

Today is *Part 4* of the series *Understanding God's Government*.

Last week we didn't really make it very far into the scriptures that I had planned to cover, and we'll be doing so today. So again, last Sabbath I was going over a few verses that were actually from the previous sermon, from *Part 2* at the end of the sermon, which is oftentimes what I'll do just to help everyone get back on track as to what the context of what we're covering is all about.

Then the sermon took an abrupt turn, a turn that I know was inspired because there are things that happen sometimes that we go through and things that are given at a moments notice. Everything changed, in that respect, but it has to do with the subject matter of understanding government. And to me, again, it's a marvel. It's one of the things that has been one of the least understood in God's Church, how it functions, whether it be within the environment of the Church, our lives, how God works in our lives. It's something that hasn't been understood that well, and if we can understand the process and all the things we're going through and why, and frankly, why we're covering some of this now, it becomes that much more important.

So, we're going to continue on now to see where all this is going, and as we begin once again, I want to go back and focus on what was said in *Part 1*. God's ways have everything to do with righteous judgment. We're to learn that. That may be a couple of simple sentences there but they're very difficult to comprehend, they truly are.

We're to learn how to judge matters of life according to His righteous laws, His righteous ways, and it's a process we really have to learn because it's not something naturally within us. It comes as a matter of growth, it comes as a matter of becoming more at one with God, learning about His ways, because that's what this is all about.

Because the more we learn about God's ways and the spirit of that, which is His spirit, His mind, His being, the more we'll be able to judge in a right way. As a whole we tend to think we do because we all have opinions about things. We can't go through a day without having an opinion about some matter. We hear something and we have an opinion about what we've heard. We judge it. It's automatic. We hear something on TV, we have an opinion. We judge it. We hear someone telling us something, we have an opinion, and we judge it. It's automatic!

That's why we really have to become more at one with God, His thinking, His mind, because as we do that then our thinking can be sound, more sound, balanced. There's very little of that in the world today even in a physical plane as far as the world is concerned, it's getting so bad out there. I was going to say, "As though," but it is so. Balance, just common sense, it's gone out the window as a whole. Very few have common sense in a carnal, physical world even.

There are reasons for that but most of it has to do because where we are in time and understanding this world. We used to read scriptures about “as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah” or we’d talk about “as in the time of Noah,” and the things that God intervened and did then because of that. I think back over any period we’ve talked about that, but today, to see it, I mean, it’s everywhere so powerfully so that I believe with all my being we’ve gone way past them in the world. We really have. We’ve gone way, way past that and there’s far more of the filth and the garbage out there than what you can actually see. Thankfully, you don’t have to see it all or be aware of it all.

But what you do or are able to see, it is so much in the world that you realize the mind of people has gone so far in some things that in a great resurrection there are so many that I don’t believe can even be helped because their minds have gone in such a direction they become so corrupt, so vile, so backward that no matter what God does, no matter what He will show them they don’t want it. They don’t want it. They’re not going to want it.

That’s hard for us to grasp, knowing the things we know, but that shows the hardness and the hideousness of selfish human nature. It’s rather mind-boggling.

So, the big thing is to get away from our way, our way of judging, our way of seeing things, our normal carnal human reaction which we all have in our opinions that we have. And today, it’s so bad because of the internet and people think they’re geniuses you would think because of what they’ve read on the internet.

You can’t put a whole lot of basis in it because it’s out of the world. You might be able to be made aware of certain things, you might be able to be knowledgeable of certain things and better equipped then to see the conditions of this world, but to drink it in, to think that this is right? Be ever so careful of that kind of thing, of taking sides.

People tend to do that when we get around to a political year for a president. It’s easy to begin taking sides with various things, and if we just have a mind that understands all government is wrong, there is no government that’s right, it’ll help us in our judgment.

Psalm 119:99—I have more understanding than all my teachers. Now, we have to be careful with some of these kinds of things, because if we’re not careful we tend to think that way anyway as human beings, we know more than anyone else. Just ask. Ask someone about a certain subject, and as a whole we have a very strong opinion about a lot of things. We have to be careful of that kind of thing.

To know something or to think we know something because of something we’ve read or something we’ve taken sides with in a particular matter doesn’t mean we really know what’s true, and definitely doesn’t mean we understand.

Understanding, true understanding, has to be based on true knowledge, and therein lies so much of the problem as far as even for us in God’s Church. Because we have to learn to

separate these things; we have to learn to see through the things of this world and understand this isn't right.

"I have more understanding than all my teachers." See, that's what happened to the evangelists in Worldwide as a whole. They understood more than God's apostle. That's why they didn't go to the Bible studies, and sometimes not to Sabbath services. They could listen to it as it was piped into their homes.

"I have more understanding than all my teachers." Now, seems like a pretty bold statement. But if we understand its context that should be our goal, to have more understanding than our teachers, the teachers we've had in life except for that which is in the Church. That's another matter as to what we take in. Even there we've had to judge, especially when we got into Laodicea. Then we didn't judge so well at all by the end.

Your testimonies are in my thoughts, my thinking. That's a pretty bold statement. Now, some of these things in the Psalms David wrote, was inspired to write, and some of these things are about, if you will, the mind of Christ, what he was given. Because a lot of that was to be fulfilled in him, those things that would be a part of his mind and his being in a very powerful way.

"I have more understanding than all my teachers." So indeed, if you look at someone growing up, like he was, and to understand all these teachers out there and people who wanted to teach him various things, and in some of the things he had to have teachers, like we all do, and for him to be able to say something like this in that context hopefully would help us to better understand some of what's being said here. Because this is what we're to grow in so that we can have this kind of confidence.

"For Your," speaking of God Almighty, "Your testimonies are in my thoughts, in my thinking." Well, that's our goal, is to have that reality in our life, that the testimonies of God, the things through time in 6,000 years that have taken place, that we've been able to learn from, and then we understand it's only by the power of God's spirit that we're able to have that in the first place. Again, that thinking comes from God. And so, if we see that we're able to come into greater unity with that, that's an awesome thing because it means we're wading through the things of this world and understanding they don't have the answers. They're incorrect.

There is nobody out there in this world who understands and has the answers about what's taking place, about what should take place, where things are going in truth and reality, as we do, because we know the truth.

I understand more than the ancients. Now, you should be thankful for that because you do. You have more knowledge. We've gone through those things, talking about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and they had so little in the sense of what was given later. Moses, though he was given so much, had nothing, absolutely nothing compared to what we have now!

Then Christ came along and began to reveal incredibly awesome things on a spirit plane that even the disciples wrote about later, the apostles, when they were apostles, and more has come since then as God gave to Herbert Armstrong, an apostle for the end-time. Then all the things we've learned since the Apostasy that God has continued to add because of His purpose of giving a progressive revelation because of a purpose of leading closer to the time His Son is actually going to return, and the world being set and ready for that transition as much as possible.

