

## A Balanced Prayer Life, Pt. 4

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Today we're continuing in the series entitled *A Balanced Prayer Life* with this being *Part 4*.

Last week in *Part 3* we ended by discussing the portion of the outline of prayer that Christ gave us that spoke of doing God's will and in that we addressed some matters concerning Feast plans. A little bit later here in another section we're going to begin addressing some of those plans as well under another aspect of this outline of prayer.

But this one here was in **Matthew 6:10** where it says, **Your Kingdom come, Your will be done in earth as in heaven**. Now, all of these, each one of these could be broken up even into more sermons, but there is no point. We're looking at this more than we have in times past in the sense of the outline, of things that are included in here, but there is so much here and it's all about a relationship with God. It's all about how to build and grow in that relationship with God and things that God wants us to see and understand in that relationship, and so much of it has to do with looking at ourselves and realizing, understanding in every way that things have to change in our mind if we want to have a right relationship with God.

We're able to converse with God and discuss those things with God and He desires that and through that process He will give us more of His help, as we're asking for it, because a lot of it's geared in that direction as well, asking for God's help. Because we can't change, this mind cannot be changed without God's help. It's a spiritual matter.

Continuing on here in **Matthew 7:21** to discuss some more things here about God's will. Again, sometimes people get funny ideas, have had funny ideas about this outline of prayer, of what it's saying. They repeat it, traditional Christianity, different people repeat it, and it doesn't have the depth of the meaning by any measure that Christ intended that it would have for his people as time went along, of those who would be called, to have that relationship, that fellowship.

How in the world can God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven? We learn from that. We learn what His will is. He tells us what His will is, His purpose for our lives, how we're to live our lives, and so we have to look deep at our own life to make sure it's in oneness and unity with Him. That's what it's all about. It's about our learning to do God's will.

**Matthew 7:21—Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.** Again, when I read things like this I think of things that traditional Christianity teaches about all these things, about the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven is in your hearts and it's how you feel, it's how you think in your relationship with Christ and with God. It's just all syrupy. Because they don't understand. They don't grasp God's purpose. They don't have understanding of the truth that you do.

So, to us these things are very, very meaningful. God making it very clear here, Christ making it very clear here, just to go through the motions, just to go before God, just to say, "Lord, Lord," or address God doesn't mean that we're going to have a right relationship with God.

We see that in the world. People repeat things like this very outline, and it doesn't mean anything. Even in God's own Church, just because someone goes through the motions and says some of the things they should say doesn't mean that a change is taking place in their life.

Because this is all about change. This is all about a transformation of the way we think. It's about a transformation of our minds. This is what he's making very clear here. "But he who does the will of my Father in heaven." That's what counts. That's what's important. We learn that. We learn to judge our thinking. We learn to think about our judgments. On and on it goes.

The reason we covered matters about how we're going to have to observe this year's Feast in a different manner, we had to focus on the matter of how God's government works within the Church, and so, we learn from that as well. We learn that there is a manner and a means by which God works with the entirety of the Church. We very much have to learn that.

Candidly, that's been a long process for God's people because I think of the period of Philadelphia, living through much of that, and then all of Laodicea, and it's an area that, candidly, people have been very weak in. It's the number one thing that's attributed to Mr. Armstrong in teaching the Church; the first truth, in that respect, that was attributed to him of the eighteen. I think that's quite appropriate, because without that, without starting there we're not going to grow - if we don't know how God functions in our lives. Government is a very big part of that, how God works.

Even in the world you see this, the lack of this ability for people to grasp and understand how things should work. There is an order to things, and if you yield to that process it's good. If you don't, it's going to be tough on you.

From this then we must go forward with learning how we are to be in unity with God's will and the importance of praying about such matters.

Luke 22, another account here. A lot that can be learned in this, obviously, that we're going to go through here. **Luke 22:39—Then he came out and went, as he was accustomed, to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples also followed him. And when he was ... the place, he said to them, Pray that you not enter into temptation.** So again, it's talking about this process here of where he was on that particular night, the last night of his life, human life on earth. He went to the Mount of Olives, He was praying, He was teaching throughout that night, going back and forth with the disciples.

Again, telling them, **Pray that you not enter into temptation.** Now, you need to understand, this is the opposite of doing God's will. We are going to go through trials. We are going to go through tests. But the important thing to learn from all that is that we want to be in unity with what

God's will is. That's what it's all about. It's not that we're not going to have trials, it's not that we're not going to have tests, and some of these things are written in such a way or translated in such a way that sometimes they're a little more difficult to grasp, but with understanding that God has given to us we understand what it's talking about.

It's not asking that we be freed from ever having to have a trial or a test in our lives, because we know that doesn't work. That's not a part of God's plan (that we'll talk about a little more here as we go along). But if we do go through those things and this is in the context then of sinning, this is in the context if you do those things and you are led into it in the sense of your own human nature, you give into it, you succumb to it, that's what the problem is. That's where the problem arises.

That's our desire, to pray that we not yield to the trials and tests of life we go through. Because they happen constantly. Things happen to us on a regular basis. Someone says something wrong to us or in a bad way or whatever it might be, treats us improperly or poorly or harshly or whatever it might be, and then we're tried as to what our response is. These are the kinds of things we learn to pray about, and if we see certain weaknesses we have then we learn on a regular basis to ask for help as we go into that day, that we recognize what our number 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 4 might be and where this factors in.

It goes on to say, **and he was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw away, and kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from me.** So, that was his desire. That would be anyone's desire in this body, in this human life, and especially with what he knew. He knew what he was getting ready to go through in a way that we can't even begin to grasp. It was so real to him just in the mind in his thinking.

Again, we don't like having to go through hard times. It's not a lot of fun. And surely, everyone has prayed to one degree or another about such things when you know something is coming in your direction and you see things building up in such a manner, that you pray. There are certain things you don't want to have to go through but if you must in order to be molded and fashioned, if it's something that is a part of what God is working in your life, if it's a part of something that you need to experience... Because we don't know what we need to experience in life for this mind to change. God knows. He does know what we must address and be confronted with at times in our life in order to cause us, to stir us to ask the tough questions of life oftentimes. It's through the hard choices we make sometimes in life that determines our course. We need God's help in that in order to make sure that we're striving to do according to what it says here, God's will.

It's saying, **Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless not my will but Yours be done.** This in itself, if we strive to follow this same example that Christ set, forces us, causes us to look more deeply inside of ourselves when we're confronted with something that's difficult.

Life was not meant to be easy. Life was not meant to be a downhill movement; like in a roller coaster, you get up to the top and then you go down. It has its ups and downs and that's the way it's supposed to be. Hard time, difficult times, and good times - we learn to experience them all. It's just that human nature wants the good times all the time. It's not real. It's not life.

