

This will be *Part 3* of the series *A Balanced Prayer Life*.

This series started out by focusing on the importance of communication, of prayer, in order to build a right and balanced relationship with God. As was mentioned, has been mentioned several times now, without it there is no growth, and with only a half-hearted approach to prayer life there can only be slow growth at the best, but mostly the squelching of growth. Very dangerous thing.

It's something we grow in as we continue on in God's Church through time and how God works with us in life and gives us the opportunities He does. But as we are instructed, as time goes along, we're to build upon those things that He does give to us. And so, this is one of those occasions that we're to build a lot more.

Toward the end of *Part 2* last week we were focusing on the first part of the outline of prayer that Christ gave which states, "Our Father, who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name," and it was given that a better translation of that, if you will, and the meaning of this is stating that "Our Father, who is in heaven..." Again, starting out from the very beginning in something like that we're reminded of the greatness and the might of God. That's what we're to do. The Sabbath day is to do that as well because it reminds us, if we think about those things, about the seven-day cycle and what the seventh day is about, that He rested on that day from all His creation.

We're a part of His creation, a part of His purpose, and it helps us to meditate upon those things. It helps us in our focus on God, about God and our relationship with God and prayer then is a vital part of that.

Then it goes on to say, "Your name is to be sanctified," to be made holy. For us, we have no ability to make anything holy except by the power of what God gives to us that is already holy. He's called us, sanctified us, set us apart for holy use and purpose, and therefore, we're to respond to that. Because that's what it's all about. It's about how we respond to God, how we interact then with God, how we receive what He has given us, and the choices then that we make. This is a part of that process.

We're to respond by setting apart what God has made holy for our growth spiritually because He's made available to us His life, the life of His Son to dwell in us through the power of the holy spirit. That's how we grow. We grow in this relationship with God. The most powerful tool that God has given us in that is conversation, is prayer with Him.

That's why this outline of prayer is so important, that we go over it occasionally even in our own lives; not just in a sermon, but sometimes in our own lives thinking about what these portions mean, when we're praying, that which Christ gave to us.

One of the verses that truly captures more of the meaning, and why we looked at it, was given in **1 Peter 3:15**. I'll just read that to you where he said, **But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.** "Sanctify," set apart for holy use and purpose "God in your hearts." To me, that's a beautiful thing, because it's all in our thinking, how we think toward God. Prayer, obviously, such a vital part of that in our life. But again, it's how we think, and prayer reveals a lot about how we think toward God, how we think toward our relationship with God, and so forth.

During that *Part 2* of last week, one of the greater things we started zeroing in on was that, again, that we're to set apart that which is called by God's name for holy use and purpose. The Church. Each one of you that has been set apart for holy use and purpose by God, sanctified by God through a process of being forgiven of sin because of our Passover, and then the process of growth that continues from that point on.

Again, we're to in our thinking, in our mind, set apart brethren in our thinking, in our relationship with them. Now, it's one thing to pray to God and have fellowship with God through that. But that's not the only place that exists, if you will. We have a fellowship where we do have conversation with one another, with God's people, those who are sanctified. Our thinking toward God must be very much geared toward our thinking toward His people, toward His family, toward those whom He has sanctified and that we're in fellowship together with.

It's not just a one-sided type of thing in a relationship with God and we're okay and so forth. This is really a reflection in the mirror that reveals to us how well we're doing, our relationship with one another and how we're doing in that part too, because though we have prayer life with God, we have a fellowship with one another too that is a part of this process. The ability to sanctify God in our hearts, that of sanctifying God, is to sanctify in our thinking, our mind, set apart for holy use and purpose that which God is sanctifying, the Church, by examples.

One of the reasons why I wore that mask today? I've stated, I really, candidly, don't care if I get it. That's my feeling. I don't want anyone else to think that way unless it's how they think. That's their business. It may be stupid - probably is, knowing me. But the point being is, get through it, go on. That's my relationship, my thinking.

But we can't be selfish in our thinking when we think about the Body of Christ, the Church of God, and therefore, we need to think in a different way, and so, because of that, because of other's protection, that's why I wore the mask, because we were travelling out there going through different airports where I know it existed, in towns and shopping and so forth. Wherever you go to get food and whatever you're going to be around people. It's going to be out there. You don't know if you're carrying something. There are a lot of people out here they find that are carrying it, have no idea whatsoever. They don't even know it because it hasn't affected them. Some have very minor symptoms.

So, again here, in thinking about others that's why sometimes we do the things we do. That's what we're talking about here, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." Set apart God's Church.

That's going to bring us to some other things as we go along here because we're going to come up to one section here where we're going to begin talking about the Feast of Tabernacles and some changes we need to start thinking about now instead of later on.

There's a process we're going through as we recognize this thing is not going away. It's not going to be gone by the Feast. It may be a lot worse by the Feast. There may be another one on the way or this could mutate and things could get a whole lot worse. We don't know, you don't know, where we are in the stages of what God is going to allow and bring upon this world to humble mankind. There are a lot of things coming to the surface and God is exposing a lot in the world, whether it be in government and society. We live in an incredibly selfish society and world. Some areas where they're taking some things seriously and they're doing the social distancing and they're wearing the mask they actually see a lot of results. Very little. And they're seeing it dying out of this.

Well, if we were to have something where everybody did that, it would die out, as a whole, if people would wash their hands all the time, take precautions and do these things. But we don't live in that kind of a world. We actually live in a world where people who know they have it go into crowds, go in and do things in public and they know they have it! They've been tested positive and they have some symptoms, but they go to work, and they do other things. You think, what a sick, sick thinking in the world that people don't care about one another, but about themselves and what they're doing. It really is sick.

We're to be different, and so one of the biggest things we're going to get to in a little bit here, one of the greatest things on my mind as a pastor is to understand or to think about, because of the Feast of Tabernacles and Sabbath services where we meet, is that we're careful not to bring something that would be bad in the sense of hurting the Church, bringing a bad name upon the Church because of foolishness, because of not thinking about others in a proper way. I hope that makes sense to you.

So, anyway. Going on here. I want to go on and then we'll come back to some of this later.

Acts 20:32. So, on this thing of sanctifying others in our thinking, God first and foremost, it's always putting God first. When you go through this outline it's always putting God first. Because that's where our minds have to be. It's thinking about God, God's purpose, what is He doing in our lives, are we yielding to that process. That's a great focus to have. If we're thinking about that, if we're zeroing in on those kinds of things that's what God wants us to do because then we can be transformed in our thinking. We can yield more to God's spirit working in our lives, be better focused.

Because we need to be focused. We need to ask the question, how well do we set apart others who are called in holy use and purpose? How do we think about our relationships? How do we value them? What are we doing in those areas?

**Acts 20:32**, just, again, another one of those verses talking about some of this where he says, **And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace.** God's word, God's truth, it's about His grace. It's about the way He thinks. It's about the way He deals with people, works with people. We're to learn that so we can have that same mind and attitude toward others. Whether it be a matter of mercy, whether it be a matter of patience, whether it be a matter of forgiveness, whatever it is that's the kind of mind we're to have toward others.

**...which is able to build you up.** So again, there is something in this power, the mind of God, the ability of God, the strength of God, the spirit of God that works in our lives that helps to build us up. **...and to give**, as it goes on to say here, **and to give you an inheritance among those who are sanctified.** We're in this together. God wants us to understand that as well. We are a family. We are a part of God's plan and purpose for a much greater family! So, the Church of God is the beginning of that process but God's desire from the very beginning before anything was ever created is His family, Elohim.

Then in another verse in Acts, on down a little way into Acts 26. This is where Paul was explaining what happened to him when Joshua was first calling him, working with him, when he appeared to him, and at a period of time when he was still known as Saul. Then Christ spoke to him concerning why he had appeared to him. This is where we are now in verse 16.