I understand more than the ancients because I keep Your precepts. So, that's how we learn, by keeping those things in our mind when we judge that are principles, precepts, if you will, things that are intended to regulate behavior or thought. God shows us what regulates those things, what laws, what ways, and then we're to judge accordingly.

I have refrained my feet from every evil way. Well, there are none of us that can really say that. Now, Joshua could. He was able to say something of that nature because of his mind. Something that's difficult for us to really comprehend. We can only comprehend it in part because of God's spirit because the mind that was given to him. It was the Word made flesh, a unique mind.

I have refrained my feet from every evil way. Well, that's our battle. We have to strive to accomplish that and do that. The more we do that the more we'll be able to understand. **...that I might keep Your word.** So, that's the purpose, to keep God's word, to be faithful in that.

So again here, **I have not departed from Your judgments.** Well, that's our goal again, because not a one of us can say that. That's what we strive to do. **...for You have taught me.** Well, God is teaching us. He works with us. We strive to accomplish this, we strive to fulfill such goals as this knowing we fall short, knowing what we are, knowing that we should judge our thoughts and our opinions more than what we do.

I hope as we're going through this sermon, because I am struck by where we are in time, things that are happening in the world, and things that are happening in God's Church, and knowing that we're going through a time of judgment ourselves in a way that is unique because this is in a sense the end of judgment for this age that we're going through as we're getting ready to go into another age.

Things being determined concerning the 144,000. Things being determined concerning those out of this Body that will go on into a new age. Those things are being judged because of time. It's being ratcheted up, if you will, because of time, because we're running out of time, because we don't have a whole lot of time left before Joshua returns, and the Church must be at a certain place at that time. Obviously, the 144,000 will have been completed by that time, but the judgment for that is something that is still happening right now.

So, if you want this way of life you've got to fight for it with all of your being, and a dedication in your mind, in your heart, "This is it. What else do I want, regardless of what happens?"

Regardless of if I get that vaccination, and conk over dead, I did the right thing. Because of God's government. Because I understand it." Awesome!

...**Therefore, I hate every false way.** It's something we grow in. What an awesome thing, the more we see through things in the world the more we hate the things we see because we see how people are in captivity and it's getting worse not better. We need to be freed. This world needs to be freed from this captivity, it truly does.

Your word is a lamp to my feet. We have to ask, is that true or not? Because if it is then the way you walk, the way you live, it either lightens the way and we want that light, we love that light and we hate the darkness, or we don't. And the majority of the people in the Church who have ever been in the Church that's not been true. The majority! That's mind-boggling. The majority! The vast majority!

I have taken oath and will perform it to keep Your righteous judgments. So, basically, we all did that at baptism. "I am Yours. I am Yours. I am not my own to do my own will, my own way, to have my own opinions." Now, to have thought and thinking based on God's way, that's not just a matter of opinion. It is. If it's true, it is, it is right.

So, opinions can be pretty dangerous sometimes if we can see ourselves and realize I've got to be careful of what comes out of me. I've got to be suspect of my opinions. And candidly, if we see those things, it'll tell us much about ourselves. We can learn more about ourselves, to see the things that are agreeable or agreeing with God and the things that conflict with God.

Proverbs 2:1 it says, **My son, if you will receive my words...** Now, sometimes where I can, especially in the New Testament and certain other places as well, where it's about men and women, it's about everybody. I strive to quote it accordingly because that's the proper quotation, quote anyway as far as a translation is concerned. But the world hasn't done it that way because it's so messed up.

Anyway, here it's a simple thought of a father to a son, and the mind being from God the Father to us. In God's Kingdom there is no sex, there is no male and female, we're all referred to, in that respect, as the sons of God, the children of God, if you want, but not sons in the way we think of it but what it is spiritually.

Again, it's not a matter of male and female. I hope we understand that and have balance and soundness of mind in that. This is talking to all of us.

If you will receive My words. God gives instruction and says, "If you will receive My words." Well, this reveals whether we receive them. Because the ability for it to be fed back in choices we make, in decisions we make, reveals whether or not we have right thinking, right judgment in our minds, and whether we've really received God's words. Because that has to do with what God teaches us. Every Sabbath God gives us His words, every Sabbath, to build upon. Every Holy Day God gives us things to build upon.

My son, if you will receive My words and hide, or as the word means, to **treasure My commands with you so that you incline your ear unto wisdom...** So, it's got to be something we really want. That's what it's talking about here. Wisdom is a matter of the mind of God, God's word. And how much do we desire it, how much are we wanting to, as it says, "like inclining your ear to hear," you don't want to miss out on something being said.

That's a good example in sermons and Bible studies (when we used to have Bible studies). When Herbert Armstrong used to have Bible studies there at headquarters, it's a good example. Some of those evangelists weren't inclining their ears too hard. On the contrary, I have a pretty good feeling and belief that the majority of them weren't even listening at home where it was piped in or had the capability—they called it "piping in" at that time—of being able to have a direct connection with what was being given on stage there by Herbert Armstrong, and then in their houses they had a direct system there to be able for everyone to connect.

But knowing the individuals, what they did and what they were doing, and not caring even about the example itself, feel pretty comfortable they weren't necessarily focused too much on inclining their ear to hear what God had for them. A marvel, huh.

...so that you incline your ear unto wisdom and apply your heart to understanding. So, is it something we really want? Do we fight against things in this world?

I remember when we used to have the Bible studies and had large congregations and Bible studies. In Cincinnati, every Wednesday. Amazing. And you know what, the longer it went, especially into Laodicea, the fewer people were there, and sad sometimes what was being given... Anyway, that's another story. We were in Laodicea.

So, early on toward the end of Herbert Armstrong's life, or a beginning of a new period there, the first couple of years as things continued on for a time fairly normal, this process here of a desire to learn came out by the reflection by people who had interest in really wanting. Because to be there you had to fight. Because you were at work, you had to get home to clean up, to get ready, you had to make a drive. And the farther you lived away the more difficult it was. And so, there was a battle there, there was a fight in order to get there.

Sometimes it might take a few minutes to start feeling better, decent, because you've been fighting with the world all day, all week, the week before that and, of course, from the Sabbath on. Sometimes just to get out of that mindset that we get from the world might take a little bit.

So we have to fight self, we did, but as time went on less and less of that. That was indicative of what? Falling asleep, having less care, not really desiring to hear and to learn and grow, and keep our, as it says here, "incline your ear unto wisdom and apply your heart to understanding." That's a battle. Because we have to fight against this!