**Then there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him, and being in agony, he prayed more earnestly.** Now again, we cannot comprehend because we have never experienced and will never have to experience something to the level, to the degree he did because of God's spirit, of the mind he had, the Word of God made flesh. That's something that we will learn and grasp more deeply once we're in God's family. But we can strive to appreciate it and understand it knowing that he had the uniqueness of a mind that God put in him, that God gave to him of an ability as he read Old Testament scriptures, as he went through those things, and a knowing of those things as time went along, perhaps far more than what we can even begin to grasp that God gave to him in his mind. It was just in his mind. It was a part of his being.

But because of all that God had said that would happen to him, he knew it. It was very real to him. Being in a physical body and knowing these things to the degree he did is something that's difficult for us to comprehend. That's why when he perspired and droplets of blood came through in that, because of how real that was, knowing what he was getting ready to do, knowing what was going to happen to his body, knowing that it's not fun when you suffer physically. When you suffer physically it's not a picnic. But when you know it so much it's almost to the point of feeling it already, the intensity of that, that's incredible what he experienced. It really is.

So, **being in agony**. It wasn't easy. It was hard. Have you ever been in agony about something, just deep down inside tied up in knots inside? That's what he was experiencing because he was very human, but with a mind that is above and beyond ours when we have the impregnation of God's spirit and knowledge that God gives to us. His was far beyond that.

**...being in agony he prayed more earnestly.** He needed help. He wanted help in ways that we have to learn through time. It was automatic with him. He knew. We have to learn we need help. We have to learn through a process of time that if we want to grow spiritually, if we want to be on guard, if we want to be able to live God's way of life, we have to constantly day by day ask for help of God's spirit. Because without it we can't.

We can't do it on our own. That's the whole history of Israel. That's why I love the way scripture is written and how God worked with a nation for so long. They could not keep His way of life. Not the physical law let alone the spiritual. Look at what we have charge of doing. We are to not only not break the law in the sense of how we act physically, we're not to do it from up here in the mind because this is where it starts in how we think toward others or whatever.

So again here, this is incredible what we're looking at in that respect, in the sense of that which is spiritual that God wants us to understand. This is what it talks about here, **he prayed more earnestly and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground.** It

came through. It wasn't just that it was a lot of perspiration, it had blood in it. That's what it's talking about. That's the proper way it should be translated.

**Verse 45—Then he rose up from prayer and had come to his disciples; he found them sleeping,** it says, **for sorrow.** It's actually a word that means "to be grieving." They were grieving. Why? They still didn't understand what he was getting ready to go through. They did not understand that someone was going to come that night, take him in early morning, beat him, whip him so severely that parts of skin were ripped off of him, and even off of his face, that he couldn't even be recognized for what he went through. Yet he knew he was going to go through this, but they still had no idea that he was going to die.

They had no idea he was going to be beaten like that and that he was going to give his life even though he told them in different ways at different times even in the last two weeks of his life there. It still didn't dawn on them. Because even that same night you know what they asked him? "When will your kingdom be established?" They were still asking, "When is the Kingdom?" In other words, "When are you going to take charge as Messiah?" When are you going to do what they were wanting him to do, looking forward to him to do? Because they felt that he was going to take over the reign of government, that God was going to perform certain things in such a manner that the Roman government wouldn't be over them anymore, but he, he would be the King of kings. Incredible.

So again here, a word for sorrow, about grieving, a word meaning "deeply troubled," and having to do with "pain in the mind." That's what the word means in the Greek language. It's the pain in the mind. That's some of the worst kind of pain, when you're hurting up here in your thinking because of what you're going through.

**And so, he said to them,** to the disciples, **Why do you sleep?** So, this example here of something happening to them physically. They were grieving because they didn't understand why he was saying the things he was. They'd never seen him like this. They knew something was up, but they didn't grasp it. They knew the torment he was in. They could see it. They could hear it. Because they had never experienced this from him before, and so this communication, as it was getting more intense, they saw what he was doing, they had never seen him do this before and here it was very late at night, exceedingly late, and he was going back and forth praying for long periods of time, and they were grieved because they saw him in torment.

**...they were sleeping. And he said to them...** So, this kind of wore them out. **He says, Why do you sleep?** Great question because it's what all of God's people are to learn from - do not ever go to sleep! Like what happened to Laodicea, it's the lesson of Laodicea, falling asleep. It's what took place.

**Rise up and pray...** That's what's communicated to us over and over again in scripture, the importance of doing what we need to do, rise to the occasion of the calling that God has given to

us, do what we need to do in order to build a relationship with God, in order to receive the kind of help we need to conquer and overcome, to grow, and to change.

**Rise up and pray!** Continually! Don't ever let it leave you in your life. So, this is a simple example, in that regard, to show something that is ongoing throughout one's life. ...unless you enter into temptation. Because if you don't, you're not going to receive the help you need. It's not a matter of "unless you enter into it." It's a matter of what comes as a result of this. We'll come back to that in a little bit here.

**And while he spoke there appeared a multitude, and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near unto Joshua to kiss him.** A kiss of betrayal. Incredible. Supposed to be your friend. Supposed to be one who was learning from you, your disciple, had the treasury, was in charge of that, and he's the one that betrays. Now, Christ knew all these things. But again, we're to learn from these kinds of things, understand not living this way of life, responding to the blessings we've been given. I think of the man of sin, the son of perdition turning against Christ. We've had thousands and tens of thousands turn against Christ. That's happened since the Church was established in 31 A.D. Thousands and thousands and thousands. Only the few have come through it through time in 2,000 years. Incredible.

That's why it's such an education to learn and to understand that as time goes along things about what it's going to be like in the Great White Throne, that this false concept that we had at one time, that the vast majority of people are going to be saved at that time, is not true at all. Because we have choices. We're coming from a background, people are going to come out of all kinds of backgrounds in life and they're still going to be the same and they're still going to do the same things. The vast majority, as it were, well, I won't say the vast majority, but it could be, but there are going to be a lot of people who just don't want God's way of life. Incredible.

Continuing on, 1 Peter 4. Let's go on to there. Again, this is all about the portion here of "He who does the will of my Father," those are the ones. Because we must learn to do that. It must be a part of our thinking and a part of our mind if we're to grow and in time then become a part of God's family. That's what it means to become a part of the Kingdom of God.

