

We are continuing today in the series *True Thanksgiving* with this being *Part 4*.

To me, I really am enjoying going through this because any kind of subject we go through it seems like the more we have moments here of whether it be *Part 2*, *Part 3* or *Part 4*, the more we have, like *Part 4*, *Part 5*, by the time you've gone through that you're really focused on that particular subject matter and tend to think about it more during the week.

So, this is a subject that I've gotten a lot of feedback from different ones, that because we are going through it like this our minds tend to be on thanksgiving, being thankful more than we might normally be. Which is what this was all about, God having us focus on a particular subject that is timely for us to think about, to consider, and to see where we can do better in our lives. Because it's so awesome to be a part of something so great and yet if we don't think about it on a regular basis, to be thankful to God in those things that He gives to us, we're missing out a lot because being thankful has a great deal to do with developing a right and true relationship with God Almighty.

Again here, I find this very inspiring to be able to go through this.

Last week we were in 2 Corinthians 9. We're going to pick up a few verses there to get the context because what Paul is addressing here is a little more difficult to grasp, to understand as you would read through it in scripture. That's why we're going to bring it back to this point in time here in thinking about it because it has a great deal to do with thanksgiving (he addresses that as well), and a lot about grace and the administration, the administration of God's spirit, how it works in our lives.

It all works together in a very powerful way to produce something that is awesome in a relationship because in every relationship there needs to be thanksgiving, a gratitude toward others, of thinking of others in a right way, and that has to do with learning to esteem others, learning to see the different qualities of different ones and get away from this thing of judging and being judgmental to one of appreciation and thankfulness, especially in the Body of Christ, the Church of God.

So, we're ever learning those things and being refined in them. So, going back to 2 Corinthians 9, we're going to pick it up in verse 12.

**1 Corinthians 9:12** it says, **For the administration**, the administering... Now, a lot of scriptures when it uses this same word here as we go through this it talks about the ministry, ministering, and it's not just about the ministry. It's about an administration, it's how God's spirit works in our lives, the government, the way of life that He gives to us and how His spirit works in all that. It is an administration that comes from God, that's been given to Joshua, that comes to the ministry, that goes out to the Church as God leads, guides, and directs us.

It says, **For the administration/the administering of this service not only supplies the need of the saints...** So, God has given us a system, a means by which He molds and fashions us, and the Sabbath and the Holy Days are the primary times that we have in order to come before God to hear those things that He wants us to have in a timely fashion. He is doing the creating. He is doing the molding and fashioning in our lives on a spiritual plane, and so He's given us all this. It's an incredible thing what we have.

It goes on to say, **to supply the needs of the saints.** We have needs. If we didn't have every Sabbath, if we didn't have the sermons that were being given to us, if we didn't have the guidance and direction that come at different times in our life, the direction that's given to the Church over various matters, maybe even in emails, whatever it might be, we would not survive. We have to have this. God has given it to us and for a great, great purpose.

But it goes on to say, **but also is abounding.** Again, that word "to go above and beyond; over and above" if you will. That's what this means in the Greek language. So, it's something that God wants us to do. He wants us to grow mightily and above and beyond even what we can think in here that it's possible. So, all these things fit together.

**...but also was abounding through much thanksgiving to God.** That's the product. That's what we want to have in our life. Because if we grasp what God is doing in our lives, and the more we grasp it, the more this will become true, the more thanksgiving that will go back to God in prayer.

That's why I mention, have mentioned several times here now, that when we pray it would be hard for me to grasp how we could go through prayer without thanking God for something, to have a mind of gratitude. It needs to be a major part of our prayer life, it truly does. It endears us more to God. It helps us to grasp the love of God even more so in our lives and how He's working with us, that administration, the administering of His spirit, the blessing of having His spirit in us, and on and on it goes.

**...but also was abounding through much thanksgiving to God, while proving this administration.** Again, I love this, the way it states this, "while proving it," that concept, that idea of going out and proving the oxen when someone would get them, go out and purchase them, whatever it might be, in order to be more productive in a field. That's the analogies that are given in scripture.

It's given to us then that we are to prove God's way. How do you do that? By putting it to the test, by doing it, by trying it and applying it, and then we begin to see what it can produce. When God's working in our lives through the power of His spirit we begin to see that. Over a period of time and as we grow we should see it more and more. As we're able to look back on our lives since the time we've been called we should see this so much, to be able to go back and be thankful about so many things. Incredible!

**...while proving this administration they glorify God.** So again here, what an incredible way of stating this and understanding this, that as we do this, as we prove God's way, as we put it to the test in our lives and strive to live it through the help of God's holy spirit—because you can't do it on your own—we have to have help, and so that's why we cry out to God for help of His holy spirit in us. Then we begin to see a product, a change, a change in thinking, a change in attitude. Again, they glorify God.

This glorifies God in itself because God's way works. God's way produces fruit. I love the examples where it talks about God's spirit can't go out except that it produces fruit. If God's spirit is present it has to produce fruit.

That's what's so dangerous about our becoming weak and quenching the spirit because then fruit can't be produced. That's a frustrating thing, in essence, to God. It should be to us. But we have to learn that sometimes that God wants to give that to us, it's the only way to change, and He's called us for that purpose.

Then it goes on to say, again, this horrible translation: **“for your professed subjection.”** Again, they don't understand. They don't grasp what takes place, how God works in our life. So again here, **they glorify God through agreeing to submit to the good news of Christ.** That's the proper translation. So, that's what we all have chosen to do. We have chosen to submit. It's a matter of learning to submit to God's way.

That's what proving is; it's submitting to try, to put to the test God's way. Then we learn from it, we grow from it. That's how we come to a point in time as we continue to grow that we learn to hate the things that are wrong because they hurt that growth, our minds, we learn to hate drama and we learn to love peace and what produces it in our lives, which has to do with the truth, God's word, the good news that comes through Christ to us.

**...and for singleness of heart sharing of yourselves unto others.** So, this was a very specific thing he was addressing here in order to help others in the Church. But this is to all of us to learn from on a spiritual plane, that this is what it's all about. It's about this singleness of heart, of learning to share, if you will, sharing this way of life with others and that we're thankful that we have a body, the Body of Christ, the Church of God.

**...and by their prayer for you.** What a beautiful thing that we pray for one another, especially as we go through different trials and hardships. I'll tell you right now, if anyone thinks that they're going through different trials and hardships, which many are, you're not alone. Right now, the spirit world is so incredibly stirred up, it truly is. Things are so stirred up out there and people are being bombarded. But we can grow in that. It's an area of life where we can grow and draw closer to God.

God uses those things in a very powerful way to transform our thinking, to help us to be better focused on His purpose, His plan, and what's coming, because we're not trying to hold on to this world. The less we do, the better off we are, to shed it, to get rid of it. This world doesn't

have the answers, just absolute massive confusion that exists out there. Things are getting stirred up more and more and it's going to increase more and more the closer we get to this period of time.

