

Today we're going to begin a series that is a follow up to the last series about how it is God who calls us. This new series is entitled *Called Into God's Government*, and this is *Part 1*.

It's really important to understand this part, I think, of what was said last Sabbath concerning the number one truth that Mr. Armstrong was noted for of the 18 Truths that's written up. I marvel at that, how that is the primary problem that went through the era of Philadelphia. Government. It is one in which God is going to try us, to refine us, if we yield to the process, because it kind of sums up everything that is needed to become a part of Elohim.

The history of the angelic realm reflects that. What happened to Lucifer and a third of the angelic realm. The way mankind has been since the beginning, since Adam and Eve, and God having made His creation in such a way that these things had to come to the surface. They have to be able to be seen. They have to be addressed.

Just like this nation today and around the world today, God is making it more abundantly clear, if you will, government doesn't work. Government doesn't work. The government of mankind has failed generation to generation, nation to nation, kingdom to kingdom, whatever, ever how you want to describe it. Nothing has survived through time and we're at a time when we're at the end of those nations being able to continue on, or the world continuing on in the same manner that it has. It's very much about this matter of government because it really sums up so much having to do with what God is doing in His creation.

It was stated in the last series that we are to more fully come to grasp the depth of the importance of our calling. We have to be able to see it. I marvel, again, at how that began to be lost throughout Laodicea, through that period after Mr. Armstrong died, that it wasn't focused upon by the ministry, it wasn't taught in the same manner in the ministry as it had been before. Herbert Armstrong always made it clear why we were a part of the Church, how we came to be a part of the Church.

But in time that focus began to change and when you don't focus on things on a regular basis you can begin to lose it, and especially because of what was happening during Laodicea. Candidly, the Church lost that focus, the ministry lost that focus.

I think one of the most incredible ways that it was lost, that's reflected in what we could see, was how the ministry would be brought into headquarters. They rotated about every two years, every two and a half years, bringing in the whole world, the ministry, at different times into headquarters and there was a process there where we had to go through a time to examine and see things about ourselves as far as what was being taught in the Church. I marvel at what we went through in those periods of time.

I want to come back to some of that because I don't want to get ahead of some of this in the beginning here.

But we have to be able to see the importance of our calling because it was lost, and if you don't focus on those things, as I was mentioning, just like the Holy Days we're coming up to in the fall here. Every time we come into Holy Day season we begin focusing upon things that lead us into that. Just like this series here is actually leading into the Feast of Tabernacles. Hopefully, we see that.

God prepares us to receive the messages He has for us year by year by year. Same thing in the spring when we come up to the point of time of Unleavened Bread. We have to be able to do this on a regular basis, again, or we begin to lose it, and yet this is one of the most important things to understand, that the only reason we have anything that we do is because God called us. It has nothing to do with how good we were. It has nothing to do with a measure of our righteousness, because we didn't have any! We didn't have any in the world. God called us to that, to begin to have a righteousness in our lives that we didn't have before.

Again, once we see those things we can have more of the kind of spirit that God can work with, one of humility, and even beyond that, one of gratitude. Because the more deeply we grasp our calling the more thankful we can become to God. How awesome it is that we're a part of this! It's a marvel, as few as we are, to compare that with the population of the earth and through the past 6,000 years. How few have ever had the opportunity to having a relationship with God, and especially with what we have now at the end of an age because we're getting ready to go into a new one, how much God has revealed! Just because of where we are in time, not because of us. He's been very merciful. But He has a plan. What an awesome thing. So again, it was stated in the last series that we are to more fully come to grasp the depth of the importance of our calling.

I was going to mention here about the ministry. I don't want to pass that one up. When we did go into headquarters, they began to teach that we should prepare sermons, ministers should prepare sermons using the tools that Protestant ministers use, the kinds of research material that ministers in the world use.

I've mentioned this before, but when you understand that and when you think about that, that was so insane! It was leaving God out of the picture and it was getting farther and farther away from the understanding of a calling. We see what we see, we know what we know because God gives it to us. He has to reveal it to us. You can't go research it and leave God out of the picture. Because that's what was happening. The inspiration to know what to give to a congregation, the asking for guidance and direction from God, what to give in a timely fashion, if it doesn't come from Him then there is no point of even giving it. There is no point of speaking if God isn't in what is given. So, if people go and research on their own what they think should be given to God's Church they have left that understanding about a calling. I hope we see that.

Anyway, going on. So, we're to come to grasp more fully the depth of the importance of our calling and the exceedingly awesome blessing God has given us in that calling that can lead to our

being in His family, Elohim, which indeed is a matter of being called into the Kingdom of God. That's what He's doing. He's calling us into His Family. This is where it begins. It begins in the Church. It begins in human life. It begins with carnal human nature and a battle that we have to fight until we are no longer in this body. Incredible to know those things.

We know that a kingdom is about government. That's what it is. It's about government. That's why God calls it what He does, the Kingdom of God. It's from God. It's of God. God is in it, not mankind. It's not from mankind. It's not from how people think it should be. That's what we're trying to escape and get away from. All the insanity in the world, and especially at a time when we have elections.

We may have time to go through some of those things, and maybe we're going to go in that direction in time here, I don't know. But going through some things in the Old Testament, because of where we're going to go in this series in looking at different examples about the subject, it's incredible to see how God has worked with man for 6,000 years and how He began to work with a nation of people, Israel, and what happened in time as that nation or those nations began to be dispersed, those countries, those tribes, if you will, began to be dispersed in different parts of the world. Only one and a few others there together, but known by one, Judah.

But as other nations went into other parts of the world and a kingly line was to continue to reign it's an incredible thing to see what took place over time, and to see how God has allowed different kinds of governments.

Anyway, the change really came toward the end when God gave to Manasseh what He promised for the end-time to this country, and the last trial of a form of government, to drive the point home you cannot govern yourselves. You're given a democracy, you're allowed to have a democracy, no longer under a king. These things are by design. They didn't just happen. This nation got started by design, not by chance, so that mankind could come to a point where a nation like this could exist, the greatest the world has ever known, the most powerful the world has ever known, and ruled (supposedly), by the people, that they're to have the say of their government and what their government is.