**1 Peter 4:17—For the time now has come...** A lot of things are written because they don't understand what is being said. People who translated didn't have God's spirit though God gave help in many occasions here. But He left things open in many cases for people to go in different directions and for a purpose. A lot of that is similar to what Christ did when he spoke in parables. There is that which can only be revealed because of God's spirit being given to someone. As we learn God's purpose and God's plan we grow in these things and we can understand things that are written that even are mistranslated.

It says, **for the time**, and it should be, **judgment must begin at the house of God.** "For the time." What time? Well, the time you're called. When you're called that's when judgment starts.

That's where it begins. So whatever time you live in that's what you're under. It's not in the world yet, it's in God's house, it's in the Church of God.

**...if with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?** Well, we learn from that. We realize a lot of things here. First of all, they can't help it, and so we know what is the end. Unless somebody can be forgiven of sin it's death, death for all time. But we also learn in God's purpose and God's plan that He has a place for people—the Great White Throne—for a time, as a whole, when the vast majority who haven't known His way will have that same opportunity, where judgment then will be their time, it will come upon them.

Again here, there is always much left open here, but God blesses us in putting every piece together, like Mr. Armstrong used to talk about, each piece of the puzzle. The farther we go in time and the more that God gives to us the more of that that becomes clearer and clearer.

**Verse 18—Now, if the righteous,** and the word “scarcely” isn't a good translation at all. It's a word that means, “with difficulty or in toil.” See? **If the righteous in toil with difficulty...** In other words, it's not meant to be easy. It is meant to be hard. It is meant to be difficult in every way. Physical life, God made us human so that it would be difficult. He couldn't make us spirit—He couldn't—to produce Elohim. It can't work that way. Because then we see the angelic realm. To have free choice. This is how it begins in order to become greater in the sense of being in His family. Because this is something that has to be transformed and changed because it's ever given that kind of power.

I love the way Mr. Armstrong used to explain that. Basically, paraphrasing some of it, the one that can be trusted through all time is God. In order to become a part of that family we have to become a part of one mind with God. Something has to happen to what's in the mind before He can give us that kind of power. Because we see the evidence of what happened in the angelic realm. So, to have something greater? What an incredible thing that God has placed before us.

**If the righteous with difficulty or in toil are saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear? Therefore, let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their lives to Him in doing good as to a faithful Creator.** So again, it's here, it's about the will of God and doing the will of God and striving to live that way. Beautifully written here talking about a faithful Creator, of the plan that God has. God is faithful. We as human beings aren't.

Every time we sin, even within the Church obviously, we're not being faithful. So, we seek to change, and the way we do that is in a relationship with God and crying out for His spirit so that we can have the help we need. Because we can't do it on our own.

Now returning to the outline of prayer, **Matthew 6:10**, going on in the next part here, **Your Kingdom come, Your will be done in earth as in heaven.** It's a matter of “as in.” In other words, as God wills from heaven. We need to be in unity and order with that. That's what this is all about. That's how it's done in earth according to - we need to ask what is God's will—who is in heaven. That's what it goes back to.

**Give us this day our daily bread.** So, we grasp that this is not about prayers to be made around a physical meal and of being sustained in our physical lives. We learn to be thankful for those things, for everything that God gives to us in physical life, including that, but to limit it to this or to focus in on this in an unbalanced way has not been healthy in the way the world does it.

God blesses us by understanding this is a spiritual matter that Christ is communicating and it's about him. Now, we talked about this in *Part 1* so we grasp that this is something about our spiritual life and it's about being fed spiritually. We need to be fed spiritually. We need God's spirit. Without it we can do nothing, nothing that's profitable, nothing that's good.

So, sometimes in this area I think of—I'll just bring things in about the Feast—even now we're at a point in time where different ones, you know, are starting to prepare messages for the Feast. Not me yet. I'm almost there. But on this next trip. I do better sometimes when I'm away, away from everything and can begin to focus more on the messages. So, as we go out west, the visits out there, going to be focusing on this. I don't know about the others but they're getting close because they've just been told.

So again here, we want to be fed and so we talk about this year by year. We want to be fed spiritually so we're a part of this because what we receive out of it is in large part spiritually is going to depend a lot, because God measures that in us, because we're told that, we're told it from Him, by Him—that's why it comes in through the Church—and He lets us know we're to pray about it. Because we look forward to it because we realize how important it is to be fed spiritually, and what we receive out of it, the degree to which we receive certain things out of it has a lot to do with that, how much we're involved in it. Because that's just how God works in us, each one of us.

The messages, yes, to inspire those, to bless those. We want help. Those preparing them, we want help, we look to God, we know it has to come from God and so we ask people to be a part of that, the Church to be a part of that, to pray about those things, because this is the time we begin to focus on them, because some of these have to be prerecorded and all of them have to be, or at least have some content or major content in the sense of the full outline so they can be translated so that when those in the Netherlands and those in other places, speak Spanish, primarily, they're able to go through it and follow along when they're given. These have to be done ahead of time.

But when we're actually sitting there and drinking it in God will actually bless us according to that measure of what we put into it. Awesome! Something to think about more deeply and pray about more deeply.

But anyway, while we're here on this part I did want to mention this, not only in those who are preparing for them, and so forth. I thought I'd read Wayne's first here, an email he sent. Because this is a different year. First year a Passover was done in a different way, in large part. We're living through a time that's so unique. Now the Feast of Tabernacles, Trumpets, and Atonement,

they're going to be done, as a whole, by most, in a unique manner, in a manner we've never had to do in this regard, in this modern age in the sense of Philadelphia and Laodicea and on. So, we live in an incredible time as we get close and closer to what's going to transpire and how quickly some things are coming. We're living through it. We're experiencing it. It's not going to get better; it's going to get a whole lot worse before it gets better.

But anyway, he said, "Due to a new virus restriction in Victoria, which covers all of the Melbourne brethren," it says, "who are now in a lockdown for six weeks..." Some areas respond differently, the governments respond differently when certain things flare up, so this is something they're experiencing. He said, "we've had to cancel all Sabbath meetings for six weeks now." So, there's no meeting together whatsoever, and also this has affected his ability to have the facility where they normally do the videos, the prerecorded videos. So, in that he can't do it so he has to do that from home, not set up in the same way that I am in our home and have the facility there, but he's going to have to do it now at home because of this.

So again, things to pray about in the preparation of messages, the ability to give them and have them done. Thought I'd just read it just to show what they're going through down there because as he says here, "New South Wales," which I believe is the area of Sydney and on up the coast or on up on the eastern side of Australia there, Victoria is farther to the south where Melbourne and so forth is, and that's where they are, that's what he's speaking of in Victoria. He's talking about how the borders have been closed.

So, you think, even within different areas of the world now, different states there in Australia, tough time, the things that people are going through. Canada, provinces and so forth and some of the travel, some of the things that are difficult for people. So, anyway.