**...and by their prayer for you, who long for you because of “the exceeding grace of God...”** This is the **grace of God that excels in you**. That's how, again, it should be translated, “because of the grace of God that excels in you.”

So again here, one of the most important things we can grasp in life in our relationship with God is that God gives us grace. Forgiveness of sin, patience, mercy, His love, and on and on it goes, everything that comes from God, in that respect, to us is a matter of grace because He has called us out of this world to change and so He desires, wants us to have the very best of that which changes self, which is His spirit and to go through things successfully and to keep our eyes focused upon Him because that's where our strength is. We as human beings can get distracted from that.

As we receive that, that grace is to excel inside of us. Not that we are getting all the time from God but that we're learning from that. He's patient with us, we better be patient with one another, toward one another. He's forgiving toward us, desires to do that above all things. That's why Christ came and died, so that we could be forgiven. And so, His desire is that we be forgiven. Why? So He can live and dwell within us, so His Son can live and dwell within us. That's why we repent on a continual basis in our lives. Beautiful!

We should learn from that grace that He gives us and extend that to others, which is really the power of His holy spirit changing self and then submitting to it, yielding to that and ourselves beginning to practice the things that He does to us. Patience. Mercy. Forgiveness. On and on it goes. Love. Learning to love. Learning to truly give of ourselves. With God, it's just the way God is.

**Because of the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks to God.** What else could we say when we see such a thing in such an incredible way? **Thanks to God for His unspeakable or indescribable or inexpressible**—all these words that mean the same—**gift**. The gift that God has given us through a calling. Awesome!

From here we went back to chapter 3 then in order to begin grasping a better and deeper understanding then of the importance that we nurture and grow in a truer spirit ourselves of thanksgiving. We'll pick it up here now, 2 Corinthians 3. Because from here Paul was leading up to what we have just covered now in chapter 9, but it's good to go back and see the progress, the process, I should say, by which he developed this or it was developed in what was given.

So, we started where Paul was asking here in **2 Corinthians 3:1—Do we need again to establish ourselves before you?** So, they had a particular problem there of resistance, which we all have from time to time in our lives in one matter or another, and sometimes we can resist certain things we hear. If we grasp our human nature, the reason we resist some things

from time to time is because there is something there we want to do in a different way or we see it differently. That's what has to be conquered in the mind.

**...or do we need, as some would, to have letters of commendation to you or commendation from you? You are our letters.** He's showing here that the fact that we exist, the fact that we're a body, the fact that we're a Church reveals the administration of God's spirit and the ministry as a part of that in how God teaches us, molds and fashions us.

So he says here, **You are our letters written in our hearts, beautiful, able to be known and known again by all, to be clearly seen,** in other words, manifest, visible, something we can see, **the letter of Christ.** In other words, we should be able to see this in the evidence of what is produced within the Church.

**...administered by/through us, not written with ink, but with the spirit of the living God.** In other words, again always going back to this, our change, what takes place in our lives as accomplished by God's spirit. But we have to submit to it, meaning we have to make choices to do these things. To prove God's way means we have to, yes, submit to it, but we have to make the effort.

So we're praying to God for help to do something, to change in a certain area of our life, to draw closer. Whatever it is we have to change, that we see, God will bless us in that. That's this process here.

"Administered through us, not with ink." He's going to come to a point here where he begins to compare the writing, if you will, even of that which was in the Old Testament, the process, the administration of the Old Testament that didn't produce anything. It didn't produce change in the Israelites. It kept them in line, in toe if you will, as a people, as a nation, as a community, but it wasn't enough. That's a part of what Paul is going to talk about here momentarily. We are able to change through the power of God's spirit, they weren't able to.

**...the letter of Christ, administered by/through us, not written with ink, but by the spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone but on the fleshly tablets of the heart.** So, just like the matter of circumcision, it's of the heart. It's not a physical thing. It's what has to take place in the mind, in here, inside, deeply felt, and with that goes great gratitude to God. It just goes back to God on a continual basis. That's the way it's supposed to be. If it isn't then we're not going to be growing in the manner, in the way that God wants us to.

**Now, we have such confidence through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as being from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.** So again, always grasping and understanding that we're not able to do these things ourselves whether it be the ministry in this case, as Paul is talking about, or any one of us in this matter of service and applying God's way of life. We have to make the choices and do it but the power and the strength to accomplish it, the mind comes from God, the focus comes from God. We have to submit and yield to His way, and it'll be accomplished.

**Who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit. For indeed, the letter kills...** It means that with the letter of the law, with the old system, they could have a community of people, a nation of people, but it didn't take away sin because the payment for sin in their lives was still the same. It was death. That's the payment for sin. It's death for all time, unless God intervene and give us what He's given us through His Passover, our Passover.

**For indeed the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.** What an awesome thing that we can live life, continue on and have a change take place in us through the power of God's spirit. It's a lifelong process, battle, and it should be filled with incredible thankfulness.

**Verse 7—But if the ministry or the administration of death,** in other words, through the letter of the law and not going any farther, the reality is we can't keep it. The Israelites couldn't keep the 10 Commandments, as an example. They weren't able to do that, and none of us can. We have to have God's spirit to do it physically and more so to do it spiritually. Because we learn things, what the law is about on a spiritual plane, and God helps us to do that. What an incredible thing that we can see things on a spiritual plane that the world can't.

**...written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadfastly on the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance.** So, you remember the occasion where he came down and it was so bright; God manifesting that to have this that we can learn from because they didn't grasp anything that was taking place.

**...which was to be done away.** It's looking long range here. This was something beyond what they could grasp. They couldn't see it; they couldn't look upon it. They couldn't look upon what God was going to do later on. It wasn't given to them at that time. All they could see was on a physical plane. That system, that's what He's showing them, had to pass. It had to go by the wayside. Again here, "that which is to be done away." The old system. Because it doesn't save. It doesn't change a human being. Only God's spirit can.

So again here, **was to be done away,** in other words, to be made inoperative, to abolish it. Within the protestant world they look upon things like this and they say, "See, the law has been done away! It's been nailed to the cross." They can't grasp (they can't help it), they can't see that which is being spoken of here on a spiritual plane to us. God has given us the capacity, the ability to see things spiritually. That's awesome! Without that we wouldn't be able to see any more than anyone else in the world around us could. But we can grasp something spiritually that is only made possible because of God's spirit. Awesome!

So again, says, "it was to be done away," speaking of the system not of the law. **How will the administration of the spirit not be even more glorious?** So, in other words, he's saying that was glorious because it revealed God's law. It revealed a way of life that we should live if we want peace, if we want proper things in our life to exist in relationships. He's saying that was glorious because it revealed that. But they weren't able to do it so how much more glorious,

how awesome is it that we have what we have, the ability to see these things, again, spiritually?