I'm going to have a hard time keeping out of a certain sermon I listened to the other day here pre-recorded for the Feast. It's Jeremy's, I'll just mention that. It's amazing how these things tie in together with things that are coming.

So, again here, incredible what God brought this country to, to have this kind of government just so the final great example could be given. You're given that opportunity. Not to be ruled by kings or despots or whatever through time, but now a democracy, and look what has happened. Incredible! This is something I've always marveled at. Of course, the world can't marvel at the same thing in the way we do. But to think that somehow you can vote someone else in and it's going to change everything, it's going to make everything better, and then after a while that doesn't produce what it should, what you think, what you want, and so you choose someone else. What a crazy world we live in.

We have so much to learn. A kingdom is about government. God's Kingdom is about His government, being governed by His ways, by laws. The only true thing in life, God's laws, not man's.

So, as we were reading in the first part of Ephesians 4 last Sabbath, government, God's government began to emerge as a focal point of our calling. So, let's begin there and go through these verses again, but this time with an even stronger focus on this matter of government.

Ephesians 4:1. I hope as we go through this we can come to grasp more fully and embrace more fully the importance of order, the importance of government, of being governed. God's law as we choose it, as we yield to it governs our lives. It's a part of coming into a process of God's government and of that same mind so that in time it's just a part of us, it's who we are, it's what we are, in unity and oneness and agreement with God. Awesome, to understand what God is giving us and placing before us. But we have to go through a lot to learn that.

And candidly, so much of that is learned in the environment of God's Church, God's Church, and when people come to a point where God is not the focal point of things done in God's Church His way, which becomes a matter of the spirit of the law and of righteous judgment then something else comes to the forefront.

Because you can have 10 Commandments, you can have those laws of things we know, of how our relationship is to be governed and our relationship with God and our relationship with one another, but when you begin to break those things down into other areas of our life that we live on a constant basis, then the spirit of those things, which fit into so many of the commandments, comes to light. Because it's about the spirit and it's about the mind, and it's about what's in the mind.

If God is not first, if God is not the focal point of those things, if we're not considering God on a constant basis about every choice in life we make, we're missing the boat. Whenever God's not in the picture and we're doing something because this is the way, and we're just looking at what we desire and what we want, and the thought of God or what God desires for us, or what God's will is, is omitted, we're moving away. We're moving away from—so many ways you can state this—we're moving away from the temple. God's in the temple. God Almighty is in the temple. Awesome!

In Old Testament Israel they had the ark of the covenant in the temple. They were in awe of the place called the Holiest of Holies, that last third of the tabernacle where God's presence was illustrated from time to time to different ones. They knew that there was a certain way to treat, to reflect upon those things that God was giving to them by something of that nature, where only the high priest went in once a year to do a service. Those things should not escape us as to how we live our lives.

So, beginning here in **Ephesians 4:1—I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.** We should strive to do so in a worthy manner.

We know we're not worthy of it. We just learn to be thankful. And the more we see our calling the more thankful we can actually become, the more in awe we are of what we have.

I mean, what can be more incredible than to be a small group of people scattered around the world (not in all countries), but just a few, candidly, at this end time and we have all that we have, the knowing, the understanding, the knowledge of where we are in time, of what's getting ready to happen on the earth, why things are happening in the manner that they are in the world, to understand that the world has to be brought down in humility, that they have to have the haughtiness and the pride ripped out of them. They're no where close to that.

A hurricane comes and a hurricane goes. A pandemic comes and, well, it stays around. Whatever takes place and whatever comes next, takes one after another after another after another but they're nothing compared to what God has to do once the sealing is complete, once the events of the First Trumpet begin.

Because even in that there can be a beginning of a humility experienced in a nation, the greatest the world has ever known, but there is so much more yet to be learned by the rest of the world, and to think what they have to go through to being to lose all hope of all things in life around them that they have trusted in for all time that they have been alive. It takes a lot to bring mankind to a point of humility, it really does, and yet God's going to do that. It's the only way to usher in His Kingdom, His government on earth, to call all of mankind to His Church, to those who will receive it.

And all won't. The farther we go along the more it becomes so obvious it's not going to be a picnic. It's going to be so much better. There is no comparison, the way the world is today, with having one government, one truth that goes throughout the world. But that doesn't make people choose it. Something that they have lived, those who have lived at a different time period and they come on into this other age, there are going to be so many who want something different.

Just like today with a little pandemic. I say little because in the scheme of things of what's coming it's peanuts. It's small. Incredible, the haughtiness of mankind and it's our battle.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you are called, with all humility. That's what we're discussing here. This is where it begins to receive God's government into our life, to choose to be governed by God, His laws, His ways (which is a choice). This come first. Humility has to be there. What's the opposite of that? Hanging on to our way of doing it, the way I see it, the way I think it should be.

It's just the way we are as human beings. We all have opinions, and if those opinions aren't in agreement with the will of God, the purpose of God, the way of God, they're worthless, absolutely worthless, of no value. Actually, on the contrary, they're exceedingly harmful. So, not only of no value but they rob us, they steal from us, they take away from us what we would otherwise could have in life.

...with all humility and gentleness, and patience (longsuffering), bearing with, that forbearing with one another, exercising a right kind of tolerance toward one another. Not tolerating but appreciating the differences. Different kind of mindset.

...bearing with/forbearing with one another in love/agape. Comes from God. You can't work it up. It's not something that comes out of you. It's not something that comes out of me. It's something that comes from God through us that we can experience by yielding to His government in our life, how we're governed, how we choose to be governed. "I want my life to be governed by the ways, the laws, the mind of God, to be in agreement with His will." So if we really think that way, that "I want to be in agreement with the will of God," we're not going to be doing our own will without thought of "How would God want me to do this? What is the best way?"

...endeavouring, word meaning giving diligence, to keep, to watch, to be on guard, in other words, the unity of the spirit. Now, Elohim, the Kingdom of God, this has to be there, a unity of the spirit, a oneness of mind, how life is governed. That's why we look forward to the time it's just going to be the way we are, no longer ruled by or highly influenced by this, carnality. Because we all have it, so we have this battle. We understand what goes on.