But I also wanted to mention here about the Feast here, a matter of, as we talked about, doing God's will, a part of desiring of being fed, the bread the life and so forth that we talked about in *Part 1*, but a kind of a continuation on this. I wanted to be able to go through some of this so that everyone could hear it in Australia, New Zealand, Europe and so forth, just so they know what's going on. Because they don't get the announcements. So that's why I'm purposely putting this in the sermon like I did last Sabbath.

Anyway, everyone here knows now the Cincinnati site has been cancelled in the U.S. So, as a result of that everyone is receiving cancellation notices, probably has received them by now, that where you thought you were staying you aren't staying. If you are, you're probably going to pay a higher price because that was based upon the fact even if some were able to come in they wouldn't be able to keep that because it was under agreement of a larger group of people, in other words, to have that. Although things are so bad right now you might be able to have a lower price. Things are crazy out there.

But anyway, as a result of Cincinnati being cancelled, Canada's been cancelled, Australia has been cancelled. They've had to do that. Australia has had to cancel because of the restrictions

between the states now and so forth, so not being able to plan effectively, not being able to plan well. They're going to have three different areas. I think it's New South Wales, Victoria, and there was one other one. Queensland. But anyway, I think they're keeping it in three different areas now, smaller, obviously, in all those.

Canada had to be cancelled totally because of, well, they don't even have that hotel opened back up, because I couldn't get ahold of anyone. But some of the difficulties in travelling between provinces, looking forward to some of that, being able to make plans, it's just like the door is shut because it's not a wise thing. If something happened up there to one individual and they met together they all have to go into quarantine at their own expense, from what I understand, for 14 days. Well, not a good plan. What if?

Anyway, so people are just going to keep it, as a whole, by themselves, whether it be up there or in the U.S. and some of these other areas. Just mentioning this because in some cases people are going to get maybe an Airbnb, do something on their own, perhaps a hotel meeting room if they can, maybe just for the first day and the last day. I'm kind of leaving that to different regions to determine for themselves how they do it. How they do it in Australia has already been established, Wayne is taking care of that. New Zealand, the same thing, they have to stay there.

But, whatever area you might be in, in some cases if people can get together on a Sabbath, a few or more, it depends on your area wherever you are. Only in special circumstances would we want anyone going to another area where they're meeting together. Unless you ask ahead of time, for whatever reason, just like maybe coming into Cincinnati. I know one family in particular because of family and so forth, sure. But we don't want any large sites. We're staying away from that.

So again here, this is not normal. You have to kind of roll with the punches. If you know of someone somewhere that is doing something, friends or whatever that you're close to and you want to be able to do it together, be together in a particular area, then you have to work those things out amongst yourselves, as a whole.

It's just that I mention this again, I don't want a whole bunch of people travelling into Cincinnati because they know the group is still going to be getting together there at least on the first day and the last day. We haven't 100% determined in between but they may well not get together in between, just on those two days.

This is just a unique time. I also will mention that because of this, been asked about this, what about someone going to, as an example, university, whatever, college, would they be able to go to classes if they continue. In this particular case, it's unique. Normally, we would strive to go no matter what to a hosted Feast site, everyone, as a whole, wherever you are. If you are in your own area because of what's taking place and you are working, going to university, going to college, whatever it might be during the daytime, and yet you make time, because if you don't make the time to listen to the sermons then you shouldn't do it. That should be your priority, the

sermons in between during the Feast as well. Obviously, the High Days that are on the weekly Sabbath, that's unique as well this year.

So again here, a little bit differently perhaps than what we might normally do it, but you have to judge those things and pray about those things yourself, okay? In some cases, it's better to escape out of the world, to get away from the world and to strive to do the Feast the best you can. But on the other hand of it, I'm not saying that you're totally restricted in certain cases. You're going to have to judge those things as yourself, by yourself.

As a whole, no matter what, I would strive to be together either in your own family, yourself, if you can't be with someone else, if you can get together with a few than that's a plus. But again, you're going to have to weigh these things out yourselves and pray about them, seeking to do God's will, see? You're not being told this is how you have to do it; you have to do it between you and your relationship with God, okay, how you observe it, and not judge others for how they observe it. Okay? Everybody has to be careful through all this because you'll be judged according to all that, and we learn from this in a great way.

So, if someone can get together in other locations, some are planning on getting into some Airbnb's, in some cases getting a larger one so that some can come together in a larger living room area in order to watch it together. Fine. If it works out for you, great. Nevertheless, whatever you do, make sure you do it safely, not foolishly.

Some people who perhaps shouldn't get together in a local area would be maybe some of the same ones who shouldn't transfer to the Feast site in the first place because of health problems. You know, diabetes, heart conditions, respiratory problems, in some cases you're just wise through all of this to be careful. Again, depending on what it is you want to live and experience in life. We're all different, we're all unique, and we're all responsible for the choices we make, and it's about a relationship with God.

This is unique in the sense we're not being told this is the only way to do it. You have to judge for yourselves because everybody's situation is going to be a little bit different totally.

I wanted to mention about the Canadian site as well, that from what I understand it, those reservations have all been cancelled as well. But everyone, no matter, except for the US and the Embassy, because they're going to take care of those reservations.... The reason we did it that way is because in case someone got wrapped up in doing something else here, forgot, and then they're going to be charged for the first day no matter what, whatever you put on your credit card and so forth. Right now, they're being totally wiped out, cleaned, you don't have to worry about it.

So, you should have an email back. If you didn't receive an email of a cancellation then you have the responsibility to contact them and say, "I know a lot of others received this, but I haven't. Is my reservation cancelled?" That's your responsibility, okay?

Same thing with those of you up in Canada. You need to make sure that your reservation has been cancelled. If you haven't received a notification from the hotel you need to contact them and let them know you're cancelling your reservation. On and on it goes.

About the only place we may have, which we may not have, but we may have a "normal" Feast site in the sense of what might be normal, is going to be in the Netherlands and we don't know that yet because that's our plan still, of being able to go there, and some others, and if it works out, great. But if it doesn't? But with these spikes that are taking place they may not let anyone from the States into Europe, as they have already determined here, what, a week ago or so, whatever it was, that no one is to come in yet. So, we have to wait and see.

In all this I want to hit something else. In all this there are many who have lost funds for having to make changes and so forth for the Feast. There probably isn't anyone who hasn't lost a little bit at least in some manner or another. Sometimes that can test some people in their thinking. Just remember, God could take care of all this, could have taken care of all this. We could all be going to different Feasts, but He didn't. And remember too, it's God's tithe that He's given to you to observe the Feast. It isn't your money, it's God's that He's given to you to use specifically for the Feast of Tabernacles or Holy Days, High Days. That's what it's for.