We in God's Church, after a short period of time of being in God's Church, can begin to take these things for granted and we don't think upon them in the manner of what we're doing in the sermon. We don't stop to think about what Paul was saying so that our mind is upon it in the manner to realize the incredible love He has for us, of so few in this world who are listening today and who will be listening next week in different parts of the world, the same message, and recognizing we're the only ones that grasp this on a spiritual plane.

Not even the Body that was scattered after the Apostasy can grasp these things anymore. Theirs is very physical. Well, it is, it's frustrating because it's become like, I don't know how you describe that. When I use the word "protestant," "it sounds protestant," it's not real, it's not alive. That's what so many have become; it's not alive anymore, it's a routine.

Now, knowledge about not eating pork or not eating shrimp and those things can still be there. Realizing the Sabbath because that had been lived and proven so deeply in them that different ones chose to keep the Sabbath. But they're physical things, as a whole. They're not spiritual any longer.

To be able to have that, to be able to see those things on a spiritual plane, we are exceedingly blessed...exceedingly blessed, especially if we grasp, those who came through the Apostasy, are able to see what we see today. Because none of the scattered Body can see those things spiritually anymore. It's not there. You can't talk with them on the same plane at all.

So, it goes on to say here, I'll read it again: **How will the administration of the spirit not be more glorious, for if the administration of condemnation had glory**, in other words it revealed the law and the way of God, **the ministry or administration of righteousness exceeds much more in glory**. So, we can live this way of life because we're able to believe it. How? The scattered Body can't. They can't believe the same things you believe since the Apostasy. But you can believe them. How? Because God's spirit has helped you to see it. He's helped you to understand some very simple things.

I mean, things that an Apostasy took place. You would think that is very simple to see, but without God's spirit it can't be seen. The stones of the temple, that the Church is the temple of God. Those, those really are seemingly very simple things to us. But they're not in a scattered Body because they lost that. Herbert Armstrong, before he died, spent several sermons explaining at different times the Church is the temple of God. Where did that get lost? During Laodicea. It was already lost during Laodicea long before the Apostasy. It wasn't being taught as a whole. I can think of a couple here and there that did refer to it, and even early on after the Apostasy. But not deep enough because God's spirit was beginning to wane and beginning to lose that.

So, the ability to grasp what happened to Laodicea - spewed out of God's mouth, the willingness to accept that "I was a Laodicean. I lived during Laodicea. I was not a Philadelphian during Laodicea" (and that's not enough anyway, to have just brotherly love). They can't grasp those things, those concepts.

I remember before the Apostasy traveling down the highway one time with a very well-known minister in the Church. We had a conversation that was about Herbert Armstrong and how he described love. He couldn't understand it. He said, because he gave that analogy, "the best form of human love that he could give as an example is a mother's love toward her child. But it's still selfish because she doesn't have that same love for all other children." God has that capacity. We don't as human beings. To be genuine and be true, that mind, that spirit has to come from God.

As we were talking there it was a bit of an awakening on my part, but mind-boggling too that a minister couldn't see that. "Well, why can't you see that?" The answer is a very simple thing; it's a matter of God's spirit. Somewhere along the line we begin, if we're not careful, we can begin to wane in that, we begin to quench God's spirit. If we do we lose those kinds of things.

So, how thankful are we that we can see? We know what we went through. Those of you who have come in since that time, you understand those things about the stones of the temple were cast down, you understand those things about even the matter of the abomination of desolation and what those mean on a spiritual plane, that that took place, the man of sin, the son of perdition. They can't begin to acknowledge that. Why? You have to see it spiritually what it all means and how it all fits together. Incredible. Simple to us. How thankful are you for it?

That's why I so often mention just going back to the truths that God has given to us. Those are the things - they're your power. They're your strength that God has given to you because to be able to see them is strength and power of God's holy spirit. It's evidence of God's holy spirit. For without it you cannot see it, you can't grasp those things. To be able to see them, to thank God over and over again for what you can see, for the opportunity you have because there are very few that have it. It helps us to recognize how richly blessed we are. Awesome!

**Verse 10** again, **For even what was glorious had no glory in this respect because of the glory that excels. For what is done away**, in other words "rendered inoperative; abolished," **was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.** We have that which remains. This is where the power and the strength is, and God's purpose in it. It wasn't back then in the killing of animals and offering them up to God and the routine of religion that they went through that kept them as a community. That bound them closer together than anything in the protestant world, candidly, kept them more at one in those things until they started going out and mingling with other nations, because that led to worshipping other gods. That's why God warned against doing those things.

**Therefore, since we have such hope we use great boldness of speech, unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look.** Can you

imagine that that was shining so powerfully, God gave that, that he put a veil over his face so that they could still look in his direction toward him but to look even still directly on his face, to cover so much of that power, that light? I don't comprehend that. But God performed a miracle at that time of something very powerful that they were able to witness, those around him, and that Moses himself knew was taking place. That would freak me out, you know, if that happened to a person. It's like a sci-fi and some of these things you sometimes see in sci-fi movies.

But anyway, it says he put a veil over his face so that, again here, **who put a veil over his face so the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.** So again here, showing here that all this pictured something spiritual that was to take place later on as a part of God's plan. They couldn't look upon it, it wasn't time because their system was to be done away with. That which Moses was experiencing reflected something that was to come. That's what we're experiencing, that we can see through the power of God, through the power of God's spirit that saves.

**...to the end that it was abolished. But their minds (verse 14) were...** It's not "blinded" here. The word is "hardened." **Their minds were hardened.** So, we know that about the Israelites, the hardness of heart that they had because they couldn't change their heart because the system they had was physical, all physical, routine and not spiritual.

**...for their minds were hardened. For until this day the same veil has not been taken away in the reading of the Old Testament.** In other words, he's saying to that time there, if you look at those, the ones who were given that, primarily the Jewish people at that time in that part of the world of which Paul was, and he's saying here even to this day it's still there, that there's this hardness of heart.

When the Old Testament scriptures are read nothing has changed. They can't receive it. Why? It's spiritual. They still resist. They're still going to do their own thing. They're going to be the same carnal individuals as they were when they came up out of Egypt, came up out of the water, came across, you know, on dry land, came up out of the sea and started grumbling on the other side as soon as things don't go right. That's their history. That's the way mankind is without God's spirit.

That's why we have to be very careful we don't get in that kind of an attitude and spirit in God's Church and begin to grumble about something that we hear or whatever. Because my whole life in the ministry has been one of hearing grumbling to one degree or another. It's not like it used to be, but every once in a while, I still hear that spirit out there. That's frustrating because that works against what I desire to see and the product and the fruit that I hope is in people's lives. But sometimes there are battles, individuals having their own battles in a relationship with God and people's hearts becoming hardened.

