

## The Creation of God's Family, Pt. 3

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This will be *Part 3* of the series entitled *The Creation of God's Family*.

But anyway, to me it's an incredible thing we've been going through and talking about as a matter of a follow-up to some of the things that were done down there, given down there in the Dallas meetings that we had. One thing that's been made very clear is how God has used the ministry in a very unique way at this particular period of time of PKG. Because there's never been a time like it where we've done what we have set out to do. I think this is becoming even clearer as we go through this, especially toward the end of today, some of the statistics and so forth I'll be giving you.

But to me, it's quite incredible because God uses different things at different times to mold and fashion His people. That's what we have to have the vision of, the ability to see that we're not all called to be and do the same things. We're not all called to be in the same place in the sense of God's Family.

It is about God's Family, Elohim. He is doing the creation of that. He has called us, each one of us. That's why we went through the section about a calling. It's so important that we grasp that, that we value it with the kind of mind that we should, in the sense of esteeming it, in the sense of keeping focused on that, and understand how incredibly blessed we are that we have a calling. It's been given to so very few, and to understand what that means then, that God has called us to become a part of a Family where we're going to be kings and priests, do things that we don't even grasp and comprehend. It's not a matter of sex. It's not a matter of male and female. It's not a matter of position and office and so forth. That's why I kind of get a charge out of the disciples that one time when talking about the Kingdom and the two got in kind of an argument back and forth, tussle back and forth of who's going to be greatest in the Kingdom, in the sense of who is going to be with Christ and so forth, and on his right side.

Anyway, whatever the human mind goes through at times and not understanding what the Family is all about, not understanding what God's Kingdom is about and how it functions. The ability as we go through some scriptures here today—we're going to go through very few, but we're going to go through some that talk about this part as far as the Church is concerned—but it's to be able to understand God's Family better as well.

So again, I marvel at seeing what God's done because that's how you learn a lot about what God is doing and how He's doing it, is by seeing what happens to the Church, seeing what takes place within the Church, what things we go through from time to time. I think of Philadelphia and things that Herbert Armstrong did and what God was doing with those individuals that were called at that time.

Though I was called at that particular time, there are things that I grew and learned from in that, but still, those who came through that and have died, who are going to be a part of that 144,000, if you will - again, incredibly unique. Being molded for something that we don't comprehend. We don't know what it was, what it is, but God does.

So, we live by faith. Our lives are in God's hands; He does the molding and fashioning and it's just a choice of us yielding to the process and fitting us into place.

I think about construction a lot when I think of something like this, building a huge building or building any kind of a building, any kind of structure and the things that go into it. Over 6,000 years, God doing that. That's hard to comprehend that things have been going on for so long, a kind of foundation, different ones who were molded and fashioned to be the pinnacle, or the beginning building blocks, if you will, and then things added to it. Incredible.

So again, to see our part, to see what we are going through at this time in our lives it's such an incredible thing that God has given to us that's unique to us. So that's why He's working with us different because something's being molded and fashioned in us that's different. It's not the same as Laodicea and those who successfully came through that period. Because the reality is that wasn't a great period as far as God's Church is concerned.

There are people who did come through, but that's why God says, "I wish that you were hot or cold," because the overall majority, what really stood out the most was the matter of being lukewarm. And yet there are people who died during that period of time who are going to be in the 144,000, who came up, as a whole, from Philadelphia on into Laodicea and succeeded, were sealed if you will. Others continued on and they're scattered all over the place in different groups out here.

God is going to offer many of them a place in His Family. We read about some of that at toward the very end when we look at the point in time when there is going to be the death of around 7,000 people. So, you have 63,000 left that are a part of this process here. Things we don't grasp, things we don't comprehend, things that we don't really know what God is doing and how He is doing it. But we have to choose, if we want this, to yield to the process.

So again, we're going through this about the ministry and things we can learn from it because there are some incredible lessons. Some of the greatest, in that respect, have to do with things that are exceedingly foundational, if you will, mightily foundational as far as importance is concerned. Because the next portion here is about pride and humility, the battle that goes on.

The human mind is filled with pride. Our natural carnal nature is filled with pride. Our nature is "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Those things are difficult for

human beings to see. That's why it takes God's spirit to really be able to see them in self. Now, it's easier to see things in other people, errors, things that are wrong.

But to see things in ourselves and how we actually think? That's a much more difficult process. That's why it takes God's spirit. He knows the heart. He knows the mind. He knows exactly what we think. Nothing is hidden from God. He can work with that through the power of His holy spirit once we're impregnated with it. What a process!

So we go through this process of being called, we go through this process of making a choice for baptism. We have a desire to be rid of all of our sins and the past and to be able to be forgiven of all sins in the future because we learn we have sin, and we'll always have sin in this human life until we're changed. Because we'll always have this human nature, this battle that Paul talks about in the mind that goes on and on and on.

The choice is to fight it or not fight it, to face it or not face it, to justify it or to repent of it. We live that day in and day out. It hasn't been really successful in God's Church. Far more, considering those who have been called, far more have gone by the wayside than those who have continued in the fight. That's astounding but it's important to understand, it's important to address, it's important to be sobered by because that should sober every individual to want to make sure that it doesn't happen to us, that we stay close to God, that we want God's spirit, we need God's spirit, to cry out for God's spirit.

Then we're baptized, we go into a watery grave. We understand what that means. We come up and we're to walk in newness of life. Awesome symbolism. At that point, we have hands laid on us by the ministry - which has escaped far too many people. There is an incredible importance and teachings in God doing things the way He does. Even that shows you how God's spirit comes into your life, how God works. He works through a ministry. It can't happen on our own apart from that process.

And so, our ability to learn, our ability to be guided and directed, that's what God has chosen as the means to lead, guide, and direct us, to teach us Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day. But a lot of people in God's Church lost sight of that a long time ago. That's why we had the Apostasy and things turned out as badly as they did.

So whether it be a matter of anointing when one is sick, to call for an anointed cloth, or to be anointed when one is sick, it points you, again, to God. It's not just going to come between you and God and you skip the process. A lot of people have thought they could do that. God doesn't work that way. He says, "This is what you're to do." It's to remind us. Because we're going to be sick in our lifetime, we're going to need to call upon the elders of the Church if we want God's intervention in our life...or just suffer through it. But that's not obeying God because God tells us when you are you are to do something by command. Call on the elders of the Church, the ministry.

Again, these are simple physical things that point us to God, how God's spirit works because it's a matter of God's spirit. It's a matter of God's government. It's a matter of understanding how it comes into the Church through the ministry. That's God's design and God's purpose so that we understand more about how God works, why God works that way, and to respect that and honor that and be thankful that this is what God is doing.

So, He's not working with us now like He did with Abraham or others where He appeared at different times in different ways even to Abraham, appeared to him as Melchizedek, appeared to him as the representative of God, as being God, in that respect, in human form apart from that occasion even. So Abraham was unique in that respect of what he saw, of what he witnessed in his life.

But you have to consider this is how God had to do it at that time to mold and fashion someone. Because there was no Church. There was no knowledge of all the things that were given to the Church in Christ's time, from that point on. Incredible.

And so, at baptism, we have hands laid upon us by the ministry to receive the impregnation of God's spirit. There is no other way. That's incredible. We can't be a part of the Body of Christ, we can't be a part of the Church of God, we can't be a part of the begotten Family of God unless hands are laid upon us and then God honors that process - as He's called us and drawn us and we've made those choices and we've been obedient to that, sought to be part of it - and so, God gives His holy spirit, the impregnation of it in the human mind. Incredible. Something we really can't comprehend fully. We just see a little bit.