So sometimes people have some struggles with some of this, which shouldn't be a struggle at all. So, just trying to put a balance in there for everyone to think about. We don't know what's going to happen, whether there'll be a Feast the following year. If there is in the States, it's going to be at the same place we had planned because that's what we worked out with them, basically.

Which I think was the right thing to do because of the hardship upon them and the hardship upon us, both had to give/take a little bit here. So, in this case here we said we would come back the following year if we're able to have it.

But people can save their excess tithe for next year if we have a Feast. It's going to be a great one if you have that much more, ability to help more people, ability to whatever. So, that is if we have it.

I think that puts things in their proper perspective but sometimes we have to be reminded of some of the smallest of things in this regard.

So, after this matter of seeking daily bread, crying out to God we want to be fed, we need to be fed, we pray. That's why we have changed some of the format of praying in Sabbath services. We have asked people pray about that ahead of time, because it's asking for this, that you receive what you need, especially during the week. Each week we need God's Sabbath. We need what God gives to us. It's not just a matter of hearing it, it's a matter of getting it in the mind here. That's a spiritual matter in a relationship with God.

Then it goes on, **And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.** Now, we've learned through time here even more so what this means, but we're always building upon these as we revisit them, as God continues to give us more.

This verse is stated a little more direct in Luke 11:4 (I'm just going to read that to you). It doesn't just say "debts" there, it says **And forgive us our sins, even as we forgive everyone who is indebted to us.** It doesn't say who's sinned, it says, "who is indebted to us." So what does all this mean? It's a word that means "who owes us." That's what this word really means. "...as we also forgive everyone who owes us."

Now, this is written in such a manner that it should cause everyone to investigate or question why this is stated in this manner. It really causes, should cause us to dig a little deeper. What does this mean? What is this all about? As we look at it, it should first lead one to asking, "Is this primarily about someone who owes another financially?" Is that what this is about? It's not about that. Is it about forgiving money owed or some kind of other compensation that we feel is owed to us or that is owed to us? Is that what it's about? No, it's not about that.

You know, when someone owes someone something, they owe it. It's something that needs to be paid, whether it be someone in the Church or someone in the world or whatever. You know, if you're in a business and someone owes you something, they owe it to you. Where would you be if you just say, "Oh, you don't owe that. Don't worry. Don't worry." You wouldn't get anywhere in life. "Oh, I want to work for you for free. It's okay. You don't owe me anything. Whenever you want us, we'll be there. I don't know how we're going to live, but we're going to survive."

Because sometimes people try to force these into physical things. That's not what it's about. The whole outline of prayer is about what is spiritual. It truly is. We're going to go through a particular story here in Matthew 18 because it's about the spirit, it's about an attitude, it's about the way we think. That's what's important in all of this, that we're to learn from it.

**Matthew 18:21** it says, **Then Peter came to him and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?** Now, he had to be thinking in his own mind this is pretty generous. He had to be thinking in that regard because of the way it's written, that he's going to ask him this question, striving to live better toward others. If he does something against me should I forgive him then seven times? In context here and what's being spoken of, it's not just a matter of seven times.

We as human beings sometimes can be—what's the word I'm looking for—very demanding in the sense of what we expect from others. Sometimes we can be pretty good at keeping record, at keeping account of what someone's done against us, wrong to us and we don't let it go, we just hold on to it. This isn't talking about something over a lifetime because then you would really be out there, wouldn't you? "See, was that the sixth or the fifth time you've done this? See, that was seven years ago...or was it ten years ago? I think that's seven! That's it, no more." So, it's not that kind of thinking at all.

This is on a daily basis because these things can happen on a daily basis in life, truly. Your attitude toward other people and something that could be said. Because you know what?

Something can happen just a few minutes later and the same thing happen again. So rather than confronting them, “That’s number three.” It’s like this thing of counting to ten.

This is kind of how his thinking is, should I do it seven times before I address it, before I act upon it, before, well, whatever I think my response should be that would be justified then? Because that’s what’s being asked.

**Joshua said to him, I'm not telling you up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.** Now, if you think you’re doing well in your approach and your relationship with God, that you would be willing to do something like this seven times, and he comes back and said, no, seventy times seven. Uh, that’s a lot, especially if you’re looking at just one day or even one week. You’re not going to be carrying your tally book with you and whatever.

It’s showing something here: you don’t keep count. You just keep doing it because it’s right in your thinking toward someone else. Then, as we have learned in the Church through time, you come to learn that you can’t hold any sin against anyone else if it’s a sin. If someone has sinned against you?

Now, you don’t forget it. You’re not stupid and naïve. There are different ways you may have to deal with someone because that’s your responsibility. It may be to go to them alone, which oftentimes people have not done as they should have done because it’s their responsibility.

Still blows my mind in God’s Church that someone can be sinning and someone else knows about it and they won’t go and address them on it! I don’t care what it is. You have knowledge of a direct sin, “You’re stealing from God.” “You’re stealing first tithe,” or “You’re stealing second tithe,” or “You’re not doing this,” or “You’re living this kind of lifestyle that is obviously against God’s law,” and you won’t go and talk to your brother about it when God commands you to do it? You’re not in God’s Church! You’re not in a right relationship with God unless you follow through and do what God says.

If you don’t do that and follow through and do that because you love someone, because you’re exercising the kind of love that God says we’re to exercise... Because that’s love, because it stops people... If there is any hope of getting through to them, this is the method that God has given to us, to show us this is what can help someone before it gets too late. Because you don’t want it to be so far or they get so they won’t stop at any point. But they can be so embarrassed or taken back by the fact that you’ve come to them alone and you’re concerned about it, people can sometimes respond then because they’re ashamed. But if they begin to be calloused and hardened to what they’re doing because people just let it go because this thing of “Well, I don’t want to lose my friendship,” or “I don’t want to lose ‘this,’” or “I don’t want to lose ‘that.’” Well, if you don’t do it you’ve lost them, you’ve lost that anyway. So, do what God says because that’s the right way, that’s God’s will in how we live our lives in our relationship toward one another.

I think of all things in God's Church through time, if that had been applied more. Because it's been applied very poorly through time, if at all, and if that would be exercised far more people would have come through some of the things that would have been so much easier, so much better for them. So again here, it's about an attitude of mind. It's about a way of thinking.

Anyway, going on: **Joshua said to him, I'm not telling you seven times, but seventy times seven. Because, the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.** So, this is going on in a story, a parable and giving this account of something that is given physically to learn something spiritually from.