Whenever we resist God and what God is giving to us that's what's happening. Our heart is becoming hardened. It's refusing God's spirit in our life. That's why this Covid thing revealed so

much. It was a physical thing, but it revealed hardness of heart that we have to fight against. To have unity and oneness, what's more important? Fellowship or our way? Incredible to have it in those terms, to come to grasp that God has given us a family and if we want to be a part of that family in every fashion or form we have to see ourselves and repent of the things that resist it.

So, this is what it's talking about, about the Israelites, but we have to be cautious of that because that can happen in our lives. Most assuredly, if we ever get to that point in life where we begin to murmur and grumble inside toward things that we might be hearing or that's given through the administration that God has established in His Church, then we're going to have spiritual battles because that is not pleasing to God one iota. It takes away gratitude and thankfulness because it can't be there because you have to submit to something to be grateful for it, to begin to see it, why it's there, to prove it, put it to the test - then you can learn. If you fight it and don't do it and you resist it you're not going to learn from it, you're not going to grow from it. God's spirit can't work in that. Incredible! Would seem so simple. And there won't be gratitude in it and there won't be that relationship that thinks stronger with God because of it.

**But their minds were hardened. For until this day the same veil has not been taken away in the reading of the Old Testament. For the veil is taken away in Christ.** So, that means, it actually means that we have to be in Christ and Christ in us, we in God and God in us through the power of God's holy spirit. That's the way the veil is taken away. Because that means then we can see, we can see that light that comes from God. Otherwise, our minds begin to be darkened. We begin to lose what we had.

Every year individuals go by the wayside who can't see it anymore, and if you can't see it you certainly don't have anything to be thankful for, because only what you can see can you be thankful to God for on a spiritual plane. Then you can rejoice inside and thank God. But if that's gone, we don't have a fullness of life anymore.

That's why sometimes when these things happen people still want certain relationships perhaps that was only made possible because of our calling because God brought us here. We have this because of God. We have fellowship in the Body because of God. Then sometimes people have, like one elder I remember a few years back, not too many years back, that made the comment after, well, basically, I had disfellowshipped a couple of other elders in the Church, and this individual was friends and said, "No man is going to tell me who I can and cannot have fellowship with." Well, I don't go out and tell them, "You can't have fellowship with them now." But the word "disfellowshipped" means, we understand what it means so we know the result of that. It's because it comes from God. God says. Because it doesn't work. Incredible.

People lose, they don't understand it anymore. Some things that are so simple. What a blessing to have fellowship, to be able to continue in fellowship, that it be able to be true, that we're

able to have true thanksgiving before God for what we have and to realize He's given us all this.

**But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies upon their heart.** So what a horrifying thing to think that this can happen with what's written in the New Testament as well. Whether be Old or New, it doesn't matter, it's the word of God. To see it spiritually, Old and New, because the spirit is what's in it that makes it come alive, again requires God's spirit in us, that we be close to God and that He gives us the ability then to grasp and to see the things that we're able to be given on a regular basis, nurtured by.

So I feel badly whenever these kinds of things take place, when people become weak, and they can't see anymore and begin to find fault with others and begin to make excuses of why certain things aren't right in their minds. It's a horrible cycle.

**But even to this day when Moses is read a veil lies upon their heart. Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord...** When is that? When you repent, when we acknowledge our wrong thinking or our wrong attitude or our wrong spirit before God and cry out to God and we desire the sacrifice of Christ to be in our place, our Passover.

**Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord the veil is taken away.** What a beautiful thing. So, he's dealing with something having to do with things of old and Judaism and so forth, but we can see this even more so, in that respect, as far as the Church is concerned, to recognize that people get cut off every year in the Body of Christ and a veil, a veil is there where they can't see anymore. They're in the dark. They can't see the light.

That's what this is all about. Our ability to see what comes from God requires God's spirit. If we begin to go off track there has to be repentance because only then can we get back on track, can we begin to see again. Because everything else will be taken away from us. It doesn't take a long time. In a few months it can be totally blacked out, in the dark spiritually, in what you're able to see spiritually. It's a horrifying thing to watch, to take place.

I think of the Apostasy, when that happened. Individuals who, I've mentioned it so many times, but it's the way it happens, it happens that quickly. One individual visited one night with us in a home, in our home, was travelling through to another area. He called headquarters, talked to Jr for a while (about 3 hours from what I understand), and when he was done it was gone. I didn't know him the next day. You talk to someone again and they try to encourage you to do the same thing they did and it's like, it's not going to happen.

What a horrifying thing that we can lose God's spirit that quickly, be cut off from God's spirit that quickly by decisions and choices we make. But it happens all the time. That's why we have to fight. We have to fight through the things we go through, look to God continually, cry out to God for help to go through the battles we go through. Because this life isn't easy, and it's not meant to be easy. Candidly, as we go through some of the hardest things in life those are the things that make us, that produce things in us that can't be produced any other way. It's

awesome to understand that. So, with God, God produces fruit regardless of how difficult life is.

**But even to this day when Moses is read a veil lies upon their heart. Nevertheless, when one turns to the Lord the veil is taken away.** How blessed, how thankful are we? How often do we repent? It should be often, and as we do, as we see things in our self, nothing pleases God more than to take it away, to put it behind and to continue to give us His spirit and ability to see the things concerning His way, His plan, His purpose.

**Verse 17—Now the Lord is the spirit: and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty,** there is freedom. Peace, if you will. What an awesome thing to have this from God. Again, God is the source.

**But we all, with unveiled faces, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord...** So, what is this all about? This means there's something that happens in our life on a spiritual plane that is absolutely awesome, that we can look at what God has given, and we can learn about ourselves. We can, with God's spirit, see where we are and be able to see what God desires for us and want that in our lives. The choices we make should be encouraging because it reveals God in us. Every time we make right decisions and cry out to God about various matters, and we see things in unity and oneness with Him, it's a strength and it's a power there of drawing us close to God. Truly is.

So again, "but we all, with unveiled faces..." We don't have a veil over our faces. Whenever we have something we've even done wrong, we repent. Even more so there, there is no veil. We've been forgiven and God continues to give us His spirit and the ability to see things on a spiritual plane.

**...and beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being transformed.** Whenever I think of that word and whenever I think of what's taking place in the mind, I am in awe, because we should be. It is a thing to be ever so thankful for, that self can change, that we can change, that it's a slow process in our life, in human life, but it continues to grow, and the conviction becomes stronger and stronger. That's why the ones who are here are still here because of that, because of the long battle that's been there, and there is character in that that's molded and fashioned within us.

