

Today we're continuing in a series entitled *Protecting Fellowship*, with this being *Part 2*. This is the final part of this, I think.

As we've been going through the different sermons that all focus on different aspects of fellowship in God's Church we've been led to this series since it involves our responsibility toward one another and the need to be on guard and protective of the fellowship that God has given to us. We're all a part of that and we all have responsibility in that, not just to ourselves, but to one another as well. This is one of those areas that we're talking about today that that responsibility is included.

So, it'd be good once again to be reminded of some verses that we focused on concerning the participation we have in Passover year by year in that which was said in 1 Corinthians 11. That's where we'll begin here, in repeating this.

1 Corinthians 11:28—But let a person examine himself, and so let them eat of the bread and drink of the cup. So again, we understand these things. We're told this year by year by year. It's contained in sermons from time to time as well, like today, that we obviously have a responsibility to look into our lives, to ask God to reveal to us those things that we can't see.

The reality is God's the only one who knows us, what's inside of us. He's the only one; Him and Christ, are the only ones who can show us what's truly inside of us. We don't know. The reason we're in God's Church is because God has shown us those things. He's shown us His truth, and part of that is the ability to truthfully see our own nature, to see our own thinking. God knows the heart, we don't.

We are deceptive as human beings. We deceive ourselves because our nature is selfish, and we cling to those things that are selfish by nature. It's difficult for us to really see ourselves because we resist that, we fight against that, just as much as we fight against God's way of life. Our nature is one that resists God.

So, what a blessing it is that God reveals things to us to help us to grow, and as we're in the Church year by year by year He continues to mold and fashion us and helps us to see things that we can't see. He doesn't do it all at once. He reveals them over time. A lot of it has taken place as a matter of sermons, and those are the times that we are even more so to examine ourselves, to look into our lives.

It goes on to say, **For whoever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment.** That's an incredible thing to understand, a part of a process here that we're to come to understand what it means, the seriousness of taking the Passover, to partake of the wine and the bread year by year in that particular ceremony that we have on Passover.

Beforehand we are to be careful, we are to think about our lives, to pray about things in our lives.

We're actually to do that all year long, but we're to do it in a more focused way before we partake of Passover because God wants us to have this kind of mindset. He uses Passover, the first period of time, not an annual Holy Day but an annual commanded assembly of all of His people to come together to understand the seriousness of what it means to begin our journey. Because we can't be on that journey unless we focus upon this. God wants us to think about those things.

One of the primary things, the first thing we see concerning Passover is the need to be forgiven of our sins. So, we have to look at self. We have to be honest with self. There is a manner that we're to go through, not just in Passover, as I said, but all year long as we ask God to reveal things to us so that we can grow.

It says here, again, **For whoever eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.** So again, this matter of judgment, to be judged for wrongdoing, answerable. It has to do with punishment, judgment if we don't yield, if we don't respond properly. Again, it's a matter of not discerning the Lord's Body. To me, that's an awesome thing because this hasn't always been understood in God's Church, what it truly is, means, what it is all about, because it's more than something physical. It's spiritual.

The primary intent of this is a spiritual relationship with God and that relationship is right here. It's what He calls us to, the Body of Christ, the Church of God. When we're called, we begin to recognize that we have a unique fellowship with God through the power of His holy spirit to be able to see things from Him, His mind, His being, His thinking, and we begin to make choices as to whether or not that's what we want in our lives. We go through this process of our own personal choices that begins this journey, and again, making decisions all along the way.

But it's easy for us to deceive ourselves that this relationship is between us and God. I've seen so much of this in God's Church over the time I've been in the ministry, since I've been in the Church, where that hasn't been understood very well. That this matter of thinking and recognizing this isn't just a personal relationship between us and God, it has to do with everything that God gives us. The area where we learn the most is right here. It's in our fellowship with one another. It's in the Body of Christ. That's what He's called us to.

It's in those relationships that we're judged very mightily so, where these are the things, this is our arena, if you will, our area of learning. God teaches us things that we need to have, that He puts into our minds to help us to understand very basic truth about His plan, His purpose and so forth, but it goes way, way beyond that. It's about His Family. It's about His Family! Everything that's been created, everything that God has done is about His Family. That's His primary focus above all else.

Everything in His mind, His being, His thinking is about this creation that's going on because it's God's ongoing creation. It didn't end, going way back, but 6,000 years ago when man was first put on the earth. It didn't end there, and populations began. The greater part of His creation has been on a spiritual plane, to draw people, to work with people, to mold and fashion individuals, to help transform their minds so they could be in His Family. Awesome!

So, we're to discern what God is doing. We're to discern what God is doing within this family and our relationship toward one another. Because that really determines and shows whether our relationship with God is right. Because if this isn't right, that relationship is not right. This is where we're tried. This is where we're tested.

So, it's not a matter of deceiving ourselves into thinking that we just have this relationship with God. Because this has happened a lot in God's Church over time. There is a way that we're able to have this relationship. That's why we go through Ephesians 4.

One of the first things that God gave to Herbert Armstrong to understand was God's government. That was one of the first things that's attributed to him as truth that was given to the Church. I think appropriately so that it was there. It was not by accident. Because human beings put that list together, but human beings moved by God's spirit because God was the one that wanted us to grasp and comprehend what He was giving to the Church and restoring to the Church that we needed within the Church, and government was the first one. Awesome! Yet few have understood it. Few have really grasped it for what it is, for what it means.

Going on here, again ...**not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason, or on account of this many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.** Not a physical thing; it's a spiritual thing. **For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.** The very thing that God wants us to do throughout the year, that He has us focus upon before taking a Passover, is to look deep into our lives constantly, and to cry out to God to help us to see things in ourselves that we can't see.

I don't care how long you've been in God's Church, the more you grow you continue to come to a point where God will reveal certain things to you that you weren't able to see before. The day we stop that process is the day we cease to grow. We need that. God's desire is that we come into oneness, unity with Him, agreement with Him, with His mind, with His being.

So again, "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged." Because if we won't do it, God will. That judgment is not a pleasant one to have to go through, truly. **But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.**

So, even there, God's desire is even if the chastening has to be done directly by Him, His desire is that we be able to come to repentance, that that chastening will bring us to repentance so that we can, hopefully, get back on track, be back on track, and begin to indeed engage in judging ourselves.

So, we focused on some of how this can be fulfilled in our life through this series or these series of sermons that have been given, this matter of being “chastened of the Lord as well so that we’re not condemned with the world.” We’ve covered that part as well as was covered last Sabbath.

But I want to go now to Matthew 18, scriptures that oftentimes have been, well, they haven’t oftentimes, they have been misunderstood in large part in God’s Church. Even the revelation of some of these things, of what this is about and how it applies to our life is something that God has progressively revealed to the Church, this matter of going to a brother alone that we know this by. Matthew 18 should be in our minds, going to your brother alone, and if it’s not in our minds we haven’t focused upon it enough. Because they’re powerful verses in scripture that apply to the Body of Christ, the Church of God.

So, let’s pick it up here in **Matthew 18:7—Woe unto the world because of, or as the word is, from offenses!** This word “offenses” literally means in the Greek, “causing to stumble or stumbling, or to sin.” That’s what this is about. But the reality is, as it’s talking about here, that’s the way it is. It’s going to happen. Why? Because we’re selfish. There’s going to be sin.