...to keep (to be on guard, to watch). So, that's a part of our calling, is to understand this, that you have to be on guard, you have to watch. You have to work at this. You have to cry out to God for help in this, to be able to do this because this is something done on a spiritual plane in order to have this unity, this oneness with God, with one another in the Body, and on it goes.

...in the spirit of the bond of peace. Because that's what it's all about. Peace in Elohim. That's why the series ended on this matter of Jerusalem. It's a beautiful expression, to understand what God is working toward, that we have peace. The only way to have it is to have a oneness with God. Awesome!

Last Sabbath, the restoration of that truth, and I mentioned here already, that Herbert Armstrong was mentioned. It was mentioned, given to him, in that respect, as an order of things that I believe were inspired by God to be given to the Church. Because there can be different order of things by the time those things were written, but that was number one or number four as we look back, going back to Sardis at the truths that the Church had.

I want to read that.

4 (1) The government of God. When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth.

Now, just because it's here doesn't mean that people will yield to it. Just because it is brought to the forefront doesn't mean people will do it or embrace it or want it in truth and in spirit. There are going to be a lot of people who conform. A lot of those who do conform in time are going to become persuaded and convicted that that's right, but there will be a lot who do not. Even during the Millennium.

That's almost impossible for us to grasp and comprehend, but it's true. Human nature is human nature. Free choice is free choice and with this carnal human nature it's not so hard to make the wrong choice.

Again, **4 (1) The government of God.** When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth.

The reality is, it's never been here in the sense of being on the whole earth. God has worked with different ones through time. His government existed, His way of life existed in the lives of different ones in the first 4,000 years, and then the Church began and it began to work in a greater way as more were called then into a spirit body and God began to work in a more massive way, in that respect, with people to bring them into the first phase of His government, the firstfruits.

Again, it was only within that environment, primarily, that God's government has existed. And how well has that gone? The majority have rebelled against God's government since they were called 2,000 years ago till now. The vast majority who have ever been called by God have insisted on, desired their own will, their own way, and made choices and decisions against God. But they don't always say it that way. They find something else to disagree with, someone else to disagree with, whether it was Paul or whether it was Peter or different ones, but they did. They came to a point where they were in disagreement, even ministers that were mentioned in scripture here, that Paul mentioned.

Think, okay. Didn't get it. Didn't understand God's government. They didn't understand their calling. They didn't grasp these things on a spiritual plane. Why? Because somewhere along the line going farther back in their life they began making choices of doing things against God's law, against God's way, against God's government - maybe totally unbeknownst to most in the Church until God brought it to the surface and showed who they were. AntiChrist! Working against the spirit of Christ, of God Almighty, in the sense of when you say antiChrist you understand then it's working against the very purpose of why Christ died! So that we could be forgiven of our sin.

But if we don't repent of our sin and try to leave it behind and come out of this sick, filthy world! Sometimes we don't grasp the kind of stuff we allow into our mind and what it's doing to us. Some of us sitting right here and listening today are still fooling around with sin in the world. You can't do that and enter into the Millennial period. God isn't going to allow that! I have said that so many times to where I'm almost blue in the face over it. I hurt because of that, but I know our human nature, and what has existed for the past 2,000 years is going to continue to happen until Christ returns.

What a sad, pathetic thing that we don't embrace God's government, that we don't embrace God more fully, that we don't work on this more fully, and instead we insist on doing things our way, that it's okay to do this or that. No, it isn't. Don't we know where we are in time? That's why it's going to happen all the way up to the time even when the bombs fall. You think, surely then I will

quit doing this or that. Well, only because some things on the internet you'll quit it because you can't get it anymore!

I'm sorry. I don't mean to get upset like that, in one respect. But I think, how foolish we can be as human beings, to be antiChrist, to work against the purpose of why Christ died for us. We shouldn't do that! What a horrible, horrible, horrible thing! What a horrible state of affairs we can be as human beings. Again, I'm sorry. But I am and I'm not, if you understand what I'm saying. We have to understand where we are in time and what's taking place in the world around us.

You know, the other day when I heard that Kim Jung-un may be dead (for I don't know how many times), again, that he may be, that Kim Yo-jung, the sister? It's been known for quite some time that she's not the same as her brother and may very well tend to work more closely with the thought and the mindset of the military there. Because to be able to be in power you still have to have a relationship that works well with those who have power - the military, the generals, and on it goes, and if you're seen as giving in a little bit here and there in your thinking toward something else, in some parts of the world your life may not be worth too much. So, that's the way governments have been for ages and ages and ages.

Anyway, when some of that news came out, I think it was just this past week, I thought, what an incredible thing we could be so close to exactly what's spoken of concerning the first four Trumpets. Somebody's going to push a button some time. Someone is going to do something that's going to begin the process of these things taking place. Could we be that close?

Can I, can you, can anyone afford in the Church of God to continue to dabble in the world, to continue to make plans in our life that omit God Almighty, where God is not in the forefront, in the forefront of our thinking about every step we take?

We should quake, shiver, be afraid of doing anything against God's will. But that goes back to how much we love God, how much we love this way of life, how much do we really want it. Because you have to fight for it and you've got to want it with all your being because you love it. If you love something else, it's an idol, if you love something else that you're raising up as an idol.

I'm crying out to the Church, in that respect. I don't want to see anyone go by the wayside, but I know that before this is over there will still be those, even during a period of time, that will go by the wayside. What a horrible thing. What a horrible witness. What a horrible testimony.

It's horrible enough thinking about the past 2,000 years and how the vast majority who had been called into God's Church have rejected God, have rejected the truth, have become or they did become antiChrist. The majority! Do we think we're different?

So, when Christ comes, the government of God.

4 (1) The government of God. When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth. God's government was restored to His Church during Philadelphia. It is not a government of men where decisions are made by such practices as voting or one's own will...

