

Today we are continuing in the series entitled, *Dangers to True Fellowship*, with this being *Part 3*.

Again, fellowship has to be, true fellowship has to be based on what is, obviously, true from God, His way of life. Not just the truths of God, because that's been a lot of the focus of this sermon. It's not just the truths that we have been receiving as doctrine, as that which God has shown us, especially those things He's added to the Church, given to the Church since the time of the Apostasy, but it has to do with so many other things as well. How we live our lives, things that are given as a matter of soundness or balance or how to address various things in our lives, and those things are constantly being addressed Sabbath by Sabbath. As far as the truths are concerned may be rarely addressed or stated in the midst of all that because it's about a way of life that comes from God's word.

So again, we have been going through this, talking about how that that is given to the Church, the process whereby God has worked, that if people had seen that in times past, understood that in a better way with Herbert Armstrong as the apostle, we wouldn't have had the kind of problems to the extent that we did. But there was a process we had to go through of growth and development where that's just a process that God has taken the Church through through time, especially after the period of Sardis, going through Philadelphia, and then all the other things we've experienced so we can grow. The transformation process, it's a beautiful thing.

James 3. Continuing here in **James 3:13—Who is wise and skilled with knowledge among you?** Now, when it's using this term, it's not talking about a worldly wisdom. It's talking about true wisdom. Just like we're talking about true fellowship, the source is God. God tells us how to have fellowship that is true. He tells us how to have wisdom that is true. Because it all comes from Him; the kind of love that we are to grow in comes from God. We can't just work it up on our own. It's not something you can decide you're going to have. It's something that God has to give help in through the power of His holy spirit, through a relationship with Him.

So, the same thing is true with being wise or having this kind of wisdom. The source is God. We can't take it to ourselves. It's learned from God. God teaches us this and helps us through the power of His spirit to be sustained in it as well, to hold on to it.

“Who is wise and skilled with knowledge among you?” So, a lot is being said there. What knowledge? Knowledge of the truth. Knowledge of God's way of life. So, who among us is wise in that? Well, if we've been so blessed, the longer we've been in God's Church the more experiences we have, the more that God's able to work at transforming us, we're exceedingly blessed. But never to be haughty about it. Never to be proud about it. Never to take it to ourselves.

So, this is, to me, a bit of a trick question that you don't want to get tricked on at all because it's not something that we want to see in an unbalanced way. We need to know this comes from God. The knowledge comes from God, the wisdom of that knowledge in our life, to have sound minds to use His truth right, properly, that comes from God.

So, it says **Let them show out of good...** the word is **conduct**, even though it's translated most places "conversation." Conversation oftentimes is a give away as to whether or not what is up here in the mind is good and sound and balanced because it comes out of our mouths sometimes that it's not so good and sound and balanced. That would reveal where we are. But there are other things that we do as far as conduct that are reflected in our lives that would express this.

Let them show out of good conduct their works with meekness of wisdom. So again, this teachable spirit. It's recognizing, again, this comes from God, and we have to be of a teachable spirit, able to be molded and fashioned by God, never taking the credit of things to ourselves in any fashion or form but understanding where it comes from. That's a beautiful thing.

And so, these things should be reflected in our lives by how we're living. It should be evident. Just as I mentioned beforehand here about this particular area and the fact that we'd been in it (before I began the sermon here), about how it brings back certain memories and how that this particular area here of—I keep wanting to say "Findlay"—Franklin and Erie was a training ground. A training ground for my wife and I, in that respect, to be prepared to go through what we did later on then in being transferred to Toledo. Then six months later after we were there the Apostasy took place.

We'd been prepared for that here because of different personalities that were very adversarial. It was a training ground. I don't know how else to put it. It was a training ground. We saw so much that was wrong and learned how to deal with some of those kinds of things over that period of time because God molded and fashioned that through experiences. If it hadn't been for that we wouldn't have fared nearly as well.

So, we're very blessed by how God transforms this, our mind, molds and fashions our lives, and He prepares us for things throughout our lives that so often we don't even grasp and comprehend until we're there. Then it's like, "Now I understand. I understand why it was necessary to experienced that." Very unpleasant, whatever it might be in our lives, but you will learn later on some of the hardships, if not most of the hardships you go through in your life, if you go through them successfully with God and share them with God and seek His help and guidance in your life, that in time those things are going to be seen for being so awesome, they truly are, and recognizing they're necessary to get us where we need to be. We can't get where we're going without heat, trials, fire.

But if you have bitter, or as the word is, **sharp envying...** This word here means, "a strong feeling for something; a zeal for something." In other words, it's getting to the point here, here is a situation where someone is not in agreement with what is being given or what has

been stated or what they know is taught, and maybe not even thinking about it or even caring about it in some cases, but because they have such a passion, such a zeal, such a strong feeling for something that they're doing or want to do or have researched on their own—generally, this is where these things come from, different ideas that creep up that sometimes can be hurtful, sometimes go off track and take people astray—then this is what it's addressing here.

If a person has **sharp envying** or sharp feelings, a **zeal that creates a rivalry or strife**. It's showing here where these kinds of things lead because it leads to things that aren't good. This is, basically, what James is addressing here. He's addressing some things in the Church that are very unhealthy for the Church. Sometimes I've had to address various things that are unpleasant to address, but if I don't address them then others are going to think that some things that are being done or said are okay. The reality is, if something begins to go into other areas or be spread around that isn't balanced, that isn't sound, then there is that need for me as pastor, in that sense, under Christ to address those things because he leads and guides and directs me to do that to protect the Church.

Just like Ephesians 4 that we went through at the beginning of this series now. We've gone through part of it two times now, the chapter, to get through it. But again here, it's about the Church, why God established the Church and what He established, this oneness, this unity, this oneness of believe, one baptism, one faith, on and on it goes, and then gave a ministry for a purpose to help us so that we're not tossed to and fro by different ideas of things that come along, so that we do have greater balance and peace within the Body. It's a beautiful thing.

So, Ephesians 4, a very powerful chapter. It's going on here as far as what James is addressing then in showing the things that interfere with that.

...and strife or rivalry in your hearts. So, if we're not in agreement or we're not in full unity about something and we're holding on to something, whatever it might be, some— and I'll address some things as we go along—but whatever idea or thought or thing that is there that isn't in unity and oneness with the Body, that becomes a problem. It causes division. It causes hurt, pain, and suffering within the Body. It truly does.