So, let's turn over to Isaiah 57. So again, as I mentioned earlier here, it's not a matter of rank or office as so many people in the human mind look up to or look at in a way that's not balanced. It's not a matter of sex, of male or female. We're learning that. We understand that as far as God's Family is concerned that is not what it's about. And that's because this is how human beings judge. We have to learn we can't judge in the way that human beings judge. So, we have to learn that. We have to understand that.

So, as it was mentioned last Sabbath there are far too many in the Church have seen the ministry in the wrong light. It's been from a vantage point too often from that human mind of pride and how we view that then and look upon that. This is just a matter of looking at this honestly because you can learn from that. No matter what has happened in your life in the Church we're to learn from it. Every member of God's Church is to learn from this process.

**Isaiah 57:15**, again, very basic scriptures here. **For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the holy heights.** Now, some of this wording in the King James is not the best in the sense of how it's translated, so I'm just going to read it as it is. This is God just telling about His relationship with mankind and how He

deals with mankind, how He works with mankind. He's making it clear, "I am the One who dwells in the high and the holy place."

**...and with those of a crushed and humble spirit.** That's the proper translation of that phrase, "and with those of a crushed and humble spirit." That's unique because what's that mean? It's about the Church. How does God dwell with us? We want God to dwell in us. That's how God dwells with us. He dwells within the Church. He seeks to dwell within those in the Church, and that means each individual, each member within the Church. We understand that in ways that much of the Church in times past hasn't grasped. For God to dwell with us means He's going to be in us, His spirit. We want that. We want Him dwelling in us. So, all it's saying here is "and with those of a crushed and humble spirit." In other words, this is what we have to have. We have to begin with the process of self being brought down. That's what it means to be crushed. Because if it's not, it's filled with pride, it's lifted up.

God cannot (will not) work with that because that works against His spirit. It's anti-God, candidly. And so, it's a part of us that we all have to come to see and understand in our thinking and then deal with realistically before God in asking God for help to conquer and overcome so that we think right.

That's why I love the word "repent." "Think differently." I mean, what an incredible word to use. We're to think differently. Beautiful. The only way we can do that is with God's spirit. You can't do it on your own by mustering it up, by pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, and some of the kinds of things that human beings try to do when they try to improve their lives and whatever.

So again, God is letting us know that that better be crushed. You've got to put it down. You've got to crush it down, this matter of pride. That's what it's all about. "And humble spirit." Because they go together. You can't have a humble spirit unless you've been crushing and working to crush, participating in that process of crushing the pride. Sometimes when we're first called we really have it crushed.

I'll never forget my calling. I'll never forget what it took to get my attention. Bull-headed as all get out and I know that I would never have listened about this way of life if I had heard of it. Well, I actually did. While in college I remember going to a laundromat. I don't even know what you call them now, where they have washers and dryers, and you go to do your clothes during the week. So, didn't have them in the apartments, the complexes we had, and places where we lived, but you'd go down there to the laundromat or whatever it is and do your own stuff.

They had *Plain Truths* in there. I remember going through them and looking at them, but nothing gelled, and if I'd heard someone begin then at that point in time in life to tell me various things about God, about the Holy Days, I would have thought they were, well, clearly,

religious fanatics, nuts, and I wouldn't have wanted to be around them. It's like, "I don't have time for that."

I had an aunt that was wacky, in that regard. Spoke in "tongues." I lived with her for a short time helping to take care of her at one time. She had a hip broken so I lived there for a time. It was good for me, had free rent (totally selfish), but I was able to live down in the basement then. She couldn't get down there.

Anyway, I was able to go up and take care of her on occasion then to help her through that process, and every once in a while I'd hear her up there and this stuff that it's like, "Let me out of the house." Even back then it was like gobbledegook and doing a whole bunch of numbers one time I remember. It's like, "You're really whacko!" Then saying things in... I don't know whether it was Latin or whatever it was. She was pretty well educated and was a teacher at one time and I knew she knew Latin. So whether it was Latin or what, I don't know, but it sure didn't make sense to me, and I didn't care to be around to hear it.

So anyway, she would try to talk to me about some of those kinds of things at times and it was like I'd already judged her as being whacky as all get out. So, I know that if someone else had come along and was "churchy" or whatever it might be, what I'd call "churchy," I wouldn't give them the time of day. So what happens to us? Sometimes God does drag us. And you think, who are you resisting? It's like we're fighting all the way.

I've mentioned it many times, the things I had to go through in order for this mind to begin to be receptive to a message later on. Had to wreck my car. Rolled it two and a half times - flipped it two and a half times, not just rolled it. It flipped through the air. Turned it into a V shape. Nice little '65 Mustang convertible at that. Oh, I was filled with so much pride. I was the only one that had a convertible like that in that college town. It wasn't a big college town, it was a junior college, and I rode high on pride.

I'd go out and race that thing against some other cars and the only thing that could beat me in a long distance was a GTO. They were fast off the track. But if it'd been half a mile I could have beat him because Mustangs were good (especially that one there) on the high end. But at the beginning, getting off the track there?

So anyway, those kinds of things there they go to a young person's mind. Had the pipes that when you let off the gas it would make that noise and it was like, "Ooooo....ahhh." So, when you hear people in a car and they have these things, boom, boom, boom, and your windows are shaking a little bit, so you know theirs really are and their minds are scrambled. But anyway, you know what they're doing. They're so filled with pride, and they want everybody else to feel what they're feeling. So, different cars people drive. A lot of time young people feel so great behind the wheel. It's a human thing of pride. That's all it is.

So, God took it away from me. I didn't have insurance. Dumb. So, I had enough money from the wreck, \$350, to buy a Volkswagen. You talk about going down from high to low. But it was what I needed.

Then a good friend of mine I grew up with was killed in Vietnam. That one there really hit me hard because being as young as I was at that point in time (because I went off to college just as soon as I'd turned 17), and when that happened I thought life is so unfair. He didn't get to have a family. He didn't get to experience things. I had a bit of a breakdown at that point. My aunt had some valium in order to help me zone out. It helped me zone out all right. I don't know if she gave me two or what, but anyway, it zoned me out. But anyway, it got rid of that emotion that I was going through because I was broken.

And anyway, I won't go through some of the other things that happened to me at that time, but I had also applied to go to ROTC and had been accepted. About a week later after that all happened I received a letter from some Major in Kansas there, sent me a letter and said, "Don't bother coming to ROTC," or "Don't come." So, I tried to find out what that was all about, and they had no records of it. They said, "But if you received that letter, don't come for the training." So anyway, one thing after another.

And finally, I've told you about I went on to the other college then in another part of Kansas, to full college, and started my junior year there, and we'd go out Friday evenings. Well, it wasn't even evening. It was Friday after the last class, so it was like one or two o'clock we'd go out to this place - I don't know what you'd call it today - but it was a dance place with beer. I mean, they sold beer, and it was a dance hall, and we had all the music out there.

So, just showing you about human nature. I've told you some of these things before. But we have to understand sometimes we have to come kicking and hollering and screaming and fighting. So, one time, I was sitting there (well, just being candid about it, we drank too much). Everybody there drank too much. They'd generally come back pretty soused, whatever, to the big ole six-story kind of a dorm that we had there. There was a rec room at the bottom there and so gals and guys would come there and meet there and continue on with conversations and whatever else.

And while at that dance, that particular dance, there was a gal that I had taken to the dance and I saw her out there dancing with a guy, which we all generally just all mixed, in that respect, as far as friendships were and dancing on the floor. Anyway, I looked out there and God let me see something I'd never seen before. I saw myself. I saw that every person dancing out there was in love with themselves. They weren't interested in the other person they were with; it was about how good they could dance; it was what they looked like when they were up there dancing. It was like, that's my mind. It made me sick.