I think of one individual, he had been our pastor for a time in Houston and was taken out to Pasadena to be over the administration of the finances in the Church, and he used to use this expression about, like going through mud, you plod along. You put one foot in front of the other. You have to pull to get it out of the mud and step ahead. It's like being bogged down in life, but you keep putting one step in front of the other. And that's hard. If you've ever done that to the point it's trying to rip your shoes off, it's hard to walk through something like that for any distance.

And this is hard. We should feel for one another as we go through various trials. I know that we do. To see the things that people go through our heart can ache inside. That's what enhances our prayers then with God, to pray for individuals, to pray for one another and to realize we're all in this together. That's why this past week I heard different things, battles that are out there, and you think, we're all going through things as a whole. It's not easy. Some are more amplified at times than others, and especially now because of where we are in this age, in this world.

Things that are ratcheting up more and more and more, and we'd have to be so blind if we couldn't see it. What's taking place in this world, what's taking place in this nation, it's really just pretty horrible just to watch it. It hurts. But it has to happen, it has to be allowed to happen for a great purpose.

**But we all with unveiled faces, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed, the mind, into the same image.** Now, what's in most Bibles is a very poor translation so I'm reading it as it is. ...**are being transformed**, changed in the mind, we understand that, like it talks about in Romans 12, **into the same image from glory to glory.** In other words, to greater glory. From a glory that God has given us when we're first called, and we just continue to grow in that, and the mind continues to become more at one with God.

We come to a point where we, we just are able to continue to learn about things that are evil in the world, and we detest them more and more. The more we detest things that are wrong the more they'll never be a part of our life. The more that we see what is good and right, we embrace it, and we become convicted in the mind of the things that are right. That's an awesome process. It's not just a matter of willpower or what we decide to do, it's a matter of conviction.

To just do something because we're told to do it is good, because that's where you start learning to prove something. But when it's in you, when your mind is at one in that, that is a most beautiful thing of all, when your mind in various aspects of life is at one with God. You know you agree with God in certain matters, whatever they are, and you know that you loathe the other and will never do them.

It's like, how many would start working now after sunset on Friday? That's so abrasive and horrifying to us in our thinking. The more we grow, the stronger we become in that. But I'm not just talking about that, I'm talking about many other things because we grow in many other areas of our life then, of different things we've gone through, unique battles that are unique to each one of us. Each one of us have weaknesses that we have to fight and have had to conquer. We're able to do that and grow in that and all the time it's a matter of becoming more at one with God. You have to hate the evil to not do it, to be far away from it, and you have to love the good. That's what God blesses us to grow in, a transforming of the mind. Beautiful, and it doesn't come easy. You go through a lot of things to get there.

**...beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image.** The God Family. It's what it's about. To that which Christ became that we're told we can look forward to the same thing, to be in that same family. He's the first of the firstfruits and more just keep coming along as time goes on. Awesome!

**...into the same image from glory to glory.** Ever growing, greater glory; the more that God's in it the greater the glory is. **...even as by the spirit of the Lord.** That's how it's accomplished. So simple.

So, there's a glory of mankind when we receive God's spirit, and as we grow in that in our lives the more convicted we become. There is a glory that's beyond that that is what it's all about. God's, the Family of God.

**2 Corinthians 4:1—Therefore, since we have this administration...** It's about how God's spirit works in our life. It's not just the ministry, it's about the administration. It all works to accomplish this. **...as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.** The word means "grow weary." So, there may be a battle there, we may be run down, it may be a struggle, we may be pulling our foot out of one mud hole and going forward and stepping down in the mud, but we're going forward. That's what it's about.

You fight, and the more you fight, the stronger you become. Isn't that an awesome thing? The more you fight, the more you become convicted of the fight and the purpose of it and why God uses that to mold and fashion us, the stronger in character we become.

I look back at my life and I realize that every major trial that I've gone through, that's what's made me stronger every time. Without those I wouldn't be where I am to this point with this kind of strength and confidence in the various things that God has given to this point in my life.

**...but renounce the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness.** It's a word meaning "trickery," or "giving the appearance of something that isn't true." This is one of our major battles sometimes as human beings, especially today if you look at this selfie world that we live in. We are so in love with ourselves as human beings. That's a hard thing to come to grasp and understand, what we're like. We're selfish and we have to fight that, and the more we fight it and the more we conquer various aspects of it, the richer life becomes, the more filled with thankfulness it becomes because we see a change that God is performing in us through the power of His holy spirit.

So again, this thing of not being able to be ourselves but putting on a kind of façade because we want people to like us, we want people to see us in a certain light. Some of the hardest things for human beings to do when they come into God's Church is to be yourself, fight the battle. Don't be yourself if when someone comes up to you and you'd like to say something to them, and you do it, that's hurtful. Then you've given into self because of judgment or whatever. There is that portion that we learn to curb what we might otherwise say.

So again here, **renounce the hidden things of shame**. Be yourself with God's spirit. That doesn't mean to just let ourselves do whatever we want to. It's within the realm, it's within the environment of being in control through the power of God's spirit.

**...nor handling the word of God deceitfully.** It's happened in the past. Most of us who lived through the Apostasy, we've experienced that within the Church, of people who use the word of God to sway others, to prove something to others that wasn't true, to give their own little twist to things. Because that came from them, it didn't come through God's apostle, from Christ through God's apostle. It came from different ones and ideas they had.

**...but by manifestation of the truth.** So, it's a matter of revealing the truth. The more truth there is the better it is, the brighter things can be, the more beautiful they can be.

**...but by manifestation of the truth establishing ourselves.** I love this word because this "manifestation of the truth," and "becoming established," it's a word that has to do with "to stand together with." So, it's a matter of standing in something that God has given to us, the truth, **ourselves**, as it says here, **toward each one's conscience**. So, it's about us. It's about what we need to see and it's about choices we have to make. It's this process of how the truth can grow in us more and more. That's what the object is.

**...toward each one's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel is hidden,** in other words, "covered; sealed as with a veil." So, even within the Church whenever this happens and someone can't see certain things or can't grasp why a certain decision is made, sometimes we resist the decisions that are made, and we can't grasp what they are. "Why was that decision made? That doesn't seem right," instead of striving to see ourselves and what might be in our own minds in our thinking and grasping what God offers us. Sometimes we begin to have a veil put over our face because there's a reason why we can't see. We're resisting something in our thinking.

**But if our gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are,** the word says "perishing," but in **the way of destruction**. In other words, going the wrong direction. Every year somebody goes the wrong, different ones go the wrong direction. There are choices. Why? Why move in such a direction that it leads you further and further away from being able to see things that enrich life because we want something a different way, whatever that might be, whatever it is we want that's different from what God says He wants us to have.

Every year I preach these things, about what has happened year by year. Especially from Feast of Tabernacles. But it seems like now there's even more stress on this than ever before because it's going past the Feast of Tabernacles into sermons after sermon after sermon, because it's just an ongoing process. I don't like that in many ways because I see us becoming smaller and smaller. So be it if we have to.