**...there's a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. Now, when he had begun to settle accounts...** All these things are always such a vast difference between the way we look at things as human beings and the way God says we need to learn to look at things on a spiritual plane. Because we're so shallow, physically oriented, and we need God's help to think of things on a spiritual plateau, if you will, and to be able to address them with God's help in a right way. So, seventy times seven compared to seven? You can't compare the two. Here is a story here that is absolutely incredible.

**Now, when he had begun to settle accounts, he was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.** Now, a talent is 750 oz of silver. Crazy. Amazing. A talent. So, that's nearly 470,000 pounds of silver, the example it's giving here, and at 2000 lbs. to a ton, which is how we do it here in the States, that's 235 tons in today's value. That would be close to \$140,000,000.

So, that's the example, it's the same thing as this seventy times seven. That makes you stop and think, look at this, how vast a difference this is. And so it is here.

Here is an individual that in this case it had to do with a physical debt of something that was owed, \$140,000,000 dollars. I don't care if it's 1.4, a hundredth of that, then the comparison here it goes on to say. Shows attitudes. Shows the way people are. Shows the hypocrisy sometimes in human life. That's what God wants us to learn from this.

**Verse 25—But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.** Because it was owed. The most that's going to be gotten out of this is that he be sold in this case, as was the custom in those times, of what to do.

**The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.** So that was, in that respect, if you want to look at it, someone that was far greater than what he was in the sense he owed this to him. And how many more owed certain things to him? So, exceedingly wealthy. Then all these individuals who would be considered wealthy, but if they're not able to meet their debt here we are. He fell down and he asked him, you know, to have mercy upon him. "Have patience with me and I'll pay you all." So, in the long run if he were really going to do that that would be a whole lot better than what he was going to get otherwise. But he was moved by the response.

**And he said, Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, he released him, and forgave him the debt.** Incredible. So, sometimes it takes something like this just to cause us to stop and think just a little bit about our relationship with God. If someone that owed so much not only didn't have to suffer for it in ways that would have been exceedingly hard, but now is told, "We're going to wipe the slate clean." Yet that's what God has done to us. To understand what we owe. We owe, as human beings, our life, to only have a physical life and no more, to not ever have life that continues on. But that's what God has called us for. That's why He created us. That's His desire.

As a part of that we recognize then that there has to be the payment for sin because what we owe there is a cessation of life. Death, that's the payment. There is no other way. God has established that and people learn through that because it isn't good that anyone should have life beyond that unless this mind is able to be transformed on a spiritual plane to the point it can be changed into spirit life for all time. Awesome! And so, to grasp how much we've been forgiven, because we sin, we sin not only before we were ever called and baptized, we have sinned a beaucoup since. Every time we did, it was the death penalty again, except for our Passover and the blessing of having the slate cleaned over and over and over again.

To have that kind of relationship with God, to recognize that kind of patience and that kind of love and that kind of purpose that He has for us, that all we have to do is have faith in what He told us and say, "Thank you, God, for giving us our Passover and that this can be cleaned, and that You see me."

Now, we don't, aren't able to do that with other human beings, as a whole. To see them as totally clean? We tend to remember, don't we? "I remember what you said! I remember how you said it. I remember how you did 'this' and how you did 'that,' and then a day later you did 'that' and 'that,'" and we just add up the big pile. After a while we have someone pegged and we'll never let them go from that! We're so harsh as human beings in our judgment! I get deeply irritated by that carnality because God has forgiven us everything and He wipes it clean, and we need to be willing to do the same thing to everyone else whom God calls, who belongs to God. To do anything less is hideous, it really is.

We need to see our lives in that kind of context. That's what it's talking about here. It's talking about the ability to have a right relationship with God. If God so blesses us, has called us to such a calling, shouldn't we strive as we're told to do to have the same thinking and the same mind and the same love and the same patience, and the same mercy that we can never have to that degree until we're in His Family, but shouldn't we strive to do that? You better believe it. God tells us that in very certain terms. That's what this is about when it talks about "forgive us our debts as we forgive others." It's a matter of forgetting it. It's a matter of putting it aside.

Does it mean you don't remember what they did or what happened? Because sometimes you have to deal with people accordingly. To give them time, that's a part of sometimes being patient. Does that mean you walk around as a fool and forget and just let everything go? Sometimes you

have to deal with it. There's a balance in there just as much as there is a balance in prayer and everything else in our life in how we work with individuals.

If someone has a certain weakness, sometimes those can be, especially in the beginning, could be very great and it could be very harmful to others in the Body, so you have to be careful to perhaps be on guard for their sake as well in order to help them.

I think of when we were much, much larger. This was kind of a dangerous situation in God's Church because it was as though, because everyone is in God's Church you could just trust everyone to always be godly, to always live perfectly before God, as though we didn't have any problems. Yet people came from all kinds of backgrounds and had all kinds of issues and problems in life.

Sometimes we learn those things then in relationships with one another and it's wise in order to help, in order to serve, in order to pray about those circumstances with the hope and desire that people are able to conquer their weaknesses, whatever their major weaknesses are or were as they're growing and overcoming.

I hope this makes great sense to you because I'm telling you some great things in the sense of that which is spiritual. You have to have God's help to see these things even more clearly.

People would do things sometimes with others in a trusting manner that they were foolish for. Because we've had people come into God's Church from every kind of background, every kind of thing possible you could name. I don't think you can name anything that I have not known and seen. Nothing. Not even murder. Okay? God has forgiven different ones whom He's called.

So that then determines how you deal with them, how you work with them. You give them opportunity to grow. They may have to grow while they're in a prison. But if that's God's purpose and they're going to learn something from that, so be it. Some who should have been weren't. They escaped it. But time had gone on by so long and certain things had passed and so you deal with what is there now, what is the situation now.

I hope we understand that we all have weaknesses of human life. We've all come out of different kinds of pasts. I think in the Great White Throne, everything is there. Everything that has ever happened on earth will be there and people are going to be given opportunities to overcome what they were. That will not change totally until they're changed.

What we are, what we have been will always be with us. What we have experienced, evil against us or that we have done that was evil will always be in us whether now or in the Great White Throne. Only God can change that mind to a point. That means there are things you have to conquer and overcome and do better at.

That's why I mentioned, I believe it was last Sabbath, going through various things and I made very clear when it talked about adulterers, homosexuals, and so forth through life that all are sin, fornicators. If that's a person's primary weakness and they have been deeply involved in those

things in their life, you think that's just going to stop? That mind that had those weaknesses to the degree they were, that that's just gone when they're baptized? No. It's the same mind, but they learn not to practice those things anymore. You learn not to practice. You fight against that thinking or those urges or whatever it might be that people have in life that are wrong, and God says to live this way.