I left, went back, because that was the lowest part of this process of being humbled, and I actually had a prayer to God at that particular time. Which I didn't know if there was a God. I had this kind of a mind that, like, there was maybe a God that used evolution and that's how we all are there. And I said, "If there is a God..." I won't tell you all the things I said.

But anyway, I went downstairs into that rec room and there I met a football player. I knew some of the football players and this one here I hadn't met so I went up to him. He went into a rage, and he started talking about "You long-haired freak!" Well, I didn't even have long hair at that time. Different things he was saying. I'd looked over at somebody and shrugged my shoulders.

At that moment I looked away he went; I was told his arm went down and he came back up and hit me in the jaw. Right away blood was gushing out, people were coming up to me and asking me, "Do you want us to take you to the hospital or whatever?" "No, no, no." So, I started walking up the stairs, going up the staircase, and I had the towel, somebody gave me a towel. All of a sudden my feeling started coming back and I realized I couldn't close my mouth because it was broken in two places. My front, bottom teeth were out farther. And so, I agreed I need to go to the hospital.

It's kind of interesting the things you go through sometimes. That one there is something that will never be taken away from me because I experienced it, what it took to get me to be able to listen when the time came. So, it wasn't until I went home after that semester, that very night my dad came into the room, 10 o'clock, about 10 o'clock at night, and started telling me about the *US and BC in Prophecy* book, about the Sabbath, about the migrations of Israel. I knew it was true. I didn't read it, he just told me about it.

It was like something went on in the mind and I knew it was true. How can you explain that to someone? How can you tell someone about something that you know in your mind and it's like you've always had this knowledge, but you just know, you know it's true?

So, we go through incredible things. But for you to have been called and to know the things that you know, because you learn very quickly others can't know this. You can't go out and share it with people, though we try. I remember trying. They listen with interest for an hour or so, and basically after that weren't real keen on being around me.

We go through these kinds of things to realize you can't give this to anyone else. They can't see. They can't know what you know. That is the most awesome thing. Because you know it and the only reason you know it is because of God's spirit.

So what an awesome thing when God works with us to give us the ability to know and see certain things. That's why our calling is so important. To understand very few have ever been given this and we're to hold on to it with all of our being. But it requires that we begin the

process of crushing self, of putting down self, of understanding self has to change, and to understand how important it is to seek to have a humble spirit. Not to raise ourselves up. Not to think highly of ourselves.

What did I have to be high about at that time? Nothing. I had been squandering away my education at that point in time after what happened the year before with those different things that had happened to me. I didn't care about anything. I didn't really care about anyone. I needed a strong slap up the side of the head. That's why I talk about the 4 x 4. When that jaw finally got broken, that changed me, helped me to start thinking about things. If that hadn't of happened I wouldn't have been thinking about things when I sat there that night.

God knows how to work with us because we're all different. We're not the same so He deals with us in different ways. Some have grown up in the Church, they're worked with in a different way. But we all have to learn the same things - we can only know the truth because of God's spirit. What a marvel that we see what we see.

That's why I marvel at PKG. Because after the Apostasy it's almost unimaginable people can't agree on a reality or see a reality or acknowledge a reality that we had an Apostasy, that the Church was scattered. How can those verses in scripture escape people? But it does unless God awakens someone. Again, His spirit.

Sometimes we sell this process short. That's why we have to hold on to these very important things in our life and to realize what we've experienced. That's why this matter of the ministry and what we've seen within the Church is a very powerful tool if we can see it, if we'll grasp what's being said and recognize the importance of it, and to be thankful that God is preparing us in this matter for a place, for whatever that is, that's unique to us.

Because we're not all the same through time. Awesomely beautiful! We're not all a part of the same part of the building. We're all different parts. But every part is needed, every part is vital to God's plan and purpose. So we hold on to that! We esteem that! We don't look at physical things in a physical world or even within the physical part of a spiritual Church and begin to esteem certain things that we shouldn't esteem in a wrong way or raise up as being prestigious and something that "I want," that "I desire," that "I deserve."

I think of one individual ordained and the comment was, "It's about time." "It's about time. I haven't been recognized." Well, that's the day he should have been removed right then. But he wasn't. you think, do we see how wrong that kind of mindset would be? A mind that thinks it's always deserved it. That's gone on a lot.

So, we're tried in the Church whether we're ordained or not ordained. That's the important thing to understand. We all learn from that. If we were all ordained we wouldn't be able to

learn the same thing and we wouldn't be worked with in the same way. So, there are things to be learned in that.

Then something unique to God's Church - to be retired. It's not forever...unless it's forever. Certain things are, like an apostle. But in that respect, there are some things that aren't forever in the sense of how long we live our physical lives. It might be a temporary service; it might be a temporary. Whatever the need is at that particular time. We've needed different things and God's provided that at different times and sometimes for a lot of different reasons.

Each one of us, as a whole, can only answer that to the depth of what we've experienced individually in this process - of what we have seen, of what we experienced, of what we can learn is wrong, and what we can learn that is right to be held on to. The value of that I can't even begin to tell you.

So again here, what an incredible scripture, **I dwell in the holy heights with those of a crushed and humble spirit.** Those whom God calls, those whom He can work with, those whom He can give His spirit to, those whom He can continue a creation in because a physical creation wasn't what it was all about. It's about Elohim and the spiritual creation, and we're part of that.

...to revive or "to make alive" is what the word means, **to revive or to make alive the spirit of the humble.** So, it's one thing to be humbled, to come to a point of humility, but within the Church this has great meaning because it's then that God can make us alive with a life that we wouldn't have otherwise, that we wouldn't understand otherwise, that we could not experience otherwise that is spiritual in understanding, in how we think and how we see.

So again, **to make alive the spirit of the humble and to make alive the heart of the broken.** Because for a human being sometimes there are people that go through things that they have to be crushed in certain areas of life in order to begin to do the right things, in order to begin to see things in their life that they're destroying their life and to make that turn around, that low, whatever that low is. That happens in a physical world.

But to happen in a world where God is drawing people and calling people that's a whole different ball game. That's an incredibly unique thing for us because of God's spirit then that will work with us, can work with us, will work with us, that God desires that we receive for self to be transformed, for this to be changed, to help our thinking become something different that's genuine and true but of spirit.

Romans 12. It's what we read there. Generally, we don't read all the verses that we're going to read today, the rest of them, but it's really quite incredible when you see the context of it and the context of the sermon today and what is being said.

**Romans 12:1.** So Paul is telling them, **Therefore, I implore you, brethren, by the mercies of God...** So again here, we have received incredible mercy, the mercies of God to be a part of something so incredible, to take that in a sober way in the sense of being sobered by it, to understand the rest of the world isn't being given that. We have a calling, we have access to God's spirit, and not only that, we have a portion of God dwelling in us.

That's what I love about when we're in Elohim. God will always be in us forever, from then on. That is such an incredible thing to understand. Because we experience in human life ups and downs in that where we're closer to God at times and He dwells in us more fully, and then when sin comes along then He doesn't. So we go through this. But when He's always there and we're always there?

**Therefore, I implore you, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies...** That is a choice. See, our lives, our bodies, our life, whatever we value in life. What is it we value in life? Well, we don't sometimes find, we find that we have too often valued things with a lack of balance, with a lack of soundness of mind in the sense of God's purpose and God's Church and God's Kingdom.

He teaches us and works with us for a long period of time because we're slow at learning. We're human beings. He's molding and fashioning something in us that can't just be given to us in the mind. He can't just put it in your mind and all of a sudden you're a different person. It has to come through experience and choices because it has to become you, your convictions, what you believe.