There is sin in the world and there is sin in our lives and we’ll never be free of it until we’re in spirit bodies, until we’re spirit beings, until we’re in the God Family. That’s the only time we’ll be freed fully then from sin. Because until that time, what? We still have this rotten, ugly, carnal, selfish human nature. It’s what we are. It’s the way we are.

But it says, “Woe unto the world,” because this is the cause. The reason it’s saying it this way is because this is the cause of our trouble. This is the cause of so much turmoil and drama and evil in the world. It’s because of sin!

Indeed, it is necessary that offenses come. Because that’s the way God created us, for a purpose. That’s what it’s talking about here. Indeed, it is necessary because it’s part of a process. We have to come to where we really hate it with all of our being, that we hate that mindset, that mind which started with one being. God wants us to know that inside and out. It’s that mind, that thinking that we have to loathe with all of our being. If we don’t loathe it then we can’t love what God wants us to have - His mind, His thinking, His being.

So, “Woe unto the world,” because it’s going to be bad. It’s just the way it is. With this kind of nature it’s woe indeed. It’s going to be suffering. That’s what this means. I think of the three Woes.

Woe unto the world because of (from) offenses. Indeed, it is necessary that offences come, but woe to that person through whom the offense comes! So again, judgment. Everyone is answerable. No one is free from answering regardless of who they are or what time it is. So, we recognize even more so then once we’re called, what does God say? “Judgment now is upon the house of God.” This is where that which really counts is all about. Because the world hasn’t been brought to that yet.

And so, it's warning here "...but woe to the person by whom the offense must come!" In other words, the cause for the stumbling, the sin itself. Because as Paul talks about, sin is like leaven. And you know what that means? It's not just in our life, though it spreads in our life. Because when people determine to sin or they won't repent of it, then it will spread in their life. In other words, more sin will spread throughout their life. They can't help it. It'll go from one thing to another, a person becomes weaker and weaker, when you're talking about someone who has been called and receives of God's spirit primarily.

So again, "but woe to the person through whom the offense has come!" So, each individual has judgment, things that they must judge in their own life, and He's telling us to be careful and be careful that we're not sinning, to fight against it.

Therefore... Now, this is a part that begins to be misunderstood. As we go on here we'll see even more so today. **Therefore, if your hand or your foot offend you...** "A cause to stumble." We look at ourselves and we can't take this physically, though we know of a person who did one time, who had been associated in a way with the Church through other family members, but not really in the Body. hey took this literally and tried to cut off their arm. Distorted mind, distorted thinking, demonic thinking. So, though they knew others within the Church, within their family, they, in a distorted way because of the influence that they had in their life (which was obviously demonic), took this physically, tried to cut off their arm.

You think, what a horrible thing to take something like this physically. But so many things in the Bible are. This one here, unlike many, we can say "There must be some other meaning here. God can't mean to pluck out your own eye or cut off a body part. Something else has got to be here." Well, we learn in time this is spiritual. It's about the Body of Christ. It's about the Church of God regardless of what part of the Body it is or it is that's caused offense, that won't change, that won't repent, that becomes set in their way, that resists God, that fights against God, it must be removed.

Because it goes on to say **and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or crippled, rather than having two hands or two feet, and to be cast into age lasting fire.** So, it's about judgment. It's saying here that for the sake of the Body what's best? What's best for the Body? Well, if it comes down to it, this is what is required. Because not only will sin multiply in our own lives but sin within the Body spreads throughout the Body. It's always been that way.

Unchecked, not stopped, a stop not put to it, it always spreads in time to others, always, always, always. If it spreads to two, it'll spread to three and it'll spread to four until a stop is brought to it. God is very protective of His Body, but He lets us experience these things. He let's us experience these things. All the life we have in God's Church, we're going to experience these things throughout our life because we learn from that, we're trained from that. We make choices and decisions through all that.

Eventually, we come into a deeper unity and oneness with God, to understand the love of God and that there are those things that are necessary that go beyond human reasoning. Because too often human reasoning gets in the way and it's like, "Well, that's too harsh," or "That's too hard," or "It's my daughter!" "It's my son!" "It's my wife!" "It's my husband!" "It's my grandparent." It's whoever! "I want to give them more time and I want to try to save them."

We don't think that out but that's our actions a lot of times and we tolerate and put up with things that God says we shouldn't. It's all coming to understand the love of God, that there are certain things in life if our love is in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, with God and God's way of life and God's people and God's purpose in Elohim that we all want, it's not owed to anyone.

God's Family is not owed to anyone, and God's purpose is not to save everyone. That's the protestant concept of God. That's why they proselyte all over the world, "Because we've got to have them say they've accepted Jesus!" Doesn't mean anything. We learn that. Has no meaning in that. What does that mean? "Yes, I say that I accept Jesus as my savior." What does that mean? They don't know. It's this false, fake type of feeling that they get from this and what they're told. And you think, what a sorrowful thing. But they don't know yet. One day they'll be able to see some of this.

But that concept is that God is scurrying around out here trying to save everyone! No, He is not! We understand that over 6,000 years He has worked to save 144,000, plus now, those who are going to be able to continue on in the millennial period. Awesome, to understand that. Then God's going to continue to add more and more and more. Then beyond that, more and more and more once people are resurrected to another life again. What an awesome purpose and plan God has! So, we live through a lot of experiences and a lot of them are difficult. They're really difficult.

If your eye offends you, pluck it out. In a lot of ways this should teach us something as far as a body is concerned. Regardless of where it is in the Body, regardless of where it is in the Body, if it's wrong it's wrong, if it's damaging and hurtful to God's Church it needs to be gotten rid of. If it happens to be an evangelist who's preaching and teaching on TV and God using him for a time to reach out to different people in the world, to draw them into His Church, and there comes a time because of sin choices have to be made. And they're not easy. That wasn't easy for his father to deal with, but he did it.

So, it doesn't matter where it is in the Body, God cannot allow sin to continue in the Body because it spreads, just like that did. It led thousands upon thousands upon thousands out of God's Church back in the early eighties, late seventies, thousands out of God's Church. To follow a man. So, get rid of it. It's hurting the Body immensely so, creating horrible, horrible damage to the Body of Christ.

God allowed it. I've learned much through that experience. Many others have learned much through those experiences. We all will have known, as a whole, people in family that are close

to us in fellowship that we've walked to God's house side by side, and counsel blended sweet (as the song goes), and the hurt and the pain that goes with it. Because it's not what we want for them, but when it comes down to making a choice and a decision about what is best and what is truly God's love and what is best for His Family, then we're in agreement with it. We have to make those choices.

If I could just give that to everybody. We have to make decisions about that constantly in our life because it's about relationships and whether God is really first in our life and whether we seek that mind and to be in unity and harmony and oneness with that being, with that mind.

So again, if this happens, **pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, and to be cast into gehenna fire.** It's about judgment, final judgment when it's all said and done. Because the reality is we're learning more and more a lot of people are never going to want God's way of life when it's all said and done. That's kind of hard for us sometimes to grasp and comprehend. People we know, perhaps people in families that we've known. It's hard. It wasn't meant to be easy. But we have peace when it's right and it's with God, though it's hard to watch because we don't want to see people make those decisions.

But you can't change anyone. You can't change anyone's mind. You don't have the power to do that. God works at that. God Almighty with all of His power, that's what He works at. But there's a process in there and we have to yield to that process. It's not meant to be easy. What an awesome thing to grasp and comprehend. When it's all said and done we're going to have known many, many people who will never enter into Elohim. You won't know that until later on, but in time you'll know it.