God desires that we all be, as Ephesians says, one, at one, one faith, one belief, unity. That's one with God. It says if we have something different than that that we're holding on to because we have a zeal, it's a pet thing of ours, whatever that might be... Because generally, that's what happens in life, or certain standards or certain things we think that we become filled with and sometimes in a very unbalanced way if we're not careful, it can lead us astray.

It says, **don't glory nor lie against the truth.** The warning that James is giving here is don't do things, don't hold on to things that aren't in agreement with the Body. That's what he's saying, in essence.

This wisdom does not come or descend from above. In other words, this isn't of God. If something is adversarial, if it's something that we're holding on to that isn't in agreement with

the Body and causes or creates strife or rivalry with what is being taught and what is being said then it's just wrong. Again here, he's making it very clear that wisdom isn't from God. It isn't true wisdom.

It doesn't descend from above but is earthly, sensual, demon-like. Now, that is pretty strong. To think that there are certain things that aren't from God, and if we can see it, that which is not of God, as far as mankind is concerned, is demon-like. There is a great lesson in that. Everything about human nature, if we move in that particular direction as far as how we live because we're motivated by selfishness, that's demonic. It really is. It's of Satan.

Because that's the very reason God made us this way, so that we would have human nature from birth. We grow up, we develop at a very young age, selfishness. It's about self. It's about what "I" want. We're unhappy, we can cry to get our way, whatever it might be. We can pitch a fit to get our own way until we're heard, and human nature starts developing selfish human nature. Doesn't cry for someone else because they recognize that someone else has certain needs. Because they can't understand that as a baby. But it's an awesome thing to watch human nature develop in a child. Then by the time you get older we're very proficient at it, we don't have to think about it. It's so deeply engrained in us.

But God created us this way (which is a marvel) for a purpose - to learn the greatest lesson that mankind is to learn. That everything about human nature is against Him and it has to be changed, it has to be conquered. You have to enter into a fight to fight against self. That's what the great fight is.

When God calls us out of this world it's to make a choice and to learn and grow in that understanding that you loathe selfish human nature. It's the motivation for everything that is a matter of pride - self, what I want above what others want or need. It's "my" needs first. It's "my" wants. "I" want to be taken care of. "I" want to be first.

That's the mind of Satan. What an awesome thing we get to make a choice in time because we can begin to see it, "I loathe selfishness because it creates drama." It creates drama, the opposite of peace that God wants to have in His family that comes by a totally different way, the opposite of selfishness, one of giving, true giving that God teaches because it comes through the power of God's spirit and the power of God's mind. What an incredible thing.

Because God is not going to allow in His Family, in His Kingdom a mind that has the remotest part of thinking that Satan had, that it would possibly do what Satan did in the God Family. So, we have to enter into this battle to a point in time where God says, "Now I know you. Whatever comes your way, whatever trial is thrust toward you, you're going to put Me first. With My spirit and help in your life by your choices you're going to put Me first." Because we always need God's spirit and God's help to live this way of life. But once this mind is set in that it's a beautiful thing. That's what we're waiting for in the 144,000, for all them to be set, that God can say to every one of them, "Now I know you," so that He can give us immortal life,

eternal or from this point forward everlasting life, spirit life in Elohim, the God Family.
Awesome!

Straight language sometimes is kind of difficult for us. “Demon-like,” “demonic-like,” “satanic.” Those are sharp things. But to understand that’s what selfishness really is. That’s what he became, filled with pride, self, wanting his way. Incredible how we are to learn that and learn to conquer and overcome it through choices we make, a lifetime of choices to where finally this mind can be transformed into something new and beautiful that God can resurrect into a spirit life forever.

For where envying and strife (or rivalry) is there is confusion and every evil work. That’s been my experience in God’s Church since 1969, being baptized at that time. Wherever there is envy, wherever there is this strife, wherever there is this kind of rivalry or strong feelings about something that’s contrary, it comes out of people. It can’t help it.

When people are passionate about, have strong zeal for something that’s different, it’ll come out in time. And so, began to see those things in God’s Church, things that didn’t agree with God’s way of life. I’ve made comment about this so often. My primary teaching, instruction as to how to be a minister that God wants me to be is the experience of having learned from so many, “This is not of God.” Certain beliefs that people began to teach is not of God. Certain practices that were out there was not of God.

Certain things of raising up the ministry or raising up students from Ambassador College just because they went to Ambassador College, that somehow, they were better than others in their church areas. That really riles me up because that did a lot of damage in God’s Church. So many students went out because of that, and because of what was pumped into them by different evangelists, as a whole, who pushed that thought and those kind of ideas without soundness of mind and balance, hurt them to where they truly began to think they were better than others in the congregation, to where ministers went out thinking that they were better than others in the Church.

Think, we’re a family! Where does that kind of mind come from? It’s exactly what James is addressing. It doesn’t come from God. It’s not of God. Things that were contrary from things that they learned from Herbert Armstrong in his classes because we’re going back in time now when Ambassador College was started and when the evangelists began to sit at his feet, in that respect, in desks and taking notes and learning from God’s apostle at a very early stage as far as the church was concerned. Those early on were the problem. The vast majority of them.

What an incredible thing that God let us experience something like that. They had ideas and thoughts of something contrary to what God was giving His servant. I’m going to hit one in a little bit here. I’ve already talked about the one on healing. There is an evangelist, who is now dead, who was over one of the primary groups out here who split away after things happened, who was the main one who began to push these ideas about doctors and healing and that it was a lack of faith if you took a medication, that it was a lack of faith if you went to a doctor.

Those things rile me up because that is against God. That is against what God is showing the Church and has been showing the Church and how God worked with Herbert Armstrong. He gave a balance in those things.

It's not a matter of having faith in them. Our faith is in God! But we also understand that God gave things to us to be able to have, to be able to use wisely, to make choices of. Just like a car, you have to use it wisely. You can't use it unwisely, or you shouldn't.