Yes, if you cry after, in other words **call out for knowledge**. Cry out to God! That's what it's talking about, praying to God, letting Him know this is what we really want. "I really want to

be fed this Sabbath. Help me to be of a right mind, a right thinking. Help me to learn. Fill me with Your spirit so I can receive Your words. Give the inspiration so that it's there."

Yes, if you cry after her (call out for her), or **call out for knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you will seek her as silver.** In other words, that's a way of thinking because we value. It means we value what we're hearing.

And so again, these examples of what the evangelists did back in Herbert Armstrong's time during Bible studies. It reflects this very thing, that they didn't put much value on him being God's apostle and what they might receive from him. Self-evident.

...if you will seek her as silver and search for her as hid treasure... So, it's an attitude of mind and thinking toward what's being given and how much we really desire it. **...then you shall understand the fear of the Eternal.** Those men didn't understand that. They didn't come close to understanding the fear of the Eternal, to fear not growing, to fear not crying out to God for insight, knowledge, and understanding, to be received week by week. They didn't do any of this.

Is it any wonder what we had in Laodicea? Is it any wonder what we had in an Apostasy?

...you shall understand the fear of the Eternal and find the knowledge of God. So, that mindset to fear not being able to think this way, not having this kind of a mind, not to treasure God's word and God's way and understanding how we get it. But if we do, it says we'll find the knowledge of God.

For the Eternal gives wisdom. We learn in God's Church that's the only way you can receive wisdom because it isn't a worldly wisdom that any of us want. That just sucks. We want wisdom that comes from God because it's of the mind of God. He's the authority, all powerful, and He gives everything that's true and right.

Out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding. So, God's the source. That's what it's saying. We have to go there to receive it. We have to cry out for it if we want it.

He lays up sound wisdom for the righteous, a shield to those who walk uprightly. There are things in our lives we learn that are protective, that protect our way, protect what we're doing because we have confidence and trust in it.

He keeps the paths of judgment and preserves the way of His saints. So, if we're doing the things that are right and striving to do what's right God is there to give us everything we need. He preserves the way of all of us, those who have been set apart for holy use and purpose. We've all been called for that purpose.

Verse 9—Then you will understand righteousness. That says a lot, "Then you will understand." **That's how we come to understand what is righteous, judgment, and what is right in every good path.** It's a beautiful thing. The more we come into unity with God and know what is right, not just having our opinion about what is right, because that isn't so

important, and sometimes it's actually just wrong. We learn in time that things we've had opinions about in judging in God's Church there are so many things of those things in time we've learned that they've just been wrong.

When wisdom enters into your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your life. So, that's when it becomes more exciting, in that respect, what God does give us. That's why I'm so excited about the Feast, because I see what God's going to give us, I see what the purpose is, and that gives me encouragement because of where we are in time, and gives even more encouragement in that regard, stirs, and inspires. We need that, we truly do.

Discretion or purpose if you will, shall preserve you. So, if we have purpose and agreement with God, because of what He's doing and we see how it fits together, that's incredibly valuable to us, it really is.

Discretion or purpose shall preserve you; Understanding shall keep or guard you. So, those things actually guard our life, our spiritual life. So, as we have those things we're protected, candidly. We have protection that's automatic from God by power and might.

...to deliver you from the way of evil. That's a part of it. Because the more we're at one with God, the more we're in unity with God the more that we're able to see the way of evil. The more we see it, if we really see it, and we're in agreement with God, the more we hate what is wrong.

To deliver you from the way of evil, from one who speaks perverse things. So, this has been a big thing in God's Church through time where certain things have happened to God's people when some have come along. God has allowed that to be. He's allowed certain things to exist within the Body to try and test others within the Body to see what they're going to do. He's allowed things to be there that in many ways just weren't a part for that purpose, to learn from it, to be able to learn to judge properly from it.

And so, those things have existed in times past in very big ways, and God has allowed that for a purpose. It's like the wheat and the chaff, there's a purpose for it being together and because of God's way and what we're to learn.

And so, when someone comes along and says something that isn't right, it tests us. What are we going to do? Like I mentioned last Sabbath, we shouldn't remain silent. If something this perverse comes along from someone else and that's a primary environment in which it can come at us to deceive or to hurt or to tear down or to weaken, and those are the things where you just have to stand firm, say, "No, I don't agree with that. That doesn't go along with things we're being taught at all." Whatever.

If someone has the audacity to say something, as an example, against God's apostle, or against something that God's apostle has stated within sermons? I just gave a sermon last Sabbath and not too long after it was over already heard of a comment that was made that came out by an opinion of something that was different, that they saw things differently. Think, why would you

even discuss such a thing? If you see it differently keep your mouth shut until you've prayed about it at least. Please, do me that favor. Do the congregation that favor.

And so, sometimes those things just boggle my mind, what we can do as human beings, what can quickly come out of our mouths without thought, without thinking. We're to guard our lips. We're to keep guard of what we say.

I'm going to remind you of the one thing that's happened of recent time that we've talked a lot about because God wants us to learn from it. It's that stupid Covid thing! And if for nothing else, what it could do for the Church to learn from has been a blessing. You think, how can that be a blessing, hundreds of thousands have died? Well, you know what? There are millions and hundreds of millions that are about ready to die, and it agrees with God's purpose for the end of the age.

Because God's purpose isn't about saving human life. On the contrary. All human life has to die. That's why God revealed, made clear that in the Millennium everybody is going to die. There was a time in God's Church where it was like, "Nobody is going to die; isn't that wonderful? During the thousand years nobody dies. When they're of a mature age, kind of like baptism, when you're ready for baptism you can be baptized, and as you've grown in God's Church in the Millennium, once you get to that certain point then you can be resurrected. That's how it's going to happen for a thousand years. Nobody has to die."

It's like, well, hmmm. Then in time God showed, revealed that didn't quite go along with God's word. It didn't really quite go along with God's purpose and God's plan for creating us as human beings in physical bodies. He helped strengthen us and brought us to the point of that being made clear, everyone will die.

So, people who live on into the Millennium, they're going to experience what it's like to get old. Something that I am not enjoying so much. It's not a fun process. When you're young it doesn't seem like it's going to happen or it's real, but when you're older and you've knocked on the door a few times of going to sleep, it's real. And what an awesome thing when you know it's all in God's hands and His timing. What more could we want? Incredible.

The main thing I think that bothers a lot of people is maybe the amount of suffering one might have before that point in time. Because people talk about, sometimes when they get older— young people don't talk about it—but when you get up to that point in time it's like, "You know, just falling asleep in the chair, that would be so good." It would be because suffering is not fun. Who wants to suffer, you know?