That's why I love this matter of free choice and then God can give us the mind that goes with that, the kind of mind we want, we cry out for. We want to think right in certain areas of our life so we pray about those, and God helps us to become convicted of what is right so that this can be changed. Awesome, beautiful! It can't happen any other way.

But it's our choice and our conviction that we have to come to. God doesn't make us. To understand that He can't just give it to your mind is an awesome thing in itself. Choices. It's by choice. You have chosen God. You want God. You're fighting for God's way of life. We have to be spiritual Israel, to continually be at it, to live up to the name, to prevail, to fight. I think of Jacob. Anyway, we have to do that in our lives spiritually.

**...so that you present your bodies a living sacrifice.** That's what we become, a living sacrifice. What are we ready and willing to give up that we hold on to? Do we hold on to certain things that keep us from God? Absolutely. Do we hold on to certain things in our own life, our way of seeing things, something, or doing something or whatever? Yeah. Sometimes to make a change in those can be like pulling teeth, spiritually. It hurts. Pull it out. Get it out of our lives. But we have to make the choices that we want it and fight at it. It might be for a while. Might take some time because these things don't happen right away.

So, a living sacrifice. So, it's not a one-time thing like a sacrifice. It's alive. It's living. So, our whole life, ever how long that is. For me, since 1969. You have to learn to sacrifice your will, your wants for something greater. That is something we grow in, we learn.

**...a living sacrifice, holy**, because it requires God's holy spirit to be a living sacrifice. We have to have God's spirit in us in order to do such a thing, in order to even make such choices, in order for it to have meaning and value, and change.

**...acceptable unto God**. That's the only way He gives His holy spirit. Because it has to be acceptable to Him. It has to be something where He will give His spirit because of a choice we've made...**which is your reasonable service**. There is no other way. So, it's what choice we have to make if we want it.

**And do not be conformed to this world**. So, that's the problem. Too often we want to take along, which that means our portion, what we hold on to, what we esteem, what we hold up, whatever that might be, whatever idol that we're holding up until we break that, until we're able to break through that. "Do not be conformed to this world," the way the world does it, whatever that might be. That means us because we're in this world. Human nature is the way of this world. We're talking about human nature.

**...but be transformed**. I love this word, "metamorphoo," in the Greek. It's the word that's used for the transformation into a butterfly. You think, what an incredible thing, from one thing that looks so different, is different, even everything about it, and all of a sudden something of beauty - when you speak of a butterfly that's unique in itself. But how much more for us to know what's taking place in the creation of God's Family that we're all able to be a part of, something taking place up here in the mind, a transformation. Incredible.

**...but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind**, to become something new that we are not. So, we grow in this newness of that mind of God and the being of God and the thinking of God, in the unity of God at a oneness with God in this transformation into greater agreement. There is nothing more valuable than to come into greater agreement with God, more at one with God.

**...so that you are able to prove...** "So that you are *able* to prove," is how it is. It gives us the ability then through this process to be able to prove to ourselves in life. It's a matter of conviction, again, this matter of conviction, **to prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God**. It's saying in a nutshell, to be in agreement with God, to be more at one with God.

**Through the grace given unto me, I say to everyone that is among you, not to think of themselves...** So, we don't generally focus on this part. We generally focus on the transformation and talk about some of those things in other context of other sermons. But

this is a very unique focus that fits in perfectly with what we're talking about in this particular series.

**I say to everyone that is among you, not to think of themselves more highly than you ought to think.** So, we need to think right is really what it's about because this has to do with human nature. This has to do with what we do without God's spirit, this kind of thinking. But with God's spirit we should be able to see and have a focus and a vision on what it means to be called, what it means to be begotten of God's spirit, that we're one of His begotten children, and that we're on the way to being in Elohim, in God's Family from then on forever.

So, the warning here is to us in order for this transformation to become successful, in order for transformation to work, it goes along with what we just talked about in Isaiah, we can't be lifted up with pride. We have to be of a humble spirit. We have to understand what it means and how to be able to be a living sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice, self sacrifice in order for transformation to take place in the mind. We have to change. Our thinking has to change.

The greatest portion of that in so many ways that is about self is about pride. It's how we think. The mind has to change away from that. But to do that we have to see it, we have to recognize it, we have to see how ugly it is. Then when we see it in ourselves we want to get rid of it, we're convicted of God how evil pride is.

It's an awesomely important lesson in God's Family before we ever get there to know this. Not just to learn it, but to know it. Because it's what Lucifer did. God is going to make certain there is no one in His Family, that can come into that Family who has any of that proclivity of holding on to that, but that they have made the choice they want to be rid of it, they want to conquer it, they want to overcome it, and they see it as evil and ugly, satanic. That's how bad it is.

So, **not to think of themselves more highly than you ought to think, but to think soberly.** So again, this balance in the spiritual life and the growing we go through.

**...according as God has dealt to everyone the measure of faith.** God has given all of us the ability to believe the truth, and we come to various convictions at different times and how we grow, and how God molds and fashions us and works with us. But He's given to us that ability through, again here, His holy spirit. But we have to make the choices to do the things that are revealed to us.

Again, I kind of go back to this thing about this job. It revealed a lot of things to individuals if we heard it, if we saw it. Many have come to me and told me they learned, and they saw that resistance that was there and came to address the weightier matters of the law of God's purpose and God's will as far as the Family is concerned. That reveals then what is important to us, a living sacrifice. What are we willing to do to be at one with God?

We had some rumbling, and we had some different things take place. I'm thankful for that, that we went through all that because it helps to bring things to the surface so that we can address it, deal with it individually and as a Church, so we can learn from that process as well. That's why it was preached upon as often in the ways that it was. Because God wants us to learn from that, what we went through and why, and why different things like that in the history of God's Church have been exceedingly valuable to mold and fashion us for the creation of God's Family.

Because if individuals aren't willing to do that, whatever it might be at certain times, like make-up. No make-up. Make-up. I don't care how many times we went back and forth, very physical thing. Make-up. No make-up. Make-up. It's like, what do we esteem?

Now, some of you never experienced that and didn't go through those things. You don't understand. You don't know because you didn't experience it, what it was like in the world and what it was like in the Church for the Church to have gone through something like this, that there were such battles and that something like that was raised up as high as it was.

So, you're talking about raising something up and not willing to crush it? Why raise up whether we wear it or don't wear it? And yet a lot of the ministry did it and are still doing it. Some of those scattered out there, this is their big thing.

It's like the one individual we invited to our home and had a meal. I remember sitting there and talking about various things, and I thought he was trying to find a better way (because he was in another organization, one of the largest ones at that point in time, larger ones), and so I thought he was being genuine and wanting to share and wanting to know, which he did want to know how to reach different ones in certain ways, but he was doing it in a conniving way. I didn't see it then.

So, he was there to look at certain things that he might be able to incorporate and get different ideas, and then he started talking about all these churches he's raised up. Basically, that we'd have a place with him too. "I know. You can come along, and I'll give you this. You'd be able to have that," type of thing. Anyway, that was on the side.

Well, the first big error he made was to say that he raised up all these churches. Because I knew he didn't. I knew that was stupid, foolish, prideful, because only God raises up Churches. And if you're a part of it, you didn't do it, God did it. But if you say "I did it. Look at all these areas. I was there. I did 'this.' I did that church there." And I'd think, "I wasn't born yesterday. You're talking to the wrong person. You don't know what you're saying." Now, I didn't say that to him. Probably should have. Because you can't change people.