If we want this, we want God's way of life, we have to fight for it. You really do. You have to stand up for what is right. You have to do what is true and right before God in a relationship with him. Our primary relationship is reflected by our relationship right here within the Body, within the Church. It's always been that way. It's just that people haven't grasped and understood that.

Take heed that you do not despise... That word means "to think little of; to look down upon." ...**that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I am telling you that in heaven there are angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.** Well, we have the Passover. That's what it's about. Then once we're called that's the time that salvation has come to us to make choices and decisions.

So, what do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, doesn't he leave the ninety and nine and go to the mountains and seek after the one that has gone astray? That verse has been horribly, horribly, horribly misapplied and misunderstood in God's Church. You'd be amazed perhaps, and maybe not, that oftentimes it's applied by those who have sinned, who made choices to leave the Church. It's like, "You didn't come after

me! I'm the one in ninety-nine, the one in a hundred," or whatever, "and what did you do, what did the Church do? Where is the love in God's Church?" Boy, you got a good attitude. I know why you're out there.

We learn through this process how the human mind works. It is not talking about someone who has been disfellowshipped from God's Church, that now we have a job to go and try to bring them back, the one of a hundred who left, who was put away from, who was severed from the Body, who was cut off, as it says, "to cut off the hand, cut off the arm, pluck out the eye."

It's not about that and yet that's how it's been applied by many. Sad. Because that's not what it means and that's faulty judgment and faulty relationship within the Body. It causes people to tolerate and do things that they shouldn't be doing in relationships.

So, who are those being spoken of in these verses? It's good to always go back in context and read things that are written and what's really there. Verse 1, backing up, **Matthew 18:1— At that time the disciples came to Joshua, saying, Who then is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven?** A little carnal human thinking there. It happens. People begin to think about position and so forth and begin to look at various things that aren't very smart, aren't very wise to do, because then it can lead you astray.

Then Joshua called a little child to him, set him in the midst of them, saying, Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children... "Converted." It's a big word in the Church of God, "converted." **...and become as little children.** We should know what that means. We should understand that inside and out. Spirit of humility, a teachable spirit.

...become as little children you will by no means enter the Kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles themselves as this little child is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven. That's what great is. That's what greatness is. That's what it's saying. That's what's really great. It's to yield yourself to the process, to always strive to have a humble spirit and to fight against pride, because pride is the enemy, pride is what we hold up as an obelisk and worship as far as carnal human nature is concerned. God wants us to destroy that, to destroy the obelisks in our life and to yield ourselves to Him and to humble ourselves before Him. Then whatever we have to attack and conquer that we do so with zeal and enthusiasm and crying out to God for help to fight whatever fight it is each of us has to battle.

Whoever receives one little child like this in my name receives me. So, what does that mean? What does that mean to you? We better receive one another as God's children in humility. This is God's Church. It's the Body of Christ, the Church of God. It belongs to God, and He's given us a High Priest to lead, guide, and direct the Church, to be over the Church, to work in our lives. Powerful, to grasp and comprehend these things that God has given to us.

The emphasis here then is on how we receive one another in the Church, how we think toward one another in the Church, never looking down on anyone else or to consider them of less value

than what we are. Because that's our problem sometimes, we tend to think of ourselves too highly. So, it's a spirit of humility that must permeate the Church, the Body of Christ in our life in how we work and live to conquer and overcome sin.

But whoever causes, whoever is the cause. That's why the verses follow and are stated in the way they are. **Whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to sin...** There's powerful judgment. There is very powerful judgment. God does not let it go by. It will be taken care of. Maybe not immediately, but it will be answered.

I consider the time since I've been working with PKG and even before that within the ministry, and sometimes I'd have different ones, elders, ministers who would inform me about something or talk to me about something and get upset when I didn't do something about it right then and there or within a week or within a month. Eventually get back to me they weren't in agreement with how I was handling it. I think, you don't understand. You don't grasp how God works with us in our lives. If it's your job, you have that responsibility. But if it's my job, I have a responsibility, and it's not doing things my way. It's a matter of a relationship with God, praying to God about various matters. Sometimes those matters, God says give time, give them time, give it time, and I have to go by that. I've learned to live by that very powerfully so. I can't do anything less.

So, when God lets me know of time to deal with something, you know what, I know it. When God brings it to me and I know something has to be dealt with, I know when it is. It's as much as I knew when the Sabbath was told to me, I knew it was true. It's as much as when the Holy Days were explained to me that night when I first began to learn these things, I knew. Same spirit. Same thing in the mind. I just knew it was true. That's how I've come to learn I know when it's God and when it isn't. I have to wait on God, and so do we all. But what a beautiful thing when we learn to live our lives that way more fully.

But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for them if a millstone were hung around their neck, and they were drowned in the depth of the sea. That's pretty powerful. Do you know what a millstone is? It's heavier than you and if you get this thing, a rope tied around the millstone and the rope tied around your neck and you get thrown over a ship, you're not going to be able to do anything about it. It's going to take you to the bottom. You're going to gurgle, gurgle until there's no more air and you're dead.

God says it's better that this would happen to you because of what you're going to have to go through. What's going to take place is not a good experience in life. That's just the quick way out. It's not going to happen that quickly. We go through a lot, we truly do, in this human life. Whether we choose God's way or not you're going to go through a lot in life. This is just temporary, thank God. Seventy-two years, temporary. It's not very long and it ends. It's what's beyond that that counts because it's what lasts forever that counts. We can only make that choice ourselves.

Verse 7—Woe to the world because of offenses! Again, that's what we just read. That's where we started. So, woe to the world because of sin, because of offences, because this is why you suffer - the wrong way.

Then the statement follows about being cut off from the Body. So, we have to keep it in context what this is about. Little ones, God's Church, God's people receiving one another. This is then followed by verse 10 again. I'll read it quickly.

Verse 10—Then take heed that you do not despise, look down upon, think little of **one of these little ones.** God's Church, God's people! Now, this is kind of a two-fold punch when we get through with this, but first and foremost it's about a responsibility we have. Do we think so little of one another, of another person that we don't care what they do? Whatever sin they might commit or what damage this might do to the Body, to others within the Body, to others in the family? Is that how we think? Or are we concerned about our brothers and sisters, about the family?

So again, **Take heed that you do not despise** (look down upon) **one of these little ones, for I am telling you that in heaven there are angels do look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.** So, what do you think, if a man has a hundred sheep and one goes astray? Well, shows the mind of God, God's desire for us.

Verse 13—If, speaking of the sheep going astray, **he is able to find it, truly I say to you, that he rejoices more over that sheep than of the ninety-nine which did not go astray. Why?** Because he didn't have to worry about them. They're there. They're there and it's a great thing, but it hurts when one begins to go astray, and we shouldn't want that. That's why we should want to go to a brother alone, if that's our responsibility, because we don't want to see that. We want them to enjoy the beauty of fellowship always within the Body until we're there in God's Family. That's what we should want for one another, and if we don't want that or we don't exercise that when it comes our way then we're looking down upon, we're thinking little, we're putting little value in the other person's life.

Do we really want them as a part of our family? That's what God is saying. How do we feel about that? How do we think about that? Do we grasp the responsibility that God places upon us?

Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish. That's why we do what we do. That's why sometimes a decision has to be made in separating someone from the Body, because we don't want to see others in the Body hurt by the sin that can spread. Like it talks about in 1 Corinthians about the individual, when Paul goes through and he's discussing things concerning sin in their life, and it's really a lot of it pulled in to teach about Passover and Unleavened Bread. That's what it's about when it's all said and done. But he uses that beginning point there about an individual who has taken his

father's wife, which, not his mother, but he's taken her and yet the whole Church knew about it in Corinth!

They lived a perverted life as far as a society was in Corinth. If you know the history of Corinth, it was pretty bad when it came to sexuality, thinking things, of living life in a very perverted, distorted way as far as practices were concerned. And so, he's chastening the Church here and telling them their responsibility in what they didn't follow through and do, that they should have done something about this, "that the whole Church knew about this, and you wouldn't do anything about it?"

So, that kind of lackadaisical spirit, that lack of love toward others within the Body, that this could spread, that others could begin to let down because that's what happens. Others think, well, nothing is being done about that so, you know, nothing has been said to them so, you know, what I'm doing is not so bad. Then it gets worse and worse, and you get farther and farther away from God, and before long, you're all out of the Church and the whole Church is gone.

That's happened in some areas. That's happened in some areas of God's Church in times past, because they didn't follow what God said, and told them, what Paul gave to the Church. Incredible! For that exact reason.

Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones would perish. Moreover, if your brother shall trespass against you... Very poor wording here. It has to do with sin, if they sin, okay? If it's toward you in some manner or form, and it is toward you in some manner or form if someone sins because it hurts the Body. It's about the Body. It's about the Church of God. It hurts us all.

Because, if it's not dealt with, if it's something of, depending on the seriousness of the situation, of something that can affect other people's lives and other people know about it and they're not doing anything about it, and whatever it might be - people who aren't in agreement perhaps with the Church, which still goes on today in God's Church. Being vocal about it, "I'm not in agreement with that." You tell someone else in God's Church, "I'm not in agreement with what was just said," sometime after a sermon. "Oh, wait a minute. What do you mean you're not in agreement? What do you mean by that? What are you not...? This is the Church of God. This was just given to us. Who...? You can't talk like that. That's not something we do in the Church of God." Is it?

It'd scare the you-know-what out of me. It should scare the you-know-what out of every one of us. I hope you know what. It really should. That we should say something? That, "I'm not in agreement with that." That's on the edge. That's on the edge of an arm, and eye being plucked out. That's what it is. Sad.

So again, **Moreover, if your brother shall trespass, go,** and this word "tell him his fault" is not a good translation of this Greek word. It's a word that has to do with "expose; to convict; to

reprove.” So, there are words that are used to expose sin. It has to come into the open. It has to come into the light to see it for what it is. That’s what it’s talking about here. Something has to shine a light on this to expose it, to reprove, to correct, all these words that are used that have this meaning of this particular Greek word.

...go...and between you and him alone. Go and expose this between you and him alone. That’s a hard thing to do and you have to be careful. Because I’ve spoken on this, written about this throughout the years in the Church and in PKG and it’s not an easy thing to do. That’s why I don’t need to go through all the things about we need to do it in a humble spirit and not to get on to somebody because we’ve had something against them or because, “This is now my chance!” It hurts. You don’t want to do it. But you know what? If you don’t, it reflects a mind toward God, our love toward God to the Body of Christ, to the Church of God. If we fail to do it? Whew! The one out of the hundred, the one and ninety-nine, and we’re not willing because we don’t think enough of them or of what they might be able to do in hurting others within the Body?

It wasn’t meant to be easy. It’s a hard thing to do. It’s a hard thing for me to do that I’ve done over the years, when I’ve had to put hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people out of God’s Church. It’s not a picnic. It’s not fun. It’s the last thing I’d ever want to do, have ever wanted to do. But I’ve had to do it on a very large scale. So, we should be able to go to one or two if need be, because of love, of not wanting to see others in the Body hurt, because of not wanting to see something spread, disagreement.

Boy, I tell you what, when there is something done and said about disagreement, it’s one thing if there is something you feel is wrong - you come to me alone and talk about it. But to one another, to find someone else who maybe thinks the same way? “Yeah, I didn’t like that either. I don’t agree with that either!” Then that’s just the beginning. From there it just gets worse and worse and worse. Who wants to see anyone go astray? Who wants to see anyone continue on a course that will lead them away from the Body? I don’t.

That’s why I’m the last sometimes I find out what on earth is going on in some areas. Because some who have responsibility won’t even tell me. Every elder out there, every minister, ever been a minister has had that responsibility. I have had... I was going to say hundreds, but dozens and dozens of them who haven’t come and told me, who haven’t informed me of something, a danger within the Body in someone’s life when they should have.

Then we got this mentality, well, shouldn’t tell on someone else. Don’t want to tell on somebody. Well, that’s not what this is about. It’s about saving someone. It’s about, “I don’t know how to handle this, I need help. I feel that you need to be informed about this because it’s gone too far, and it continues on.” That’s a responsibility out of love. Because if it’s not done it may not just hurt that individual, it could take some others out too.

I have seen that over and over and over again in God’s Church, so many being let out because they get together. It happened right here. It happened right here over and over and over and

over again right here in this area. It's happened in every area I've ever been in. Every area within the Church, it's happened because we have carnal human nature and we've quit fighting it somewhere along the line, or we don't follow through with our responsibility.

God is showing us He loves us, and He wants us to love one another. Sometimes that means doing things that are unpleasant so that we can all live within a Body that's filled with love toward one another. Because we want to see everyone succeed. We want to see everyone come through all this and be on the other side of this. I've known hundreds and hundreds, and I believe into the thousands of people who won't be there.

I've prayed for some that Satan not be able to get a hold of them, some that I feared for. They lasted for a time - I think of one in particular - lasted for a time. And in time they have to become responsible for their own choices and decisions. That's painful too, because you can't save anyone. Sad.

So, go between you and him alone, discuss, bring the thing out in the open. **If he will hear you then you have gained your brother.** Beautiful thing. Beautiful thing. To gain a brother, to gain someone within the Body.

So, two-way street here again. It's about a responsibility we have and one, indeed, is about the foolishness of the one who sins and that can hurt or lead others to be hurt because we think little of the Body. So, the individuals who sin think little of the Body. Someone who continues to sin, thinks little of the Body because it weakens the Body. If we become weak, if one person becomes weaker, it hurts the Body. It makes the Body weaker. It's a spiritual thing.

Over the past several weeks there have been a lot of instances of people who want to try to determine or judge some of these kinds of matters. Often, it's a matter of oneself, of being clear that a matter is sin. Sometimes it's difficult to know. You have to make sure before you go to someone that it's sin; it's not just our opinion about something and it raises itself to a level that this is harmful to others. We have some of those things now to be able to look at more clearly, of things that have been out there for a long time that I never knew about, you know?

I can't help it, this one comedian that I mentioned last week, or was it the week before? I guess it was. They came, someone came to show me this video. I want to mention it again because I love it, of the one who had this Reiki massage he was getting. Well, he went in to get a massage, he went in to get a massage and he says, basically, "When are you going to start?" "Well, I already started. I started ten minutes ago. My hands are just right above you. They've been there for ten minutes now and there is this force, this energy that you're able to receive from this." I love it when he got up and talked about how, he said, "I feel back here in my wallet. My hands behind me and I feel this energy and I'm hoping that you're going to receive this energy and that you can help to pay your energy bills." Anyway, something like that.