At times I'm guilty of using it unwisely. I like it, in today's traffic, to have some power, that when I need it, I can get out of the way or move on, and I like it a little more instant if possible. I appreciate that. We have a ramp that comes up on the freeway on 71-75 that right now has so many semis on it. I understand, we live in that kind of a world. Things don't move by rail like they used to. Or really, the big problem is, I guess, we're just getting so large and the demand for goods is growing so much that when we first moved out there fifteen years ago, well out of town, now it's not that far out anymore and the traffic that comes through that corridor of 71-75, where it comes together, it's a nightmare.

We have this entrance, which they're now starting, they're going to open it up wider. The time to get on the freeway... You know what I'm talking about back there? You ever got? Yeah, both of you getting on that ramp that leads from our place out there to get on freeway going back north, it's dangerous. I'm surprised some people haven't been killed out there already because you have just a few moments to get on the freeway. And if traffic is right there you have to hit your brakes, and other cars behind you, they have to hit their brakes too because you can't just pull out on the freeway when you want to, especially now because they have a concrete corridor there.

Anyway, my point is when I get in that kind of a situation I appreciate the progress of mankind, I appreciate where God has brought us, and I appreciate the fact that there are times that if I have it that I can use it, power. That car has power and I appreciate that, because our SUV doesn't and it's like, "Get going!" You want to make sure before you get out there that the distance is pretty broad before you ever try to get on there. And then behind you, all these people wanting to get on as well, and it's like... Anyway, the challenges of trying to have a sound mind in a very unsound world, to keep away from the stress. "How do I do that, babe? Pretty good?" Anyway... Don't answer.

So again, there is appreciation of things and a balance of things, and where do we get those? Philadelphia, candidly, Laodicea, they should have had it from Herbert Armstrong. Everything they learned of what was true, everything as far as truths, they came through him because that is how God works.

The same is true today. It's how God has been working and it's just a reality. Not a matter of pride and haughtiness, it's just a matter of order of things, of how God has worked to help us to be ordered as a body and to become stronger as a body and closer knit as a body, and more in unity and oneness in a body.

So again, **But the wisdom**, this wisdom being spoken of here, that is against or strives against what is true. Because it does. There's a battle that goes on there and too bad we can't always see that when that's getting a hold of us, that it's something that's pulling us away and we're striving for something different not from God. We can deceive ourselves into thinking it's from God, and that's why we have the ministry and the set up and the establishment as we do and why some things are addressed then from up here.

It says, **But the wisdom that is from above, first indeed**, is how it's properly translated. **The wisdom that is from above first indeed is pure**. If it comes from God, it's pure, it's sound, it's beautiful, it's perfection. Not that we're perfect, but we're to grow in perfection. We're to grow in righteousness. We're to grow in unity and oneness with God. The more we have the mind of God, how blessed are we, that soundness of mind that we can have?

We live in a world today that has... the soundness, it's just going down the tubes quicker and quicker and quicker. Fewer have just basic soundness anymore.

Is first indeed pure, then peaceable. It brings peace. Unity, oneness, agreement with the things God leads us in, teaches us in, it produces peace. Unity produces peace.

It's gentle, or actually the Greek word (and I love this one), it's **yielding**. That's important to understand. It's yielding. Yielding to what? Yielding its own will to God's will. Yielding its own way to what is being taught that comes from God. Because we understand that process.

...easy to be entreated. Which means "quick or ready to obey." That's our desire. That should be our burning desire, ready to obey, wanting to obey, wanting to get rid of anything that resists or interferes with that unity and oneness in the Body of Christ.

...full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality. You know, that's a hard thing for human beings, and it's a hard thing for us to grow in sometimes, this thing of not being partial, of being able to judge things. Because it's a matter of God's judgment, it's a matter how God wants us to see them.

We live in a world today that has such prejudices that it's difficult for people to grasp them. Some people are out here trying to address some of those things and not knowing how and going off on some other tangent that's just even weirder sometimes then. Well, candidly, most of the time. Because there are problems in society, in the world because of human nature, but they don't have solutions. Why? Because it didn't come from God. It's just another thing that screws things up and makes things worse and causes more confusion and causes more tension and more stress and we see civil disobedience and things just growing and growing and growing as contention between people. It's getting worse out there. It's getting dangerous.

...without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness... That's what we're talking about, that which comes from God because it's right. Judgments that are just right because, again, it comes from God, it's something that agrees with what God is giving to us, of what we're to do and how we're to do it.

...is sown in peace in those who make peace. That can be a sermon in itself right there. Peace doesn't just happen. Peace comes as a result of, first and foremost in what James is addressing here, coming into unity. The more we come into unity, the more peace we have, the less that is contentious, the less that divides, the less that causes questions in people's minds. Because inevitably at some point whenever something comes along that isn't in harmony and unity with what we're practicing and what we're doing in our lives, if it's something that is unsound or going in that direction then other brethren begin to be hurt by it and they begin to have questions by it.

Now, sometimes people are led into it and they suck it up, too, and that's the danger. That's what Ephesians 4 talks about. The objective within the ministry is to have no divisions among us but to be at one and not to be able to be deceived in a manner that we get caught up in something and go off in our thinking because we begin to agree.

That's why I've had to address some of these things about more balance in this thing of just dealing with something as puny as Covid and there's a balance in there. You're going to learn that balance in one way and it's going to be a matter of relying upon and depending upon and trusting in God. That's what it is. That's where your faith is. Not in doctors, in God because of how God leads us and how God leads us is how He'll protect us.

1 Corinthians 1:9 it says, **God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Joshua the Christ, our Lord.** So, again here, addressing something that is such an awesome thing to understand. I was thinking about that the other morning walking in our subdivision. Sometimes I enjoy prayer at that particular time because it's such an awesome setting in that particular area and there is that then in prayer to God that just thanking Him that we can have absolute faith in everything He does, everything He gives to us. What a beautiful thing to think upon, to understand, that we can have absolute faith in God in everything, that He's not like human beings.

Because a lot of times when people come into the Church and throughout our growth, we still equate certain things of God to be like what we've experienced in our lives. Perhaps with parents. So sometimes people have a hard battle or a difficult battle to have this concept of a Father—because God says He is our Father—when we maybe have had, obviously, something that's different, that is hard to grasp that concept if we've had difficulties in some of those things in our life. Whatever our situation was like perhaps with the drama in our past. We've all had that. We all still have things we try to conquer and overcome.