Every area we go into you know what we oftentimes see and talk about? Those who aren't here anymore. There used to be a lot more in the Dallas area. There used to be a lot more in every

area we have ever been in. We'd have a lot larger gathering if everyone would have stuck to what they were given. Incredible. Some areas decimated even more so by choices. Horrible to watch, to look at those things.

I hate to see it continue on, but there's a refining we're going through. So, that should even be more revealing to us in the sense of realizing even what we're going through here, of a desire to hold on to what God has given to us, a desire to not let go, a desire to fight and to realize we're going into periods of time here where it really takes more fight. Because battles that come at us, they're not easy to go through and they're distracting, they pull at us. We know that but we each have to make the choices about fighting and putting first things first. God first. That's what it's about.

**But if our gospel is hidden, it is hidden to them who are perishing.** In other words, if it comes to a point in time where someone can't agree with something and they're fighting and resisting, you know what I automatically know? There is something they've got to repent of. They're being cut off. Somewhere, there's a reason why they can't see.

I can talk to individuals and hear feedback and realize you're missing something here. There is something you can't see. Why? Only you can answer that. Only you can answer that. Something in your thinking, in your mind, in your relationship toward God, something you're resisting, whatever it is. Until you've broken through that and repented of whatever needs to be repented of you're not going to be able to see it. Why? Because it's spiritual.

Everything that has great meaning to us in life, that has deep meaning to it, that carries us through, that transforms, is a matter of God's spirit. And so, that's why it says this so plainly, "If our gospel is hidden," if something being said and stated that comes from God, that's inspired by God's spirit, whatever that might be, if we resist it, if we fight against it there is a reason for it, and we've got something to repent of because we're headed off on a tangent somewhere in our life. Only we individually can cry out to God and ask to reveal that to us so we can see it, so we can repent. "It is hidden to those who are perishing." What a horrible direction to go. Every year people go in that direction. Every year.

**...whose minds, thoughts, thinking, if we will, the god of this age has blinded.** He loves it. More than anything else, that being and so many who are with him, desire to see God's people fail. Someone who's already deceived out there in the world, they don't have to work at that. But they hate God. They hate God's way of life. They hate God's judgment that's been told to them now, things that are going to come their way as a matter of their own destruction.

I think of, if you were a being and beings who knew that when certain things take place on this earth (and you have had enough experience in seeing what God says comes to pass), and you know that when certain events take place that you're going to be put away for a thousand years, would you fight against that? Would you work against that?

And what's the number one place they can do that to stop this process if it were able to be stopped, which it can't? The Church of God. The 144,000. It doesn't take a lot of brain power to grasp that. They know these things. They know that.

So, a being that would want to stop that process so that doesn't happen? They've always tried to thwart God's plan. You think of all the stupid things, to even fight against the Messiah when he was born. To think that you could somehow change God. And you know what? It doesn't change. Look at what happens at the Great White Throne at the end! They gather up all with the attitudes that they have, and they try to fight God once more.

I believe with all my being with whatever is there they're going to believe that they can do it. Because all along the way they've tried to do various things, for the past 6,000 years to thwart God's plan, to change God's plan, to alter God's plan. They loathe it, they hate it. They couldn't do it with the Messiah, maybe they can do it with 144,000, because after all, "They're not the Sons of God. They're just human beings! Look at them, how weak and miserable they are!" That's how they feel. That's how they think.

And we are. We are weak and miserable. Except for God's spirit. That's what makes us strong. In God's Church, that's what makes us strong. We hold on to that with all of our being and they're no power against that whatsoever. But if we go off on a tangent, especially now of all times...?

That's why I think about that and 144,000. Is it going to deter that? No, it's going to get done. Could it be prolonged? Yeah. Don't know what God's going to allow to take place. Personally, I want to get this over with. I want to get on with this. I know when it'll happen - it's when we're all ready.

**...whose mind the god of this age has blinded.** It says here, "who do not believe." Some of these translations, again, are really awkward. Satan is able to, and the demonic world, seeks to blind us. How? By sin. By going off on a tangent somewhere. By getting caught up in something else. They think that various trials and various things that come our way, and God allows different things sometimes to happen, that they're going to thwart that and they're going to thwart that in us.

No, that's when you should be more determined than ever before to fight with all of your being. To fight. To keep putting one foot in front of the other. God is on your side. God called you to succeed, every one of us. That's why He called us, to keep moving forward. It will be done. What God creates is going to be created, it's just a matter of our submitting to it and yielding to it and fighting for it. It's a fight.

Look at all the examples about fighting. There is no greater fight on earth. There have been incredible wars fought. To what purpose? This is the fight that counts because it's about God's Family, it's about Elohim. Those things were passing for the moment. And what did they accomplish?

Can't help but think about in writing, updating the book and doing Chapter 7 here. I'm almost to the end of Chapter 7 now. I'm thankful I've been able to do a lot of that writing on this trip. But going through the Thunders, because they're going to come out again, and going through the Thunders and talking about them again and thinking about the matter of war and what it's produced and what was produced because of Afghanistan and Iraq and all the fighting over there. Tens of thousands that have died as a result of it, hundreds of thousands in the long run when it's all said and done. You look at the statistics. The number of U.S. soldiers who have come back from the war, the numbers who have committed suicide. Thirty-some thousand.

I was bowled over when I saw that! Because of the spin-off of coming out of that and coming back into the world and society and not being able to deal with some of the things, what it does to a human being. Especially with modern technology and war compared to what it was long ago. I think there have been 7,000 since 9/11 up till the end of this war here, U.S. soldiers that were killed in action. But thirty-some thousand, and I don't remember the exact number, but I put it in the book, committed suicide in that length of time.

To me, that's atrocious and mind-boggling. But it shows what it does to people and the mind, the horrifying part of it. So, man tries to have peace and what was it "Operation Freedom" it was called? "Operation Enduring Freedom," when we went into Afghanistan. How our minds are so messed up as human beings to even have such expressions "enduring freedom." They didn't receive it over there. Something like 170,000 civilians killed during that period of time. Not counting their forces over there and the waste of human life and how people continue to fight each other and murder each other and kill each other in the world. And for what purpose? For their peace?

That's why I love the expression when it said, "Not the peace of the world, but My peace I give to you." God's peace. It's not man's peace.

We have everything on our side, and we've got to keep focused on that as we go through what we're going through because please understand the closer we get the harder it's going to get. It's not going to be easy for us in what we have to go through in what's ahead of us and what we're going to experience in God's Church and what's going to be allowed for us to experience.

We're not going to get off all that easy. God is on our side. He'll help us to go through those trials, but we have battles in front of us that we don't know about yet. You have to choose to be strong and close to God, truly, with all of your being.