You know, that's really hard for us to see as human beings, when our will gets in the way, when our choices aren't in unity with God's choices for our life, with God's will and purpose for our life.

...but as God leads through the power of His spirit.

I'm going to mention it at this point in time and I don't want people cringing, but, you know, it's a good teaching tool. Last Sabbath I made some comments about the Feast of Tabernacles, and probably a month or longer ago it first came out of what we were going to have to do as far as a Church is concerned, of breaking up into different areas. What was happening in my mind so much was what was happening in Australia. They're going to try to hold off to be able to have three areas at least they could meet in, and now they're not even sure they can do that right now with the kind of restrictions they have down there.

So, everybody is having different things that are hitting them. I'm going to paraphrase a part of this, but in a conversation I was having with Wayne, telling him how we were going to do some things up here, basically he hit it on the head as to exactly what was going to take place. Because this is a part of why it's been done this way. It was going to try everyone to see what is in them, how you think. Is God at the forefront? Was God at the front of making choices and decisions?

And so, when it comes to a point in time, and it's fine to make comment about and wonder about, "Well, is this okay?" As I have stated to some in the ministry this is not a time about approval. I'm not giving approval. We are not giving, the Church is not giving approval to anyone. We have given the guidelines by which people can make choices and decisions, and how you did that and what you did is between you and your God. It was not instructed by the Church. Well, there was instruction by the Church, and then that depends upon where we are spiritually as to what we were able to hear. I cannot give that to you. It's something between you and God then as far as a matter of what's in the mind, of God's spirit that's coming into our life because we're striving to yield to that in our life.

We are at a time that may not be much time, where we need to look at ourselves in depth spiritually and to analyze, to strive to look at the choices we make along the path here in a very short time that's getting shorter and shorter, of our time to become in greater unity and oneness with God and to come out of some of the garbage of this world in how we're doing things in our life. Because we must be more fully yielded to God, truly. There has never been a time like this in the Church of God because we're getting ready to go into a new age.

So, it's expedient upon every one of us to examine ourselves mightily, regularly, continually, more zealously before God than ever before. So, could something massive happen on Trumpets? I don't know but I'm looking at that. I'm looking at smaller time frames and thinking, "Is this a

possibility?” And if it is, we better dig down more deeply inside concerning our relationship with God. We should strive to want to draw closer to God than ever before, whatever that takes, to be more at one with Him.

The closer we get to those things happening the more we should want to be living God’s way and be in unity and harmony with Him. Because we live at an incredible moment in time, and the more each day passes, the more critical this all becomes as to who we are, what we are, where are we.

Nothing is owed to us. Nothing. We’re here by God’s mercy, by the grace of God, by His love. We can embrace that and love that, love His family, love His purpose, and the more we do that the more we will hate those things that get in the way, those things that cut us off or weaken us spiritually, truly.

So, the closer we come to the end of this age the more urgent these things really become. That’s why I’m speaking out in the way that I am because what has taken place has manifested much about where we are. It’s just a reality. How do we think? What are we doing and why are we doing it? Is it a matter of glorifying God or is it a matter of something else?

Only you can answer that. It’s not my job. Mine is right here. This is ours. What do we receive? What is our spirit? Is God truly first and foremost in our heart and our minds? And the guidance and direction that we’re given, what do we hear when we hear it? Do we hear something that we strive to mold and fashion and fit into the way I want to do it or the way that is best?

You know what the first thing in my mind would be about anything that happens in God’s Church if I am given guidance and direction about things to do and things that I have the opportunity of doing in a good way before God and loving God and rejoicing before God, which we’re to do at a Feast of Tabernacles, as an example? Yes, to seek God, to seek His will in any matter, to pray to Him, to ask for guidance and direction.

But there is a step in there along the way that we should know ever so well as God’s people. Is God going to speak to you out of a burning bush to give you an answer? Is God going to have a dream given to you, inspired where He opens up your mind and there you see it all and you hear it all? Or is there a way that God works? Because I want to be sure that this is sound, that this is good. Where is God’s ministry?

You know, something that always boggles my mind is that we should ever have to ever repeat what it says in James, what scriptures clearly tell us when we’re ill. You are commanded, you are instructed to call on the elders of the Church. That is primarily given on something very physical because of illness and sickness in our life, that shows us there is a way that God works. It isn’t a private thing between me and God Almighty, it’s about government. It’s about how God works in the Church of God.

That’s why in Ephesians here it states and makes very clear God has given the Church a ministry. We’re going to look through some Old Testament examples, and that’s been the problem through

time, that when people aren't looking to God they don't go to the priests, to the prophets, to the different ones that were there, to the judges. They just do their own thing in what they deem is right - if they even think about it being right. Human nature. We've all got a pot full of it. Good way to express it.

This is not a good thing, this human nature. Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life constantly fights against God's way. It constantly fights against God's way. It does!

Do you ever do something and just having prayed to God and going somewhere, doing something and all of a sudden you move away from that in whatever you do? Something happens? Well, it can happen a lot on a freeway anymore. It can happen at work as soon as you get to work and certain personalities, and someone says something, whatever it might be, shopping, I don't care what it is. If you're going to be out there in the world at any point in time, especially the way the world is today, it's not a happy place. People are pent up. There are all kinds of emotions and frustrations boiling inside. We live in a very divisive time. That can affect us if we're not careful.

Which brings up another point. News! I don't know how you can call it that. But sometimes in God's Church we deal with the reality that people get worked up by the news and it becomes a big thing. Now, there is one matter of being alert and attentive to what's happening in the world. There is one thing to realize that there are things taking place in the world, to be aware of things that are happening, like I mention with North Korea, things that are happening right now between Greece and Turkey and how the European Union is having to make some choices now that are working more against, in that respect, Turkey. There are some hot spots in the world. How does this affect the European Union? Because Turkey is a part of NATO. Oh, these are happy times over there.

They've got some big, big problems on their hands because there are certain leaders in certain positions today, as there are throughout the world - Throughout the world! - that are supposed to be where they are for the purpose of what must come to pass and what is going to be fulfilled, and it's not a pretty picture. It's not hunky-dory-peachy-keen and everybody is just really happy and getting along well.