So at some point, it came up about make-up. Now, I'll probably mess up the story a little bit but I'm going to get the gist of it. Then he made the comment that Laura doesn't wear make-

up, "We know that Laura doesn't wear it." His wife says, "Yes, she does." This is after the Apostasy, but this was important to him. Still holding on to some of these physical things of whether you do or don't.

Anyway, we have gone through some really stupid things. When you look at choices people make, and they think "This is the Kingdom of God. Make-up? We're all going to be in Elohim and make sure we put on the make-up when we get up." Well, we don't have to worry about getting up anymore. We're always going to be up.

You think, how blind we are as human beings sometimes. We don't see God's Kingdom. We don't understand it. Anyway. But God wants us to see it more and more, more clearly all the time, and understand that it's amazing what we lift up physically sometimes.

Pentecost. From one day to another. How do you know? Only through God's apostle. That was the only answer. The only answer back in 1974, what does God's apostle say. Because when he shows us what is there we're going to see it. The majority of the Church did. They waited. And we saw. And it was so simple. It was like when it was finally all given, it was like a month before, a week before I could have sat down with you and still gone through the scriptures to show you it's on Monday. Until he said what he did, and then all of a sudden this miraculous thing takes place in the mind. He says what he does, and you see it.

It's like 2005 at the Feast. Might take some time. But as we go through it if we're being worked with by God we're going to see it. That's been one of the most exciting things that I've ever experienced in the ministry, is to give whatever God reveals, whatever God gives, and to know that those who have God's spirit they're going to see the same thing.

That's what the choice is because of God, because of God's spirit that you see certain things. That's awesome. Truly is.

**...but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every one the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body and all members do not have the same...** It's not the word "office." This, some of this kind of - you know what words I want to use but I won't today - but that's what it is. It's dumb. The word "office." Stupid to have put that in here. But it confused a lot of people because it's in the King James Version, and too many times Strong's Concordance or something else hasn't been used to find out what does that Greek word mean?

It doesn't mean "office." It can have to do with something being in an office, but it's a word that just means "function." Function. Whatever God determines that should be. That's what it's about.

So, **not everyone has the same function.** It's like we're not all called to be in the same part of the building, otherwise, it's not going to look right. You're a nail. You're a nail. You're a

nail. All in the same spot. No, you can't do that. I hope you understand what I'm saying. If you have a certain tile that fits into a certain spot you can't have twenty tiles that fit into the same spot. It's going to stick out, twenty tiles, and the rest are going to be against the wall. It's going to look kind of silly.

So, we're not going to look silly because God's in charge and He knows where we fit. We don't know. We're just to be thankful to be in God's Family and to know we're in one Body, one Family. God will take care of all the rest. He'll lift us up in ways that we can't even imagine.

Exciting, awesome beyond our minds to comprehend the things that God has planned for the future in His Family. We've only experienced a smidgeon of physical human life and then we learn this isn't so good and we get old. Everybody. If you don't then the alternative is something else. But if you get old you're going to experience certain things in life, and it's not your golden years. They're tough. You start hurting in places. Talk about people when they get together, older people. What is the conversation? What surgery, what procedure, what medication, how they feel, where it hurts, and think, uh, oh... So, younger people, they don't want to be around that kind of conversation. They don't understand that. "Oh, this is exciting!"

But you know, one day they're going to arrive, and funny, they're going to have the same conversations. Because you get older, you start hurting, things happen, you get cataracts in your eyes perhaps, whatever it might be, various things happen to your back, your legs, your feet, your toes, your bladder, your intestines, your stomach, your heart, your arteries going to the heart that can really mess you up. It's not fun to go through those things.

So, we learn with God's plan how awesome it is we have something so much better than this. That's why I would abhor having to live in this twice. I can't tell you how much I abhor the thought that I'd have to be in this body twice. Who wants to be in this twice? Once was almost once too many. But you can't get there without being in this and this is where we fight, this is where we battle, this is where God works with us, this is where God molds and fashions us, this is where God transforms us, this is where God creates us. How incredible is that? Wow!

**For as we have many members in one body, and all members do not have the same function,** meaning, in that respect, task, purpose. Wherever we are it's going to be a part of the Body, it's going to work together.

It's like Paul talked about. We can't all be the eye. We can't all be the nose. We can't all be the pituitary gland, you know, that's not seen but you know it's there and you hope it's working right because when it doesn't it causes a lot of problems. So, we all need every part of the body. But just because something is seen you know what sometimes? We esteem that.

"I'd rather be the mind." Well, it's going to take a lot to make up the mind. I'm sorry, I won't even go there.

But the task, the function, the role, the place, that's what this is about, this function. That's in God's hands, thankfully. We just have to yield ourselves to the process.

**So we, being many, are one body in Christ.** So whenever it's been in God's Church, there have been many scattered all over wherever the Church might be. But even in different congregations. Might have many in a congregation, twenty, thirty, ten, you know, whatever the many is, three hundred, three thousand, twenty thousand? Whatever it is.

"But we, being many, are one body in Christ." Something we all need to be able to see is we need each other. Sometimes we don't grasp that. You can't have fellowship without one another. God determines who is going to be in that fellowship. You don't. We don't. We don't determine who God gives His spirit to. But whomever He does and impregnates them with His holy spirit, they are His children.

That's why the cautions are given there. Be careful that we don't judge God's servants because we're all God's servants unless judgment is given to fulfill a particular duty or responsibility. But as a whole, we're not to do that amongst ourselves. We're to be for one another like a family does. We want to see each other succeed. We want to see each other make it. We want to see, if we see somebody making a mistake, we feel like this is not going to be a healthy thing, a good thing you're doing, well, there are times you just have to back away from that. Because sometimes God uses that for people to learn a lesson or to learn from the mistake.

So, you have to live your life before God and then everyone else does the same thing. But you can't judge them in the sense of being harsh, in the sense of putting them down or holding someone in your mind and finding fault with someone or looking for various things. On and on it goes, things that human beings tend to do.

In the Church, we haven't tended to be as careful as we needed to be in that area because we didn't recognize the seriousness of such a thing. If you recognize the seriousness in what God says and you know what God says about it, you'll back off from those kinds of things and realize I better do what God says, judge self first, and "Why am 'I' thinking this way and what am 'I' to learn about this?" It's about us, each one of us. We're to learn.

**So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another.** It's beautiful if we see it on a spiritual plane, spiritual family. We need each other. So whether it be within a congregation and a part of the Body of Christ or see the bigger picture of one Body, one Family, the Family of God, Elohim, and what that's going to be? Wow. But to get there means we have to battle.

God uses various things at different times to bring things to the surface so that we can learn from it. The ministry in PKG has been one of those big tools. Not just Covid. So you think, "Hmm, the ministry and covid." Just kidding! That was a joke! But we're to learn from that because it brings up something that can be seen by human nature only because we tend to be a certain way and we can learn things about ourselves or about others.

I've learned a lot through this process and seeing the choices that people make. It helps us to be sobered, to work harder to focus on the choices "I" need to make.

So, we should understand very well that we're expected to hold onto a humble spirit and to be able to detect a mind of pride whenever it raises its ugly head, because that's the part that comes out of the water that was put under the water and it wants to come up, it truly does. It's a constant battle of human life.

But again, this has been a problem within the environment of God's Church. Much of my learning has been from some of this, of seeing things that haven't been done right, things that haven't been handled properly, and so forth, haven't been handled well. It teaches us a lesson that the answers aren't in this physical life regardless of where you are in the Body. Each one of us has to fight, every one of us, wherever we are in the Body.

But without some of these kinds of things, some things can't be illuminated. But when they're illuminated by God's spirit then we can see and learn from them. That's the point of all this. That's why we're going through some of this and talking about it. And so, this process has revealed much in God's Church, in PKG.