This story is being told and it says here, **Acts 26:16—But rise and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen, and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.**

That's an awesome thing because a lot was revealed to Paul. He was three years being prepared for all of this, when it came right down to it, and some of the things he went through before he was sent out to do a greater work in the sense of going to the gentiles. God worked with and molded and fashioned his mind, his thinking, and revealed much to him there as well as through time.

Just like in 2 Thessalonians, because that's on my mind, because of the videos I'm doing right now and preparing to do that are geared toward a scattered Body and I can't help but think of the simplicity of some of those things. But there was that which was given prophetically about an apostasy, about the man of sin, the son of perdition. All those things are there, but those are things that were revealed. As time went on more and more things that were revealed to Paul. So, this is what Christ is telling him. This is what I'm going to do with you, through you.

Now, this is a marvel. Here is a man whom God molded and fashioned long before Christ began to work with him. It just shows how God works in life. It's not just when you begin to come into the Body of Christ, the Church of God. There are those, God has a plan and a purpose, and He does even for this world... You know when? In the Great White Throne for a lot of them. There are a lot of people. We don't grasp these things. It's hard for us. There is that power and might to

prepare people, and experiences of things they have in life, that are going to be utilized and worked with later on.

This is something we have lacked in times past, to understand God is not only working with us, He's working with others in the world, and especially in this end-time because they're going to be a lot of those who are going to go right on into a new age whom God is working with.

Here is a man who had incredible training, awesome training, and he had a particular spirit and attitude about himself, a zealously, if you will, in ignorance for what he did. Because he didn't know the truth yet. And God knew - God knew his mind so well and what he would do when Christ came to him, when he would be blinded and not be able to see, and then be told what his job was going to be, to know he was going to be an apostle to the gentiles! Now, you ought to marvel at something like that, the power and might of Almighty God to so know the mind, to know us, how to mold and fashion us to prepare.

If He has a work to do, He is going to do it, and He knows how to do that. We just don't recognize that kind of might and greatness, and if we really grasp more of that we would understand in an awesome way the relationship we are blessed to have with God. Because we're not waiting for some future time of being able to begin to go through this process. We have it now. We have this relationship now. Not many have it.

I think because of focusing on some of these videos to the scattered Body this becomes more pronounced in my thinking, to realize, to grasp we're so few. How incredibly blessed are we? How much do we truly value what we have? We have been given the greatest of things in the universe, we truly have, of the mind of God and the purpose of God more than any other generation ever before us.

That's hard for us to grasp because we see our own life and what we're wrapped up in our own life and it's just a normal life. But it's not normal. You can't compare it with the world and things in the world, you have to look at what God is doing, what He's given to you and what He's offering you. That's why you're to latch on to it with all of your being, with all of your might, and sanctify God in your hearts. Because He is everything to us, truly, His way of life.

It doesn't matter what happens to us, it really doesn't. Because you can have the confidence to know your life is in the Creator's hands! Where else would you want it? If you're seeking to put God first in your life, if you love God, if you're growing in that love, you don't have to worry about a thing. It's all going to be for a purpose, and if it's going to be a hard thing, a harsh thing...

I wasn't going to say anything about it, but something happened to us this week that just puts fire, fuel on the fire, to realize how close we can be at any time of us being attacked mightily, okay? Totally shut down as far as a world Church organization would be concerned. But I am not concerned about that whatsoever, because it's God's. Everything is God's. We are God's, okay? And so, we don't have to worry about those things. We don't have to carry it. There are things we

cannot carry, truly. Our life is in God's hands. Whatever happens, God knows it before it ever happens, and He's not going to allow one diddly thing happen to us except that He knows it. Now, what kind of peace of mind can that give you? What kind of confidence and help can that give? It's great. It really is.

So, no matter what comes our way we are in God's hands and there is a purpose in every one of us, in our life, in what God is doing. Doesn't mean it's going to be a pleasant journey. Doesn't mean it's going to be an easy journey. It's going to be a tough one because that's the way it's designed to be and we learn from that. It's awesome. It really is awesome.

You want to talk about life? When you read some of those scriptures when He talks about giving us life and some of those things that are spoken of, it's not about just the physical existence. He's talking about you want experience in life, this is something to experience that is incredible that we aren't going to fully grasp until later on. The more, the longer you're in this, the farther up the line we are, even once we're in God's family, we are going to look back and we are going to marvel more. Once you're in God's Family you are actually going to marvel a lot more of what you had and how God worked with you in your life. Because we don't really grasp it yet to that degree. Once we're spirit and we see things on a fully spiritual plane and grasp and see the things that God did in our lives, we're going to marvel more than what we're able to right now. Because right now we're still carnal, selfish human beings fighting this fight against self and we're puny. Any greatness is because of God, God's spirit, God's life. Awesome!

He went on to say, **I will deliver you from the people.** It says the Jewish people **...as well as from the gentiles.** Certainly, in the context of some of this how he's going to work with him, what he's going to do, what he's going to have to do in his life to help him through all of this. Because what he's going to call him to is not a small thing. Brought to the edge of death more than once. Suffered mightily, really did. When anything ever happens it's what my wife and I generally talk about first. A lot of others went through things a whole lot worse in the sense of that which is physical. The physical is not an easy thing to go through, and carry with that, there is that which is of the mind then as well. So, you think about Paul. Glad I didn't have to walk down that road. But if we had, we had. Anyway.

**...as well as the gentiles, to whom I now send you,** making it very clear what he was going to do. **...to open their eyes...** To be used as a part of those whom God is going to draw and call, to begin opening the minds of some.

Because to grasp that God was now going to begin working with gentiles, that was an awesome thing! To be of Israel, to be of Judah, to be of Benjamin, to be of whatever tribe you were and to recognize this is a Jewish world where God is looked upon, though not in soundness of mind as Christ made very clear when he came along there, but by this time here with Paul.

In Paul's mind, to think about he's going to go to gentiles, he's been trained in everything to do with that which is Judaism, and in the highest ranks of Judaism and what awaited him as far as time was concerned, and to realize what he was going to do? Incredible!

**...to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God.** Because that's what happens in the world. Satan has the power. He has the power over this world. That's why he's referred to as the God of this world until God Almighty removes him. Because people don't realize they're in bondage to him, truly. If you're in bondage to your own human nature, lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, without being able to be forgiven, without being able to have opportunity to get away from any of that, to be free of that, to be able to go toward the light, you're in bondage and this being has the power.

**...from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.** Because that's what it means to go from the darkness to the light. We begin seeing things. Things are clear to us that the world doesn't grasp nor see. You can go through and read comments about three days and three nights or whether it was a pole or a cross, and you realize... Well, you know anyway. We know these things anyway. You grasp that they're in darkness and they can't help it.

They can't see some of the simplest of things. Maybe a little bit here and there and some can agree because that makes sense. But most can't. Even that, to go through all of them and to see it all? They can't without God's help.

**...that they may receive forgiveness of sins.** So, what a beautiful thing when we're called, we're able to come to that point. Because you can't come into the light, you can't be freed from that power unless God's spirit is involved. We come to the point of being able to be forgiven of sin through our Passover.

**...and inheritance.** Family. Family, family, family. Be careful how you think about family. Be careful how you talk about family. Be careful how you judge family. For in those things is how our relationship is with God 100%, or whatever is much less. That's what it reveals. It's a giant mirror.

**...and inheritance among those who are sanctified.** Isn't that an awesome thing to understand we're all sanctified, set apart by God, by the life of God and of Christ for holy use and purpose? How blessed are we in this world of such confusion, of such evil, of such filth, of such unsoundness of mind? You even hear people talking about this on TV now. They're saying they feel more convicted that there is just a lot of insane people out there. "People have gone crazy! What is going on?" People see something here, that there are different levels of real craziness. And you can't reason, and people can't get rid of their prejudices, and they're ruled by their prejudices and they go a little whacky because of their prejudices. I mean a little? Oh, I mean a lot whacky, and just do goofy, dumb things.

They don't know the power that's working around them. They don't realize the power that's been unleashed on this earth right now. I hope you see it. These things are not normal. They're

intensified and there are becoming more of them. It's going to become a lot more intense and there's going to be a lot more of it as we go forward. That's the world we live in now.