Just like Europe, I was mentioning to some beforehand here, that we don't know if we're going to be able to go into Europe yet because they still don't allow the U.S. to go in there. They're going to have a meeting at the beginning of the week here to determine that. They do it every fourteen days, every two weeks. But this one here is one of the main meetings, in that respect, so probably what they decide now is what it'll be two weeks after that, so it'll determine where we may or may not be and that's in God's hands.

Thinking about some of these things, what's happening right now, Europe is sick and tired, sick and tired of this country. They really are. They're seeing it more and more as an enemy, as a threat, as much as Russia or China. That's mindboggling. That really is mindboggling. The closeness of a relationship. And, interesting, Germany is kind of smack in the middle of all that, of that dissension and ugliness that's taking place. Hmm.

Then, of course, there is the pressure being put on them because now we're at a point in time where sanctions on Iran, some of this is at a point where it has to be addressed again because of time. Anyway, pressure is being put on, the different countries, and people just love pressure from the U.S. to back something now at this time. They're sick and tired of it. They're sick and tired of their finger in NATO. They're sick and tired of their finger in Iran. They're sick and tired of their finger in the Middle East.

They want to make their own decisions and their own choices to their course and what they're going to do in the world and how they're going to deal with Greece and how they're going to deal with Turkey and so forth. But they get this pressure from over here. They are tired of it.

Anyway, we live in a volatile world, we really do. So, I hope we realize even in those things that's news, what's happening in the world, what's taking place. These are not nice times. They're not pleasant times.

Some of the things we're addressing about news. If you're not careful you will begin to take sides. I have been crying out in God's Church, do not take sides. If you think one side is right, better than the other, you're missing the mark. It's a matter of being aware of what's happening in the world. It's not a matter of taking sides. They're all wrong! I don't know how much clearer I can say that. They're all wrong. All political parties and sides are wrong! God is not in that picture! He is not in that! He's letting them go their own course.

We should never get caught up in that aspect of someone being right or wrong. What they had to say, that it's right or wrong, doesn't matter, because it's all with wrong motive, with wrong purpose. It does not agree with God.

Out of the midst of all this, again, which I have mentioned so many times throughout time, these things of conspiracy theories, things that are unproven: Who cares! Who cares! I'm trying to express this in a way that hopefully we get it. Who cares! Conspiracy theories, what somebody may or may not be doing, why they're doing it and so forth. It doesn't belong in God's Church!

Now, if we insist on those things and getting worked up about it ourselves, we're missing the mark. We're not understanding spiritually our lives, what we're supposed to be doing, and we're definitely not listening to God. You know why? I believe I'm God's apostle. I believe I am God's servant on this earth fulfilling a part of what it says here in Ephesians. I believe that what is spoken, that we live by that, and if we don't we're judged by that.

Because God isn't coming down and speaking through a bush. He's doing it in another manner, which He's been doing for the past 2,000 years. Actually, longer than that, but anyway, the point being is that it's up to us. Only we have the ability to have the ears to hear. God has given us that ability spiritually but it's up to us to live it, to yield to it.

As we prepare for the Feast of Tabernacles God is revealing to us to become a part of His government, to become a part of His Kingdom, we need to deeply look at our lives, especially now more than ever. Where are we spiritually? Don't you want to be closer to God?

We've had a series on prayer. Are we doing more? Are we doing it more in depth in the sense of not a matter of long length of time, it's the matter of what we're searching for and what we're praying about, that it doesn't just become the same thing day after day, but that there are things we're looking at as far as life is concerned, as far as others are concerned and so forth. What is being stated to God? What is it about? Where are we?

Fasting. When is the last time we fasted? What is our relationship with God? How much do we want God? How much do we want to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him knowing the dangerous times we live in and knowing as we get closer it becomes more dangerous, in many respects?

The reason I mention conspiracy theories because it's popped up that there are different areas of people communicating with each other and talking about some of these things against what the Church has said we are not to engage in.

So, if anyone contacts you, calls you, talks to you in any manner or form, on any kind of communication, and has a conspiracy theory, you need to have the loyalty, the faithfulness to God Almighty to take a stand and say, "We aren't supposed to be doing that. I don't want to get into that because I've been told, we've been told not to do this." If you allow it, you are guilty. Do you realize that? You are a part of it, just as guilty before God. And not only that, you will begin to quench God's spirit in your life, whether you believe me or not. I believe I say that by the authority of God Almighty and His Son Joshua the Christ.

The context continues from the previous verse about keeping the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. How do we have that? We listen. We strive to do things through what's given to us in the Body. And how do we receive that? Well, Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day we receive God's guidance and direction in our lives, and He gives to us what we need at that moment in time to focus upon because of what He's building. If we're yielding ourselves to that we're a part of the building. If not, we may be left out. And you know what? That's going to happen.

There is one body, and one spirit, just as you are called in one hope of your calling. What a beautiful thing! **One Lord, one faith;** the truth is the truth, only one thing to live by. God gives us the ability to see the truth of what we have opportunity to believe and then it's up to us to choose to live by it. That's what faith is; it's the choice, it's the engagement and striving to live by what He's given us to believe. It's our sense of urgency, our mindset that we want to live the truth that God's given us. **One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.**

Verse 11—He gave some, apostles. Through time we see that. We see what God has done. We see in the very beginning there was the need to establish the Church on earth and God gave 13 apostles quickly to the Church, 12 primarily for Judah and some of the scattered tribes, 1 to the gentiles to establish something that the world had never known. More of the world then was

included to have opportunity in knowing about the Kingdom of God, the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and Joshua the Christ who is the head of it all that God has given to mankind. Incredible!

He's given some, apostles, some, prophets; some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the equipping of the saints, for our benefit for the Church. It's how the Church functions. It's how God works in the Church. **...for the work of ministry, the ministry, of ministry, of serving, for the building up of the Body of Christ.** God is very ordered. It's a matter of government, how things are governed, how things work from God the Father through Christ through the Body of Christ. It doesn't just happen. God leads and guides and directs it. Christ is the head of the Body.