My experience with heart attacks is that you don't have to suffer too long. When it hits you? Now cancers, that's another matter. There are some things that are really, really bad, things that can happen to us in physical life. But we're to experience all the different things of human life to learn to thank God He has a plan, that this isn't what it's all about. This is where we're

to learn. This is where we're to make choices. It's an awesome plan because it can't be done any other way to create Elohim. What a marvel!

When you see how those things fit together it's like, awesome! Because it's important that all people learn about loved ones when they die. It's important to experience those kinds of things, things about life and death. That's just the tip of the iceberg. Much more to learn.

I'm going full circle back to this Covid thing, which is where I was at, it's amazing how it's benefited the Church. Because there has been great value in that to help us to grow, to help us mature in things because you have to experience certain things in life to become more deeply convicted of specific areas of life, things that God is teaching us and molding.

It's not just by knowledge. God can't just pump knowledge at us. We were having a discussion before services here about how Club used to be. I had one teacher as a minister, the primary thing I took from him, was able to learn from him, through him, was his ability to ask questions and to force people to think in order to come to the truth or the conclusion of why something is true.

It wasn't because we had these inspired margins. Because most of the time someone, if a question was asked in Spokesman's Club, we had this topic session at the beginning and someone would get up and ask questions, and generally one of the rules was you were to ask about a difficult scripture and explain it. Hands would go up and different ones would have their Bibles there and they'd start reading—you could depend on it—certain scriptures. Which is fine, to a point, certain scriptures there that explained what that verse was really about.

But this individual would ask questions of them and others to reveal that they didn't understand why that was the answer to that scripture, to that verse, because they didn't understand. They had the answer by knowledge, but they didn't understand it. If you don't understand it, it's not in your mind yet.

So, there are things that we go through and experience in life that help us to learn and understand why God has said some of the things He has. It isn't a matter of just funneling knowledge into our brains. It's not like going to school and having knowledge. Think about that when you get farther up into school, into high school, and then university, if that's where someone chooses to go, or something else, and now you have to apply certain things.

Like one I hated, calculus. Hated it, hated it. Still do. Won't have anything to do with it. I don't have the mind for it. Don't even like it. But I love math! So, I became ruined at that point with mathematics because when it got into calculus I didn't see the practical application until it was too late, and if you fall behind in it, it's too late.

So, it applied to matters of physics and so forth, which I didn't know. It wasn't being taught. If you can see the application of something and understand how something works and why then knowledge can make a huge difference. That's how God works with us. There are things He teaches us, even in knowledge in the beginning, but later as we're baptized, we have to learn

and grow in understanding of why these things are there, and it comes through what we experience.

And so, we have experienced something unique concerning a shot. Why? Opinions. Opinions. Opinions. Opinions. Opinions. Opinions. We were flooded with opinions. We were flooded with things over TV. I loved one question asked recently about this one individual who was pushing a lot of this stuff, "Do you have stock in any of the pharmaceuticals? Do you have investment?" Surprise, surprise, he wouldn't answer it.

There are people who make choices and decisions, and especially in the world we learn from that, they have a motive. What is their motive? You think it's good? Most people in human life don't have totally good motives for doing things. Politicians, is it always a good motive because they're altruistic in every way and want the best for other people and want to fight for them with all their being? Or is it the next election? Is it their own pocketbook? Is it their own living? Well, you learn from that, and I hope we understand.

So again, I value what we went through with Covid, but a lot of people died in the world. So, what is more important? Those? The loss of life of those who died, who are going to be resurrected in the Great White Throne, or the fact that what God is creating because of who is called now can benefit from the lessons from it? Which is more valuable?

Those lives are important to God. He loves them, loves all of His creation. But the overwhelming majority of all human life in the last 6,000 years is intended to be in the last resurrection. That's their time. That's when they're going to be drawn, and called, and worked with. Not before that.

Some might ask, "Is that fair?" With God, yes. It's God's plan. It's God's plan to create and mold His Family in the most productive, meaningful way, the way which gives the greatest ability, if you will, to accomplish that to all. Then we learn about human nature and God teaches us more and more there are going to be an awful lot, an awful lot amount of people at the end of the Great White Throne who make the choice they don't want it.

So, the merciful thing? Death for all eternity, never to be resurrected from again. It's an awesome plan. Because that can't be around God's Family. It can't be around, period.

And if we haven't learned the lessons of what it's like to have a spirit being around, and angelic beings around, who are demonic, over the past 6,000 years hurting mankind, trying to thwart God's plan, perversion in thinking, stirring up wars, stirring up evil minds to accomplish perverse and sick things, if we can't learn from that experience of life once we learn what it's all about and what some of this comes from, much of it, and realize this can't be around. Yet God has allowed it to be around so we can experience it. He allows it within the Church. He allows it within the world because we're to learn from all this.

And so, when it's all said and done you would think the choice would be a lot easier. "I love God's way. I want God's ways. I don't want any other way because every other way is of the

mind of that being, Lucifer, who turned against God and wanted his own way, had his own opinions about what God was doing.” Dangerous opinions from self.

The more I think about this as I’m speaking about it, to think about opinion, just the word kind of makes me sick. It’s like, I don’t really think I want to have an opinion. I’m a little fearful of opinions.

Now, something that is said because it’s true and right and right down the line because it comes from God, then that’s great because that’s not an opinion, it’s just true. I’d far rather rest there. That’s what we should strive for.

I hope we’re cautious of opinions. I hope we’re going to become—because there lot of it still exists in God’s Church. Do we become leery, far more leery of things we hear in the news, of things we take side with? We can learn from certain things, but you know what the primary thing you can learn from in that? Is that it all fails. It’s all going the wrong way. They all have the wrong motives and the wrong purpose in everything that’s being done.

There is nothing right being done out there in the world. And if you think there is, we need a little washing in the mind yet inside. Get out the bleach, cleanse the mind thoroughly, wash it clean, make it white. That’s what we should all want because the way of this world just isn’t right in everything. They’ve got everything upside down. Everything is messed up. You look at it. Now, are there some things that people do that can be good in how they do it? Yes. Won’t go into the motives of different things, but even there it’s not God’s good yet until it’s of God. May have to think about that for a while.

Anyway, what an awesome thing to be at one with God and get away from the opinions of this world. Today, that’s all the news is, basically, is opinion. There are some things been looking for on TV to find some news coming across about some things happening in some other countries.

It’s just like this thing in Ukraine. It’s taken a back seat. People were shaken up for a little while. WWII was being talked about, nuclear war, nuclear weapons, and for a little while people were not so sure where this might be heading. What’s sad is as they go to sleep, more and more to sleep, it’s exactly what’s coming. Sad, human life, human experience. We’ve got to go through it to learn what’s right, to learn to appreciate what is true and right.