Christ clearly told us of the outcome of willingly addressing such an issue in one's life or of ignoring it. So, we have that choice whenever we're confronted with it. So, when we see something, or it's brought to our attention it's a matter of choices again. We either ignore it or put it to the side because we don't want to deal with it, or we don't really see ourselves yet in that part that must be gotten rid. Anyway.

Let's turn over to Matthew 23. It's such a simple scripture. These are all really very basic, simple scriptures but they haven't been simple and easy to live in God's Church. They are some of the greatest battles that there are.

**Matthew 23:12**, very simple. **And whosoever shall exalt themselves shall be abased.** I have seen this over and over and over and over again in God's Church. Because within God's Church, you know what, He isn't going to allow that to exist. At some point it's going to be illuminated for what it is, it's going to be revealed for what it is, and prayerfully, each one of us sees it, is able to deal with it individually before it gets out into an area if you will, that begins to cause harm. Because that's happened a lot as well in God's Church - in PKG even.

**...and whosoever shall humble themselves shall be exalted.** In other words, leave it in God's hands. What could we want more than to be in God's hands, to be in God's Church, to be called of God, to have the impregnation of God's spirit, to be part of this Family, and then to know what's in the future? That's what we fight for, to be in Elohim. That's so much greater than anything we're going to experience in this physical life. You can't compare it. It's not comparable if we grasp it.

So this matter of lifting up ourselves, sometimes we don't realize what we're doing if we're not careful. Like the one individual, "It's about time." "It's about time." Now, we've kind of had a mystique in some ways about someone being ordained, and it's like that's something special in the sense of the individual is special above other individuals who aren't as special.

That is sick. That is perverted. That is wrong. There are certain things God allows, sometimes for good and sometimes for bad. There have been people who have been ordained because God knew what they would do with it. There are some people who have not been ordained because God knew what they would do with that as well. When you have the mindset that "I deserve it," or "I want it and I should have it," and what it does to the mind?

There are things to learn on every aspect of wherever we are. I hope you understand what I'm talking about here when it comes to this matter of how we think. We tend to esteem some things, as I use that word prestigious, in ways that should never, never, never be done in God's Church. That's physical, carnal. Only the spiritual aspects of it are important, the purpose of it important in the sense of a function. We don't all function in the same spot for the same reasons. And some of it for us, it's for learning, for being molded and fashioned, and to yield our self to that process.

I think of this, and I'm just going to speak bluntly about certain things, this matter of, again, "Whoever exalts themselves will be abased." If we'd just hold on to humility and understand how horrible it is not to deal with pride. Because this has happened many and many of times within the ministry, where it hasn't been done properly. In Philadelphia, in Laodicea, in PKG, it's always been my experience in seeing certain things like this within God's Church that some have tended to exalt themselves, trying to raise themselves up in importance in front of others.

If someone enjoys, in the sense of being seen by others, in a job, in a function, you miss the mark and it's not a living sacrifice. That's not what it's about. It's not about enjoying in a physical carnal way being seen or feeling important. It's like me and the Mustang. "I'm good." "I'm better than some of these that don't have this thing, let me tell you." Because that's how we tend to think.

Now, if I had seen someone driving along beside me in a Volkswagen? But now, if they'd had a GTO I had greater respect, or another Mustang, ah, a peer as good as me. We're perverted.

The human mind when you look at the carnality of it, it really is sick of the things that we feel lifted up by.

Now, I still like the sound of a car. There's just something, I don't know if it's in female hormones but in the male hormones, it's there. It's like if it's one of those old muscle cars, I love it. Because there's something there. But to feel better about it, to feel lifted up by it? No. I don't have to have one. I don't have one in the garage though our other vehicle does have a bit of a sound of that, a little bit when I let off the gas.

But there are some things that we can enjoy in life that are fine to enjoy in life. But not to lift ourselves up by it in our thinking. Isn't that strange how we can be like that? To be lifted up by something, to feel better about self? Why do we have to have something like that to feel better about ourselves and that's over others? Really whacky, the human mind. Carnality: "Lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life" really is pretty sick when you see it for what it is.

Another part here. Some others have struggled with the mindset that they deserve to be ordained, especially over some that they knew, or that they know, if you will, and have looked down upon or have known, and have looked down upon in the sense that better qualified. Well, who is qualified? It doesn't mean that everyone is qualified. What do you mean to be qualified? Are we qualified to be in God's Family? Are we qualified to be called of God? What do we do to get qualified?

So, we have to be careful how we think. God is the one that will decide and determine what we have, what we receive, and then how we use whatever we have in life. Our calling. I look at all the people who have misused their calling. Where are they today? Did they esteem that?

The tendency of such minds is to look down upon others. I go back to this thing over and over again because you've got to look at the example and understand the mindset there. This area that's a foot above everybody else in an audience, that you have to have something like that and you're striving to put forth something that you want them to know you're better than they are? They need to see that you're elevated.

I mean, that's a literal, physical example that you're able to sit up there at a banquet while they're sitting down there. They need to know that. They need to be able to look up at you. And to get something out of that? Do you see how sick in the mind that kind of thing is? It really is.

I think of battles that were in this particular area here with the choirs, two churches battling back and forth. One talking about one having to have a certain kind of dress, a certain way they should be able to be seen, and others who had a different viewpoint of a kind of dress where they could be seen. Each judging each other as being better than the other.

But I know one person I could have asked who was better, and he knew. I have no doubts he knew what was best in his mind and how everybody needed to act. And you think, no. Did we learn from that, those of us who experienced some of those things? Is that what God wants to see in His Church, people competing with each other and saying one is better than the other or that one's youth program is better than the other?

Why do we get involved in that kind of thing? What are we trying to do? Is the choir there to sing praise to God and to be able to be an example to God as a Body could be inspired by what is given? Or are we more hung up on how they're dressed, how they come on the stage? I mean, we've gone through some really crazy things to learn some of these lessons in the Church.

Anyway, I hope you understand what I'm talking about. The longer you've been around the more you'd understand what I'm saying.

Some have believed that this is their calling, again, that they have not yet been recognized. I know that's existed. That's a battle that people have to fight so God lets someone have that battle to fight, because if they were to receive what they wanted there's going to be a different battle there, and if we understand how God works with us He wants us to succeed.

God wants us to succeed and so He'll allow us to go through various things, and sometimes give us certain things to illuminate and bring certain things to the surface, but it's all for the purpose of saving, of giving the opportunity to repent and change. So what is it "I" have needed? That's what you need to ask yourself. "What is it that I have needed in my life? Does God know me as to what I can learn the most from where I am?" Because God knows.

We have to be careful because sometimes the thing we want and the thing that God gives us is the very thing where God also knows far too often what individuals will do with it because of their mindset to be an example for others to learn from, that that's going to be their stumbling block.

So should we go through various trials and tests and stuff? Yes. Does God know what to take us through in order for that to be accomplished? Yes. And it's all for the purpose of cleansing, making strong the Body for transforming the mind. If we yield to the process and do it in a humble manner we'll succeed, we'll be there, because God has given us all the tools we need. Choices. Choices. Choices.

All these views, whether one is, or is not, is not the issue. It's how we think about it that's the issue, whether we're sound in our thinking. That's the issue. Whether it's at one with God in our thinking or whether it's a matter of raising up self.

Every person must guard against the inclination to be lifted up in self-importance, with pride. I think of one part here I've written in my notes. I'm going to share with you some of the

battles that have come to the forefront in PKG that show you how God has used the ministry to illuminate wrong thinking. We're going to go through some examples, simple examples, but they're there and some of us know of them and some of us don't. So, we all have different experiences but we're to learn from these experiences within the Church as well, and sometimes it's a matter of illuminating wrong thinking so we can learn from it.