But unless someone is in the Church and striving to live by the Church, they're going to experience things of the world and human nature of the world. A lot of people come along with a lot of scars and a lot of baggage because of our experiences in our physical life.

That's why I hit certain scriptures like I do sometimes when it talks about the "wrath of God," you know. Because the world and why they translated those words that way is because they see God, especially in the Old Testament, as a wrathful God. "He's quick to destroy!" When Israel

was sent into wars, they killed everyone because they were told by God kill everyone, man, woman, and child. And people think, “Oh, that’s a harsh, wrathful God.” No, it wasn’t.

The world they were living in, the things they were experiencing, the reality, the truth is that because of death a child is going to be resurrected and grow up without all that crap that they were growing up with, all the unsoundness of mind of the gentile minds that were in the world and all the things that they were being taught. Some people growing up in the atmosphere—just reading the other day here about—Tophet, Baal. There were those who had the practice of offering their own children up on altars to be burnt, to be sacrificed, thinking that their gods were appeased by or influenced by or moved by and they could receive certain favor if they were willing to offer their children up in a fire. What a perverted world! But to have that in your mind, to begin thinking and then... Anyway.

In this world there is a lot of garbage out there, a lot of garbage that people have had planted in their minds. All of you, every one of you without exception has garbage that’s in your mind that you learn and experienced as you were growing up. That there are some things you can’t even see yet because God doesn’t help us to see, He doesn’t let us see, thankfully, everything all at once. We couldn’t survive. We would be so depressed, so demoralized. We couldn’t make it up here as far as our thinking was concerned if we could see things like that clearly.

And so, God lets us see a little bit at a time so we can conquer a little bit at a time, and we grow slowly. It’s a beautiful thing. But we have people within God’s Church who have experienced some very horrible things in life.

And so, this process of what we go through and what we learn in this life. Just like this thing about a wrathful God. It takes time for us. It takes time for us. It’s only been in the last several years that I can say that I have an excitement about the Last Great Day in a way that I never have. The ability to see death in a way that I haven’t been able to in times past, even as a minister in God’s Church. There are some things you just can’t give. You can talk about, you can preach about, but to know certain things in your thinking, in your mind, to have a kind of calm and peace because you know what is best from the mind of God, the beauty of a great resurrection later on, that day, what that’s like.

When death comes along in this world it’s not painful. It’s not as painful. Now, the loss of a close relationship is always going to have pain in it, but nothing like what the world experiences. When you have the truth, when you know it, there is peace in that and a gratitude of that which is coming. It’s going to come. It’s going to come; it just takes a long time to get here.

But God sees it right away and He helps us to begin seeing it right away. That’s that peace. You know it’s true. It’s there. You don’t have the kind of worry and doubt and frustrations and sorrow to the level that the world has. You can miss someone, but not like the world does. There’s a vast difference in God’s Church as you grow.

Then as you grow that excitement for that resurrection becomes greater and greater and greater and you realize the blessings of young children not having to carry a ton of bag of bricks and rocks behind them during their hundred years. Because what they see and what they're going to know and what's going to be planted in their minds and their thinking is so far above and beyond us in the sense of the peace that they are able to experience in human life. I hope that makes sense to you.

Verse 10... I get upset when I read things about the "wrath of God," or the "anger of God." They talk about the "anger of God." They translate certain things as the "anger of God." "Well, that's what that word means." No, it has to do with context. You can't translate the mind of God. You can't translate the truth of God without knowing what He's saying, the context.

We know the context and we grow in understanding of the context, of what God is like, who God is. He's not a God with human emotions. That's why sometimes we equate God—and that's what this all started out as—God having human emotions. No, He doesn't. He's not like us. He's not motivated by things that we're motivated by. He's motivated by one thing - agape. That's what He's motivated by. That's His thinking. That's who He is. Everything is motivated by that. Not by selfishness, not by being angry. He has hope and desire for His creation. Everything is motivated by that. Not by selfishness. Not by being angry. He has hope and desire for His creation. He gives it every opportunity.

When we're called, we're given every opportunity to change, and if we continue to resist Him then there comes a time of reckoning, a time when He can't give any more time. He wants what is best for us. From the moment He calls us He gives us the road, the pathway, the ability to do everything, have everything that is good and right in our life.

But our human nature resists along the way, and that's the battle. He'll continue to show us those things where we resist and then we have the opportunity to come to repentance. Because we have that all the time, this thing of repentance. It's a beautiful plan. It's awesome.

We strive to make the most of that, repenting, growing, becoming more at one with God. The problem is always in self, though along the way. The vast majority choose something different. When it's all said and done, they don't continue to fight against selfishness, against what we are. Don't continue to yield - yield - that word "yielding" to what God is revealing because they want to hold on to something different.

Everyone who is separated from, who leaves God's Church has had this zeal, this desire of something greater that was more valuable and important to them than God's word was, than the truth was. That's what it comes down to every time.

We still have people, situations where God is cleaning up the Church even to this day. That's why I've been crying out like I have in this particular series, that we need to be sober-minded and know that we're deep in the battle of fighting against self, that we do indeed want to do these things, we're ready to obey, we want to obey, we're crying out to God to help us in that

process. And where we're wrong, where we're not yielding like we should be, to help us to see that so we can repent and continue to grow.

That's where the excitement of life is! Very few have been able to go down that road successfully. The vast majority have turned away from it. Mind-boggling!

Verse 10—Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Joshua the Christ, that you all speak the same thing. Absolute unity of mind. In other words, when we talk to each other there is never something that pops up that has come out of this world or out of our thinking that's different from what God is revealing to us, different from what God has shown us, that "This is the way, walk you in it." Because we're in agreement and oneness with what God gives through the Church. Beautiful! So, we all speak the same thing. We're in unity.

...and that there be no divisions among you. What a beautiful thing, not to have division in God's Church. Because that's all I've ever known in God's Church, division. That's all I've ever known, divisiveness and division. That's been the biggest thing to deal with in the ministry, division and divisiveness in God's Church. It's been that way ever since I've been here. It's been that way ever since I've been in the ministry.