The last verse I read is, **To deliver you from the way of evil, from the one who speaks perverse things.**

Then Proverbs 21. Again, Proverbs is just filled with things having to do with the wisdom, with having, attaining, desiring wisdom, growing in wisdom. And to learn and understand it’s about the mind of God, the spirit of God, the being of God, the thinking of God, the word of God. That’s what it’s about. That’s wisdom.

Proverbs 21:1—The king’s heart is in the hand of the Eternal, as the rivers of water, He turns it wherever He wants. In other words, there is no one who rules except God allows it,

and if God desires to move something in a specific direction He will. There's a lot there. Different ones who are allowed into power at different times, some of those things have, candidly, happened to teach God's people and to bring about the end of an age in a very specific manner.

People make their own choices and decisions but there are situations where God intervenes to mold and fashion, to allow certain things to take place, or to cause them to come to take place, if you will, because He's molding the course of life. He allows man a lot of choices in that and governments a lot of choice in that, and the wars that take place, and allows those wars. But again, God's in charge. Could stop it at any time.

So, when things continue on in certain things that are evil, God allows it to exist because people are going to be resurrected out of every age and they're to learn from those things just as much as—I've said it over and over again within the Church—within the ministry my primary teaching has been of what not to do and what to do because of what is right that comes from God. There are things that were being done that just weren't right.

We have to go through things to learn all that, and so does mankind in general, just on a physical plane as we begin to learn about God's way of life, or as individuals begin to learn about it. They have to compare that to things that they lived and experienced and saw, and to see that it wasn't right. Nothing was right.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Eternal, as the rivers of water, He turns it wherever He wants. Every way of man is right in his own eyes. "Every way of man is right in his own eyes." That's why the word "opinion." That's what this is. Because we agree with something, we have an opinion, that means by its very definition, "That's my way of seeing this." "That's the way I see it."

That's how disagreements come into being because two people of two different opinions are in disagreement. They're both wrong because it's their opinion unless something comes from God. Then you better be sure that you're right with God. So, if something comes from God we have to measure and judge from that, "Is this of God?" And if it's of God then it's of us too, it's what we agree with, it's what we live.

That's what's beautiful about God's Church, we come into unity and agreement, are growing in that because it's of God. What could be more desirable?

Every way of man is right in his own eyes. That comes from God. That's what God says. That's the way we are as human beings. So, that means that's our battle, because as a whole this is the way we are naturally.

...but the Eternal ponders, weighs, measures the hearts. So, He looks at us, we are being judged, not God, not God's way. Yet man does and doesn't even know it. People in the Church have done that and not even known it. The majority of who have ever left have done that, they've judged God. They don't see it that way. No, they judge something else that they found

fault with that was wrong and why they made the choice they did, so they have a reason. Because that's their opinion, their way.

It's really very basic and very simple, but we make it hard sometimes as human beings because we don't call a spade a spade.

Every way of man is right in his own eyes, but the Eternal ponders the hearts. That's what God is concerned about, what's inside, what can be worked with.

To do righteousness and judgment is more acceptable to the Eternal than sacrifice. Isn't that amazing that there are so many things in the Old Testament like this but really not understood on a spiritual plane in that regard until the Church came along, as a whole. Now, God taught different ones at different times and worked with them, and they came to understand various things of the spirit because of what God gave them, but as far as what was being taught and what people, others could grasp, really wasn't there until the establishment of the Church. Then began to reveal and show these things, that this is what God desires, what is right and true.

It's not just a matter of sacrifice, and yet we have to sacrifice. But it has to be by choice, and what we're sacrifice is self. So, "To do righteousness," it's what we live, "and judgment," to learn to judge right, "is more acceptable than all the sacrifices ever given throughout time," as far as what was offered upon the altar, if you will.

Jeremiah 9:23—Thus says the Eternal, let not the wise glory in their wisdom, neither let the mighty glory in their might, let not the rich glory in their riches. Well, that's pretty tough because that's just the way of mankind. So, God says don't let this get you because this is what tends to get people. Power, wealth, various things, might, goes to the head. Like someone who, if you will, has high aptitude, great memory, knowledge, a professor type (I'm just kidding), someone who has a sharp mind.

I think of one evangelist who that hit really, really, really, really, really hard and it destroyed him early on. They began to destroy others that they we're teaching. But he was known to be a very sharp individual, a sharp mind book wise, could remember things. But he destroyed so many it's not even funny because it went to his head, because that's the way he saw himself and he wanted others to see himself that way.

So, he would sit on the front row, open a book, while God's apostle was giving a sermon. The student's reaction to that, because I heard different ones who are ministers make comment like this, "Look! He can sit up on the front row there reading a book and digest everything that was being said in the sermon." Hmmm. That's a talent we all want, isn't it, or do you want to incline your ear and make sure you're really listening to what's being said? Because he was one of the ones too that kind of stayed at home during the Bible studies. Hmmm. It's not too hard to figure these things out.

Amazing, the history we've gone through. But we have to be able to see those kinds of things in order to become more convicted of what's right and what's wrong because thousands lived what was wrong in this kind of thinking and what it did to their minds.

So, to let someone who is really sharp, let that go to your mind to where you feel like you're better than others, you're lifted up above others—because that's exactly what happens—is just wrong. It stinks.

Or because of wealth. You see that so often in the world, that this is a way people have been. Now this snooty type of thing and looking down on others and looking at servants in a various way and treating people in a certain way because you're so much better than them because you have a lot of wealth, and so you must be better.

Or because of power. A lot of times these two even go together, and when they're that way people just get raised up with all kinds of air, and it just gets bigger and bigger, and you can't tell them anything.

Trying to think if I should say anything or how to say it. I think of elections, and I hope time doesn't go on much longer. We've always hoped that. But I think of one case if someone were to come back. It's kind of my nightmare because it's that "nobody can tell anything, and everything is right," and it's a head that...it's big. That's just what it is. That's a sad, sad commentary on human beings, that people can be demeaned, talked down on, slandered, and someone to think they're right in doing it is really sick. It's a sick mind, sadly.

(Anyway, better shut up. People be out to hang me up to dry somewhere out in the woods, which no matter what is said it's going to make everybody upset. But such is life.)

So, we live in a world like this where people are swayed by things. Oftentimes then on the other side of this are people who respect and look up to such things. You think, that's the wrong thing to lift up. God should be lifted up. God's word. But people can't with God's word because they don't know it. And so, that's a bit of a dilemma. So, we learn from that.