If a person isn't changing, isn't responding and they have the certain wrong thinking it can get worse. It doesn't get better necessarily. So again, those things need to be illuminated so we can learn from wrong examples and good examples. We have to learn how to judge, truly.

I'm going to go back to an example of what started in PKG because I'm going to use the ministry as part of this then in going through some of this and to show some of the things that have come to the surface that wouldn't have come to the surface in another way and how God has dealt with various things.

So, there's an example I've used before and it's central to understanding what we're covering here, and one was the first meeting of the leadership within PKG that was an occasion in Florida. So again, hopefully, that jars some thinking.

The first time I ever had ministers come together in a location farther away from where the Church was basically headquartered I made the decision of going to the expense of doing so, of having everyone, again, come together. And it did not go well. It was a beginning of seeing something here in a newly forming body or spiritual organism in that respect, because PKG was going through various things, or hadn't become PKG. When we became PKG in 1998, basically, when God then established us as that as a remnant group, the only one, that was unique to us.

But we've gone through a lot of things, and we've gone through a lot of people and God's constantly been refining and preparing the Church for this period of time, what we're going through. But I go back to this because I think some statistics sometimes and some of the stories, again, help to illustrate, illuminate, if you will, things that we have to learn from and be on guard against ourselves.

As I was going through some of this I couldn't help but think here today when I was getting ready for the sermon here of things that Herbert Armstrong went through. I remember the house that was going to be dedicated to God and I remember it being built at a time when finances were stretched in the sense of television and printing press and all the magazines going out. Because Herbert Armstrong was known for pushing it as hard as he could, as strongly as he could to do that job of the gospel going into all the world, to fulfill that commission. He took it exceedingly serious.

There were times he would ask the Church to rally behind a matter, to do more. I remember doing, I remember different ones doing more and responding to some of those things, but I also remember different ones finding fault. When those things began to happen, they began to illuminate something if we're observant and we see. How can anyone do something like that towards God's government? That's what it comes down to, toward God's apostle. If he has a desire, it's in his heart and his mind to do this for a purpose, so be it. What was accomplished by it accomplished a lot.

So did many other things - His ability to fly in the Gulf Stream jets. But a lot of people found fault with that. "Using that money... Using the tithes." You know, one of the things that used to irritate me some of the most sometimes was if individuals began to find fault with how money is being used, and it's like, "There is this person out here that they don't have a job right now and they're trying to feed their children and they get some money and they're supposed to tithe on that, and their children are suffering because of it." It's like, "And he's using this money."

You think, I hope you understand that kind of reasoning, where it comes from. Because it doesn't come from God. You tithe, you tithe. Things get hard you tithe. We all have gone through different things.

I remember one time driving back from one town to another town in Kansas and it was the last \$20, and the right change hadn't been given back and so even had less from a purchase that was made. It was like, are we going to make it or not?

So, we all go through different things in life, and we experience different things. When it comes to God's Church that's good and healthy for us. Whatever it might be, whatever trial in life you go through, you always obey God. You always put God first. Because if there is not a struggle in that battle you're not growing, you're not learning. Because we have to go through hardship. We have to go through, as it talks about, tribulation, hardship, trial. It's just a part of the process for transformation. It doesn't come easy.

I think of that particular meeting down there and some having found fault with bringing everybody down there to be together in fellowship within the small group of the leadership of the Church at that time. Because it was very small. Yet it wasn't done with the right spirit. There was fault found in the expense of being able to be there, of all of us being able to come together, because the bigger picture wasn't seen.

So, whether it's something small like that or large like what Herbert Armstrong did when you're talking about millions and millions, it's still the mind and how we think about it, what's being done. And who makes the decisions? Who makes the choices? And why? What are we to learn from it? How do we think? Do we stumble and do we sin in the process? Because that's what God's going to see, that's what's going to be illuminated. Attitudes in thinking.

I'm going to go through the story again. Very small, only five ministers there. At that time we called them all leading ministers because that was it. And one was me, one was Johnny, and there were three others, who all became disfellowshipped. Those are the three. I believe with all my being it was manifested and much of it judged right here, right at the very beginning. There are some things that God does in our lives to determine what we will do, how we do it.

God doesn't forget. He's very merciful and very patient, but there are certain things He allows to continue on then to grow and to fester and to one day erupt. Just like... Well, I won't go there. I was thinking festering. Do you know what festers? If you have a piece of something in the skin and it festers until it pops and then it doesn't look so good. That's what sometimes has to happen within the Church, it festers until it pops, until it's able to be gone, gotten rid of out of the Body. It's good; healthy for the Body. The healthier the Body can become always welcome that, truly, because it'll be better and healthier afterward.

So, I specifically stated, which I'm going to repeat again, and I'll probably repeat it again before I'm finished. We were in Orlando, primarily the purpose in mind was we were all together. We need each other. Even within the Church and within the ministry, and especially the leadership, we need each other.

I'll be real candid with you. There are some things I cannot discuss with everyone that I can discuss with some of the individuals who have been around for some time who have that particular, a particular ordination or whatever you will, that it's very clear that God is using them within the Church in the ministry in the sense of what's taking place.

The reality is there are certain things that God gives through His spirit for individuals to see that can be talked about, that can be shared with one another. Because where do I go? I pray to God about it. I pray to God about various things, but it's such a joy as well in certain kinds of meetings with individuals who are being worked with in that manner as well, to be able to share thoughts, ideas, and so forth, especially on a spiritual plane with one another.

I probably did a very bad job of explaining that, but anyway. There is a difference in some things you go through in life. Where did Herbert Armstrong go? Well, there were evangelists he could talk to about various things because they'd already experienced a lot of things within the Church. They had matured on a spiritual plane in a manner within the Church that there were some things that some wouldn't understand, some would be hurt by if they were to discuss various matters because they haven't learned yet. They hadn't learned or known various aspects of how to work with certain matters within the Church that are sometimes painful and difficult to work with.

Does that make any sense?

So, I have appreciated very much so the ability to share various things with different ones in that regard when we're together because there is something unique in it. There is something unique about the entirety of the Church when we're able to share things in fellowship in the first place. This is very much like that but for a very specific area of service within the Church.

In those individuals there they were brought together so that we could be a stronger-knit leadership, that we were closer together, that we would know each other better, that we were able to share some of these things about the Church and bounce ideas or whatever it might be. But just to be together in fellowship is the primary thing. So, the expense was for that.

So, who is going to say that, well, the airline tickets and the hotel cost was too much for that to occur? Well, God gave it. It's all God's. And if it's for a purpose for God's Church I have no problems with that. But some did.

So, I told them, "Do not go above Sand Lake Road." If any of you know Orlando it's gotten better there, but I still would not want anything above Sand Lake Road for God's Church to stay for a Feast site, because it changes. Crime changes, tourists change, other things change. So, for God's people wanted something of a higher quality, greater safety, etcetera, whatever it might be. So I told them, "Do not go above Sand Lake Road because it's not good. Stay below it."

You know, it reminds me of Saul. When he comes back with all the animals and so forth and prophet has to say, "Hey, what about all the bleating of all these sheep I hear? What's that?" "Oh, the people made me bring them back. The people wanted them." And you disobey God. What did that say for Saul? What happened to Saul? From that point on Saul, in essence, he had gone to a point where he had removed himself. That's just the reality of it because of what he did.