Until we all come in the unity of the faith. So important, unity. That's what government, God's government is all about. It's about a unity where we have agreement. We desire that same mind. **...and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect (mature) individual,** if you will, because that's the process until we can be changed, until God can say, "Now I know you." Sealed, if you will. **...to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Messiah.** Awesome, beautiful verses here, what it's saying.

Verse 15—but speaking the truth in agape, may grow up into all things into him who is the head, Christ. So again here, it's showing the order. It's showing God's government, how it's accomplished, how we can grow up, how we can mature in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God in the order that God has given and the way that God has given. To understand then that there are things, guidelines, direction in things that are given and how we yield to those things reveals so much then about where we are, how we think, where we need to repent in our lives in order to draw even closer to God.

...from whom the whole body joined and fit together by what every joint supplies. The reality is in the Church, in the Body of Christ, everyone is needed. God has called us all as a family. How we function together, how we work together, how we communicate together... That's why a matter of divisiveness in our lives can't exist, especially now where we are, as small as we are. We need each other, we truly do, on a spiritual plane.

We have to be able to see this, that this is a matter of something on a spiritual plane in our relationship with one another because our relationship with one another really reflects our relationship with God. You can't have something separate and say, "Well, this is my prayer to God and this is how I pray and this is what I'm saying, and it's God and me and Christ." No, here is where it's made manifest, in our relationship with the Body, with the Church, with others, how much we care for one another, how much we think of one another, how much we pray for one another, how much we desire to say the right thing to one another and not something that would reflect divisiveness because we have something we want to share that's special - like a conspiracy theory.

Now, you can call it whatever you want to. Why are those things important in life in our lives? They're not. We know what's getting ready to happen. Everything that's out here is getting ready

to be destroyed because it's all wrong. It doesn't matter where things come from and what's wrong in the world, because the reality is everything is wrong!

What do you see out there that's right? What do you see out there that you think that God Almighty is going to have brought on into His Kingdom? Anything to do with the structure of economics? Anything to do with the structure of any kind of government, any kind of laws, unless some of those agree with God, in the sense of don't kill, don't murder someone. That's pretty lame isn't it. But other things we see in the world, whatever's in the world, what are we going to keep? It's going to be so re-vamped, thank God. Thank God.

"But speaking the truth in love." What does that mean? It means you speak the truth. News, taking a side of someone else is against the truth, it's against Christ, it's against what I have taught as a minister of God. Taking a side, republican or democrat, I'll just say a person would be a fool to do that. There is no side. There is no matter of discerning and try to decide which is right and which is wrong. They're all wrong! They're all wrong! None of them are right. They don't have the answers. They're not doing things God's way.

Do we get caught up in that? Do we get pulled away from God's Church because of that? Do we begin to put importance on something else because of that?

"Speak the truth in agape." I don't want to hurt another brother. I don't want to say something to them that pulls them away from what is true, from the direction, the guidance, the instruction that's given in God's Church.

Because we're given a lot of instruction in God's Church. I went through this thing about make-up. It's amazing what we went through. Those of you who didn't go through it, it might be really hard to understand, but that was a big, big thing. It really was. Thousands left over it. Thousands got in horrible, rotten, stinking attitudes because of it. Thousands looked down upon, stuck their nose up in the air against Herbert Armstrong, God's apostle, because they were so righteous. They had no comprehension. They had lost total understanding and sight of their calling.

I think of all the ministers that came through the Apostasy, and I don't know one that this didn't fit. Well, one, but he was really out in left field and used it for the wrong purpose. But anyway. That attitude and that spirit, "He was a good teacher." Some wouldn't even acknowledge that. Some wouldn't even say this, "He was a good teacher. I learned a lot through him." I just, it's like can you beat your head against the wall. All that was taught all those years, all that was given, and you don't see that?

Well, when you're asleep and you're blind, you're asleep and blind. I'll tell you what, I have to control myself when I think about some of these things, because if there's a way to make your blood boil, this is it for me. Everything anyone ever learned of 18 Truths came through what God did in his life. Incredible! Herbert Armstrong, God's apostle. Awesome! It's amazing how we are as human beings, it really is.

...for the building up of the Body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith. Verse 15—but speaking the truth in love (agape), may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ: for whom the whole body joined and knit together by what every joint supplies. We do need each other in the Body. There is a spirit alive that works within the realm of God's Church, within the temple and we benefit from that and the strength of that. The greater the unity, the greater the oneness with God, the stronger collectively we become. The more that people will stand up to what is true.

See, it's not my job to have to intervene all the time in different matters of life. As a matter of fact, many, many, many I let go. I don't have to address them. I don't have to be like a policeman of God's way. Now, if something comes to the surface and has to be addressed, I will address it.

But as a whole, many things happen because we're human beings and we have things that take place and it's a relationship on a spiritual plane then with God indeed. What we hear is, again, between us and God, but how we hear, what we're supposed to hear, what we're supposed to yield to, that's a part of what we're talking about here, and whether we do or don't, that's in our ballpark.

Again here, the whole body knit and joined together. It's a beautiful thing when it's done right, when it's done spiritually. ...by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working in which every part does its share. We all have a share of that which we are to be doing in our prayer life, as an example, in our relationship with God, keeping spiritually alert and on guard. You want to be alert and on guard because you want to have right things come out the mouth as a matter of love, agape.

So, again, this truth that should come out of our mouths and how we talk and so forth. Sometimes it's hard for us to put it in these terms, that a matter of news can become something divisive in God's Church.

I do want to mention something else here. Sometimes we pass news around. That's fine. That's a great thing and some do an awesome job on this. Some don't. But what you have to understand in all this, what is it there for? It's been a great tool for me. I have one individual that sends me stuff that helps me mightily to go through various things, and I can focus on some, as even last night I was doing, and go and look up and research some of the areas there.

But we have to understand none of them are an authority as to what's really happening because people tend to write with a slant. Left, right, somewhere out there. And so, if you know the source, so often it's pretty easy to see where they're coming from, and you have to judge what you're reading by that. Because the reality is it's all messed up. Even how things are reported there is a slant. Everybody has an intent of something they want others to see, whatever that might be. They have motive. That isn't from God.