But let those who glory... There is that which you want to lift up, **glory in this, that they understand and know Me.** Because it's God that's being glorified. We understand God is to be glorified in how we live our life, and to do anything else is to bring some shame to that, obviously, to take God's name in vain, if that be the case as well, because of what we carry.

But let those who glory glory in this, that they understand and know Me, that I am the Eternal who exercises loving kindness. I can't help when I read something like this to think about how so many people in times past, especially in the world, but even sometimes within the Church, looked upon God and things read in the Old Testament as though He was hard and not fair at times. Not understanding that it's filled with God's love, not grasping God's plan and God's purpose and things He was working with with Israel, His incredible patience over and over again. Then to see that throughout scriptures, and where you go through it to understand what comes from God, what the mind of God is based on, well, it's a love that we as human beings

don't have. Human beings really can't grasp it without God's spirit. We come to understand that in time.

I've said it a lot, and it needs to be said a lot more. I think of Herbert Armstrong's good example, that the best a human has that he could give an example of was a mother's love towards her own child. That love, he said, is still selfish. It isn't God's love because God's love is to everyone. So, we're restricted as human beings by selfishness, by a carnal mind. Now, it's a beautiful thing, but it isn't God's love.

That's why I think of some who had remained Philadelphian and they didn't want to be called Laodicean. They couldn't accept that, because if they did, they'd have to repent and see themselves for what they really were, and it's just too horrible to think, "I'm a Laodicean? You're calling everybody in God's Church, that everybody was Laodicean, and we all fell asleep? You're just sick."

So, the human response to that by those who have been in the Church, you know, because of the spiritual state they were in, they couldn't grasp it. But what an incredible thing to see the incredible uniqueness of this, that the only way to see God's love is to be impregnated with God's spirit, to receive of God's spirit on a continual basis in our lives. That's how we come to appreciate and see that more and more and love Him more and more.

...that I am the Eternal who exercises loving kindness, judgment. Everything we learn from this, if we learn why God did things the way He did we would... If we really grasped how God worked at different times, of different individuals and throughout the Old Testament and how He dealt with them, it teaches us a lot about God, about His love, about His mercy, but also about judgment and why certain things were judged in the manner that they were. We can even learn other things as a result of that.

There have been people through time who, and it still goes on, but it came out of a distorted protestant world, where there are things looked at in the Old Testament to give people what they think is some kind of right, even in race or something better because of race, and they distort scriptures to do that. There have been incredible prejudices because of some of those teachings that have existed in the world and in certain parts of the world through time in traditional Christianity that have really screwed things up and added even greater problems.

I think of just one example alone that comes to my mind. I think of how Moses—Miriam, and Aaron, and how they found fault with Moses—when he married the Ethiopian woman. Now, if people understood that you can learn from that, that there was a judgment, and what that judgment was, you can learn about what is true in the matter. What was God's judgment? It was against Aaron and Miriam. It wasn't against Moses, that he did anything wrong. It was fine what he did, but they found fault with him because of what he had done.

Anyway, it was Aaron and Miriam and their attitude toward what Moses taught, teaching, and guiding and directing, doing, and finding fault with it instead of trying to learn from it. What is God's judgment in the matter? Well, it was against them, not against Moses. It speaks reams.

Over and over and over again in scripture. I think of David when he went in and took of the loaves, of something that shouldn't have been taken. I'm not even going to go there and tell you what it's all about because I've done it in times past. But there are people in God's Church who never understood that, never understood the spirit of it. Well, all you have to do is, what was God's judgment? Did He condemn him for it? Amazing.

So, we can learn from God's judgment in scripture. We can learn more about the mind of God by what God has done and hasn't done. That's how we are to learn. The spirit of the matter, what is the mind of God? Then it helps us to judge matters because we see the right way.

Anyway, it goes on to say, **and righteousness in the earth.**

Ezekiel 36:16. It's amazing how much is in scripture, some that we're going to bring out during the Feast. I just have to throw a few more things out there once in a while. It's bad, I know, but it's exciting. Anyway, it's amazing how many things in the Bible have to do with the Church. There is much more in there than what we've ever known, and I mean the Church in the end-time. That's why there are times that I have tried to press upon everyone the importance of understanding how blessed we are at the end of an age though so small, how important what God is doing in the Church. Because there is so much written about it. It's a focal point.

It's just like this Covid thing. It's like, "You're comparing things of Covid with the Church, a few hundred people on the earth?" Yep, sure am. Because it revealed a lot. Still revealing things because it's still a tool to teach. God is using that, inspiring that to be given to the Church so we can learn from that.

I've been so thankful to see so many people that have just been outright about it, "Yeah, I had a battle with that in the beginning and this is what I went through." You don't have to come and tell me, but I've been thankful that there have been those that have offered that information. There are others who did certain things that probably would have been good if they'd come to me and said, "You know what? I said things I shouldn't have said, and I spoke up in a way I shouldn't have spoken up," especially when it's in the ministry.

Ezekiel 36:16—Moreover, the word of the Eternal came unto me, saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way. Now, what's amazing when you go through Ezekiel 5 and some of those places, God revealed to us that so much of this is about what happened at the end of the age, what would happen with a third and third, the remnant, and so forth.

Then in other parts of it, especially toward the end in this area of scripture God powerfully speaks out against the ministry and what took place in the Church and what people were doing and what had happened by this time, and basically calling it murder. Taking the life of people.

“In the Church? You sure that applies to the Church, that could be about the ministry at the end-time?” And the reality is, yes.

Spiritual life is far more important than physical life. It’s the worst murder there can be if someone is responsible for hurting someone to the point that they could go farther away and have their minds damaged and a person having part in that.

So again, **Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way.** History over and over again. History. It’s happened again and again and again.

I think of something I heard on the news, I think it was this morning or last night, when someone was going through, and they were talking about the economic situation and what had happened at a certain time going back at different points and different presidencies and times in history here, and they were going on about, “Yep, history has a way of repeating itself.” I thought, it sure does because we do the same stupid things over and over again, so we get the same result.

So, if one thing happens you can almost look at... I don’t even know if you should use the word “almost.” You can basically look at things that have taken place. It’s like presidencies. Why does one get in? Well, how do human beings think? “They didn’t do this, they didn’t do that, we need this one in,” so they bring in a different one. They swing back to the other party. Then it comes along, and he’s done certain things wrong, and we want him out of there. We want to get the other party out there, and congress, so, we’re so fickle, really kind of stupid when it comes down to it as far as things are and how they work. It’s like, it’s just history repeating itself because we do the same stupid things over and thinking someone is going to really fix it. They’re not going to fix it.

So, what’s your only choice with democracy? Replace them and hope for the next one, because maybe he is listening, and maybe he’s going to do the opposite. And that’s what they do, they do the opposite. So, what happens? Certain cycles even with economy, even with the printing of money and all those stupid decisions that are made that hurt that create inflation.