**...that they may receive forgiveness of sins.** What a blessing then we can have a fellowship with people who have been forgiven of sin, that all they have to do is cry out to God and say, "Holy Father, forgive me through my Passover. This is what I have done." He already knows what you have done, but you've got to acknowledge it. You've got to go to Him in prayer and tell Him you want to be cleansed again, and then again, and then again, and then again. Because each time you do, you're growing in character and you're acknowledging God Almighty is right. I'm wrong, and I want to change, and I want to get rid of everything that is selfish.

**...that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith,** as Christ said, **that is in me.** That's where it starts - Passover. You can't go on to him being High Priest until you've acknowledged the fact of Passover and of forgiveness of sin. Then he becomes our High Priest, our intercessor before God Almighty of a way of life that God wants to give to us anyway. But he fights for us in those things, works with us in our lives, works to mold and fashion the Church, a work that's been given to him to do as High Priest. Awesome, what has been handed over to our elder brother.

Going on in **1 Corinthians 6:9**; just breaking in here to a thought of some of the things being covered but focusing on specific areas. **Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God?** It won't be in the Family. It's pretty clear. We come to understand that. That's why we're not to have unrighteousness in our life. That's why wherever there is unrighteousness, wherever there is sin, we're to repent of it. We can't be like the world. We can't practice the things of the world. We're to fight against the things of the world, the sin that's all over out there anymore.

**Do not be deceived: neither fornicators...** How people think they can do this outside of marriage and have a relationship with God is nuts! You want to talk about insanity in the Body of Christ, which they really aren't in the Body of Christ when they make that kind of decision, because they cut themselves off from God. These things happen! They happen over and over and over again in God's Church! I should say in the environs of God's Church because that's kind of a loose way of explaining something. Because as soon as somebody does something like that they really aren't in the Church!

**...nor idolaters...** Whatever it is we're holding up, whatever it is that we're raising up before God, some idol, something that we're worshipping. It can be something as stupid as smoking! "Oh, that's so good - refreshing! [cough, cough]" It blows my mind! Little things that we can't even give up sometimes in life, that I've seen people have struggle with. I could give so many stories of battles just over something so puny and so small.

It's like, in your home why don't you just make this great piece of art that's just like standing up here, and on the top it's red and it can glow red, and the rest of it's white. Then if you want a

filter at the bottom you can put a filter down there. Then you can get back a little bit and “Oh, oh, I love you! I need you! I want you!” Because that’s what people have done spiritually through time in God’s Church!

I hope it doesn’t exist today, but it probably does, especially in the beginning of someone’s calling. You’ve got to conquer. Because if you hold up something small before God like that as an idol, what about the bigger things? What about the greater things? Because if we do it in the little areas you know what? We’re going to fall flat on our face in the bigger things because we have no strength; we’re not exercising strength at all. We’re not exercising the power of God’s spirit in our life because we’re not sanctifying God in our hearts at all, and we’re not sanctifying the Body of Christ in our hearts at all, in our minds. That’s just a truth and a reality of life because it has to do then with our relationship within the Body.

Because as soon as we start practicing these stupid things, which continually happens, and I know right now it’s still happening somewhere in God’s Church because these things are going to continue right up to the time he returns. Some probably think, “I don’t see how that’s possible because once WWII starts people are going to be shocked to the core of their being and they’re not going to want to do these other things.” Oh, yes, they are. Human nature is human nature.

**...fornication, idolatry, adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves.** It’s all sin! Meaning you don’t practice any of these things. You might have a desire in your heart and your mind that you’re fighting against, but sin is defined by, and these things, you’re yielding yourself to them or dwelling upon them and letting it build up in your mind and you think about it in ways you shouldn’t. Then that leads to the actual act. That’s just calling a spade a spade.

It may not be an expression in different parts of the world... Translators. I think about them sometimes. “Well, what’s a spade?” Because they have trouble with some of our sayings. Just like we do with some of their examples of things. We don’t use them.

**...nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdom of God.** So, in all these things just mentioned, that may have been your life, or that may be the greatest pull or the greatest weakness you have in your body, in your mind, in your life - one of these or more. You may never be able to get rid of it totally because your mind has been so damaged because of whatever you lived previously in your life. It just may be something that’s a part of your being! Which it is, in many cases, obviously, and it will be your fight until you’re no longer in this body.

That’s why I look forward to getting out of it. No more human nature! Can you imagine? Just the mind, the being of God. Awesome! Being in total agreement and having the power in that mind and no longer having “lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” that rules our lives except for the fact that God blesses us to fight in those things and conquer and overcome them.

This is about prayer! All this is about prayer and things we can pray about in our lives! Some say, “I don’t know what to pray about.” Well, here it is. Go through the sermons if you have to. Pray

about each one. Break it down; break it down fine. There is a lot to pray about - not just for ourselves, but for others as well.

So again, these things then we don't practice. They may be what we are, they may be what's deep down inside of us, they may be what our battle is, they may be our major weakness, but you don't practice them anymore. That's what can make us then of the Body of Christ with God's spirit within us, to be sanctified, to live that kind of life.

**Even as some of you were. But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Joshua, and by the spirit of God.** We learn from that, we grow in these things, we're matured in these things that we go through in life.

**1 Thessalonians 5:14—now we exhort you, brethren; warn those who are unruly.** So, we have a responsibility within the Church out of love toward one another, and especially within the ministry as sometimes these things are being spoken to through ministers, given to ministers, of things they're to do, things they're to teach. **Warn those who are unruly**—in other words out of order or out of place. And so, it's not a pleasant thing to do. It can be a very difficult thing to do. There are some things in relationships that we don't want to have to address because it's uncomfortable. But we have responsibility out of love toward one another within the Body. We learn from this process. We have to be careful how we do it because sometimes people can go too far in this in judging others and condemning others.

I've known of situations in times past where people just looked for something to be able to pounce on somebody by and they were justified and righteous for being able to find something and say something about or to an individual about something they have done. "How could you?" "It's good to know you're so good."

**We exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, encourage the faint-hearted.** In other words, fearful. The word means, literally, "the fearful, the timid," those who are held back. We all come from different backgrounds. We're all different in how we think. And so, as we go through scriptures, as we go through things that are given something is going to hit us because we're human, and everything that's human has been addressed in this book and by God and by Christ. And so, he's telling us different things here – somewhere we fit into the category too well sometimes, so well sometimes. And that's how we address it then. And we're always able to be forgiven when there is sin. Awesome!

So, **encourage the faint-hearted.** You know, there are things we can do to just in conversation, by example sake sometimes, by what we're doing. It doesn't mean we have to go preaching to one another. That's not what this is about. To encourage - it's just by being a friend, by being there, by whatever it might be that someone else is going through and you're there, whatever it might be in life. And sometimes it's by encouraging, by knowing someone and maybe part of their battle in life, and to bring them along with you and include them in something that would help

them to break through a particular barrier in their life, or even to speak certain things that might... Depending on the closeness of the friendship and the relationship.

**...support the weak.** You want to pray about things? What does that mean then? How do you apply that to your life? When is someone weak? Well, generally we know. If you're close to someone and they're going through a hardship? It might just be something that they're dealing with in their own personal life that's got them down. Have you ever been down about something?

I was down yesterday! I was way down! I was so down my heart was hurting because of battles coming our direction. And then I had to get my brain in gear and look toward God and apply the very things I'm preaching to you today about, that my life is in God's hands, this is God's Church, we are God's people. He knows it before it ever happened. Chill.

But sometimes when you first hear something or see something...that hopefully gets resolved this coming week, and if it doesn't then I'll share it with you next Sabbath. But this way of life, sometimes we can get bombarded in horrible, hideous ways. We really can! There is a spirit world out there right now that hates us with a passion, and if there is any way they can come at us they're going to. So, more than ever you have to be on your guard. Yourself and for one another, praying for one another.