Anyway, how we get caught up in some things in life sometimes, it's a deceitful world out there. God wants us to grow to be able to determine, to judge between things that are of Him,

from Him, and things that are from another being and from a spirit world out there. Their greatest desire is to see every one of you to stumble and fall and turn away from the Church, to turn away from God. That's what they want. They will throw things at you at different times through different means in the world. On the job, family, different situations come up in life that they will throw everything they can at you to try to get you off balance, to turn away.

We have to make decisions in those things all along the way. Incredible. So, to know some of those kinds of things. Not going to start hugging trees, not going to start walking barefoot in the grass or on the ground because I think I'm going to receive this special energy out of the ground and it's going to help me, or to support any group that promotes this crap. Because they want the money. They get involved in selling medications, or not medications but vitamins and all kinds of things that are supposed to be good for you in life. If you want to get it from them, that's your business, but where is it? Hmm, maybe it isn't.

But to support something that is of a demonic world? You've got to be careful. Everything out here in this world is off base, but we have choices to make in that process as well.

Or to listen to some of the conspiracy garbage that's out there, that some of these same people promote. Conspiracy ideas have no place in the Church of God! What people are saying about others, organizations, or government, or whatever it might be has no place in the Church of God. We're not a part of that. It should have absolutely no part with us!

It shouldn't be spoken amongst brethren. It shouldn't be passed along to brethren because that's not what we're about. We're about God, His way of life, His truth, His government, if you will. That's what our minds should be consumed with, with His truth, with His ways, not with the garbage and the cesspool that's out here in this world. Because it's everywhere right now and it's just getting worse and worse and worse. If you take sides in that, which some in God's Church have and still are, it's going to hurt you. It's going to hurt you. If you don't get hold of it, it'll lead you away.

That's hard to say, but it's the truth. That's why I think about getting whittled down in size. And you know what? If that's necessary, so be it. If it's necessary for the Body of Christ, for our health spiritually, so be it. Because I've lived that ever since I've been in the ministry. It's a must for the sake of the Body.

So, thinking about some of these things I thought it might be good at this point here to talk about different things that sometimes happen in our lives or happen within the Church. I've had a lot of different questions come up about different things that have to do with judging. Sometimes we have to judge little things in our lives. Tithing, how to use second tithe, things about the Sabbath. You know what? That's been something I have to do all the time in life. You do. We all do. How to do certain things, what not to do in certain things, and striving to find good balance in that and striving to stay away from the things that we see as danger signs or that could be harmful or hurtful. I thought I'd throw some other things in there today that come up from time to time that people are concerned about. Because we want to have, make

sure that we ensure in our lives that God's Church is striving to live by that which is right and good before God always.

I thought I'd talk about some things just having to do with the keeping of the Sabbath. Because if we can learn to judge in these matters it'll help us in other matters, it really will. It's how we think and it's how we come to various judgments that's so important. Sometimes if something is really being done in a way that's very unbalanced, if it's in our own life then we can repent. But if it's in someone else's and it continues on after sermons are given like this then we can maybe - not maybe - we can go to a brother alone and discuss some of this with them and say, you know, "This was just said, and I feel like this isn't what we're supposed to be doing and how we're supposed to be doing it." You don't want to see someone hurt.

Because when God gives something to the Church you know what happens? Judgment. Judgment starts coming into our life more at that moment in that particular area because God wants to see how we're dealing with it and if we're receiving it. If not too long after a sermon we automatically go to someone and say, "You know what, I wasn't in agreement with that," whatever portion it was, "maybe with the rest, but not that portion," what does that say right then and there? Needs to be dealt with.

I don't want to go through the things about use of second tithe because it has come to my attention, various things that I realize that I do need to include that in the next series, if that is indeed the next series. Because I've been thinking that I was going to give that next series several series ago. So, maybe next week we can start that next series. It has to do with tithing and so forth, and obviously, second tithe and the use of second tithe.

Because if we haven't heard it for some time or thought about it for some time, if we're not careful, we can begin to stray a little bit from the center of what we should strive to do and how we use various things, that can lead us into a place that could begin to hurt others in the Body. We have to be careful. Besides hurting ourselves; because if we're straying, we're hurting ourselves already.

Now, we've gone through a lot in God's Church concerning learning balance and soundness of mind. Like on the Sabbath day, even within the Church how we observe the Sabbath has changed over time in the sense of how big a Church is and where people come from, how far they may have to travel, how many places there are close by where people are able to be invited over on occasion more often. Now, we're so spread out and everything it really makes it a lot more difficult to do those kinds of things.

We're different than we were maybe 25, 30 plus years ago because of being a much larger size. Because of different conditions we have to adjust accordingly. Sometimes that affects things.

But always in how we keep the Sabbath should be a big part of our minds because this is a day to honor God, this is a day that glorifies God, this is a day that reminds us He's our creator and

why we're here and why He's called us. On and on it goes. It should be something extremely important to us.

I'm going to address various things here that some are maybe going to have a few problems with. Because some already have. Anyway, there is balance in all this. God doesn't want us to sit down with a Bible all day long and study the Bible and study scripture. You can overdo that in a big way. It's not balanced. That's not what it's about.

On the Sabbath, it's a day of rest. The Sabbath is primarily about what? Right here, right now. That's the main thing about the Sabbath. The reason for a congregation, a commanded assembly is for right now—that's on the Sabbath day—so that we can receive what God has prepared for us and what He's prepared us for. Because it works both ways. That works together in a very powerful way.

So, this is the primary time. The time leading up to it and the time after are important. Just because we're maybe through with fellowship or through with hearing of a sermon - because, again, fellowship is a very powerful part of that if we have a group to meet with. Now-a-days some people are so scattered they don't have that same thing. But if we have anything of a group that is able to come together, meet regularly Sabbath by Sabbath, that fellowship is exceedingly important before and afterwards. Whatever time that might be, it might be ten minutes, it might be fifteen minutes, it might be a half an hour, it might be more; it depends on your plans and what you're doing. No one should be made to feel guilty that they're not spending more time in doing some of that because that happens sometimes too.

So, what about young children or adults, something you might do on the Sabbath, after the Sabbath? Now, when you're out on the west coast, you know what? There's a three-hour difference, and when you're through with this commanded assembly it's going to be 1:30 at the latest (that's if I go two hours), their time. So, that's a lot of time in the summertime. If there are some who are in groups and can be together there's time you can spend perhaps doing certain things. Again, God wants us to be together to enjoy each other. But you have to be careful in what you're doing and how you do it.

The subject about what about playing a game or something on the Sabbath, what kind of games could a person play? Now, some people, maybe because of their past, because of Worldwide, can think, "You can't play any game on the Sabbath day because you're not to seek your own pleasure!" I'm sorry, but it's like you're this robot and don't get any enjoyment.

This is the day to enjoy. You're to enjoy being together. Sometimes things of being together can involve a game! But because of our past sometimes people have an aversion to some of this.

What about playing some cards? I'll tell you what, if I'd said something like this forty years ago, thirty-five years ago, there would have been some upset people in a very big way. But there's balance in that. There is nothing wrong with four people around a table, six people around a table playing some cards, enjoying their fellowship depending on what that fellowship is. There

is a balance in that too. Not talking about poker and getting the chips out. I'm talking about whatever kind of game that's calm. Not one where you're slapping at cards and raising a ruckus and getting wild. Because there are games like that. I'm talking about something where you can actually have conversation back and forth, even if it's a little smack once a while, you know, in your conversation because someone else is losing.