You think, "What a horrible thing. Why is that?" Because the vast majority have gone a different way. They don't want this. When it's all said and done, they've come to a point where they want something else. You think, why? Why?! Where is the mind that we're talking about here, the kind of mind that's yielding, peaceable, that wants to be in unity and oneness with God, that wants to be in agreement with God, that doesn't want our own way. We should abhor our own way if we see that it isn't in agreement with God.

See that you all speak the same thing. I love verses like this because the hardest part of my job has always been when people haven't been speaking the same thing.

That's why sermons like this, I don't relish giving, but they're necessary because it's a matter of sobering, being sobered, it's a matter of recognizing what our human nature is like and realizing that the Body is still being cleansed by God. And candidly, He's showing me something else on top of all that. I know that God is cleansing the Body and He's showing me what I need to do as a minister in serving Him and serving His Son, and basically, it has to do with the fact of where we are in time.

No more putting up with, tolerating divisiveness in any fashion or form. There comes a time when mercy can no longer be extended, where time can no longer be extended, where patience can no longer be extended, where results are expected. That's where we are in God's Church. Regardless of what we end up in our size, I know where we're headed - to a greater purification in the Body to where indeed when Christ returns we're speaking the same thing, we are in unity and oneness of spirit in a very powerful way, in a very profound way. So, certain things can't continue to be given time, allowed to continue.

...but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.

Powerful! So, if we can learn why certain judgments are made, why certain choices and decisions are made, and if we don't understand them to know in time there are things that God will reveal to us that we will be able to understand if we can't understand certain things. But we continue on because we know God's Church, we know how God is working, we're convicted of those things because we have seen the fruit of it over a long period of time.

For it has been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by those, in this particular case here, **the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.** Now, see, the point is in all this is that that shouldn't exist in God's Church. There should never be anything that's of a contentious environment, that's even uneasy. Sometimes if we're not careful we can insist on certain things our way and what we have come to believe out of this world in what we see on the internet or what we think we've learned out of the Bible, or whatever it is. If it isn't in agreement with God, don't go that route. It's destroyed so many people in times past, taken so many people away from the truth.

Another one, 1 Timothy 4:1. So, in order to speak the same things we're cautioned to not take part in that which derives its origin or its thinking or its teaching out of this world, from this world. Everything is wrong out there, everything. Everything in government. Everything in how economies are run. Everything having to do with an economic system. They're not right. They're not based on things that are right. Everything is corrupt because it isn't in agreement with that which is just and true and perfect, God's way.

That's why this world has to come to the point it does. That's why this last book is being written in the fashion that it is, to address one last time everything that's brought us to this point. This world stinks and we have to be deeply convicted of that, that there is nothing worth salvaging.

Everything we've ever been given individually, communities, as a nation, God has given that which is good and right, and we've screwed it all up. That's our nature. We really have. We've made a mess of things. We're destroying God's creation. Given enough time without a nuclear war, we would end up destroying the entire earth by our pollution, by our greed. Everything in time. The larger we become in population, because that's the nature of things, when you get to this point it's just going to get larger if it can be sustained.

You look at what mankind is doing with food, with crops. Some things that aren't fit to be given for the very purpose they're grown, to give to livestock. Not fit for consumption. How much less human consumption? Some things that actually are harmful in a very great way to health, and on and on it goes.

1 Timothy 4:1—Now, the spirit expressly says that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits/deceiving spirits. Now, the word "seducing" here is a Greek word, and it has to do with "wandering or leading astray." That's well put because that's what happens whether it be from that which is broadcast to us in a spirit world or that

which is just broadcast to us in this world because of man's nature that we hear on TV, primarily, and whatever is blasted at us that we drink in, or the internet that we read that we think is true, that we've proven to our self, that we take as authoritative. Be careful. There is a lot of garbage out there, a lot of garbage. Be careful what you take as being authoritative or absolutely true.

...some shall depart, giving heed to seducing/wandering... In other words, it's wandering away from the truth. Everyone who's left God's Church has wandered away from the truth by the cause of something that's out there that pulled them away, some idea, some thought.

...speaking lies falsely or speaking falsely, I should say, or **speaking lies,** as it says here, **speaking falsely in...** this word **hypocrisy,** I love this one too. It's a word that means "play-acting." It's like being in theatre. When you understand what's being said here, where it's coming from, it's like being on a stage. That's where the word comes from in the Greek language, this being on stage. Now we have TV and the cameras that can convey and movies, but in the beginning, it was on a stage, and it's been a part of society.

But when people get up there you know what it's about? It's about the one on the stage. Everybody's eyes are on the one on the stage, and oftentimes, they become looked up to because they're an actor. This has to do with human nature. It has to do with life and how people want to be looked upon for what they say. They want to be the attraction, the center of attention because "What I have to say, it's important. You need to hear my ideas. You need to hear my thoughts."

We live in a world today where even in the news, I don't care what it... of all things out there I loathe this probably the most, this commentary, this discussing of why they think things are the way they are and how they should be. They'll grab someone off the street, "What do you think?" It's like, "Now, everybody be quiet because I really want to hear this. I want to know. I want to learn what that person has to think." I'm being facetious. It's like, I don't care what they think! It's not going to change my life. I'm not going to sit here all day long listening to someone with a mic go up and down the street. Now, the more you do that the more you find out how bad we really are. People don't even know the next-door states connected to them let alone anything that has to do with government or anything else and how nations work and blah, blah, blah. So, it's about self, the center of attraction.

...forbidding to marry. You think, well, what's that mean? In times past, in the time of Paul when he was writing this, what is this forbidding to marry thing? Well, there is an entire church out there that forbids people to marry, but that is not what we're talking about, different doctrines people have. And you think, they're demonic. It's demonic thinking, some of these kinds of things. It comes from the world. It doesn't come from God.

I think of this one here, too, "forbidding to marry." My wife and I were talking about this, it was just last week...or somewhere along the line here, a week or so ago, of something that happened within the Church. At one time within the Church there were those (again,

evangelists) and they would teach different ministers and so forth that it was a sin to date, let alone marry, someone of another race.

It didn't come from Herbert Armstrong. We know of a particular couple that were in the ministry that people found fault with the fact that they got married after Ambassador College. Yet it was Herbert Armstrong (correct?), that told them it was fine to get married. He didn't teach those things, forbidding to marry because of race.