Crazy world we live in. Think, yeah, history repeats itself. We’re so stupid. Human beings, we need help. We need deliverance from what we are. We need help, big help, and it’s coming.

Their way was before Me as the uncleanness of one removed (separated due to uncleanness). **Therefore, I poured My fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land and polluted by their idols.** I think of the world today and the pollution that’s out there because of false Christianity and so forth.

Verse 19—So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the land according to their way. So, we’ve gone through that where God has shown Israel why they were taken into captivity. He revealed to Judah why they were taken into captivity and why they were allowed back. I mean, there are some incredible things to be learned from in that and God has taught us as a Church. Then why He allowed Israel then to become scattered and

how through time then we finally learned where the physical nations of Israel were, the blessings that God had given because of the promise He gave to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to the end of the age here up to the coming of God's Kingdom.

He says, **verse 19—So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the land according to their way, and according to their doings I judged them.** So, God judged them as to what should happen, what should take place. All a part of a plan and purpose to bring about His greater purpose. I think just about the fact that this was to be the greatest nation the world has ever known. Incredible!

Then when they entered into the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name. Well, some obviously, as we, even before we get to this, already did this. But going on here there is that which is spiritual too.

Then when they entered into the nations where they went they profaned My holy name—when they said to the people, These are the people of the Eternal, and have come out of His land. But, it goes on to say here, kind of an awkward translation, **But I had pity for.** It's not "pity for." That's not the right translation. **But I spared My holy name, which is the house of Israel.**

Now, God did certain things with the nation of Judah, but so many of these things aren't about the physical nation of Judah. So many of these things aren't about a physical Israel. They're about a spiritual Israel, they're about God's people. So much of Ezekiel as you go through it and read chapters just before this, it's talking about things that even happened at the end-time, and then things that took place as far as the scattering of God's Church, if you go back to chapter five especially, and six, seven, eight, some of those in there. It's really more about—you can try to read something physical into it—but it's not about what happened to the physical nations, it's things that literally happened to God's Church.

And so, there is so much written that compares certain things that Israel did go through, and Judah did go through, but the focus is about that which is spiritual of God's people, especially as we come up to the end-time. Because most of the prophecies even in the Old Testament there, they're about the end-time, where we happen to live at this time.

So again here, when you see those things and you go through and focus on some of them, "I scattered them among the nations," we are scattered among the nations. Small. But we are scattered all over the place. "And they were dispersed throughout the land according to their way and according to their doing." So, when you look at what happened to the Church after the Apostasy especially, that's something that took place in a very powerful way.

We were scattered. We had a beginning there of choices and what God was going to bring out of all that, speaking of a remnant, but as far as what was scattered, what happened? Well, if you look at the different things that popped up, different ones, what did they do? "They were dispersed throughout the land according to their way, and according to their doings I judged

them.” That happened with every group, every organization that began to pop up. They came together because of the way they thought, their thinking.

Sometimes it had to do with certain doctrines, sometimes it had to do with certain teachers, evangelists or whatever that had worked with the groups. But people were attracted to various ones because of what? Their ways, their opinions, the way they saw things. It wasn't because of God; it was because of how the mind thinks. They were divided up accordingly throughout the world.

I think of some of the bigger organizations - throughout the world and people attracted to the ones that were according to their ways. That's what we're talking about here. "According to their ways and their doings," God says He judged them. So, judgment still went on, still continued on. I don't want to go into that because some of that has to do with the Feast.

Then they entered into the nations where they went, and they profaned My holy name. So, things didn't get better, they got worse. Worse and worse and worse to where it's become rather protestant. Because without repentance, without changing, when certain things come along when given the opportunity, if they're not accepted this is what happens. We're judged.

"Then they went in and entered into the nations where they went, and they profaned My holy name, when they said to the people, These are the people of the Eternal..." That's what everybody believed. "We're the Church." "We're the Church." "No, we're the Church." They gave money according to—because that's tithes—where they believed God's people were. "... and have come out of His land." Hmm, scattered, out of His land. It's His Church.

"But I spared My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went." It's a beautiful thing when we see what God is doing and it's not about the numbers, it's about a remnant. The size, that's in God's hands.

Verse 23—Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God... So, when we read something like this it's easy to look at it and say this is about the nation, the physical nation of Israel. No, the house of Israel, we understand, when we're talking about something on a spiritual plane, when God speaks about His Church, it's the Israel of God. Not yet Israel, we're not yet born Israel so we're in a process.

Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus says the LORD God, I am not doing this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for My name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. So, I will sanctify My great name. What a beautiful thing. Out of all this where everything was sent because Ezekiel is about the scattering. That's why it begins in chapter five about a third and a third and a third that would happen to Israel and the division that would take place in the end-time, candidly, and about the remnant that it talks about there as well. Then this is a continuation of some of the story after it's already talked about some being guilty of what they were in the ministry.

So, I will sanctify My great name. The Church of God! It's about God! It's about the fact that He's going to at the end-time bring out of that which was in such chaos a small amount that will be sanctified for a special use, holy use and purpose, to fulfill and accomplish something, being a remnant, if you will.

So, I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations will know that I am the Eternal. So, there will come a time. Most will be in the Great White Thorne when that education will be given as to what happened in this time period. Much is going to be taught in the Millennium about what took place. There is going to be a lot of teaching about what happened in the Church in Philadelphia, Laodicea, the Apostasy, and afterward.

...says the LORD God, When I am sanctified. God set apart what He's going to accomplish and fulfill for His name's sake. Then when others come to grasp and comprehend that they will be moved by that when they see it and they'll set apart, have the choice to set apart God and God's name.

For I will take you from among the nations and gather you out from the earth, and I will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your filthiness; and from your idols will I cleanse you. This was the beginning of the process. This is everything we had to go through after the Apostasy. God had to do this with a whole Body that had been asleep and weak spiritually. Certain things had to be reestablished, the first, and then God gave more, Passover and then Pentecost. Incredible what took place.

Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean. Little at a time, given a little here and a little there, and those who stuck with it and fought and continue to yield were able to continue to grow.

And I will clean you from your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. We had to go through things about government. There was such distrust it was easy to understand why people felt like the church has to have more of a worldly type of organization of boards and voting. That's all you can call it. One big group claimed, "Well, we never vote." Yet this council of elders would get together and make decisions. "Well, how did you make that decision that you all agree?" "Well, we would say yes or no." "Hmm. That's not a vote, eh?" The way we deceive ourselves sometimes is incredible.

