won't. Sad.

...who is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body is joined to fit together. That's what the word is. They say "fitly" as some translate, but it means "from whom the whole body is joined to fit together." That's what we want. We want to fit together. We want what God is building to fit into whatever. He knows what we need. God knows what He's doing in our life. He knows what He called us to. He knows what He's going to mold and fashion within us. We just have to yield our self to the process and say, in essence, "Amen." "So be it." "Thank God." If He can make something out of this, that's awesome. And He is!

I marvel at that sometimes, that God can work with carnal human beings. But that's how He transforms us. It's an awesome process. The more you see it the more awesome it becomes.

...according to the effective working in the measure of every part. "The effective working in the measure of every part." That just says, screams what you put into it. That's how it's accomplished. It's according to that process. So we need each other.

I think of the time we're in right now. We need each other. We need everyone to be growing. We need everyone to be responding and crying out to God for help to change and getting to the point where we need to be, every one of us, so that we can get on with this process. Because you know what? We're the only thing that determines the time. It's true.

God has brought us to that point to understand that just like He did so many things when we came through the Apostasy. We had to go through certain things to learn what it was we went through and why we went through it and how we're to live then in response. So it is in the end that we've gone through certain things to come to really fully see in a more mature fashion now than ever before what it's all about. It's all about the same thing it's always been about - those whom God has called. When it's complete, when the 144,000 are to the point where God says, "Now I know you," we're there. Awesome!

...the whole body joined to fit together. It's like anything in construction. Even the word "joined" and "joined together." You know, you fit something together in a house, in the construction of something, a dresser, a cabinet or whatever it is, small, large, it doesn't matter, and it fits perfectly for what it was made to fit and that's a beautiful thing when it does. Because

I've experienced many things when sometimes it doesn't fit fully because of the person doing the wood.

But thank God it's God doing the work here and Christ doing the molding and fashioning and we just have to respond to it and yield to it and desire to be a part of it. That's a lot of it right there, just wanting to yield ourselves to whatever we go through and having patience and trusting in God that our lives are totally in His hands if we continue to fight and yield to this process.

...and compacted by what every joint supplies. It says the same thing again. Every joint. Every one of us and what we're able to supply. What are we supplying? What are our prayers like for the Body, for one another? It can't be just about us.

...according to the effective working. It's just over and over and over again, driving, saying the same thing but just driving it home. **...according to the effective working in the measure of every part that makes increase.** It means "makes growth," building, something that grows. You see a building being constructed. It's what it's about.

...and makes increase of the Body for the edifying of itself in agape, God's love.