So, there's a little fun in that. There's enjoyment. God wants us to have enjoyment of life. Not to be zombies, not to be robots. Sometimes we can take out of context things that are said about not seeking our own pleasure. I wouldn't be able to eat on the Sabbath. I enjoy it. I wouldn't be able to have a glass of wine. I mean, if you take that to its extremes, which generally isn't done because human nature will hold on to certain things. "Well, it doesn't mean not eating. It doesn't mean not having a glass of wine!" Well, where do you draw the line then?

Well, I'm telling you. I'm telling you. Receive it as you will.

Some people haven't liked the idea when I told some out west at one time, they could play cards at a table. Get a life! You don't like what I have to say? Come and tell me! Don't tell others that you don't agree with what they're doing. Come and tell me and then I'll be able to explain to you why perhaps or why I might have said that or if I said it.

So again, there are things you can do. It's just what is the atmosphere? Is it one you can have conversation? Now, it doesn't mean you're supposed to be in that two and three hours of doing it or whatever. There is a balance in it. Balance! I think it's Johnny that makes the expression, "Balance is a beautiful thing." Balance is a beautiful thing, it really is, and we should seek to have that in our life.

Anyway, fellowship. Fellowship. What about some kind of sport activity? "Sports on the Sabbath?!" That's a pretty broad thing. Now, I've known of people who sat around watching sports on the Sabbath, football games, basketball games, whatever it might be. "Well, we're having fellowship." Balance. Soundness of mind. We don't do that in God's Church. Okay? We don't get involved in those kinds of things in the world. So, what is the difference if you're watching it on the television and go get in that crowd and watching it in the stadium? Well, you wouldn't do that. Well, don't do it on TV either. Okay? Because something is wrong in there. Is it just because there's a crowd there or is there something else that maybe isn't good about it?

Now, something out back, corn hole? I don't know if you all know what that is. You have this little bag filled with corn and there's a little stand on the other side about, what, twenty-five feet away or so, it's on a slope and it has a hole up there. It's kind of like horseshoes. And horseshoes, is it too heavy to lift on the Sabbath?

You know what? There's a place up in Detroit, and I can't remember the name of the Highway. It might be something like 680 or 6 something [I-696], I think, on the north side of the city that kind of loops. It's part of the section that goes around across from east to west and on the very

north side. There are two areas where there is a special wide area that was made across the freeway and when you drive underneath it the first time it looks kind of strange because you see these pine trees growing up above the freeway and you think, "What on earth? I've never seen a road crossing the freeway where there are pine trees and other kinds of trees." Come to find out it's orthodox Jew that lives in that particular areas. There is some kind of an agreement made at some point in time for a Sabbath day's journey that this had to be built across the freeway in order to build a freeway there, so that people could have a place to walk to get to the other side where the synagogue is.

Now, that's their choice and what they believe in and have thoughts about when scriptures are spoken of, a Sabbath day's journey. It's like you can go to the synagogue and back and it can't be too far. You got to move in closer. I don't know how they do it, what they do.

But you can become too physical in these things as so many things are. Like the whistle going off in Jerusalem. Is it an hour before Sabbath or three hours? An hour? I think it's an hour. Then afterwards, not right away, another hour. I knew a minister like that at one time. Anyway, extremes. There is no soundness of mind and balance in that. We don't do that kind of thing.

It's like Atonement. There are people who are made to feel guilty if at sundown on Atonement that you should have the audacity to take a drink of water. What are you, just carnal? You got to have it right away? As soon as you know, what is it, 7:35, the sun is down, 7:36 you're drinking a glass of water. How do you know that's exactly right? Maybe you should wait just a little bit longer. Maybe...? How long? Well, if you're thinking that, then you're just carnally minded and that's what you're thinking. So, what is the line? Half an hour, can I have a drink?

If you know exactly and it's absolute, 10 seconds afterwards, there's no sin in that. You obeyed God. You're carnal. I mean, you're physical, that's what I meant. We're all physical and God knows us. We did it for the time He said and that's all He expects. We're not more righteous because we wait for an hour later to sit down and have some food. But we can become so physical in our thinking that it's not spiritual. Where is the spirit? Where is the spirit, of the importance of fellowship? Which is more important? The enjoyment of fellowship in a unique way, in a special way?

I played some cards a couple Sabbaths ago. Was it two Sabbaths ago or three? Whenever it was, a little bit on the Sabbath there. Enjoyed our fellowship. We had a great time. We laughed. I have fond memories of some of those kinds of occasions, just being gathered with other people who are laughing and enjoying themselves. I had a lot of fun with the smack, too, being smacked and smacking back. There are relationships that develop in those kinds of things, of things that happen as you're talking and visiting and sharing things and whatever it might be. It's pleasing to God. On His Sabbath.

But we can go too far in some of these things sometimes in our thinking. So, I was talking about this corn hole thing. If you were out there three, four, five hours, you think, come on! There's some balance in this, isn't there? Where is it? Well, you have to work toward that. Not every

Sabbath is going to be the same. Some Sabbaths are going to be different, aren't they? Amazing how we are as human beings sometimes.

So again, one of the principles is fellowship, something to apply. Where is the fellowship? How does that affect in our judgment? Where is it at?

So again, being together, enjoying one another's company. So, you have to make judgments about what kind of a card game could I play? What kind of a game could I play? Again, little things. People get loud and boisterous and it's like going out and playing tag football or regular football on the Sabbath. Shouldn't be done. Don't do it in God's Church. That is something you're doing that's beyond what we should be doing as a people. Because it's not balanced. You're out there exerting, working at what you're doing, at a game.

Other days of the week, fine, but not on the Sabbath. It's not the same thing. You're not able to spend good time together tackling each other, whatever it might be. You might think you are but I'm just going to tell you again, because I have no other way of saying this. This is from me. It's what I'm telling you for God's Church. It's either from God or it isn't. Take it, leave it, that's your choice. God will judge you accordingly, I can guarantee you. It's pretty strong. Pretty confident, too.

Volleyball? Same thing. It takes a lot of work to play a game of volleyball. You're working up a sweat. Same principles as working on the Sabbath. I don't care if it's working outside in your garden or whatever it might be, or something else. Shouldn't be doing it on the Sabbath. It has nothing to do with fellowship with others either. Now, you can say, "Well, volleyball is. We've got four over there and four over here." No, just don't do it.

Tennis, skiing? Obvious. Same thing, see. So again, have to use some thinking in what might be pleasing, what might be acceptable, calm, at rest, because it's a day of rest. Now, I never got real worked up over a game of corn hole. "Pshew! Those things, those bags are heavy!" Horseshoe, maybe, I don't know. Just kidding.

How about being out by the pool, going to a pool, if you have pool in your backyard? Well, I don't have one, but I do have a hot tub. Should I ever be able to go out in my hot tub on the Sabbath if I wanted to? Now, I don't think we've used that thing in three years, four years probably. It's a water supply to us—that's all it means—or a place of baptism. But to use it, it's just taking up space. But if it's ever needed, might be excited to have it out there. So again, soundness of mind, balance.

I remember an evangelist in God's Church one time, people looked upon that and, like, "Oh, he goes out by the pool and he's out there by the pool on the Sabbath day." Think, are you kidding me? So, he shouldn't be an evangelist for that, huh? Now, he did other things he shouldn't be an evangelist for, but not that. But it was like this was, this just goes to show how wrong this is!

It's like saying I've got these chairs out back. We haven't used those in, what, two years? Three? Four? Anyway, we have this little table, metal thing out back on our patio out back and four chairs around it and two off to the side. We used it last night. We had a meal at that table, and it was awesome!

Now, obviously, eating on the Sabbath is fine. But I'm telling you if I were thinking differently about someone who because they have a pool, they can't go lie down there beside it, or even dip into it because it's, like, 90 degrees outside, 100 degrees outside, and it's like, "Gasp!" Hmm, bathtub, shower, but no pool water? So anyway, soundness of mind sometimes just goes right out the window. Balance is a beautiful thing.

So again, what's wrong with that? Now, if you get a bunch of people in there and you're playing some kind of game and you're jumping all over the pool and screaming and hollering and the neighbors aren't really happy about that either - and it is the Sabbath day - see, there's a difference in that, isn't there, than some other days of the week. Balance. Soundness of mind!

So, is it okay to go out there for a half an hour, maybe an hour or whatever or to dip into the pool if you wanted to? Now, to have a big group of people doing that, just coming over to swim and be in the pool on the Sabbath day, that's not what the Sabbath is about. Week after week after week? Okay? So, there's balance.

If you do it because you have it? So, if I have that out there on my back porch can I go out there and sit for a while if I want to and maybe see if some birds come down to the bird feeder and enjoy them, enjoy some of the work that went into landscaping and so forth and enjoy what God has given, His creation? And if I had a pool, to sit out there on a day that it's 90 degrees? I think I'd be inclined to get into it. "Oh, but is that good? Wouldn't that be pursuing your own pleasure?" Well, I guess it would be. Is that what God means by that then? See?

Balance. I have to agree with Johnny over and over and over again here, it's a beautiful thing. Talking about that last night. It's what Johnny says, balance, soundness of mind, it's a beautiful thing, it really is. He maybe uses some different words but that's the way it hits me, "It's a beautiful thing."

Anyway, on and on we go, the Sabbath, how to keep it. Oh, I don't even want to go into that. Again, the kind of activity, the kind of effort that goes into it, the kind of noise that maybe is involved in something, again, we've got to use soundness of mind and balance in some of these things.

TV. "Shouldn't even have TV or watch a TV program on the Sabbath; don't watch any news." I do. Maybe there is something on there of a nature, matter of nature, you know. What is wrong with that? God's creation, seeing something like that? So, okay, I was told that watching—What are some of these?—Discovery and it's all about animals or whatever some of these programs might be, and I could watch some of that on the Sabbath. And so, as soon as Sabbath services

are over, and especially the farther west I am, I have that many more hours before sundown, so I have seven hours of watching it. Whew! Got a lot of nature in this week! Again, balance.

I shouldn't have to go through that and explain any of that. Something that's educational or has to do with an educational matter, perhaps something that might even be humorous. Hmmm. I'm not talking about weekly programs that come out. I can't even think of any supposed to be funny, as to what I'm talking about.

What about *Funniest Home Videos*? Watching people make fools of themselves at times in life? One of my favorite ones is watching someone go out underneath the garage door and bending down to go and it's not all the way up, they run out, and as they are coming back they hit their head. And I told my wife, "How could anybody be that dumb?" Be careful what you say. I did it. I'm just glad there was no camera to catch me.

Anyway, together as a family, together with children or whatever, something enjoyable? Can't enjoy the Sabbath? Can't enjoy something in the Sabbath? Is that what God wants? What are we supposed to do? I think of the first time I gave in a sermon telling people if you were to go by a zoo and walk through the zoo on the Sabbath, is that sin? I said that a long, long ago. Might have blown some people's minds, I don't know. God's creation. He created those beings, those animals. You think, what an awesome thing, just slowing down sometimes and seeing things for what they are, flowers, trees, and thanking God for what we're able to drink in. Go on a walk, whatever it might be. "Well, you're exerting a lot of energy doing that." Well, I'm not going twenty miles.

But other kinds of programing, where there are movies, drama things, FBI, Hawaii 5-0, we ought to be able to make those kinds of decisions and realize that's not what we do. I hope this all makes sense and you can see some soundness of mind and balance in those things. Something we don't have in this world today as a whole.

I could go on and on and on. Maybe I'll get some more things coming in where some will say, "Well, what about this? What about that?" That's good. That's fine.

Matthew 18:16—But if they will not hear you—so, gone to a person alone— take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. Totally, totally misapplied, totally misunderstood in times past. It doesn't mean that you're to go and get a couple of people to go with you to see that same person that you talk to because they didn't hear you. You feel like they didn't hear you so I'm going to take along these two witnesses, and then I'm going to tell them what they're doing is wrong. Don't ever do that. What you would be guilty of is spreading something that may not be any of their business!

Do you understand that difference in that? You may be spreading something that would only be hurtful to someone else in their relationship with an individual and bringing them into and saying, well, "So-and-so did this or they said that" and I'm going to "blah, blah, blah" to them

and then bring them along with me to go to them. No, you've committed a sin. You've sinned by doing that kind of thing. That's wrong to do in God's Church.

So, where is the soundness of mind? Well, sadly, this comes in, just been mistranslated all over the place because they don't understand God. They don't understand God's Church. They don't understand the government of God's Church. They don't understand that this is about the government of God's Church and how things are done. That's what this is about.

Isn't that an amazing thing? We can read things in the Bible. The more we learn, the more we see, we can see things that have been totally misunderstood by the protestant world. We can think, how can they think that way? Well, no, how can we think the way we think? It's by God's help because He lets us see certain things. Then when we see something, it becomes clear the context or what might be said there that fits into a flow of something that we grasp, we see.

So it is sometimes in our past as we grow, we're able to look back and realize that we made mistakes and haven't grasped something because something else has come along to reveal a meaning of a particular area of scripture. Then we see it more clearly and think, "Oh, man, took that physically. Didn't realize that that wasn't translated well," because they didn't grasp God's government and so forth.

So, let's go through this and talk about it. This doesn't say and doesn't mean that a person who first went to their brother alone is now to take one or two with them, as I said, a second time. That isn't what's being stated, it's just read into it, and it's been translated into it as well because people haven't understood.

Verse 16 is very awkward in how it's translated, truly is. Anyway, let's pick up this verse here in King James. "But if he will not hear you," or "They will not hear you," this part of "take with you one or two more," it just should have a line drawn all the way through it because it's not saying that. The word "take" here can be used in two ways depending on the context. Basically, for us, the context is understanding God's plan and purpose in the first place. Because that's the context. If we know things about government and so forth, we'll grasp what it's talking about and all we have to do is read a few more verse and it should become more clear.

But anyway, right there it's a word that is also translated as "receive." So, what does this mean in light of that as far as receiving something? **But if they will not hear you, then receive one or two more...** Well, what do you mean "receive one or two more?" **...so that the mouth of two or three witness every word or matter is established.** So, what does that mean to us? It's not about us. It's about God's ministry. It's about judgment within God's Church, how a matter is to be determined. Not because one person came and said that something happened or someone said something or did something, but because others have or because of your conversation as well with them. Because that might be all that's required to find out what was going on. Then they affirm or whatever what was taking place. But if they don't affirm something, of what someone else has said, then perhaps there is someone else that's come along, or you know of someone else who is privy to what took place, and you can ask them (the minister).

Then by the mouth of two or three witnesses, of people who are in God's Church, who are to have God's spirit living in their life, then you can be led to a choice and a decision of something that has to be done or said or given, so that a person can then go back (minister) and discuss it with an individual and let them know this isn't just from one party. There are others of God's spirit. This wasn't an easy thing for them, and this is what was said. Is it true or is it false?

Now, you may not get to the bottom of it right there but that's a beginning. But that's what it's talking about. First and foremost, we are to do our part by going to someone else. So, over the past many weeks going through this series, have different ones tell different stories of things that have happened, and I'd say in the majority of those situations they never went to their brother alone but should have when those things took place.

I think of certain things that happened going back to 2012 and 2013, extremely dangerous things to the Body of Christ, especially if they come through some in the ministry. If it's not in unity and harmony you don't play games. You have to act upon that quickly because this is exceedingly dangerous then to the Body of Christ. But if we just take the knowledge or the hearing of something and we don't want to do anything about it, we don't want to approach it, we don't want to hurt our relationship with them because I've heard that so often, "I don't want to hurt my relationship with them." Give me a break!

What's more important? Your relationship with God Almighty, with the Church of God, with Christ, or with that individual? What is more important? And don't you have a desire to see them cease from doing what will, if you don't say something and do something, could very easily in time make them weaker and lead them out of the Body of Christ? Or this in itself may be grounds enough to lead them out of the Body of Christ. Don't you want to help save, be a part of a saving process that God has given us to exercise within the Body of Christ, the Church of God?

"Not discerning the Lord's Body." If we do that, not discerning the importance of a responsibility each one of us has, that means not exercising our responsibility as well. That's not discerning the Lord's Body because we're not doing our part if we're not following through.

Again, this is exceedingly important. It's exceedingly important for being able to partake of Passover, too. It fits in. It all fits together.

Verse 17—And if they neglect to hear those in the Church. It's not talking about the membership of the Church. It's about the Church, which is in this case the ministry. **...then or now neglect to hear the Church... If they neglect to hear the Church,** neglect to hear the ministry, the Church, neglect to hear the Church, **then let them be as a foreigner.** That's what it's about, a **gentile.** It's just saying a non-believer. Because they're not exercising it, they're not a part of the Body. They put themselves out if they neglect to hear. If someone won't hear then the ministry tells them about something that needs to be done, then that's what happens.

Anyway, **verse 19—Again I say to you that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done of them of my Father who is in heaven.** Well, this is pretty strong. Again, this isn't about two people in the Church getting together. It's about decisions that have to be made within the Church. It's about the ministry. It's about the government of God and how it works and how it functions.

So, there are things that happen from time to time that must be prayed about. There are certain things that seek God's guidance and direction and help in a matter, and how to address various matters and so forth. There's a lot involved. It's not a simple thing. If it comes down to a matter of a decision, a choice having to be made, God's in it because He's given that government to the Church, He's given that responsibility to the Church, and it's set. He leads in it anyway.

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, and it's a matter of authority, the authority of Joshua the Christ, even in the matter of anointing, **there I am in the midst of them.** So again, it's a matter of what God is doing to lead and guide and direct His Church. Once something comes to the ministry then choices and decisions are made and God's in it. Candidly, the witness of Joshua and of God are in it, and that's counted in it.

Other scriptures, we'll just go on to other ones here. I'm not going to go through Matthew 18 anymore. There is a lot here, there really is, and given this in times past, but that's the crux of what is being talked about. It's about the government of God's Church and how it functions. So, sometimes someone may not know how to address something or maybe in question themselves about the seriousness of something, whether it's serious enough to discuss with someone else. Then it's better to go and discuss it with a minister, say, "I feel totally inadequate to address this, but I feel it may well be very important, so I don't know. Should I do this?"

Sometimes we'll tell an individual, this is what you need to do, go and talk to them about it. Sometimes we'll tell them, which I've done many a time, let it go. Let it go. A lot of reasons for that, a sermon worth. Other times it's like, no, this is of a level that needs to be dealt with by the ministry in the Church.

Anyway, coming down to this point in time is never a pleasant thing, so this matter then again of protecting fellowship is so awesomely important. Because how valuable is it, God's Family, God's Church?

Oh, I have so many scriptures of things I could read but I don't think there's a need to go through them all. Let's just conclude in 1 Corinthians 1. This is what it's all about. This is where it leads.

1 Corinthians 1:9—God is faithful. What a beautiful thing. What a beautiful thing to understand, to grasp, and comprehend, our reliance on the Great God of the universe, every word that He has given to us. Powerful.

God is faithful by whom you were called unto the fellowship of His Son, Joshua the Christ our Lord. Fellowship. Fellowship in the Church. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Joshua the Christ, that you all speak the same thing. To me there could hardly be a more beautiful thing that exists within the Church than this. That means we're of the same mind, the mind of God, that we're striving to grow in that and we're striving to exercise that.

Where we individually need to make a course correction, that we're willing to do so to get back on course, to be on a better course, or as a Body or as a help to someone else that we're willing to do that which is unpleasant because we love God, because we love Christ, because we love the Body of Christ, the Church. We love one another and we're growing in that love and that care and concern for one another. We have to exercise that. It's not just a thing to say, "Yes, I do." It's a thing, "Yes, I do practice. I live it. It's a part of me. Whatever is required, whatever is needed, no matter how unpleasant it is."

Again, **that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you.** So, how could anyone, how could anyone say something different than what's given to them on the day that God says to congregate as a commanded assembly. How could anyone say anything different from what God gives to His Church? Either that's true or it is not. If it's not then why are we here? Our lives rest on that. Your life rests on that truth.

"That you all speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among you." So, to watch our mouth, to be on guard of what comes out of our mouth, that we never say anything like, "No, I didn't agree with that."

Reminds me; I have to tell you this one too. I can't think of his name now, but it was this kind of, oh, who were the two that were sitting on that rock together that time we talk about and there wasn't room on the rock as they got older? Anyway, there are these cartoon strips and some we don't see anymore because you don't have any papers anymore. But anyway, a little cartoon strip and this guy is looking up in the sky and he says, "God, smite my enemies." The next section has, "God, smite my own worst enemies!" Then the next one, the whole ground is black and he's scorched, and he's his own worst enemy.

Sometimes that's the way it is in life. We don't realize what we're doing and how we're living our life and how we're fighting against God and existing God. But if we say anything against God, against God, against anything God has given us in the Church, that's division, and division is as the sin of witchcraft. How do you think God looks upon that? All you have to do is read some things in the Old Testament of what God has to say about witchcraft and what different ones did, like Saul, who went to a witch. Amazing. For the mind to go that far is a horrifying thing. To be divisive is more horrifying.

Because he wasn't called to be saved at that time. That wasn't his purpose. He wasn't called to have a relationship with God, to be molded and fashioned to be one of the 144,000. We are. Awesome to understand that and the difference in what's being said there.

I as a minister don't understand when someone would say something to someone else that is very clearly a matter of something against the Church, against something that's taught in the Church, against something that we teach in the Church, and you stay silent. Is that my job and my job alone or do we all bear that as a family, as a responsibility within the family? To say something about it right then and there. Someone that has the audacity so say something so wrong, so foreign and untrue in a group of people, all the more reason to address it within that group of people, to be an example of what we should all do when that happens.

Because if anyone has the audacity to stand up against God and God's Church and against what is being taught in God's Church, we should have the strength of character and the strength of mind and the strength of conviction of God's holy spirit to say, "No, that's not true." Is it hard to do? Well, maybe the first time you ever do it. Is it hard for me to do? No, because I've done it hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times. When there is a need to say something, I will say it.

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Joshua the Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. Awesome! Truly awesome!