That's why I say real news is really difficult to find, to have something accurately reported for something that actually, really, truly happens. It's tough. We have to wade through a quagmire of

junk out there, but we're to do that to try to keep abreast and pull out some of the things that become obvious.

Just like I've tried to give an example of how today you can read more about world tension and the possibility of a war than we were able to two years, five years, ten years ago. Now, it's every week. That's a gauge that we can look at to see how the world is at this point in the stage. It's not a matter of taking sides. It's not a matter of believing everything they say. Because a lot of what people say it's off base. You can't go to any news source and say... How is that one expression put of one news agency out there? "True and Accurate" or something like that. You think, okay, by how you think. But that doesn't make it true and accurate. Where does this come from?

You try to find different sources in the world. There are a couple out of Europe that when I'm over there that I tend to watch more when I'm there and look for certain articles over here as well, that tend to have a little bit more soundness. But they're still off base. Everybody is off base.

So, why would we in God's Church get all worked up about certain things at times like we're taking sides? That's not what we're about. It's to be informed so you can see where the world is, so you can see a greater need for why the world needs to be changed, and our part in it.

If we're all speaking the same thing—because if we're not, we're pushing something else and we're hurting our brother—it's not agape.

"But speaking the truth in love." Does that mean just the 57 Truths type of thing? Well, actually, if we knew where those things fit we would know, yes, it fits in there, but that's not what you're talking about when you talk about news or a conspiracy theory or where something might have come from.

And who cares where the COVID came from. It's here! All the arguments. "There's a secret lab!" and "The Chinese, I know they're guilty!" People can get worked up about these things and you think, who cares? It's here. It's going to be here in the world and there are going to be other things come along and other things are going to happen. Why get worked up about it? Why let it affect your life to where it becomes drama?

I've seen some crazy things. And you know what? Some things may have a measure of truth within them about certain things that are happening in the world and how things are taking place, but for us to get involved in that? We have no place in that because it doesn't matter. In the scheme of things, it does not matter one iota. It's just things God's bringing to the surface to show how corrupt and evil the world is.

Conspiracy? Oh, yeah! It's coming from, primarily, one being! One being who is stirring up the pot and given the power to do so big times in the world. He and all those who have followed him have tremendous power and broadcasting in the world today more than they did five and ten years ago. They've ramped it up! God's allowing that because of where we are and we're foolish if we

don't see that and understand that. So, why would we want to get caught up in something that that being is instigating and doing, where it comes from him?

Wouldn't that be a horrible turn of events in our life spiritually, to get worked up because of something he is behind and take sides or decide to believe a certain thing. You know what? In so many things in life there might be a little bit of truth here and there, a little bit of truth. I think of a trial I experienced one time. A little bit twisted and distorted because people have something else they're striving to do. That's the way of the world. We are not a part of the world.

So, today I am crying out more than I really want to in the sense of my voice being raised at times. Because the reality is, that really doesn't help us to hear. But I get worked up spiritually and see things that are happening out of concern within God's Church.

It's been a long battle. It's been a long battle. But you know what? I think of what God has done for 6,000 years, the patience, the mercy, the love for His family, for His government, and we're called to that. What a beautiful thing because that's the only thing that can govern right. It's the only way that governs right, that brings and produces peace and we should love peace.

That's why I wish I had it up here, the little llama, and press it. Drama-drama-drama. I have really grown to hate, I mean hate, hate, hate, hate, HATE drama. And you know what? It bombards me every day in the world. There is so much drama and people get their lives wrapped up in drama and worry. It's of no value and especially in the Church because we have God Almighty. We have the Great God of the universe who's leading us along the way and showing us a way through all this cesspool, this garbage that's out here. We just embrace that and hold on to that and we'll come through it. He gives us the means and the tools and whenever things are needed, they'll be there. Faith. Just the way we are, the way we live. Our lives are in God's hands. Where else would you want them to be?

We don't have to let drama in life bother us and in ourselves to live that as though this is how life is to be lived. No, it isn't. The most refreshing thing in life, the most enjoyable thing in life in relationships is peace, tranquility, happiness, joy. We say it. We speak it. But to live it, to experience it? It can be a battle. It's a spiritual battle.

I don't know if we made it past last Sabbath or not.

Verse 17—Therefore, I say this and testify in the Lord, so that you should no longer walk as the rest of the world. That's what it's saying. "Like the world." You know what? We don't want to walk with the world. You get caught up in some of this stuff, you're walking with the world, you're letting the world work you up. You can get worked up about things you hear on the news. You can get worked up by things you hear from others when you shouldn't be.

We know these things! We know what has to happen in this world and where we are in time, and we're just waiting for the next step, the First Trumpet, the event of the First Trumpet.

...and testify of the Lord so that you should no longer walk as the rest of the world walks, in the futility of their mind. We don't have that. We're not to have that. We're not to let that eat up our lives, because it is futility, it's empty, it has no value, it corrupts, it destroys, it tears down. We're the opposite. We're to be a part of that which builds up, which strengthens.

...in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, no light. We don't want to be a part with that. That comes from a being that's in this world that has no light and he wants to confuse and distort and confound. He wants to pull at God's people. **...being alienated from the life of God.** We don't want that.

...because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. You think, we so desire, so look forward to a time when, finally, people have gone through so much that they can be humbled, where this haughtiness is brought down. Because haughtiness and pride are so evil. It is so ugly to stand against God. Yet that's been mankind for 6,000 years. Now we're at a point where that's going to begin to be removed.

What an awesome thing to be a part of! A desire we have in the world around us, people we know, neighbors, people that you come to know in different institutions out here, whether it be banks, grocery stores, whatever it might be, whatever kind of business it is that you've run into and have come to know over time, and relatives and the like. Things we desire for them to be able to begin to experience.