I'm just going to throw it in right now. I remember one meeting we had in Toledo. So, it was allowed to exist for a time, that we had to have this in order to be able to grow and come out of what we had gone through because there was such horrible distrust, and understandably so. And so, it was like if different ones were able to have their input, but it didn't take very long for God to reveal very clearly, "This is not how I work."

And basically, we came down to the reality that if you want something different... So, we had the group up there one night that wanted to take the *News Watch*. "Well, who's writing it? Well, I am. Hmm. And you want to take it and proceed with it, and you want to take the name of the group, you want to take the money that's there." I was at a point there that I thought, "Fine, just take it all. God will continue to work in the manner that He is, and those who believe that will follow."

There were some other things that they wanted. I wish I could think of some, but anyway, basically they were saying, "You are to teach up here." They were getting a little bit tired of me going down to Cincinnati and then maybe off to Dublin and wherever it might be. It's like, "No, no, you're our pastor and we have the board here and this is what we're going to do."

It's like it finally hit me, "No, they're not. This is God's and I'm going to fight for it." So, we went and got a lawyer and letters were sent out to all of them, cease and desist, and don't touch a thing or we're going to come after you. Anyway, that's what we needed at that time, and it worked. But it's incredible the different phases of things we've gone through in having to make choices. But God was showing us that government does not work through a board.

Now, we have a board in the church for the corporate part of a physical organization that we have to have as far as government is concerned, but we know how the Church functions and we understand there's an apostle, and we know that everyone who is in unity will do according to what God gives His apostle. That's the way it works.

So, thankfully we have that kind of unity and oneness, although there have been battles against that at different times. But that's, again, about government. How does God work? That's something that Herbert Armstrong had to learn from the beginning. The Church doesn't function by different ones, deacons and so forth, of a church who hire and fire ministers and so forth to teach certain things that they want to be taught. It doesn't work that way. That's not how God's spirit works. Never did in the Church.

So again, I hope you understand why we're going through some of these kinds of things. To be reminded of government, that we have to be convicted of government. And if we're not, God brings that out.

I was just trying to think. Is there anyone on that board—and I don't think there is—that's around anymore.

...but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. So, I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations... And so, it's not about being big and being nations. It's not about that. It's not about the size. It's about the Church and what happened to the Church, where we were scattered. Because none of them are going to learn much of anything until the Millennium, and then the Great White Throne, when history is talked about and things that have happened to help them to learn the process and the struggles that

we do with the Old Testament and things in the New Testament. All these things will be taught to help people to learn and be able to make right choices.

So, it goes on to say, again here, **I am the Eternal, says God, When I am sanctified in you before your eyes.** God is doing something in the Church that no one else sees but it's taking place. He's doing it, and in His time make it known to others, even to those who were scattered.

For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out from the earth, and will bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you... Already talked about that. ...**and a new heart also will I give you.** You know, I think about that. It says, "a new spirit." I think, you know what, it was different after the Apostasy. It was almost like a calling again. I don't know how to put it any other way. Yet it wasn't. But in a way, in a manner it was spiritually.

When you're awakened spiritually from a sleep and all of a sudden things begin to come at you and you're seeing on a plane and on a level government, Passover, Pentecost, things in a way that you didn't see in the same manner before, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, the importance of them, the importance of treasuring them.

I remember the first time we had a Sabbath service after the Apostasy, and it was like it was such a blessing just to have that ability, to have something that most of the Church had given up right then. Here we were able to come together in a small group and different ones striving to cling on to. We were incredibly weak, incredibly weak. All the groups were in different areas. It was a horrifying time, it really was. That first service, I was sick. When I got up and preached, I had notes, but when I was done, candidly, I don't know what I said because I was so sick inside.

Because all I could see was this small group of people, and I thought, "Look at the devastation and the groups that were there Sabbath by Sabbath before." I can't describe to you that feelings of sickness, sick to the pit of my being. Then after that it started getting better and better and better. But it was incredible that we had to go through certain things. The more God began to give to us and restore to us again, if you will, or revitalize again and to add to, like Passover, Pentecost, other things, it was exciting what God was giving as far as the Church was concerned.

So, I think of different things that we had, like the ten virgins. Exciting when we went through that when we began to understand that. Exciting when we began to understand what the stones of the temple all being cast down, what that was all about. On and on it goes. And so, it was like we see things now on a plane that was better and richer than what we had before. Which was because of Laodicea.

I'm sorry about reminiscing at times about some of these things going back and telling about some of our history, but it's my life, and therefore, it's very much a part of your life because

we've all been called to the same thing. That's very much what Ezekiel is about, what God did to the Church, how He's judged the Church, how He's continuing to judge it, how He's sanctifying Himself out of the midst of all that mess.

He's refining, as it says here, the sprinkling of the water. He'll clean us from the filth and from all your idols. You say, what idols? Well, just like Passover alone, government alone. It was screwed up at that point. It was like, what do we do? Well, when God begins to reveal how He's working again then it became clear. Things about Passover, it began to become clear, things were being strengthened that were beginning to be weak.

He says, **I will put a new spirit, a new heart, and a new spirit in you.** Well, we needed reviving and strengthening spiritually as a Church, and God began to do that with us and began to give us more. He began to give us more knowledge and understanding than we had before. Beautiful!

And I will take away the stony heart. So, it's a continuing process in the Church, something that really never quits, but especially after going through the Apostasy there was that which had to be taken out of the Body because it couldn't be worked with. If after going through something like that and given the opportunity once again to be awakened, if the heart is so hardened that it won't change after some of those things began to be given and we still strive to hold on to our own way, you want to talk about a hardened heart, a stony heart?

So, individually God was taking that out of us, but He was taking it out of the Body as well, what He could work with and what He couldn't work with. Because if individuals won't humble themselves, God can't work with that. If people think that certain things are owed to them within the Body, they don't understand God and God's Church.

I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh. So, as a Body, as a Church that's what God has been doing, giving us the right kind of heart, the right kind of mind, one that desires to be like David. We've had sermons about that. The heart of others as we've talked about of recent time, that's what we desire and that's what God is molding and fashioning within us. It's a beautiful thing.

"And I will give you a heart of flesh." Not the hardness of heart that doesn't learn, that won't learn and change and grow.

And I will put My spirit within you. Candidly, more and more and more. The more at one we become with God is because we're receiving more of His spirit. **And I will put My spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do them.**

So, this is where we are right now, at a time when we're really focusing on judgment and how to judge more and more. So, I'm going to leave off there with Ezekiel. I hope as we go through some of these things more and more leading up to the Feast and especially at the Feast we're going to focus on it even more how the Old Testament very powerfully over and over again is

focusing on this time at the end with the remnant, with PKG, but even more so on the end of the end.