"Support the weak." You're there. Sometimes that's all you have to tell someone. "I'm here." Sometimes it's—well you can't hardly do that now—put your arm around someone, "It's okay."

**...be patient toward all.** Be patient toward all. Boy, that can be a tough one sometimes to apply in life. It's something to pray about. It's about the Body of Christ. These are things about the Body of Christ. Our relationship with one another very much then reflects our relationship with God, reflects the power of His spirit to the degree, to the way that's being sought in our own lives to benefit others in the Body. Things to pray about.

**...see that no one renders evil for evil to anyone.** So, these are things that we have to be on guard about, rendering evil for evil. In other words, things are going to come your way sometimes from different ones, maybe within the Body at times as has happened in times past, not so much anymore, but if something were to happen, or people in the world in your job and whatever. It's a way of thinking. Now, it's a lot in the world, obviously, but you don't respond in like way.

Someone cuts you off on the highway, you know, you're going to catch up with them and... "I'm going to show them!" People do this out there all the time because they get caught up in it, rendering evil for evil, using a machine that can kill everybody, to use it stupidly. "Now, I've never been guilty of anything like that, so, pshaw!" But I have. And it is so stupid to get caught up in something like that.

Now, people... I know sometimes I hear back, "You must be a horrible..." "You must be something else on the freeway. I don't want to ever be around you." Oh, brother. But things happen out

there all the time because you live in a selfish world. I don't care where you go anymore, just as much as there is on TV you see insanity out there, people doing the dumbest things.

Just like coming down here today. It's like, where are you going in such a hurry that you have to come in behind me and everyone else you're driving behind, giving the heart palpitations, and then you whip around, and then you pull right back in front, and then you get up by a semi and you pull right in front of a semi. That's a smart thing to do because if he has to hit his breaks, whew! If someone in front of him, because you pulled in there and there's not room and they have to hit their brakes, you're dead or you're going to be close to it. But people don't think about that. They don't think about life and death in that way. It's just themselves. "I'm going to get where I'm going and I don't care who's out there on the highway." Sorry I got into that.

It's the kind of world we live in. I don't care where it is, all kind of selfishness that exists. And you've got to be careful you don't get caught up in it. You have to ask God for help not to be of that kind of thinking. And if you ever catch yourself in that kind of thinking, let alone that kind of action, you've got to pray to God for forgiveness right away. Because we're not to be like that. We're not to think like that. But it's sure easy sometimes to get pulled into it whether it be something on the job, something somebody says, somebody does, especially if they've done it repeatedly. Sometimes a little harder to take. Take it.

**See that no one renders evil for evil; but always follow...** And that is a Greek word that means "to pursue." And if you pursue something it isn't done haphazardly, it isn't done nonchalantly, it isn't done just by kind of moseying along. You have to work at it. To pursue something, you have to put some effort into it. And that's what this is talking about.

**...always pursue what is good.** So, that has to do with how we think. Are we trying to do the right thing? Are we trying to pursue what God reveals to us as the good thing to do whether it be within the Body of Christ or whether it be in the world around us? **...both for yourselves, and for all.**

**Rejoice always.** Rejoice always. Sometimes in this world, you watch too much of this world, it's kind of hard to rejoice so you have to get your mind elsewhere. And a great place of doing that is prayer and asking God for help to think about those things, to reflect upon those things. For you, apart from prayer even, to think about and upon those things that you can rejoice in that are good, that are right, that are being done in preparation for a new world.

**In everything give thanks.** Everything! It's just hard to go through a day without giving thanks to God. I hope you're doing that every day of your life. If not, you need to start practicing that one. You need to start thinking about it. What is it to be thankful for? And just start thanking God.

Sometimes I get a little too concerned that I keep thanking Him for the same things too often. But you know, as long as I'm thankful in here I'm not going to worry about that because God knows I'm thankful for that. If it's every day, fine. I'm thankful for that, you know. Because that's how I truly feel. It's not a thing where you do this repetition over a meal morning, noon, and night type

thing and after a while it doesn't mean diddly squat. If it's from the heart because you're feeling it that's what God wants. He wants that kind of a relationship with us.

**Pray without ceasing.** It has to be a part of our life. Communicating with God has to be a regular routine and part of our life. Without it, where is the relationship? **In everything give thanks.** Did I pass that one? I guess I didn't focus on it enough. ...**for this is the will of God in Christ Joshua concerning you.**

Isn't that amazing to think, to see what God's will is, to be thankful for who God is? I'm thankful God is the kind of God He is. Truly! Because anything else, life would not be the same. But everything about God is based on a specific way of thinking, and it's outward; the kind of love Mr. Armstrong explained, that which is outgoing not inward. That's an awesome thing to understand.

**Verse 19—Do not quench the spirit.** By not applying these other things we begin to quench God's spirit. We begin to choke off the flow of God's spirit. **Do not treat prophecy with contempt.** **Prove all things...** That means to put to the test God's way of life, to look upon those things that God says we're to do and search for its value, put it to work in your life. And that which comes from God you will learn how productive it is. You will learn to treasure it more, prayer life alone.

...**hold fast to what is good.** It's what we have to do. To hold fast to something? I think of when the Apostasy took place and that big tree out in California. I can't think of the name of it right now but it goes up a long way, the one they can cut a hole through, you know, type thing, and drive a car through. Sequoia? Anyway, it's big. It's sequoia. Is that the right word? I hear a lot of things at the same time and I'm at a point in my life where if I hear a lot of things coming from different areas it just kind of blends together. It's like noise. And I'm not sure that's because of where I am in life. I think it just happens when a lot of people are... Anyway, that's good, good response.

But I think about that one booklet—I think it was *Time is Running Out*—and talking about the 18 truths and holding on to the trunk of the tree. You can't get your arms around that one but it's hold on! You have to work at that, to hold fast to something that God gives you. And it takes work. It takes effort. And so, God wants to see how we're responding to Him, to His calling, to what He's offering us. And everything depends upon that in our growth and our relationship with Him.

How do we respond toward God? Is God first? Do we esteem God? Do we sanctify God in our hearts and our minds, let alone in prayer? Because that's how we do it, sanctifying God, setting Him apart, His way of life for holy use and purpose, because that's why He gave it to us - to be in His family.

**Abstain from all appearance,** and the word really means, **from every form of evil.** Which, there are things to be learned from the appearance as well. So, sometimes for examples sake we don't want to do certain things in life. Sometimes judgment should be made because we don't want others to see something and get the wrong impression, even though there may be nothing wrong

then, obviously, in what you're doing and so forth. But sometimes for the appearance sake we have to be careful.

Now, to me that's a really refined thing in thinking. If you really think that way that shows a process whereby you're striving to be a right example before God, for God, to God, to God's Church, on and on it goes, to the world around you. You want to be a right example. So, you don't want to do things that might give the appearance of something that doesn't look right to them as far as the world is concerned.

"From every form of evil." That's what it's really saying.

**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely.** Beautiful! This thing of being sanctified, it's a process all encompassing. So, may the God of life sanctify you completely, set you apart. Well, He wants to do that. That's His will. That's His purpose. But how we respond to Him determines whether He can, whether He will.

So, we're to learn from that aspect as well in what it's saying here. But his desire toward the Church was that God be able to sanctify you completely. How do you do that? By everything else that was just said: because we're responding to it, therefore, this is what's going to take place. And obviously, this is strengthened and accomplished through prayer as well.

**...and may your whole spirit, soul...** The word means "life." It's about life. That's why I feel sorry for the world of traditional Christianity that wonders about this thing about a soul because they've been taught something that's really kind of strange. Something that I remember long before coming into the Church and having this little discussion in college as some students were standing around that had invited me to a church gathering of some young people, and so I went. And talked about this thing of this soul, what is it? And people had the weirdest ideas. It's just weird. Thankfully, it was weird then, so maybe I was being given a little help back then.

I remember having the same kind of conversation in high school. Some were talking about this immortal soul. Think, okay, explain that. It's tough. It's just is about life. It's nothing immortal about it whatsoever. We know that. I've knocked on that door a few times. I know that.