We've had people come along that have had some of the same kind of thinking as the world, because a lot of people in the world have problem with race and differences. It's just the way it is. Judgments that are made because of race. You think, what a sick thing! What a sick, sick world we live in, and it's the cause of incredible contention. Always has been, always will be. Every race has had problems with others in the sense of measuring by these things.

A lot of these things even worked their way into traditional Christianity early on in the south and there were these ideas that there were those of a "supreme race." Now, you talk about causing some problems!

I think of two peoples in the same country in Africa. The Belgians went down there and taught this, correct? Went down there and basically taught, I think it had to do with the size of the head. They did this measuring and stuff. What? Oh, the color. I thought they even did measurements and so forth as far as the skull and so forth, which is something that Hitler did and different ones, or his doctors did. Whatever you want to say.

But anyway, so these two nations, it ended up having incredible genocide because one nation was told, basically, by what was taught to them from the Belgians, that this one race because—I can't remember if it was lighter or darker in their color in Africa, in this one nation in Africa, that they were a superior people. They believed that they were a superior people and so they started killing off the others who weren't.

All these things have happened around the world with every race. That's what I'm saying. It's happened between white races. It's happened between oriental races. It's happened between black races. It's happened between all. Then on top of that, then the race against the race. So, mankind is sick when people begin to think they're superior to others and it's always existed.

That's a part of something here that came out early on within the Church, that some of these things had crept into the Church, that some evangelists began to uphold as far as the teaching was concerned, that it was wrong for different races to marry. It's a bunch of garbage. It was never forbidden as far as God's apostle was concerned. I wish I could think of some others along those lines.

But some of that thinking was so perverse that if they could follow it through, if it was a matter of sin then their children would be a product of sin and what chance would they ever have in life? Think, how sick and distorted is that thinking? But they didn't even have the ability to even think that through about God and what God is like.

Then there are those within the Church who have said that you can't marry outside of the Church. That didn't come from me as God's apostle. But we've had some people even up to recent time that have given that advice to some other people in the Church, young people, basically, who aren't married, in some cases. That you shouldn't marry outside of the Church. Why? Where did they get that? Where did they get that? Is that in agreement and unity and oneness with God's Church? No, never has been.

But because the Church was so large at one time the fact that if you were able to have someone of the same belief, what an awesome thing. Today, we don't have congregations like that. It's just it doesn't exist. For someone it's more challenging, it's more difficult, there are obstacles, but there are things to be learned as well, things to grow in that can mold and fashion you.

I think of how there were those out of Ambassador College who, basically, there were people in the Church who felt like, now, if you're in Ambassador College... I remember someone in this area one time when we were here. Basically, had a difficult time because they were given a hard time thinking they might date and eventually marry someone who wasn't in Ambassador College. Correct? Right here in this area when I was here.

It's like, where does this come from? Somehow because you were at Ambassador that you can't marry someone in the Church who did not go there. That's how far some things went from some evangelists. Not balanced. Not sound. Didn't come from Herbert Armstrong.

But this is what I'm talking about, not in unity and oneness in the Church because we have some of our own ideas and thinking sometime that doesn't come from God. And if they didn't come through Herbert Armstrong, that he didn't have these ideas, and they weren't being taught by him, then why would others teach them? Because they're divisive. They're not of the same mind. They're not teaching the same thing.

We've had this problem in God's Church even up until now. All the time going back to that period of time when these things were taught by some of these people during Philadelphia that went on into Laodicea and still around the Church to this day. I hope we don't have any more of it in God's Church anymore. Because if I hear someone saying something like that, I'm not going to mince words with any of you - that you're being adversarial to the teachings of God's Church and you're hurting others in God's Church, planting things in their mind that are not true.

And so many of those marriages that happened in Ambassador College, they ended in divorce. They weren't all successful. Why is that? Because one or both didn't live God's way. That's what it always comes down to. If you live God's way and you're in God's Church, whether it's married to someone in or out, how you live is going to determine where that's going to go the majority of times. You don't have control of anyone else. But as a whole, everything is on your side when you live God's way of life, and God will bless you for living His way of life. Awesome!

Anyway, I'll be candid with you. When I go through things like this I am sickened inside. When I think of all the things that have been taught about healing and about false ideas about faith, that even to this day we have some in God's Church that still battle some of these things and about taking medications or going to a doctor. It's like this is wrong, "I'm a naturalist! Everything is going to have to be natural. Anything else is sin, is wrong!" No, it isn't. There's balance in both. You can't put your faith in any of them because who is the expert when it's all said and done? Well, we rely on God to give us balance, don't we?

I'm sorry, but some of these things rile me up because they cause division in God's Church, and they shouldn't exist in God's Church. Just like I've talked about some not able to go to the Feast because of something believed about Covid. Where did that come from? Didn't come from here. Many weeks before the example came from here of what we're to do in faith. If we could just grasp what faith is all about, if we can fully grasp how God leads and guides and directs His Church and gives us measurable balance, sound balance, soundness of mind in a very unbalanced world, And we either agree with that or we don't.

It goes on to say, forbidding to marry, to abstain from meats. We've had these kinds of things run through God's Church as well, people feeling that being a vegetarian is better than having certain, you know, having beef or whatever, and yet the examples are right there all through the Bible. It's a matter of balance, again, and a lot of things we don't do in balance in this world anymore. But anyway.

...which God has created to be received with thankfulness. In other words, some look at this scripture and say, "Well, see, God said everything is clean if you just give thanks for it." That's not what it's saying. It's already understood; it's like when there are certain things spoken of, you don't have to say to people in the New Testament you're to keep the Sabbath. It was already understood very well by all the apostles and by everyone who came into God's Church, just as it is today, you keep the Sabbath. But people try to twist and distort certain things that are said to say something different. The same thing is true here, some trying to use some of these things to say, "See, it's okay to have something unclean." No, it isn't. It has to do with your attitude and thinking toward God, that you want to strive to live by the balance that God gives you in His word.

... for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. So, we have our relationship with God, we're to be thankful for everything that God has given us in life to live by that is good, that is proper, whether it be in food, whether it be in lifestyle, whatever it is we're able to live what is true in everything. The point is even in what we eat. Incredible.

1 Timothy 4:6—If you put brethren in remembrance of these things, you shall be a good minister of Joshua the Christ, nourished (trained up) in the words of faith. And what did he tell earlier on? What did he tell all of those within the Church? Remember where you learned it. Remember from the example what I said, what I did, what I live, what I told you. That's where you learned it.

“Trained up in the words of faith,” because God shows us what it is we’re to have in our thinking to be in unity and oneness.

...and of good doctrine whereof you have obtained. But refuse profane and old wives’ fables (tales). In other words, “profane.” It’s a word that means “unsanctified or worldly.” Basically, you think, well, we don’t have that problem in God’s Church. Yeah, we do if people are doing a little bit too much research on the internet and that’s their authority if it’s something that doesn’t agree with what the Church is teaching. If it’s something we research and study and think into and think, well, this is the way it should be or this is what it is, and we make the decision, like Covid or whatever it might be, then where does that authority come from?

Well, if it’s something different than what the Church is teaching it’s fully coming out of the world or one’s own mind, but it isn’t coming from God. I’m speaking some pretty straight things here, things that we need to think about, how God works with us in our lives to mold and fashion us, and speaking of them fairly boldly because I know who I am. I know what I’m supposed to be doing. I know what I’m teaching. I know what I’m responsible for and I don’t take it lightly. And God blesses it, that process.

For bodily exercise profits a little... So, it’s showing here that there are things you can do, obviously, and we learn that, that some put in here “little while” because it’s something you have to be consistent at. Which is true.

So, we recognize the value of exercise. I know the value of exercise, of just being able to walk a certain distance every day as much as possible, five days a week, if possible, at a faster pace than maybe I normally would. Because if I counted up all the steps I do in a day it’s going to beat that. But that’s not the point. You have to do it at a particular point in time at a particular pace to get your heart rate up and all those things that go along with it. It’s healthy for the old heart, the ticker, especially mine at this point. I need it and I know it. I can feel it.

So many people I talk to they recognize when they do various things of exercise that it profits. That’s what it’s talking about here. If we can recognize that there’s certain things physically we can do to profit by it, we feel it, we feel better because of it and so forth, it profits it a little in life. It’s not everything but it’s a part of it because other things are a part of it too as to how we live, what we do, how much sleep we get or we don’t get, if we’re able to. Food, everything else, drink, whatever it might be, that there is balance in everything we strive to do before God.

...but godliness, or in other words, “the exercise toward godliness,” is what the context is about here, **but godliness is profitable toward all things**. They will be age-lasting because of what’s being molded in us. A lifetime, whatever our lifetime is in God’s Church, what we’re able to learn on a spiritual plane, have molded and fashioned in this mind.

This period of time in our life is so puny. It really is. But we can’t think that way as human beings. It’s hard. When you’re twenty you think of the concept of seventy, it just doesn’t click

so well, until you get around sixty. It starts meaning more. Then when you get sixty-eight it really means a lot more. Then when you pass seventy you know your days are numbered for sure. They always have been, but you know that. You know it, you understand that in a way that you can't when you're younger.

And so it is with this. It's very difficult for us to see things like the Last Great Day in God's eyes with the peace of mind that comes with understanding the Last Great Day and the importance and the beauty of an incredible resurrection for all who have ever lived and died, as a whole, that can be worked with in a beautiful world.

I mean, sometimes I hear some different ones talking about and thinking about what we're going to do throughout the Millennium, because I feel that God has blessed us in thinking about some of those things in a way that we really haven't, to understand that we are right now just on the verge of breakthroughs if you will, in technology, the likes of which we can't even begin to imagine.

To understand what this world is going to be like a thousand years from now, we really can't. But it's going to be so much greater than it is now, and the ability then to use technology right. That's the beauty of it all. Because right now we're, with it, we're destroying ourselves and we'll destroy the world given enough time. Well, we will with nuclear weapons too if we did it just a short time.

But the point being is what an incredible thing to realize those in the Great White Throne, what they're going to be resurrected to. Awesome! It's all you can say. Awesome beyond your wildest ability to think upon it because it's going to be far greater, far greater than what you can begin to conceive of in your mind.

But it says, **but godliness, profitable toward all things, having promise of life that now is and of that which is to come.** That's what it's about. So, we're blessed in this life with God's way of life, with the truth we're able to grow in and learn. But wow, what is it all about? This short period of time that we suffer in human life, the suffering is nothing.

Every one of you suffer because you know the truth. You know what it's like to live the truth in this world. It's not easy. It was never meant to be easy, and to see the world for what it is and to understand how far away it is from what is true and right from God, only you can grasp this in the sense of comparing it to the world and people around you. They have no ability. How profound is that?

To realize that whatever this time is that you have you can't grasp life everlasting and what God has in His plan. We can barely think about the next 1,100 years. And beyond that when there is no human life anymore? We can't grasp that kind of a world. That's like saying, what's life without your cell phone? No, I'm just kidding.

It used to be like when we first had mail that we could send over the internet within the church, within the ministry. And if you were bad, you could get cut off from that. It came up to

the time of the Apostasy, a lot of them were, basically, joking in part about “Take anything away from me, but don’t take me off the CC-Mail,” because that ability to contact through that medium was so profound and so awesome.

Anyway, we’ve gone so far beyond that now it’s not even funny. It’s hard for us to grasp what God is offering us. It’s hard to grasp what God has placed in front of us and you have to fight for it, you have to fight against self, you have to fight against the ways of this world. It’s not easy; it’s hard and you go through a lot of difficult things out here. You go through a lot of hard trials. Yet God will use those trials to mold and fashion things within you that can be molded and fashioned in absolutely no other way for what He’s preparing you for, to give you so much more.

2 Timothy 4:1—Therefore, I charge you before God and before the Lord Joshua the Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom. Preach the word! Be instant in season, out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.

So, patience that he needed to have and exercise toward the Body because there were things he was going to see and understand that others couldn’t because God was giving him added help, which He does, to see things and grasp things, to know things. You have to use those things that God gives to you as you grow wisely and not to misuse them. Because a lot of times it can interfere with your judgment then and your ability to receive others in the family in the way that you should. Hopefully, that makes good sense.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own desire. What a horrible thing that he was having to warn Timothy of what was going to come in the Church. Because God was already giving them the sense and the knowing because of different things that had already happened, Paul had already had that experience where some ministers had gone astray and had to be separated from the Church. He named them by name, had to separate them from the Church, warned the Church about what they had done and so forth so that no others would follow that kind of thinking or them.

I mention that because we had a horrible time within Worldwide. We came to a point in time where to mention someone else’s name, a minister’s name, was like taboo. You were forbidden to do that. You couldn’t do that. And it was like, if you mention someone’s name and mentioned them in a bad light you’re sinning. Think, if they sin and it hurts the Body, and they don’t know what they’ve done and it could cause greater harm to the Body, shouldn’t they be pointed out? Shouldn’t that be stated?

Now, it’s hard to maybe grasp some of that except you live in it. But when it came to the point in time where I had to, where I was supposed to as God’s servant mention some names of different individuals, different evangelists by name, the man of sin by name, it was very uncomfortable because of this environment we had created in certain thinking about saying

someone's name in a way that wasn't good. But it was the truth and people need to know when those situations arrive, in some cases.

That's why sometimes when some are separated within the Body, we send out a letter to let people know they have been separated from the Body. We don't want that, we wish they weren't, we desire that they would make different choices and so forth, but you can't control anyone. But you can control the environment that we have to a degree.

Even within that there will be that which will not be in agreement. But God has shown me very clearly, He'll take care of that. He'll take care of anything that's false that isn't able to be taken care of within the Body through the process that He has instituted within the Church, even if it means death.

Verse 4... I'm sorry, I didn't read all this. ...**preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering in doctrine**, instruction in other words, teaching, **for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but to their own desire**. This is a word that means "passionate longing." It's this thing of interference again. It's this thing of something that comes along that a person becomes filled with to a point where it becomes almost obsessive, it becomes a pet-project of thinking and perhaps purpose and so forth that is not healthy as far as the Church is concerned.

It says, **shall heap to themselves teachers having itchy ears**. So, whether it be a matter of doctrine or different ways of doing things, it's just it's something different. We've experienced everything imaginable within the Church since I've been in the Church. We really have! Everything imaginable that you think you could think of, that people could think of and do to create division.

It doesn't just have to be doctrinal. It doesn't just have to be against some teaching, like 14/15 Passover. Those are far easier to deal with and so forth. But there are other things that come along that can be very, very divisive. Like the thing I said about marriage. You might think, well, that doesn't create a problem. But yes, it does. If it's not in unity, it's division, and division always hurts the Body.

Well, I don't care what the subject matter is - marriage, food, doctors, whatever, make-up. These are "big" things. Sad they do become, they can become very big things in people's minds.

...for they shall turn their ears from the truth. From the soundness of mind, not just doctrine, but of the ways of the thinking that God said should be ours that we be in agreement with as to how we function.

...and shall be turned to fables (tales). In other words, things that are not true - unsound or unbalanced.

But watch in all things. In other words, be on guard. That's what this word is about. Be on guard. How do you do that? First of all, what do you do? You go before God every day of your life and you ask for, you cry out for His holy spirit to live in you, that you not have anything in you that separates you, cuts you off from the flow of that power, of that life in you. Because that's the only way to address everything else in life. That's the only way to have the kind of eyes, the kind of thinking to help us be on guard; it's God's spirit, to be alert to dangers around us, to things that are not in agreement and unity and oneness, to clean up our lives. If there are things out here that we're doing that aren't in agreement with God, that we need to clean up our lives in, you can't fool around. You can't continue to play around with this world or with things that are just wrong.

But watch in all things, endure afflictions. It's just a part of our life, affliction, hardship, trial, fire. It's not easy. Never was meant to be. **Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.**

What an incredible thing. Paul knew that he was at the end of his life. He knew that what he'd gone through to this point in time, that he was there. God let him know that and understand that.

I have fought a good fight. What an awesome thing to be able to say, "I have fought a good fight." If you've been in God's Church for a long time it's a confidence and a boldness you need to have, to know this has been good. What else would we want but to fight this fight, to be in this to the end, to work for it whatever the hardship is. You go through a lot of hardships. It's just a part of it. I don't care what they are.

And the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished the course. How confident are we of our relationship with God? How confident are we of our oneness and our unity with God? We can only answer that ourselves. There is great strength in that.

I have kept the faith. What a beautiful thing to know, to say, "I have kept the faith." That means you have kept, you have held on to the present truth and all other truth that God has given to us with desire because you've prayed about those things, you've seen the things inside that need to change as far as thinking in order to come into unity and oneness. Because the desire is to obey, a ready desire to obey, is the desire to change and be in unity and oneness and the battle that goes with that, to fight against self.

Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. Boldness. He knew what was ahead for him. He knew what he had fought for. He didn't waver from it. You can't waver from it. Only you can know if you waver from it, if you're doing things that aren't good, aren't healthy, if you're not fighting things you know you should be fighting. The time has come. We're at that time. You don't have much time.

I believe that with all my being more than ever before because of what's in the news. This world, the news that's out there, it's screaming out in ways that we couldn't even begin to imagine.

I think the book is pressing that more than ever before and putting it in the light that God has blessed us with. So, anyway, don't even know if I'll finish it. That's how close we can be, brethren. Truly, we've known that we could be for a long, long time, but I'll tell you what, it's pressing in fast, this world, what's out there, what's taking place.

Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day. And regardless, we press forward until it's done. We keep pressing forward until we have finished the race or we're in a new age.

...which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only but unto all those also who love his appearing (his coming). That's what we live for. That's what our life is about, the desire for a new Kingdom, a desire for a government to be established on this earth, to where mankind doesn't have to live through this anymore, this hideousness that's out there in the world where people are just oppressed right and left constantly, the stress of government upon people, the stress and oppression from corporations. Everywhere you look, stress, uneasiness. Not peace, drama, drama, drama, drama everywhere you turn. It's not of God.

Well, that pretty much says it all. Strive for the truth. Fight for the truth. Seek to be in unity. Seek to be in oneness. Examine your own lives. Because we've come to a point in time where God is making it very clear, candidly even more so this past week to me, there is no more putting up with divisiveness. There is no more putting up with and giving time to things that are not right, things that are not good.

More is going to be brought to the surface regardless of what we end up with in size. That's not the issue. What we are as a unified Body, that's what it's all about. We must be at one with God. Strive more than ever before to be at one with God.