So again, **the god of this age has blinded to not believe to/toward the light of the gospel.** That's what happens. **...of the glory of Christ who is the image of God to shine unto them.** So again, this same image that we're to become a part of.

**Verse 5—For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Joshua the Lord; and ourselves your bondservants for Joshua's sake. For it is God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness.** It's what's happened to each one of us when we were called. All of a sudden, we can

see something. Others around us couldn't. We tried to share it with somebody else and they're still in the dark. But we're not. Awesome!

**...who has shined into our hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Joshua the Christ.** Opened up God's plan - Passover to the Last Great Day - of things we can see. They're so clear to us. Awesome!

**But we have this treasure...** It's a treasure. Now, we need to appreciate it as a treasure. The reason people leave, the reason people choose to go by the wayside is because they treasure something else more than what God has placed before us. What a horrifying thing to think can happen. But it's happened to the majority of people who have ever been called. It's happened to the majority of people who have had opportunity since the Apostasy, who had the opportunity to be like a branding iron plucked out of the fire and gave it all up.

That blows my mind when I think about it. We were just, my wife and I, were discussing that the other day about a person and some of the kind of choices that were there and their deep conviction about how Satan is going to be destroyed. A deep conviction that was quite evident in their life about other of the truths, about Joshua the Christ, though not specifically "Joshua" at that point in time, but about his life and what we're to become. And Christ not preexisting.

So, so excited when they heard it. Then you think they chose to leave that and went with some other scattered groups at a point here, then came to the point of disagreeing with them because I knew where they went and what they attached themselves to, and how can you do that? Because no one else has this. No one else believes those things. How do you leave something that is so true in your mind to latch back on something that goes way, way back in the past? That's mind-boggling, but it can happen if we have certain sin in our life and begin to go off course in things we can't see. We have to even go against what we have come to believe, even if not with God's spirit.

Because understand there are things people can hold on to—just like up to the Apostasy—of things of the past and try to rebuild them, try to redo them, try to relive them because that's all they have. Because there is no growth in that, there is no ability to see and have God's spirit and grasping those things any longer. That can happen to anyone who has come at any point in time in the Church. Just like the name Joshua, to go back to using "Jesus?" There are individuals who wouldn't be able to do that, just like not eating pork. But not because of God's spirit, but because of being around it for so long that they believe that in the sense of what they became convicted of. That will play over onto a physical plane.

I hope you understand what I'm saying there. You hold on to the truth on a spiritual plane by the power of God's spirit, and it's a treasure. What we've been given? That's what we treasure, that's what we value. The pearl of great price is not just an expression, it's a way of thinking in the mind, to grasp something and believe something about God's truth and God's word mightily so, and to know how blessed we are because we're able to see that.

If you grasp it's a treasure, and the more you grasp it's a treasure, the more you treasure it, the more gratitude and thankfulness you will have to the Great God of this universe. Because it has to do with the value then we place upon it, and with that goes gratitude and thankfulness that you can't hold back, it's just there. It's something that's automatic that you'll say to God on a regular basis in your life.

So, it goes on to say, **But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.** The glory, the honor is God's. The gratitude and the thankfulness is toward God Almighty. That is a beautiful thing.

**Verse 8—We are troubled,** it means “to be afflicted,” **on every side, and yet not crushed.** What an awesome thing that we can keep going forward. After things that people go through and just keep going forward with confidence and boldness, and yet knowing that it's not easy, knowing that we have to fight deep down inside sometimes.

**We are troubled on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed,** in other words, the word means “sometimes at a loss.” Sometimes we don't know what to do, we don't know the answer. But we know this is God's way of life. We know this is the truth and we keep plodding forward until we grasp some of the things we go through and the why's and so forth and what's being developed and molded inside of each one of us.

**...sometimes perplexed,** in other words, “at a loss,” **but not in despair.** Not in total loss, in other words. So, it's a good way of putting it. We're in the mud, but we're able to keep putting one foot in front of the other. Still in the mud, but you have to work at it. “The mud is still going to be there, but it's not going to stop me.”

**...persecuted, but not forsaken,** in other words, “left behind or deserted.” Just to know that God's always there with us going through whatever hardship it might be. What a beautiful thing.

**...struck down, but not destroyed.** Yeah, we experience some rough things sometimes, we really do, hardships of life.

**...always carrying about the body, the dying of the Lord Joshua.** I love this when it talks about, in other words, we've entered into his sufferings. We have to learn through our sufferings. There is no better way. That's the way it's designed in this human life. God is molding something different in all of us. Every one of us is being molded and fashioned for things we don't see and understand yet.

Yes, to be in God's Family. But where, what we're going to be doing? We don't have the foggiest idea. I can't even begin to grasp what that's going to be like, working with this world and the things that are going to take place and helping to bring others along into God's Family, because that's what's going to be accelerated and magnified so many times over incredibly so.

So again, **always carrying about the body, the dying of the Lord Joshua**, entering into his sufferings because it doesn't end. We continue making choices, holding on to this way of life, knowing we're bombarded by things and knowing it's a part of a purpose and part of a plan in ways the world isn't being bombarded.

**...that the life of Joshua also may be made manifest in our body.** Why? Because we rely on God. We continue to repent, we continue to go forward, and we want this. People have to really want this. You have to be convicted of its value to fight for it. It's a beautiful thing. That's why I love all those who remain faithful and continue to fight for it. I see in you that determination and that mind that's very rewarding to us. It's encouraging. But I hate seeing it get whittled down too, because that is discouraging, why anyone would make different choices. But it's part of a process and only each one of us can make that choice. But I'm encouraged by seeing that the battle is there, and people keep fighting.

I mean, what an incredible thing. Look how puny we are, how small we are, and God has given us a power and a purpose to keep going forward, to see the things that we do, and to accomplish the things that are yet in front of us that we don't even grasp and comprehend yet, but we believe them because of God's spirit. There are things you just know. Awesome!

**For we who live are always delivered to death for Joshua's sake, that the life of Joshua might also be made manifest in our dying flesh.** So again, it's that power, that life we want to live in us so that we can continue to see and continue to fight, and to know it comes with suffering. He did it right up to the end and we have to, right up to the end, even if it's death.

**So then death is working in us, but life in you.** So, he's talking about some of the things they were going through at that particular time. But anyway.

**And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, I believed, and therefore I spoke; we also believe, and therefore speak.** That's a beautiful thing because it's in the whole body. We are able to speak the same thing, to be of the same mind. That comes from God. There is just nothing more beautiful, really. To have that kind of unity? No one else in the world has unity like that. Nowhere.