That's why sometimes when people have made comparisons of different kind of sins you think, sin is sin, and some are more vile than others, but it's sin. That's why I think sometimes of traditional Christianity and especially in this certain part of the United States, what they call the Bible belt. Not a big a belt as it used to be. It's getting smaller because of trends. But I think of country western music and I think of all these that call themselves Christian, and some of the most heinous things happen in churches. Some of the most heinous things of relationships happen when people meet each other in churches and they go out and commit fornication, they go out and commit adultery.

Some of those things have happened right in God's own Church through time. Not a little, but a lot. You know why? Because we're human beings and because people have weaknesses. People have often left. Probably one of the number one things for people leaving God's Church is for sex, immoral sex, because they want something that God says you should not have. They won't fight, and they won't practice living righteously before God. They won't practice not sinning because they want it. Okay, that's your choice, cut off from God's spirit. That's just the way it is.

Now, sometimes people have known about those things in God's Church. That's one of the examples I'm using. You don't forget certain things. You recognize if someone has a particular weakness in a particular area, to be on guard. But to forgive them, to give them opportunity to grow and change, to accept them as clean, hoping and praying that they have been cleansed and will not revert back to those wrong things. Again, I hope that all makes great sense, because there is a lot there, there truly is.

This has a lot to do with what it's talking about here, the ability to forgive. Doesn't say to forget, but it doesn't say to remember either in the sense that you're keeping track of, in the sense that you're using something against someone else to harshly judge someone else. Because our overall desire should be what Gods is, to see us saved, to see us able to conquer and overcome, to see us grow spiritually. That takes work, and it takes work on everyone's part.

So, here is a debt wiped clean, and if we look at it on a physical plane like this, we should be in awe of it. It's more vast, what God has forgiven us of, than this. It really is. That's the point of it all.

**...Now, when he had begun to settle accounts one was brought to him who owed that amount. Okay, catching up here.**

**Master, have patience on me, and I will pay you all. Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out**

and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. Now, it's varied a lot as you go through history there so it's kind of difficult to pin down the exact value because the reality is it changed within the Roman Empire, what its real value was. But with one general calculation of kind of a medium of all these this would be approximately 12.5 oz of silver - compared to all these tons of silver that was forgiven him.

That's really the way it is, in a sense, if you see it on a spiritual plane and what he did then. Look what he did. Incredible! Worth about \$230 compared to \$140,000,000 that was forgiven him. That's just how sick and how puny we can be sometimes as human beings on a spiritual plane when it comes to how we think about others.

It says, **and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what you owe!** So, sometimes we don't grasp the depth of what God has done in our lives and we respond by being harsh and cruel toward others, the very thing we should not be doing but that we should be learning. That's the point of all this. We should be learning from what God has done in our life and value that and recognize this is what I'm to do.

**Verse 29—So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and pleaded with him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay you all. But he would not and instead went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt.** Incredible. \$230 compared to \$140,000,000. That's the example it's giving here. Incredible!

**So when his fellow servants saw what had been done,** it says, **they were very grieved and went and told their master all that had been done.** Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, **You wicked servant!**

Now, if we can't glean from that how God would look upon us, the sin that is there, because it's sin. It's deep sin. It's ugly sin. It's some of the ugliest of sin there is. To say, to think about something like that, here is what God has done for us, with us on a continuing basis day by day, and yet if we respond like this by judging someone harshly and not forgiving? Because it's in the mind. And if you really forgive someone you really want what's best for them. That's what it's talking about. It's that attitude of mind. Not erasing something - being wise in it but being filled with a motive and a desire to see everyone succeed as we want ourselves to succeed spiritually. We want to see someone grow. We want to see them blessed in life. We want to see them productive in life.

That's why you go to a brother alone. Because you want to see them be able to get through, over a hurdle and be forgiven, because they're cutting themselves off from God. They're going to be gone. I mean, they're gone at the point in time of sin unless there is a change. Again, it's about our desire toward one another within the Body.

God's overriding desire for us once He calls us is that we come through this, that we be able to address everything in our life and continually be able to be forgiven and continually grow spiritually. We should want the same thing for everyone in the Body of Christ while they're in the

Body of Christ. Because as time goes on, we learn from the fact that not everybody stays and that many have gone by the wayside. People continue to go by the wayside. That's why every time that it happens it should hurt. It should hurt! Why should it hurt? Because of this loss.

We understand there's a great loss here and we should feel that way because we want to see them succeed. We want to see them fight and conquer and overcome, and if we don't have that feeling toward others, toward everyone in the Body, something is wrong with us spiritually. Because that should be first and foremost in our mind.

**Then his master, after he had called him, said, You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.** Think about ourselves in prayer. We plead with God. We want to be forgiven. We're ashamed of sin. We grow in that, and if we can't have that same spirit and mind toward someone else that God has toward us?

**Shouldn't you have also had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I showed mercy to you?** So much to be learned there, there truly is. **Then his master was angry and delivered him, it says, to the tormenters,** but it's to those, to be punished until he should pay all that was owed him. **So my heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart...** It's in here. It's inside. It's how we think in the mind. ...**does not forgive his brother his trespasses.**

So, it's not keeping record. Seventy times seven. It's gone, as God has done to us, unless we have a responsibility in something. Then you may have to go to someone alone. But again, you don't hold it against them and you hope that they're able to repent so that they can grow and not lose out and not be cut off and remain cut off from God's spirit.

It's one of the worst things to watch. It's one of the worst things as a minister to watch. After a while you see it so clearly, what happens in people's lives and this process that takes place as individuals don't listen to what's being said. Because this is the means that God has given to me to do it. It is through preaching and teaching of those things that happen and continue on, that we all need to be aware of and sometimes specifically individually in our own lives. It's up to us and our ears to hear how we are spiritually and how we're thinking, and what we receive from God that He gives through His holy spirit.

Yet within the Body God makes it very clear if someone has done something toward you that's wrong or by you or next to you or in your environment that you know is a sin because you've seen it or you're fully aware of it because you've seen it or aware of it because it was told to you by them or whatever it might be, then you have a responsibility to them of going to them alone. It's the way it works.

**So my heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from your heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.** Now, kind of interesting, this word here, "trespasses." It is not "sin" in what's being said here. It's a different word. That's the point because we come to learn that sin is against God and it's not something that we have the right to forgive. Only God has the right to forgive sin. So, what is owed to God is totally different than what we might feel that's owed to

us. That's why we're supposed to be forgiving. Because we have no right to hold something against someone else in the sense of harsh judgment. On the contrary, we're to pray differently than that.