**...let your whole spirit, life, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Joshua the Christ.** That's the goal. But in the midst of that goal that's your pursuit, that's what you're going to be pursuing, but knowing all along you're going to fall flat on your face and you're going to have to keep asking God for forgiveness of your sins, of what you are, because you're carnal, because we have carnal human nature and we have this battle we're fighting all the time as long as we're in this body. But that's [where] we're engaged in the battle. And we want to be engaged in the battle.

**Faithful is He who has called you, who also will do it.** What does that mean? God is faithful. We're not always faithful. Every time we sin, we are not faithful, until we come to a point of praying for forgiveness of our sins through our Passover. And then that's a faithful act because we

recognize the importance of it and we do it, and we're forgiven again and we're right with God. But God is always faithful in His will toward us. He wants us to be completely sanctified. He wants us to become fully transformed so that He can say, "Now I know you," to set you apart, or to be able to continue working with us and we can continue on in the Body of Christ.

Because sometimes people practice sin and God says, "No more! I've had enough of this! You keep thumbing your nose at Me! I keep forgiving you. We keep working with you. We keep giving you all this information and all this knowledge and all this truth that others before you would have given so much, anything to be able to see and know if only they knew it." But they don't know it, so they don't know what they missed, but they will one day.

So, sometimes we just don't grasp how much we've been given, you know? And that can be so irritating to watch. It's so frustrating to see people just throw things away, to throw what we have away. And yet it's been ongoing ever since I've been in God's Church. Hundreds and hundreds and thousands and thousands and thousands who have gone asleep or gone by the wayside, who just gave up and quit because they really wanted to do something else that God says you are not to do, "You are not to live that. You are not to lie to Me. You will not get by with it." So, He gives us time.

And yet there are people out there that still fool around with tithes, second tithe because they need to use it someplace else. It's about God and God doesn't take those things lightly. And that one will be there until we get to the end here because there is carnal human nature that exists and sometimes it's just too powerful for people.

You really got to want something in your heart and your mind toward God to be faithful to God, to fight this fight, to resist the things that are wrong, to ask God for help to resist the things that are wrong. Because only then can God help fight your battles. That's what He promises. He will help you through whatever it is and give you so much more, and especially what's in the future. Can't compare it. Blows the mind sometimes.

1 Corinthians 1. I may never get to where I wanted to include in the sermon so I've got to rush a little bit here or just stop and discuss some of the things about the Feast. But we'll get there.

Anyway, there is much that can be learned just in this greeting that Paul gave to the Corinthians or sent to the Corinthians. **1 Corinthians 1:1—Paul, called to be an apostle of Joshua the Christ,** we already read about that in Acts, that process, **through the will of God.** It was God's will. God was working with him long before Christ worked with him and began to deal with him. **...and Sosthenes our brother, to the Church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Joshua the Christ,** that's how it's accomplished, through the forgiveness of sin. It's always talking about that because that's where it starts, our Passover.

**...called,** it says, **to be saints.** It's a word that just means called, saints, or called, sanctified. That's what God does when He calls us. He begins to sanctify us immediately. If God begins to draw us by the power of His holy spirit, He's sanctifying us, He's setting us apart already in the

way that He's not setting apart the billions in this world. And so, He begins drawing an individual, sanctifying, giving them opportunity and time to be drawn to the point where they can then say they accept, they want the Passover in their life. And so that's a process of sanctification.

**...with all who in every place call on the name of Joshua the Christ our Lord.** And so how do you do that, call on? We use that name in our relationship with God Almighty. It's through prayer.

**...both theirs, in other words, their Lord and ours.** Family all together being sanctified. **...grace to you and peace, from God the Father, and our Lord Joshua the Christ.** Just that sentence alone has so much meaning to it if we zero in on what it means, again, about grace and about peace, to have peace, to be able to be free from drama. One of my favorite subjects. I loathe drama.

**I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you by/through Joshua the Christ.** This is where it all starts. Over and over again through the writings it constantly starts here, continuously reminds us of what we have in a relationship with God through our elder brother Joshua the Christ, our Passover.

**...so that you were enriched in everything.** We're enriched because of everything given to us. That's what's being said. And he was thankful that they were being enriched by what was being given to them. Their lives start to change and have meaning and purpose because they now they know why they were created in the first place, to have opportunity to be in the God Family. Incredible!

**...enriched in everything by him in all utterance and knowledge; even as the testimony (witness) of Christ was confirmed in you.** What does that mean, "the witness of Christ confirmed in you?" Well, as we change, as we begin to repent, as we begin to grow our lives begin to reflect the fact that God is doing this by His power. You can't do it on your own. You can't change. You can't get rid of your carnal, human nature on your own. You can't fight your greatest weaknesses in life on your own. You're going to fall flat on your face if you do!

But the more you look to God, the more you cry out to God, the more you seek that life and that power in you and the conviction to hate what is wrong, to hate the evil, to hate the sin, God's spirit changes and transforms the thinking process of a carnal mind into something different. Beautiful.

Let's go back now and pick up the portion of the outline of prayer. Says, again here, **Matthew 6:9 –Our Father who is in heaven, Your name is to be sanctified.** To be set apart for holy use and purpose.

**Your Kingdom come.** Now, we don't have to go into this a lot because this means a lot to us, especially because we recognize the name we're blessed to bear right now in the Church of God: Preparing for the Kingdom of God. Names have meaning. There is reason why that was inspired by God to give to us to have focus and meaning for this end-time. Because this the body, this is the

group, this is the time that's preparing for that square on until he's here. Awesome! It's coming. It's on its way. Incredible to understand our calling, where we are in time.

So again, we cry out for these things, and the more we go through what we're going through the more we cry out "Your Kingdom come." You see the madness that's out there, the inability for humans to govern themselves effectively, the jealousies in governments, the hatreds in governments, the evil in government. It's everywhere! And it's just evil, the practices, to put down others, to... Everything that works against God's way of life, that yields itself to selfishness, it's just not good. It's bad. It's evil. And it's all around us and it's more manifest today than ever before. And so we long for and our desire...

I think of righteous Lot, as it says, he vexed his righteous soul day by day because of what he saw. And you think, we see so much more. We see so much more because of what we're bombarded with today because of modern technology, what we're capable of seeing. So, every day it should be something that weighs heavily in our lives and thankful that God's Kingdom is coming. We want it yesterday but we're waiting, and we know there's a purpose in what's being worked out here. And God will show us one day why and how everything fit together. He's given us the blessing of being able to see a lot of it already, to put things together, to grasp it but there is much we still don't know yet. There are still things to come.

So, **Matthew 24:14**, again, scriptures we're very familiar with. **Then this good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then the end will come.** I think, what a marvel, and what a horrible thing when people can't see it. Because the scattered Body hasn't been able to deal with this because they don't think this has been finished. They think they have a responsibility in TV and radio, primarily TV, or the printed press or having a magazine out there that resembles or reflects *The Plain Truth*, and the reality is that's done. It's over with. It's finished and you can't do it. You're not going to be allowed to do it. You're not going to be able to be given what is needed to continue on to do it in the first place. Because it's not God's will. It's not God's purpose right now.

**...and then the end will come.** So, Mr. Armstrong was given to know we're in the end-time. And if you look at the past 70 years, that end-time that began, of things that began to be revealed to Mr. Armstrong, especially there around the end of WWII, at the end of it and then on. And I marvel at the things that God gave to him that were very powerful. And I've spoken on those recently in the video. You think about Europe and those ten nations and now all that's done. And the next thing? Just a matter of time, WWIII. Incredible. And that will come to pass as well, and Europe will be right in the midst of it.

**...and then the end will come. Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation...** Just did a video on that. Next one is about the Apostasy. All geared toward the scattered Body. To what degree God's going to use it, when it's going to be used, we'll see. And then the one after that is going to be about the man of sin, the son of perdition. These things are really hard to deny if you look at them objectively without God's spirit. We'll see.