**...knowing that He who raised up the Lord Joshua will also raise us up with Joshua and will present us with you.**

Going on in verse 15. This is a more accurate translation for this verse and I'm just going to read it as it is: **For all things are for your sakes, that the multiplying of grace because of the thanksgiving of so many more...** It's a beautiful thing when we have a body, and not just us, but others in other areas as well, what we do have, **that it may abound**, again, this **going above and beyond to the glory of God.** It's to God's glory. What we accomplish, what we're able to do, God is doing it.

That's another thing. I'm just throwing some of these things out. But I think about how God is going to make clear to the world, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit." In other

words, it's not by what we're able to do, yet we have to do, we have to be a part of it. But He's making it very clear, in a very small body. Not a body that's 15,000. Not a body that's 100,000 or whatever that we've had in times past. He's showing here, "Look what I'm going to do in something so very small. But it's going to be done and that Body is going to continue right to the end."

That's an awesome thing. Tell someone in the world something like that and they think, "You have got to be stark raving mad! How big is your Church? You travel how far to get to Sabbath services?" I mean, when Worldwide was in existence: "You're going to a Feast of Tabernacles and all the people in the United States are in one place? And you're only how many?" I mean in times past we have had 15,000, 14,000, 17,000 in different locations. It's like, that would have been easier to tell your relatives. That would have been easier to tell people. But now you really don't want to share that for obvious reasons. Because on a physical plane it makes you look more loony.

But we know what we have. Awesome! We do it with boldness, gratitude, thankfulness, confidence. We know who we are.

**For all things are for your sakes, that the multiplying of grace because of the thanksgiving of so many more may abound to the glory of God.** So, it's about God and it's about this coming back to God. Whatever He does in the Body it goes back to God because He does it through the power of His spirit. But we desire it, we yield to it, we want it, and He gives us that opportunity. Those who remain faithful to it, it goes back to the glory of God. It's God's creation. It glorifies God.

What God is creating, the 144,000, it's going to be the next almighty, most powerful thing that God has done yet in all of His plan through time up to this point, when that part becomes a reality, when that part comes into Elohim. 144,000, that structure that God has created over that 6,000, years, when He brings it together all at one time, is a mighty thing, a powerful thing the world can't even begin to grasp but will come to learn one day. God did it. God did it. He said He was going to do it and He'll do it.

**Therefore, we do not lose heart.** What God says, we believe; we know it's going to come to pass. **Even though our outward self is perishing, yet the inward is being renewed day by day.** So, the older you get the more you know that the "outward part is perishing." Oh, does it perish! You know, you sit around when you're younger and you hear older people talking over here about the different aches and pains and whatever surgeries they've had and so forth. Then you get there and you're doing the same thing. You're just thankful to still be there in God's Church, in God's way of life, and sharing in it. Yet you know that it's knocking on the door and it's going to come. It's a part of the cycle of life. It's what happens and you glorify God, you thank God.

"Yet the inward is being renewed day by day." In other words, you have to do that. You have to cry out to God for His holy spirit. You want to be renewed and strengthened. You can't just do

it on your own. You can't leave and go out and perform everything on your own, because one day will turn into another day without God, and another day without being close to God, without praying, and you can't do that. You have to have God in the picture and understand that He has to be in the picture, and you want His spirit in all situations that come up, and to be growing and conquering and being able to see things in self that have to be changed. So, renewed day by day. That's because of your choice to pray to God Almighty and seek that help.

**For our light affliction, which is but for a moment...** That's why I hate to see people give up and make choices for something in the world that's physical. And you think, where did you lose the sight to see the treasure that we have in front of us? How can we compare anything to that, anything else to that? It's mind-boggling, and yet because of human weakness we can. In time we can become weaker.

**For our light affliction but which is for a moment...** If we grasp the span of time, we're here for a certain length of time. How deeply do we really believe and grasp everlasting life? God's Family? Never suffering physically. Never having drama. Always having peace. Always having rich friendships, relationships, fellowships with one another in the Body with everything that is true and right? I really can't grasp that. But I want it. We have a taste of it every once in a while in our lives, like when we come together in Sabbath services, and it's a wonderful thing, it's a beautiful thing being in God's Church, being with God's people, being of God's family. But when we get rid of all this that's physical and we're forever? It's exciting to me and I hope it's exciting to every one of us and we hold on to it.

So, we only go through things for a moment. It's not a long time. It might seem a long time. You know that three years that I was gone, I have to stop, and I really have to think about what I did because it's like it's gone and it wasn't too long afterwards it's like I have to stop and really think, conscientiously think about certain things. Because it was for a moment in time. Was it enjoyable to go through? No, not really. But I strove to have the best of that joy that comes from God, of the truth. That's what keeps you going.

And whatever we go through in physical life it goes by the wayside in time. In time, our physical lives come to an end, people die. We've had people die continually in God's Church. They don't have to worry anymore. They don't have to think about it anymore. They don't have any struggles anymore. And you think about those that are going to be a part of the 144,000, wow, resurrected into a body that is spirit in composition, I can't comprehend that. Not feeling your knees if they're hurting, like mine are presently a little bit when I stand up here for this long. There's a little bit of ache there. I can tell it.

I won't go into all my aches and pains. You have your own if you're older especially, and probably younger too. It's for a moment in time. We tend to think things go on for so long, and they don't. Especially when you get up to a certain point in your life. Especially when you've had certain health problems, you realize the reality is, not going to be here much longer on a physical plane, even if God's Kingdom isn't here in my lifetime, because that's what happens.

We just get old and die. You can fight it all you want; it's not going to do much good. It's going to happen because that time passes.

Now, we should fight it in the sense of take care of yourself and do what you can while you can, but the reality is it's for a moment in time. What an awesome thing to understand. Then we have it made for all time, hundreds of years, thousands of years, millions of years. My mind, your mind cannot grasp such things.

The things we go through in physical life as God talks about in time, you won't remember them. Just like that camp. I don't remember it. I mean, I know of it, but it's so far back and you don't think about those things; they're not important. We think about what's ahead. That's what's important. Awesome!

**For our light affliction, which is but for a moment**, in other words, compared to what God is offering us, **is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.** God's Family forever, forever, and forever.

**...while we do not look**, in other words, our focus, one's focus, **at the thing which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.** So, in other words, we deal with physical things in life, but our focus is on the future. Our focus is in God's Kingdom being established on this earth. Our focus is in what lies ahead. That's what we fight for with all of our being, crying out to God, treasuring what He's given to us, loving it, loving Him, loving His Family, and being ever so thankful day-by-day-by-day that we can see such things.

**...for the things which are seen are temporary.** They're here and they're gone. Whatever you plan and whatever you do physically, won't be long, it'll be gone, disappears. **...but the things which are not seen are eternal, everlasting.**

Well, I'm going to stop there today before going into chapter 5, because there's a continuation of some of this thought here, and we'll wrap up in Corinthians at least. But I also know we're going to have at least one more part, *Part 5* next Sabbath.