This word here means... **Anyone who does not forgive his brother his false step...** It's from a word that means "to fail or to fall beside one." So, someone, if they have sinned before God because they have not kept God's law, they have fallen down beside you. They're in a fall, if you will. They've cut themselves off from God's spirit and our response to them should be different. Not to harshly deal with them.

Even when you go to them alone, some of the biggest mistakes people have made when they have tried to apply that has been for the wrong motive. Sometimes to get at someone. "Now is my chance. I'm going to my brother alone!" and jump all over them for what they've done. It's not done in that spirit at all. It's done in a meek spirit. It's done in one that hurts. It's one that you don't even want to do it, but you do it because God holds you responsible. And so, you bring it up and you discuss it. Not with harsh judgment. It's just a reality, "This is what it is and it's wrong and we don't do this in God's Church. I hope you get this dealt with. I've done what I have to do here. I'm not enjoying this one iota. I hate this."

So again, it can be a word that has to do with trespasses, but basically, it's about a false step. What is that false step when we look at other human beings? Well, you've gone the wrong direction. You're going the wrong way. You're walking in the wrong direction. You've done something against God. You've fallen down. If someone falls down, what should we want to do? Help them up. So, what's our part in that? That's what this is about. So, instead of being harsh toward them we should want to know is there anything that can be done to help them up?

When it comes to forgiving others, again, it's about an attitude toward others knowing that sin, again, is a matter between God and that person as to whether or not they're forgiven. It's not between us and them, it's between God and them. Christ paid for that. So, it's between God and them and whether or not they're forgiven.

Our attitude is not one of what we believe is owed to us. What is owed to us when someone sins in the Body? Hmm. Even if it's directly at us. You have to work through that, don't you? But it's, again, a willingness or a desire to see someone forgiven by God. That's what our real desire should be, so that we're all in the Body together.

The question should not be what we think someone owes us but what it shows here in Romans 15:1. I like the way it says it here. It's unique in how it says it. Some of these scriptures we're going to be reading kind of drive this home in a unique way.

**Romans 15:1—We then who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.** Because a lot of this, what we just said, is about this, and when you understand the word "ought" that is translated here, it's the same word "owe." It's really poorly

translated to say “ought” because it’s not about “ought to do ‘this,’” or “you ought to do ‘that.’” It’s what you owe it to be done. Okay? It’s a debt. It’s something to be paid.

**...we then who are strong owe it to bear the infirmities of the weak**, or we’re not strong! We need to see that. We’re strong if we can bear through things that are uncomfortable, things that are not easy to deal with, and we do our responsibility according to God’s will, whatever His will is in the matter. Things we’ve gone through in this series so far, God tells us what His will is in these matters in our relationship with others let alone our relationship with Him.

And so, we owe it, it is our responsibility then to bear the infirmities. If we see something that is weak, someone who has stumbled at something, you may have a strength in a certain area that someone else is weak in and you may be used, you may have the opportunity before God to help them if you’re in that environment, if you’re in that situation, if you’re brought into it some way or another. In other words, it’s not something you can just shut your eyes to and ignore, if something is at your doorstep. You have to deal with it.

As it says here, **and not to please ourselves**. What does that mean? Well, how do we please ourselves when it comes to something like this? Well, it’s the way “I” see it. It’s the way “I’m” going to deal with it. It’s like going to your brother, “I’m not going to my brother alone because this is tough and we’re probably not going to be friends anymore. It’s going to be this ripple and this hard thing and it’s going to be awkward and this is how they’re going to think toward me.” It’s pleasing yourself. You’re not doing what’s pleasing to God. You’re not doing what is right before God. You’re just wanting to take care of this - self. Or it may be a response, again, that has to do with the way we judge and so forth and how we judge in a particular matter.

So again, so many things that can fit into what it’s talking about. So, if indeed we are strong, if we’re growing spiritually in a particular area and there can be help to someone who has something, a particular something that happens as a matter of weakness, again, we’re not to please ourselves.

First, the word for “infirmities.” I’m going to read some of this here. The word for “infirmities” is about weakness. The word “weak” is about not having strength, hence a weakness. What I’m pointing out here is some of this is just really poorly translated. We’ll come back to this in a moment.

Then there are those verses that carry very special meaning of what we’re covering right now and I want to read some of those that has to do with this word “ought,” and then we’ll come back to this verse again. Because verse 15 is really very poorly translated. Some scriptures in the Bible are just so irritating in the way translators have done it. But they couldn’t help it. They didn’t know. But a lot of people have stumbled at those even in God’s Church.

So again here, it’s the word “owe” just as we previously read there in Matthew 18:24 where he talked about owing 10,000 talents. Well, there is a scripture as an example here in 1 John 2. I’ll just read these to you. There are so many that have translated and used the word “ought.”

**1 John 2:6—He who says he abides, or dwells in Him, dwells in God and in Christ, ought himself to also walk.** That, to me, just doesn't drive the point home when you realize it's saying you owe it. "Owe it" shows a great deal more responsibility. "Ought to" is like, well, you ought to have done that, but you didn't, so it's okay. You ought to do this, but if you don't, you know... It's a bad word that we have today in how we use the word ought. At least in my vocabulary. You ought to do this, and it's like, if you don't, well, you can kind of skid on by. With God, not so. It's owed. **He who says he dwells in Him, owes himself to walk even as he walked.** We owe it.

So, it should say here, **He who dwells in Him even owes it to walk**, that's really the translation, when you put the words together, **even as or just as he walked**. It drives the point home. It's far more absolute. This is the way it should be. This is how he walked. Isn't that the way we're to live our lives? We're going through an outline of prayer that tells us how to pray and he's left so many examples of different things in his own life, of what he did, and we're to strive to do the same, to walk in the same ways, in the same kind of thinking.

Another one, **1 John 4:11—Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to also love one another.** No, you owe it to love one another. It's something that's owed. And what does that mean then if we really understand it? It means if you don't do it, you're living in sin. It's not something we "ought" to do, it's something we owe it to do. And if you owe it to God? To not give what is owed to God is sin. A lot of other examples of things we've already covered to this point should point that out very clearly. Sin is sin and to not do something according to God's will is sin. It truly is. If it's not according to God's will, what is it? It's against His will.

So, we learn so much in God's Church of things that are on a spiritual plane that should enhance life, make life richer, make life better.

So anyway, we'll come back and probably refresh our thinking in what it says here about owing something. Not ought to do it but we owe it to do a certain thing and then to put it back in context in what it says in Romans 15. Because, again, going through this outline of prayer, there is always so much to build upon that God gives us and we become stronger, we can become stronger spiritually understanding things on a better plane than we ever did. That's what growth is all about, and it's beautiful.