**Therefore, when you see the abomination of desolation...** And what a blessing you know what that is. I still am dumbfounded by thinking what Mr. Armstrong was teaching toward the end of his life, in the last few years of his life beginning in the early eighties there. When he began to make it very clear that Christ was not returning to a physical temple, it's a spiritual one. We are a spiritual temple; the Church of God is a spiritual temple. But the mass ministry, it was lost in time. And we're only blessed to have it because God had a purpose in a remnant and giving us what we have, otherwise we'd be in the same darkness thinking that some stones have to be brought in. Like some in traditional Christianity think that are out there, anyway, in left field on some of that.

Because they want this to come to pass so we've got to get these stones cut out and we've got to get them up there. Or at least, as one doctrinal committee came up with and told an evangelist, that he told the Church, an altar has to be placed out there. And I think, whooo-ee. Can you imagine trying to pull in an altar into that temple mount area that's ruled by the Muslims? And that's going to go over good? That's going to be an easy one to accomplish?

Because in their mind what has to take place is another slaughtering of a pig upon the altar so at least they can have another Antiochus IV Epiphanies, you know, take place, that took place, fulfilled this physically, abomination of desolation. And it's so clear to us that it's a spiritual one that took place. Incredible!

**...spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso reads this, let them understand), then let them who are in Judea flee into the mountains.** I think about that one there as well. I think about what happened to the government of the Church, the ministry. It split up. And mountains are about different governments and it was split all over the place and people fled into these different areas to survive...but didn't. They're asleep and waiting for a time to be awakened.

What an incredible thing you can see these things, that they are clear to you. Because there are thousands who have been in God's Church, who were in God's Church, I should say, a lot longer than you have been, who don't have those things now. And some of you have been in a short time and you see these things. How blessed are you? Incredible!

Well, I was going to read the one in Daniel there, but I don't need to read that as well. To me, it's an awesome thing when you go through it and you look at the statue up there and you look at this stone that's cut out without hands, it says. In other words, it's from God, and it comes down and smashes the feet and all these kingdoms are destroyed. And it says it's not going to be left to people any longer, to any... I think it says it there. Let me make sure. Anyway, if it's not there it's in another scripture we'll get to in a moment.

But what an awesome thing, something physical given like that to show us what we are looking forward to. We're at the point of those toes in clay. It's there and it's not there. They're not

together and yet they are together, and it doesn't take much then to destroy it at the very end here and then God's Kingdom be established. What a beautiful picture.

On and on. There is so much here.

Matthew 6:25. So our minds, there is much about the Kingdom of God that we can pray about, that should be a part of our prayers at different times, a different focus at different times. But Christ gave us an outline there to at times maybe just one portion of that will be your whole prayer because there is so much there depending on what is more important in your thinking, in your heart and your mind toward God at the time and where your focus is. But I'll tell you what, these things really help you to become focused better spiritually. Because we need that in our lives, ever to be focused spiritually. Because that's a part of placing God first, it truly is.

**Matthew 6:25—Therefore, I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat and what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you will put on.** Now, what it's doing is... I don't know of many people who worry about that today but there's an analogy being made here of something that's very physical. Say, well, why would you say that, because we have these things. Because it's showing something here very physical about human beings, how we tend to think, breaking it down to something very small that can be a part of our lives at times.

**Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?** Now, there are times literally that finances can get so difficult in a person's life, especially in the beginning, and you're going through things of changing your entire life from no longer working on Holy Days, you're going to the Feast of Tabernacles, you're no longer working on the weekly Sabbath, you're not doing any overtime into Friday evening, all these things that can impact you mightily as far as finances is concerned. Your whole budget has been set up by having those practices in your life.

And when you address those and then you begin to see there is 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, and there was a time when we were in the Church that there was a 3<sup>rd</sup> to think about as well. And you did all these things and you learned to rejoice in them. You began to look at and be excited about the blessings of your third tithe years, and you began to write things down and be in marvel at what God was doing because He blessed us in those things.

But those things impact people's lives. So, there are things that we go through from time to time when perhaps we go through some other trial, perhaps a layoff, perhaps a company has something happen to them, whatever it might be. And it's all about what is our focus. Physical cares of life? What is the measure there? Yes, they're concerns, but how do we think about it? How does it affect our thinking? To what degree?

Because sometimes... See, that's why we have problems with things about tithing and 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe being misused in the Body, of people spending it on other things, that I hear from time to time. And things about first tithe that come out in time. Shows where people's heart is, where their mind is. Sad.

**Look at the birds of the air: for they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns.** So, it's just showing here, look at the creation. God's in charge. God Almighty created it. And just look at this. Just look at something simple like this. ...**yet your heavenly Father feeds them.** He's taking care of them. He's provided the means whereby they continue on generation to generation, except for when man steps his foot in there and messes things up.

**Are you not of more value than they are?** So, God is taking care of His creation. And this is being addressed (don't forget), to those whom God calls. It's about the Church. Everything Christ taught was about the preparation for establishing the Church of God, the Body of Christ. And so these things are geared to us and these things are written for us.

"Are you not of more value than they are?" Do we grasp the value of what God has offered us, what He's placed before us? That our life, as I mentioned earlier on here, it's in God's hands. No matter what you go through in life, I don't really care what it is. Do we want the real hardships of life, the life and death things in our life, the really hard things of whatever it might be in life that come your way? No, they're not much fun. But we have them all by design. And one of the greatest things to learn in the midst of all that is, to learn to rely upon is your life, my life, is fully in the hands of Almighty God and His Son. Nothing is going to happen to you that God doesn't know, that God isn't involved with, that God isn't a part of.

And so, He allows us to go through many things in order to learn. He doesn't do everything for us. He doesn't intervene and just treat us like spoiled children. "Oh, you need more? Well, here. Oh, you want to stay out? Go ahead, whatever you want." It doesn't work that way. We don't grow that way in life.

"Are you not of more value than they are?" So it makes us think about that. Yeah, sanctified, called, given the greatest riches that anyone could ever have.

**Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?** In other words, to one's life. It's talking about a measure to your life in time, not by height. But you can't do that one either. Matter of fact when you get older... I don't even want to get under a ruler because I know that I'm not as tall as I used to be. Stand on my tiptoes. It's just your back gets older and things begin to squeeze together a little more.

I remember my grandpa. He was a tall, tall guy, way above me in the six-foot region and above, and an austere looking man. Anyway, he got cancer, leukemia, and had to take chemo for ten years of his life in a time when they were using chemo and it was a hard thing to go through and you were on it all the time. And not only was he getting shorter because of getting older, but because his spine was disintegrating as well.

So, anyway, some of those kinds of things we go through in life and you realize there are things you can't do, whether it be length of time, you can't... All the worry in the world isn't going to change your height. All the worry in the world isn't going to change your length of days. Your life is in God's hands.

**So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field.** I love how some of this is stated because this makes us think if we stop and ponder what he's telling us. **Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.** Now, right now in the ditches up there in Kentucky - I don't know what it's like up here - but we have some areas that are just... They have these orange lilies that are just everywhere. Beautiful this time of year. And they're here and then they're gone.

...they neither toil nor spin. In other words, they don't make their own clothing. They're not spinning, they're not making their own clothing and their own covering. ...and yet I say to you... Think about this. Why does he say it this way, **That even Solomon in all of his glory...?** Now, he is the one that inherited all the riches from the time of David, and all that that was prepared for the building of the temple and all the riches of things that he experienced in this life, and then his own place as well that was incredibly lavish and the kind of life that he experienced. And its saying here, **Solomon in all his glory wasn't arrayed, wasn't dressed, if you will, like one of these.** What is that about?

You know, if you think about anything of God's creation you know what man can't do? He can't make a lily. He can't make a bird. He can't make grass. He can't make the simplest of things in the creation. I don't know anyone who's made anything like that, that can put it together, that can make seeds that will germinate when it dies out and then plant it and it grows back just like that again. So, in all that man's able to make...

Because you know what? Back then, just like certain dyes. I think of the Phoenicians, I think it was (trying to think of the rest of the group there). But anyway, they had this dye, you know, the purple dye and everything. And anyway, they had incredible wealth because it was hard to come by. So if you had this it was a matter of royalty and great wealth to have such colors. So, that was the best man could do. So, the best that man could do at that time was something like that and you think, pshew...!

So you go out and something in God's creation, you harvest it, you do something with it, and... What about silk or cotton, or whatever it might be, and all of a sudden these silk garments, you can begin to have silk garments, and all these little worms... And you come up with this one here. I don't know how they came up? I don't know.

But anyway, here it is, you start spinning and make beautiful garments with all kinds of colors in it and it shines, but you can't make a flower, you puny's. It puts things into perspective.

If we're in God's hands and we're so much more than these things, do we have a right perspective in our relationship with God and grasp what we have regardless of the suffering we go through in this physical life? Because this is what helps to mold and fashion us. It's the heat! We're in the heat. That's how you're molded and fashioned. You can't be molded and fashioned any other way. It's through the fire. It's through the heat. It's through much trouble, as God says, tribulation, if you will.

Now, if God so adorned what grows in the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown in the oven, furnace, whatever it is. It's hard to tell what the definition is here fully because it's about a furnace. Whether it be for cooking of something that is of grain that comes or whether it be something that helps to add to a fire?

It says, **Will He not much more you**, is what it's saying here, **take care of you, O you of little faith?** So, it's about faith. It's about relying on God. It's about a relationship with God and how we think toward God. **Therefore, do not worry about what we shall eat**, in other words, about the physical things that we normally worry about in human life. What is it? Do you ever worry to a point where it starts hurting, starts hurting the mind? Then you've got to put things back in proper perspective. You're in God's hands. What a beautiful thing.

**(For all these things the gentiles seek.)** In other words, this is the way the world is. **...for your heavenly Father knows what you have need of all these things.** He knows everything we have need of and God takes care of us. It doesn't mean He gives us everything of one time of what we want. But that's how we grow.

**But seek...** Here it is, this is how we're to live: **But seek first the Kingdom of God.** It's about our thinking. It goes back to this thing over and over again starting with the first of the commandments. Is God first? God has to be first in our thinking, placing God first, thinking about God first, putting everything we live through in life first about God, what He's doing. It's beautiful.

**...and His righteousness.** So, it goes on to show that this is a part of the process, His righteousness. We have none of and by ourselves as human beings. Selfishness is unrighteous. And so, righteousness comes from God. God is the source. His law. His word. His way of life is the way of righteousness. So you have to seek that, you have to want that, you have to think about that, you have to pray about that. **...and all these things shall be added to you.** Because that's what God wants you to have.

**Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about the things of itself**, in other words. **Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.** It's just the way the world is. You're in God's hands. You're being prepared for something that is far beyond this physical, temporary world, far beyond it.

Quickly here in Acts 14. I say quickly. Acts 14:21—**Then when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, confirming (strengthening) the lives of the disciples, a word meaning those being newly called, exhorting them to continue in the faith, saying, we must through much, or as the Greek word is, many. Means much but many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God.**

So yes, it's going to be a rocky road. It's not going to be a... If it's a smooth ride you have to start worrying at that point. Something is not right if you're having too smooth of a ride, okay? Because

it's meant to have rocks in the way and thing you have to do to remove them. And they hurt. And on and on it goes. But that's what molds us as we yield to the process.

Finally, we're to that point. **Matthew 6:10—Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven.** Or in earth. In other words, again here, it's about God. All this is about putting God first. It's about a relationship with God. Prayer is about a relationship with God. Everything in here is about a relationship with God and how we live it, how we pursue it, to the degree we want it, to know it's God's will that's to be done. Not ours. There are many things we might want in life that conflict with God's will.

So, we'll come back to that next week, more of it, but the brings up Feast plans, doesn't it? Because we would like everything to be like it was planned to be, but we've had to already make a big change. No one is going to Spain for the Feast. How about that?

So, sometimes we have to change things, respond to things in a way, to understand that there is something else going on in our lives, and we want to make sure that God is first, that we're putting things in their proper perspective, and that we want to do things according to God's will and God's purpose for what we're living through at any moment in time. And this is one of those in the end-time, of what we're experiencing.

One thing you can count on? Things are not going to get a lot better. They are going to get a lot worse as we move forward. And so we have to be wise in things we do and we have to be caring and loving toward one another in the things we do. So we've changed a lot of things and we're going to have to change a lot more. And I'm going to ask for help and prayers in some of this because this is not an easy thing to do.

But first and foremost in all this to me is the name of the Church and the reputation or how people can attack the Church and trying to defend, in that respect, in a right way (if you understand what I'm saying), the Church. So, we don't want to do things in a foolish way or a stupid way or whatever it might be along those lines. So, we want to be wise. And so this is going to fit into that category of seeking to do God's will, which comes down through the Church, in that respect. Things are administered. That's a part of God's will that they have to be organized and so forth.

And some of that includes—I'll just mention it because I want it to be in this particular sermon—Australia is having to deal with this now. Very likely from the looks of it, after talking to Wayne about this this week, it doesn't look like they're going to be able to host the Feast site there now. Because of what's going on between the different states there it appears as though it might be wiser to split up into three different states in the areas where people are already located, and be at that particular group together. Whether it be in a home or whether it be in a hotel, that can all be worked out later because some are going to be small. Or, you know, people can do all kinds of things, a bigger bed and breakfast type place, or what do they call these things? Airbnb. Got to be

in the modern age. I'm not there yet. So, whatever it is, big enough and people can come in there, big enough living room and have some...

And we've got to think about some of this. That's why I wore that mask today. Because we've been travelling and I know there are people out there who have this, and this is not going away right now. It is getting bigger. It's just one of those things of life. People are getting sick. I've run into people in talking, even in business and so forth, that people who are sick, people who are in the hospital, of different things that are happening to people. It's still going on and these things are being passed around.

Well, we have to think about not just ourselves but even others in the world in example we set and what we do. So, sometimes by peer pressure we do things, we respond to things. So, that's why coming in here, I'm still having temperatures taken. It's for the Church's sake, your sake. You're in the Church. But it's for the Church's sake and the name, Church of God, because we have many who would like to find fault with and tear things apart. And so, we're striving to do things in a way that protects the Church as well. And so, you have to put things in their proper perspective and their balance according to God's will. So, we're striving to do that.

I know that's God's will, to protect the Church, so we're taking temperatures as people come in. And wherever we go we're going to start doing that whenever we travel somewhere else as well. Because I don't want someone else to be hurt by something, by any of this in any fashion or form, by a group coming together, so everywhere we travel in different areas—and I'm going to ask everyone when we come into your area from now on—from now on when we're coming into your area wherever you are, that you wear masks. Okay? Or don't come.

So, please wear a mask when I'm going to Virginia, when I'm going to Minneapolis, out to Arizona, wherever it is. So, we're doing this for a reason. For one another. To protect one another, in that respect, to do what we need to do out of wisdom. To do otherwise, sometimes, can be to a point of tempting God, of putting God to a test of something that yes, your life is in God's hands, but you are to use wisdom as well in how you live your life. And your example, if it's just in example alone, of something you're doing to cooperate in the sense of everybody... They've given enough information back to know in certain areas that people who are practicing more of this matter of social distancing and wearing a mask, that it's doing some good, a lot of good.

Anyway, so be it.

So, the Feast of Tabernacles presents a problem because we have a lot of people who are going to be crammed together at this point in the Embassy. And I have sent them a notice to let them know we have cancelled out unless they will work with us in minimizing some of this and how they're going to work with us as a Church to make sure we... Because we have people coming in from all over and some people are going to be travelling on planes and different... And you don't know what you're going to come across and where you're going to come across it, okay?

And so all we need is for one person, like we did that one year, to have something that's brought in and all of a sudden it begins to get passed around. By the time everyone leaves the Feast we have a big problem - probably in the news. So you understand where I'm coming from - to protect the Church, okay, you all have your part to play in that.

So, I am asking today for people... Don't make us make these choices and decisions, because I am going to go through the list and do it. But as a whole, I am asking people who have health issues, who have... If you're up there in age, don't put yourself to that kind of risk to be out in the public. These airports are packed right now. The airplanes are getting packed all of a sudden. I was a little shocked! I thought we were going to Cincinnati and I'm going to... I was looking forward to this, Friday we drive in, when we're gone for only two or three days and we take a vehicle and leave it in the garage there. If it's a longer period of time we do other things. And all of a sudden I thought, going to get a parking spot right up front. I couldn't believe how packed that garage was! Think, where on earth...?

And then you get to these other airports. And Dallas, packed. People getting off planes, walking up and down... Anyway, not a good situation, travel right now, it really isn't. Trying to find bathrooms. It's not so much fun. If you've got to go to the bathroom, it could be a problem if you're travelling. If you're travelling from the airport down there across town, you might have a problem. You might not be able to use it. Might be finding some bushes or something somewhere because you may not find a bathroom. We found that in Idaho in the places pretty well opened up in a lot of ways.

And it's not a good thing for children. Everybody has to wear masks on a plane. Now, they do, if a child is a baby, younger, and they can't wear a mask, they're making certain exceptions in some of those things. But as a whole everyone has to wear a mask throughout the flight. That could present a problem with some people sometimes. So, anyway, it's not a real fun thing to do for a long period of time.

And so, I'm asking people voluntarily to think about some of this. We may have to come down to the point where we do have to tell them we're cancelled out, period. That's going to be a fun thing if we do because we're so far into this at this point. But because of the COVID thing and they can't meet our needs, shouldn't be a problem. But you never know.

So, IF, and I put a big if in here, IF we have the Feast here in Cincinnati at this point in time, it has to be much smaller. IF we have the Feast in Cincinnati we'll probably have to have this hall and that hall and work out some kind of a rotation thing where people can go between both and have some social distancing and realize that everyone is going to be asked to wear masks throughout the Feast of Tabernacles, period, exclamation mark! Okay? So, we're going to have to do something that isn't necessarily that fun to do.

But for the sake of everyone who's been travelling we need to do that, and we need to make sure that we have a little social distancing when talking. Now, if you're sitting down in services and

the chairs are a little farther apart than what we even have here, if they're a little bit farther apart, you can take them off while you're sitting there. I don't see a problem with that. You're more than six feet away if that's the case. If you are then you can take it off during that period of time.

But when you start conversing and visiting with people, you need to wear it at the Feast of Tabernacles. I'm not telling everyone you have to do this in your local areas. And if you've been somewhere, if you've been like we have, we've been in a lot of different crowds and stuff, I'm not going to be responsible, don't want to be responsible for carrying something that I may not know, that I may not even, you know, and then pass it along to someone else. What a horrible thing.

So, if your environment is like that, if you have that potential, like I mentioned last Sabbath, for one individual—where are you—back there wearing a mask, awesome! Great example! Because of that environment. And anyway, I don't need to say more. That's what we need, to think like that toward one another.

So, at the Feast of Tabernacles understand when you're coming, this is what's going to be expected of everyone if we have it here. I don't know. We may have to stay in our own regions at this point. Pray about it. We may have to stay in certain regions and people be able to meet together in small groups like you are now in homes or whatever it might be, do something special, if you can, during the Feast.

But this is not normal, what we're going through right now, and we can't treat it as though it's the same as years before. We can't expect to have this year what we had last year or the year before that. You can't expect that because that's not the world we're living in right now. So, we have to change our thinking a little bit and seek God's will in this for the sake of the Church and for the sake of one another and how we do things.

Not expecting God just to do everything for every one of us. "Oh, He'll protect every one of us. He'll keep us from anything happening because we're His people." I've seen that happen in God's Church. Its like the thing about healing; it's like all you have to do is be anointed and you're going to be made whole right away. God doesn't always do it that way, does He. He allows us to experience things. He allows us to have things, to experience things in the world that happen to the world for a purpose. We don't want this to happen in God's Church though, to spread and start.

So, anyway, I hope all this makes sense to you, what I'm talking about.

So, I know a lot of you have registered for the Embassy. We have too many there. So, I'm going to ask that in some cases that people start thinking about going back to the site and saying, "Not attending." That's a big ask, but it's a part of God's will. Things we will learn from the process, things we need to think about in this process, and to understand what's with us to stay for a long time looks like. Seems to be a pretty hardy thing that's taking place.

So, anyway, I don't know what else to say along those lines right now. There is a lot more I could probably say and probably will say as we go along here, especially after, hopefully, hearing back from them next week. Because they're going to be shocked when they come back to work and realize what I've sent them contractually, if you will, because I have to think about those kinds of things.

So anyway, this is not easy, and it's hard to ask the Church some of those kinds of things. And I know the deep-down desire is that we all have what? The same thing we had last year. We enjoy, we love the Feast of Tabernacles! We love it when we can see people we haven't seen for an entire year! We love it! We thrive on it! But there comes times in our life where we have to experience something different for the sake of others, for the sake of the Church or whatever it might be. And this is one of those times that we are obviously in.

So, I have to make some difficult decisions along the way here. I don't want to have to make all of them for everyone, that I feel in cases of illness that people have, of age factors, of things of weakness in the body that there are people who have and different things along the line. And I myself have had to have some honest look at myself. But I realize my heart is really in great shape, it's the arteries going to it. Well, you know what? They fixed that. So, it's not as though it's like a heart condition by itself.

But there are people who have heart conditions where the heart is weak. So you have to think about those things. People with diabetes, things that they're saying out there, who are the ones who are catching this the easiest, in that sense, and having the most difficult time of recovering. Do not think you are immune, that those things couldn't come your way, especially now this has been covered in the sermon, okay? Because I know where this is coming from. But you have to know it too. And you have to realize there are things we are tried in, that we are tested in to see how we respond.

It's like the one year... It takes me back to the year that boy, were the waves rippled then, when we were asked to have four days. It's like, "You have lost your mind! How could you ask such a thing of God? He commands me to be at the Feast of Tabernacles!" I'm exaggerating that a little bit, but sometimes that's the way we think.

Well, yeah. You can be at the Feast of Tabernacles just like you are today at the Sabbath service. You can be wherever God places His name. And you know where He places it? In us. In ever how we're organized. That's where God is. That's where Christ is, especially at times like this when we're together in fellowship. And so if it be in separate, if it be in our own home because we can't travel for whatever reason, God doesn't abandon us. He is there.

If because of health and age and because of conditions in the world we have to be in a certain spot by our self, so be it. God is there. He will be there. We're not abandoned.

Well, having said all that, plenty of food for thought.

Oh, yes, Canada. I am asking no one to transfer to Canada. It's out unless you have a Canadian passport. That's your exemption. And think about it even there. But no one is to transfer out to Canada. That's not resolved yet. Going back and forth is not resolved, and in some cases people are going to have quarantines. And the way things are going and the relationship there even between governments.

Even right now they're not letting anyone in Europe from the U.S. They just determined that. But they're making a decision every two weeks and I feel quite confident that by the time they get down to that point they're going to... A lot of it is political. But a lot of it is still there are other things involved here. But nevertheless, we have to roll with that. We have to adjust according to what's happening in the world around us.

So, my plan is I wish that I could be in Australia because it's so much easier doing the video's and having them done and edited in time to be around the world, but the closest I can get to that in time zones in order to have things better prepared without everything being done way in advance in the sense of prerecording that I really prefer live because I know how I am able to do that in a better way before a congregation.

Anyway, we're still going to Europe to do that and of course, we have other selfish reasons for being over there, so.. But primarily, that is what we have to do, striving to do, and in a smaller group that is able to meet together. And all that's been set out and there is plenty of availability to distance there.

But we need to be able to do that here in Cincinnati and it's going to be tough.

So, I don't have all the answers yet so please, include that in your prayers this coming week.