In this particular case here, there was some excitement then because they found something north of Sand Lake Road. Now, how do I jump up and down about something that some are excited about within the ministry and then have to tell them might be a good price, we are not going there. Sometimes that ruffles feathers. If it does within a matter of government, something is wrong. If feathers get ruffled, if someone doesn't get their way, tough cookie. What do you have to do? Swallow... Not just swallow it but crush your pride. Crush your pride.

Such important lessons sometime to learn over something so little, so small like that. In time in some of the attitudes, some of the thinking that came out in time, jealousies, things that individuals were jealous of. I remember one of them became jealous of a minister who was also a minister there and had known for a long time. That jealousy was something you could kind of, as it were, almost see grow and become stronger as time went along, and especially

when I had to correct something in his sermon one time in front of the whole congregation. That decided it from there.

*The Passion of Christ*. He came back and included it in a sermon. I had to get up and correct it because *The Passion of Christ*, it's perverted. It's wrong. Wrong thinking, wrong mind, wrong focused, unbalanced, and unhealthy spiritually. Why watch crap like that and then get up and give a sermon about certain aspects of it, of how good it is? It's like, no, not going to happen. That's not right in God's Church.

So, what happens when someone receives correction like that? Do they take it well and swallow their pride or does it just fester inside? Well, this festered.

I know another individual that was there became jealous of someone else who was ordained to a higher rank. They had been close friends for some time, very close. That day it changed because they couldn't take it anymore. They couldn't take that his friend had received this and he hadn't, whatever the thinking was, and in time went by the wayside as well.

Can we learn from such experiences of things we see and realize the danger, the dangers of pride, and what it can do to the human mind? Because we are a people that need correction constantly in our lives. We should cry out for God to correct us, to help us to see sin that needs to be repented of so that we can draw closer to Him, and so often as a matter of seeing certain things of pride and how we think as well.

Then, of course, later on, we had Las Vegas. Ah, whoo-eee. Sin City. "He is taking the ministry, the leadership to Las Vegas, and they're staying in some nice hotels!" And they were. "And going out for some nice meals." We did. There was a lot of fault found. And you know what? I've always known that things like that, it's always there. Always knew what would take place. It's how you judge. It's how you think. It's what you see. Because there is something wrong with the mind when it starts finding fault. Why would a person be doing that? Are you looking for what is right and good in the purpose or something else?

So, it's revealed a lot within God's Church. I think of one because they had so far to go and because of the health, I told them go first class. They took us up on it but found fault with it. Later on, took off with money of the Church as well in that area that had been stored up, that had been saved in that particular area. You think, what a sick thing to do. What a sick mind. But it was already there. Been there for a long time, just took time to come to the surface. God makes sure that such things that are unrepented of will come to the surface. It's always been this constant battle of pride versus humility, of seeing God or judging things from our own perspective. Because to judge things from your own perspective is a matter of pride.

So, there are things that work in different ways. Sometimes the refining fire to refine, and so forth, and we just go from one battle to another.

Anyway, I think of one large meeting held back in 2008 where there were 25 ministers at that time, 6 have died and 6 became disfellowshipped. That was what at that particular point in time, by 2008. Going back to another time in 2017, I went through some statistics—I'm just going to read some of those again just to show, just since 2017 about those who have served within the ministry. Some of this bears repeating and then added to in the sense of learning a little bit more about why there have been so many that have been ordained.

Because it's for the lessons to be learned. That's why it's been done. It's for what we could learn from it. It hasn't always been because of being called to a specific service. Everyone can be called or ordained to a specific service. We're all called to be something far, far greater. So, to be ordained is not something to be held up on a pedestal. But if we can learn if we're a part of it or not part of it; both could learn.

So, it was mentioned at that meeting in 2017 that all who had served within the ministry 37 had become disfellowshipped. Mind-boggling. 37! 97 were removed or retired. Something never done before in the Church, in that respect, because we're to learn from that process. Why would God do that? And you know, that's learned from as well, what can we learn from it? At that point, 54 were still in the ministry. Incredible how many have gone through this process and how many have not but have gone through a process of seeing it and observing, and prayerfully learning as well.

Today I just want to go through this because I find this interesting. 38 ministers, again, fully have been disfellowshipped. 38 ministers in PKG. That's mind-boggling! That's bigger than a lot of congregations, isn't it? Most congregations. 135 have been retired, removed, or have died, because 16 have died. 21 are currently serving in the ministry. Since PKG has begun, a total of 194 have served in the ministry, and right at 20% have been disfellowshipped.

So, when I talk about, when we hear about how that so many who have been in God's Church, many have been called and a few have chosen, it shouldn't be a mind buster by any measure. It's incredible some of the things we've gone through in times past, even at a time when we've been given so much more, so many more truths during PKG. It really is incredible to understand some of the things that we have gone through.

So, I just thought I'd mention Australia, New Zealand, one each. One in Australia, one in New Zealand. Ireland there is one. Europe, two. Canada, zero. U.S., fifteen. Then somewhere out in the Caribbean, there is one. Anyway.

So again, of that 194 who have served in the ministry of PKG 38 became disfellowshipped, leaving 155 who remained in fellowship.

So, you know, you just go through statistics like that and it's what we learn from the process, of something different and unique to us in our experiences than any other time because we

learn by being ordained, we learn by being retired, we learn by not being ordained, we learn. So, we all learn if we will learn and not judge. Most of all never, never, never allow pride to rise to the surface.

Now, whether we come back and visit some of these things, I don't know, but all this should be sobering, reminding everyone that we all need to constantly be on guard and watchful because this thing of pride is not a little thing. It truly is a major thinking that has to be conquered before we can become a part of Elohim. It is that mind of Satan. It's the thing that caused him to rebel and turn against the Great God, His Creator.

Astounding how far the mind can go. So, for us to experience things within the Church is kind of small compared to that one. A spirit being who was given so much that can do that? Astounding. We as human beings in God's Church, that we can do the things we do? Yeah. We're to learn those lessons not to be like him, not to do what he did, to see how ugly that is. Because it's really ugly, truly.

Not all have been consistently faithful. Indeed, we can repent when in error. What a blessing. But sometimes people can't do it. They can't. They get caught in this festering thing. When that takes over, with pride it destroys. Truly does.

Not all have consistently fought their own greatest weakness, pride. "Lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes" is in there as well, but not without pride. That's why those things are so dangerous too. Because pride is first. It's at the forefront. It determines the course of everything else.

Not all have consistently supported God's apostle. What an incredible thing. Didn't happen during Philadelphia. Hasn't happened now. Not a surprise. That's why we must consistently walk truthfully, always examining self. It's just a way of life with us. And hopefully, we grasp the seriousness of it and are thankful to God that He's working with us in a different way. That's so much of the purpose of this series, is to realize that God has worked with us and we're unique. He's working with us in a different manner than He's worked with people at other times because we're not all the same and we're not all to fit in the Body in the same place.

So, we shouldn't lust after, desire something, want something, expect something, believe something about ourselves that isn't balanced and sound. Just be thankful and grateful for what God's giving us because it's far beyond what we can grasp, far greater than anything we can imagine. But the human mind, it can be a horrible thing to deal with sometimes when it allows such things to enter into it, things of pride and raising itself up.

Seek out those things before God. Ask God for help to see those things because we don't want to have the kind of mind of a being who rebelled against God, the first to rebel against God, the first to become, well, a foe, to hate, to loathe God. What a horrible thing.

Anyway, so above all things seek to be part of the Body of Christ, to be part. Be thankful that we have the part, because we're all headed for the same place, to be in Elohim, to be in God's Family. What an awesome thing. I can't express it in words what it means that we have an ongoing creation to become a part of God's Family working inside of our minds. Treasure that, love that, be thankful to God for that, and fight against the things that work against it which are in self.