But we have to go through something first, don't we? We have to be called out of Egypt. The world is getting ready to be called out of Egypt. It has to be called out of Assyria, has to be called out of Babylon. All those things that are pictured by those empires of times past, on a spiritual plane, what that means, out of mass confusion, babel, that which came out of the Roman world. Assyria that has to do with government and the oppression of government on the world, that we look forward to the world being freed from so that it has the government of God, indeed. Egypt, the bondage that all mankind is under because of our carnal human nature. Incredible.

Verse 19—Who have lost all sensitivity and given themselves over to lewdness, greedy to work (practice) all that is impure, unclean. That's the way of the world. **Yet, this is not the way you have learned of Christ.** So, every Sabbath we're to measure things by what we're learning that comes from Christ. Christ is the head of the Body. He inspires, he guides and directs, he leads.

That's why I marvel, that's why I marvel at messages and sermons that God gives, whether they be through a matter of time through a year and how that someone in another part of the world, another part of this country can give a sermon and it fits in. They don't know the timing of when something is going to be played, when it's going to be done, and here it is, fits together in a way that is really inspiring for us, mightily so. Because I don't know how to describe that, but it's inspiring. It's that which you see that God is doing and it's that assurance in a powerful way that is good to receive and see and rejoice in, and to see this, everything fitting together.

Just like that sermon I mentioned a while ago. I have a hard time keeping away from some of that because it all fits together and where everything is leading us, even into the Feast of Tabernacles this year. And so it is. We don't discuss these things amongst ourselves. But God communicates them, Christ does. That's where it comes from, it comes from Christ. He guides us, he directs us, he leads the Church. Matter of faith. Matter of confidence.

...give themselves over to lewdness, greedy to work (practice) all that is impure and unclean. Yet this is not the way we've learned of Christ, if indeed you have heard of him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Joshua. That's why it states this again and again and again, things like this, because he is the head of the Church! Either that's true or it isn't. Either it becomes evident in our life or it doesn't. We should be able to see it by just what I mentioned a moment ago.

That you are to put aside concerning your former conduct the old man, which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Now, we know that! But God tells us this over and over again in our lives. We have to come back to this to be reminded, to be on guard.

...and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. We get that opportunity every Sabbath, to be renewed in the spirit of our mind, of a focus that we need to have as God's people, of what to be aware of. What is coming toward the Church that we need to be aware of. Because there is a being out there that continually comes at us and he is stirred up. I hope we can see that in the world around us, what's taking place.

...and that you put on the new person. Choices-choices-choices-choices-choices-choices-choices. What are our decisions? Why do we make them? Is God first? Is He at the focal point of it all?

...that you put on the new person who is to be created according to God, what God has given. There is that which God is creating in us, a transforming of this mind. Beautiful! **...in true righteousness and holiness.** Awesome!

1 Peter 1. It's kind of hard to get into some of this here, I guess. I'll start it. **1 Peter 1:13—Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind.** That's exactly what we're talking about today. "Gird up the loins of your mind." This is where we want to focus. What's going on in the mind? How are we thinking? Are there times in our life that we come to be able to see a need for measuring things and examining ourselves more closely.

Gird up the loins of your mind! Don't let things run rampant. Don't let things loose. Don't let things go that need to be addressed here and now, especially because of the time we live in and where we are.

You know, when the day comes, it comes. It doesn't have to be on the Feast of Trumpets, but I'm looking at it because of the meaning of it. It could happen tomorrow - catch you off guard. Do you want to be caught off guard or do you want to be addressing these things now? Because we're judged by how we're living life day by day, hour by hour. Is God in the picture? Is God first? Are

we allowing some kind of idolatry, some kind of symbolism that stands before God enter into our thinking?

Or do we recognize the necessity to be ever more on guard than ever before? Because we really need to grasp the being that is being given more power right now. He is being allowed greater power to exercise that's been restricted from him for a long time. I hope we realize that's what's entering into the world more and more. The more things get stirred up, the more power he will have. Above all that he's going to do out there in the world you are at the top of his list.

Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober. That's what this sermon is about today, truly is, to be sober. To understand the importance of what we're discussing - called to the government of God, to the Kingdom of God, to become Elohim. Something that's difficult to grasp and comprehend with God's spirit.

Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Joshua the Christ. That means more to us today than ever before because we have that on a spiritual plane as far as the Church is concerned, but we are living at a time when that's about to be made manifest in the world. Awesome!

...as obedient children. Obedient. That's what government is about. What are we obedient to? When it comes to God's government there are laws that lead, guide, and direct us. There is a spirit of the law that even becomes more profound in the sense of being able to see something deep inside of our minds that the world can't see and deal with, but we are to see it and deal with it. Because this is where it all starts, in this upstairs, living by God's ways.

...not conforming yourselves to the former lust as in your ignorance. That which is behind that we were to have left as soon as that dead goes under the water, that body, that person, to walk up in newness of life and to keep fighting to live newness of life. To have our minds renewed in what is from God, made new from what is from God.

But as He who called you is holy... It's beautiful. That's what we're to become. **...you also are to be holy in all your conduct,** in all of what we do in life. In all of what comes out of our mouth and all that we do in life our conduct is to reflect that mind, that we're in unity and oneness with what God gives. And this, this Body, is our primary place of learning, it really is, primary place of trying and testing.

We're to set aside wrong ways and strive to live what is right. That's a continuing thing every day of our lives. To get weary of that? You can't afford to. Choices, choices. You can't afford to. You can't afford to get weary of a battle that God has called you to, to fight until it's done. This is a battle that just continues on until you're there.

That's why I marvel at people who have said, "I'm just tired of being told how bad I am. I'm going somewhere else." What does that mean? "So they'll tell me how good I am. Just come as you are. It's so much easier." "It's so much easier just to come as you are. I don't want to address what I am." Isn't that amazing? Which one do you want?

People think you're nuts. You want to continue on in a battle every day of your life, fighting against your human nature? Yeah. To see how bad your nature is? Yeah. Because the clearer I can see it, the more I want to run from it. That's why God says flee, flee fornication, anything that interferes with what God is revealing and showing as to how we're to live on a spirit plane.

...because it is written, Be holy, for I am holy. Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful.