

So, before we begin with *Part 5* of our current series (because I'm going to include this for everyone that's listening now that will be posted), I want them to be able to hear this in Australia, New Zealand, and Europe. They've already been told today they did not have a service. They were to do what everyone in the States did last Sabbath.

We didn't post anything new that was out there at all to be listened to. The reason for that is because last Sabbath was a good reminder of where we are in time and to understand there are going to be times in your future where you're going to have to decide what you're going to do yourself. Nobody is going to be able to tell you.

We got different ones wanting to know, texts and emails and whatever, "What should we do? What should we listen to?" Your choice. If you can't get connected you have to decide what you're going to do and how you're going to observe God's Sabbaths.

And so, that was a good exercise, a good reminder here of preparation for something that's going to take place in time here. We need to be prepared. We need to think about that, what do we need to do? What can we do? Ask for guidance in it, whatever. Pick something and pray about it, obviously, but again, that depends on whether you can even get anything.

So, you have to think about some of those kinds of things. I had three years of training in that. Not that it was difficult for me. But you have to think about things like that because sometimes you may have a longer period of time and you're not going to be able to have anything, in the sense of if you don't have electricity and so forth. Which is what happened last Sabbath; we didn't have electricity.

There were a lot of high winds there in the Cincinnati area and we tried to get set up. When we first got there there were lights, but it didn't take very long and so we set up, basically, in the dark. We were ready for them to come on, but they didn't come on. So, you have to plan accordingly when those things happen.

So, now we'll go into that sermon, *Part 5*, entitled *The Love of God*.

Two Sabbath's ago now we ended in scripture that most of us should be keenly aware of. I hope we are when we hear 2 Thessalonians 2. It rings in my mind. Has for many, many years now because it's a very powerful thing that's covered there by God and He gave us understanding of what we were to experience, what was going to take place.

But it covers the subject of something that had to occur, primarily the only sign, in that respect, from God that we were now there, that now preparation is for Christ's coming. This was to be it. Because all the previous time, nineteen hundred years plus whatever it was there, they were looking, they were waiting for Christ to come. Generation after generation after

generation, era after era of God's Church and they never saw what they hoped for. They lived this way of life in faith to the end. They were unique, all of them. They lived out their lifespan, whatever that might have been in God's Church.

I think of us then and how incredible it is that we get to see, we get to experience so much of what so many thousands before us never got to experience, those that will be in that first great resurrection.

And so, we're the ones that live at a particular time that's unique to us, to be able to experience things that have never been experienced. 2 Thessalonians, a part of God's plan God revealed through Paul what had to take place. The subject matter of 2 Thessalonians is fully about the timing of Christ's coming and what had to occur.

That's an awesome thing when you think about it. God had planned it out. Not just two thousand years ago. We don't know time, what it could have been, but before anything was ever created that was planned out. That's how meticulous, how incredibly perfect in everything that God does in His planning and His organizing.

It wasn't something that happened; He decided during the first four thousand years that well, we're going to have an apostasy in the Church. No. There are reasons why all these happen. I hope we're learning this. It's a part of training as well that certain ones had to experience for whatever purpose in His temple.

So, every period of time that has existed God has used to call people, to draw people, to work with people, to mold and fashion them to fit into a specific place in His temple. Well, that temple was designed before anything was created, before the angelic realm was created, and that is something we can't even begin to comprehend. But to see it, to know it now, to believe it, to grasp how Great God is, or at least with a measure that we can from that, should put us in awe of Almighty God.

Then to realize what we're a part of, how incredibly blessed we are to have been called at this particular time in our lives.

And so, before Christ's second coming as King of kings it revealed, it was revealed that something was holding that time back. The Apostasy. It couldn't happen until after the Apostasy. Because some of the greatest lessons as far as a maturing process spiritually to come to understand how God works with mankind had to take place at this end-time. That a vast number of people in one respect would do worse than what Satan and those who followed him did.

Because to have an apostasy when you are begotten of God's holy spirit, to turn away from what God has given is no small thing. The angelic realm never had God's holy spirit. But God's people have. The majority who have received His spirit over the past 2,000 years have gone and done their own thing; at some point in time have turned away from God, have turned against Christ, became antichrist.

When it talks about one great antichrist that this is talking about in 2 Thessalonians, that's only a part of the story. Because there have been many. The great lesson is to show what we're capable of as human beings, an entire Church of God that was established and set up with the greatest of knowledge ever given to anyone through time, to that point in time through Herbert Armstrong. Things hadn't been known by Paul and by the early apostles to the degree that Herbert Armstrong was given understanding in His time during Philadelphia.

So of all times you would think that surely we with His holy spirit would be faithful to the end. God is going to show, "Not so. Left on your own as human beings, given enough time..." Just like He did, the angelic realm, "Given enough time look what they did. Look what took place. Given enough time in God's Church, look what happened."

I guess what really makes me sick is that it's still going on and it will go on until this takes place. That is frustrating as all get out as a minister, as God's apostle in this end-time. It really is. It's frustrating. Because some play in the courtyard and they're still playing in the courtyard and they're playing games with God.

You can play games with me, and you can play games in God's church, but you can't play games with God and get by with it! So, we need to be shaken up a little bit about that before we take the Passover this year. Because there are some people out there that need to repent, that need to see themselves for what they're doing. They're walking around in the garden thinking they're in the shade, thinking they're under the brush, that God can't see them! Same attitude, same thinking but in God's Church with God's holy spirit, or at least have had God's spirit. Because some get so weak they get cut off from it before they ever leave God's Church or are put out of God's Church.

So, I marvel this is still going on. We can only examine ourselves, each one of us, which is what we're to do before taking Passover. So, what an incredible time we're in this particular series.

Something was holding back and that's what 2 Thessalonians talks about here. Something is holding back that time that all the others who have gone before, especially in the Church over the past nearly two thousand years now, that they wouldn't see, that they wouldn't experience, that they looked to. But they didn't even understand. There were a whole bunch of them that didn't even know about the book of Revelation because it hadn't been written yet.

Paul didn't know about the book of Revelation. Peter didn't know about the book of Revelation. All the other disciples except one, or apostles, if you will, didn't know about the book of Revelation until he wrote it, John, the last one toward the end of the period of Ephesus in God's Church. Then they didn't understand it. John didn't understand what was written there. The next era after that didn't understand what was written there. The era after that didn't understand what was written there. Only toward the end, finally, toward Philadelphia, that it began to be given through Herbert Armstrong, certain pieces here and there.

I still love the one at the point in time where he realized a scripture was being fulfilled after WWII, toward the very end there, and he saw a transition between one period of a kingdom into another that was going to begin in time. He knew where he was in time, and it was about his time in that moment in time. We should all understand that.

So, what an incredible thing to understand that an apostasy had to take place in God's Church as a part of God's plan. He didn't do it, but He opened the way for it by letting human beings make their own choices, letting a Church become great, in that respect, as far as the world is concerned, the greatest the Church had ever been as far as numbers and wealth. Not just in wealth, physical wealth, because there was a lot of physical wealth there. The ability to build three campuses, the ability to do the things he did, the ability to send *The Plain Truth* throughout the world in many different languages, millions and millions of copies a month. Mind-boggling. To be on radio first and then TV later on. Incredible, what was done.

And then what happens? So much wealth, physical and spiritual, and passing with time people begin to be lifted up with their own stinking self-importance. Those who sat at Herbert Armstrong's feet at Ambassador College when it first got started, when he first started in Pasadena teaching, and some of the very ones who became evangelists are the very ones very early on who began to betray him, began to teach things that hurt God's people. Began to teach that you can't go to doctors, that you can't use medicine. We still have some people sometimes even in God's Church today, who have difficulty with some of that because it's like what this one evangelist started teaching. One evangelist started teaching this – you know what I want to say. I'm trying to refrain from it today, but I'll probably slip because it is what it is and it belongs down the toilet. It's just as ugly and, well, it's worse. It's far uglier, smells a whole lot worse. It's really sick what human beings are capable of.

I think of what some of those evangelists did. Another one who began to teach very early on in Ambassador College in the Bible class about a 14/15 Passover. He got by with it for years and years and years and years to where when we finally began after the Apostasy up here with Detroit and Toledo and we affiliated ourselves, and we called ourselves *United Church of God - International Association* I think it was AIA. Not AI. (Maybe should have been artificial intelligence.) But anyway... You think, it came out basically that nearly half the ministry believed in a 14/15 Passover because of what that evangelist taught.

So, it started happening in the '50s. It started happening more in the '60s. And by the time the 70's came, we began to have rumblings in the Church. It talks about earthquakes in Matthew 24, but that's what it was, a shaking in God's own Church and people beginning to leave because of things that some ministers were teaching.

1973. 1972. 1974 because of Pentecost. On and on it went. It just got worse and worse and worse. Then he had a heart attack and he had problems for a while health wise and he wasn't strong enough to deal with and address the Church or the ministry. The ministry went rampant at that time. They started choosing sides. "He's about to die, what are we going to do?"

That was in the mind, “Who were you going to support?” It’s like politics. People decide who they’re going to support because they know that they’re not going to be the ones so “Who is the one that I want to have favoritism from so that I get a post that’s important?” Because that’s what it comes down to, selfishness, desire for something you want more of than what you have right then. You think, what a sick part of human nature, especially in God’s Church!

Now, I get riled up about these things. I get stirred up in spirit, God’s spirit, because of how evil that kind of thing is. But He let it happen for a purpose, for a reason, and we’re to learn from it. We’re still learning from it. Some can learn and some can’t learn because they’re caught up in the exact same disgusting, evil, selfish spirit.

So, God had a purpose for allowing for an apostasy in His Church. When you look at it, it’s mind-boggling. So much so that it shook a third of the Church, that they really got to a point where they didn’t even believe in God anymore. Didn’t have any desire to go to anything protestant because they knew that was wrong. The christmas tree, the easter bunny, all those kinds of things, they believed that, so they knew that those churches were a bunch of gobbledegook. But what do you do? Where do you go because it’s like “If this happened in God’s Church...?” Then the conclusion is, “Must not be God’s Church. So, is there a God?” They just lost everything.

Then another third scattered all over the place. We know what the other third did. They went with the junk. That is shocking! Our history is shocking! But I’m so glad in so many ways that I was blessed to experience it, and those who come through that have a kind of conviction through experience that can’t come in any other way, to be able to be used, to be able to be placed in the temple, wherever that might be and whenever it might be, but still having that experience. That’s beyond our comprehension right now.

We won’t comprehend it until we are there, and then we’ll begin to see it when we look back and “Oh, now I understand why. Now I see it.” Incredible what God molded and fashioned. What an awesome thing to yield yourself to that process.

So, when that apostasy then did occur that was the signal, if you will, a revelation to God’s Church that it was now time to fully prepare for Christ’s coming. Names. PKG. Awesome! By accident or by design?

So, let’s go back there and read a little bit of that because even though we’ve read it we need to look at it again. We’ll look at some of the first few verses here we didn’t look at in that particular sermon, in *Part 4*. But it’s good we back up a little bit just to have it deeply etched into our thinking that’s the context, Christ’s coming, his second coming.

2 Thessalonians 2:1—Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Joshua the Christ and our gathering together to him... So, it shouldn’t be a mystery what this is about. And yet it has been by far too many. **...we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as from us, as though the day of Christ has come. Because**

there is going to be that which you're going to be able to experience and see if you have the eyes to see, the ability to see, if God gives you that so that you'll know when that time is there.

Let no one deceive you by any means; for that day... What day? "His coming and our gathering together unto him." Now, that doesn't happen overnight, gathering together unto him. Since the Apostasy, we've been gathering together more and more. God's been bringing more and more together. 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, especially through there, brought a whole lot more in for a lot of different reasons that are absolutely beautiful when you see God's purpose and God's plan.

So, he says, **Let no one deceive you by any means for that day will not come unless the...** This translated as "falling away," but it's the Greek word "apostasy." **...unless the Apostasy comes first.** So, that's something that everyone should be able to see and to acknowledge.

Well, those who quit and don't even believe in God or kind of lost hope in anything, what happened there? Could they see the Apostasy? What about those who went back to putting a tree up every year, decorating, and all that garbage? Do they see an apostasy and realize what happened? Well, they didn't even recognize it as God's Church by that time. To them, it wasn't God's Church. God's Church was something else. God's Church was something more like what the world has, "And we need to be more like the world. We need to be accepted by other groups out there," and "God is just working with us in different ways." Duh!

You think, look at all the knowledge that had been there. Every bit of it just went down the toilet. That's what they did to it, they spit on it. They spit on Christ. They spit on God, the truth of God that He gave to them. They didn't have any comprehension of a calling anymore. They didn't have any comprehension of what it meant to be begotten of God's spirit and where that leads. It was all gone by the time you make those kinds of decisions.

And the rest of us? Well, we'd fallen asleep. God had a purpose in that, allowing that to happen. Shook the tar out of us. Because the Apostasy was to shake us awake. It was to begin that process once it could begin to be realized this is what we've experienced. Some before that two hundred and eighty days was up when God intervened and dealt with the person who started the whole thing, the Apostasy, December 1994, and put him to death.

God did it. Judgment. Forty Sabbaths later to the exact same time - some take that to challenge and so forth. Think, it's not even worth the words to express the ignorance.

So it says here, **and that day will not come unless the Apostasy comes first, and the man of sin be revealed.** Now, no one could know for sure by any measure or form until the two hundred and eighty days. Then you could know. Because some had the idea and so forth, had written about it, as that one individual did, and then all of a sudden when he died he had to change it. "It must be his son then," because it didn't fit his scenario. Well, at least they were... Well, I can't even say "at least" but...

“The son of perdition.” So, we’ve been through that. We lived through that. What an incredible thing to know and to understand. God began waking up more and more people helping them to understand, yes, indeed, Christ is coming. When? Well, we didn’t have any idea. You just keep going forward and God keeps revealing more and more. Later on, we had certain inclinations of certain things and were allowed to see or believe certain things as well about timing. But even in that not right but learning about timing, how important it is to God, that things are exact with God.

And so, He brought us to a point in time where we look at these mile marker type things or whatever, like in a marathon and you’re looking forward. When I give something like this and I think of running I can’t help but think about that run in Bricketwood, and it was a short distance, three and a half miles. It felt like I was going to die. Others who have run marathons, it’s like “You wimp!” That’s where training comes in. Because we really didn’t do much of any training. We just went out there and ran three and a half miles.

But I think of how good you feel. Because I didn’t know the area very well at all where we went. We went down through this place, came up through the chicken farm area. I’d never been over there in that area where the farm was, and I came down this one hill and I knew we were getting close because I recognized some of the buildings around there.

And I think of us. We recognize certain things and God lets us see certain things so we know we’re there, almost there. It’s not much farther compared to what it was in the rest of the run. Then you get on the top of the hill there and you see the track and it’s like, “I can do this. I’m almost there.”

Anyway, I think of our calling, what we’re like right now. We’re almost there. We see these things happening, the Thunders that are taking place, what’s happening in the world. Mind-boggling what’s taking place out there, and it’s just so loud.

We’re going to repeat some more of this, certain portions of this. I hope we can begin to grasp even more deeply the subject matter in this series because it’s about an incredible depth of love that God Almighty has for each and every one of us. The more we grasp that, the more we comprehend that, well, there is just no value. It’s beyond value that you can have or think of.

Verse 9 then speaking of the man of sin and those who followed, **Whose coming is after the working of Satan.** That’s how it happened. Because what happens in people’s lives when you get to a point when you begin to turn against God, you allow things into your life that you have no power against. It gets to a point where they can have incredible sway. That’s a terrifying thing to think that can happen and has happened to so many people who had been around God’s Church. You lose what you had and more is taken away from you, and then the mind goes so far, far away from what it had. It’s horrible.

And so here because of certain mindsets, people who wanted to be more like the world, they’d been cut off from God for some time. Some of those at headquarters, the ministry, those in

various jobs at headquarters all the way to the top had this mindset, “Need to change everything. From the Sabbath to Sunday. From Passover to Easter.” On and on it went. To think that could happen in God’s Church it’s kind of unimaginable. But it wasn’t and it happened in a very powerful way.

So, this being had tremendous power at this time over so many. **...with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.** Those things took place very powerfully so throughout all the areas of the Church wherever it was throughout the world.

...and with all deceivableness. What an incredible way to put this. **With all deceivableness of unrighteousness.** Now, that’s powerful when Satan is involved because he has the power to deceive, and the more people lend themselves to certain thinking the more he can deceive them, the more he can work in them. That’s what was taking place in that primary group that was trying to take the Church in a different direction.

And “unrighteousness,” well, that just means moving farther and farther away from God to do your own things.

...in those who perish. It shows their outcome. That’s what’s going to happen. They’re going to perish. Literally, those that did that portion, some may be judged even as far as even the Great White Throne. Time will tell as to whether or not they’re even going to have that opportunity. Because what’s the point?

...because they did not receive—notice this—**the love of the truth.** Now, it’s not just a love of the truth, it’s something that has to come from God to love His truth. It has to come from His holy spirit, and this love is agape. So, here to have that, the source is God. We know that. To be able to think of the truth in that regard, well, because that’s God. The truth that God has given to us, that’s who He is. It reveals His mind, His being. So, all the truths that He’s given to His Church have to do with His being, His mind. We’re able then to come into unity and harmony with His mind, His being, His word, His truth.

And because of loving, the ability to love the truth, the more we see it and the more we embrace it and then think how awesome and beautiful and incredible it is, the more we can come to love God, we actually love God, because that’s what it is, it’s Him.

And so, “Because they did not receive...” So, here is a group that didn’t do that. They didn’t receive that love. They didn’t love the eighteen truths. They didn’t love the three truths that were still there at the end of Sardis. They didn’t love them. Look at the choices they made. Truth after truth they were tearing down, striving to tear down, to move away from within the Church, and they had for a long time.

So, it shows here, **that they might be saved.** So, it’s through the truth that God gives us that it’s the way to be saved. It shows the way, the process, and we just choose to yield ourselves to it, embrace it and desire it and love it.

For this cause, God will send them strong delusion. Now, the word means “wandering.” That’s what happened. Their minds wander into things that are far away from what is true. They don’t love the truth, so God lets them wander into their own thinking or the thinking of others and they begin to embrace weird ideas, crazy ideas, foolish ideas, stupid ideas, things that they had disproved a long time ago but went back and embraced it. Mind-boggling!

And for this cause, God will send them “strong delusion,” strong wandering, that they will believe a lie. They chose it. They chose to believe a lie. That’s what it came down to, to embrace a lie, **so that they all, says, “might be damned”** but the word means **be judged. ... that they all be judged who do not believe the truth.**

So, if we at any point in our lives don’t believe the truths that God has given to us, whatever they might be, wherever it might be within that realm of truth about God’s Church, about whatever it might be in His plan. And yet this is something that goes on and on and on and has ever since I’ve been in the Church. But people can’t see it for what it is because they become weak. They can’t see what they’re doing. They get to that point.

Because it’s through bad choices, wrong choices, and choices for the wrong things that they’re not capable of any longer because it takes God’s spirit to believe the truth, to see the truth, to hold on to the truth. You can’t do it on your own.

...but are... It says, **“they had pleasure/but had pleasure.”** It just means they are **well pleased in unrighteousness.** They like something else. They like something else! And what is that something else? Well, it’s something else they’ve concocted in their mind or that they’ve agreed with with someone else that they’ve concocted that’s off base. It’s their own way of doing things, their own way of seeing things that stinks!

Because we are not free to do the things we want to do apart from God! If we do we don’t belong with God and we become separated from God, and God will let us go and do our own things, whatever that is. Good riddance when that takes place because it harms the Body, that kind of garbage. Just like it talks about, Paul talked about, “A little leaven will leaven the whole lump.”

So, though I hate to see people go, when they go I still rejoice in the fact that they’re separated because that hurts the Body and we should want what is best for the entire Body so that the Body is not hurt, so that the Body is not swayed with stupidity, stupid ideas, and stupid reasoning - which isn’t reasoning at all but just reflects the kind of selfishness of what somebody else wants, how they think something should be done that they don’t agree with how it’s being done.

You don’t understand government yet. I can’t help you. You don’t understand how God works in His Church; I can’t help you. Only God can. But that requires repentance and that requires a desire to be right with God. Only God can give that kind of help. What an incredible thing to understand.

What an incredible way of saying it: **So that they all be judged who do not believe the truth.** And they are. **...but are well pleased in unrighteousness,** in their own ways, in their own thinking, in their own ideas, in their own perspective that disagrees with God or God's Church or God's ministry or the truths or whatever it might be. But it's all the same thing.

Verse 13—But we are bound... The word literally means "we owe it." This is something we owe. **We owe it to give thanks to God always.** That's what it's saying. What a beautiful thing. That's what we owe. And if we see the truth and if we grasp what God has given to us, we won't even think about that part. That's just what we want to do. We want to do that, to give God thanks.

...to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, the loved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit. So, it goes back to a calling. It shows here what takes place in our life, that there is a desire God has to set us apart for holy use and purpose through His holy spirit. So, there is a sanctification, if you will, a setting apart by God's spirit. It's the only way it can happen. The only way we begin to see the truth is because He sets us apart.

What an incredible thing for God to do, say, "I've chosen this person, to set them apart with spiritual help, with spiritual drawing in the mind to be able to see things they haven't been able to see," and then to have protection around them, to be able to make choices within that period of time, whatever is offered to them, but set apart. Awesome!

So again here, **because God has from the beginning chosen you.** In other words, this is a part of God's plan. He just calls people at different times. So, during Philadelphia, He was going to call more. During Laodicea, purpose for that. And then PKG, and not very many then, but a whole purpose in what was being done and how it was being done.

...chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. Because that's where it begins. That should be so clear to us. In the beginning. Where did your calling begin?

I'll never forget mine. Around ten o'clock at night, and all of a sudden, I could see things, I believed certain things that I hadn't even read, hadn't even gone through scriptures. I was just hearing and God opened my mind to see it, to believe it. No one can take that away. It's a personal relationship of something that God does through sanctification of His holy spirit.

What a blessing to be a part of something so incredibly great. So, what do you do? Thank God. Just thank God; give God thanks through the entire phase of everything that's taken place, whatever it might be.

2 Thessalonians 3:3—But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you. We just have to make the choices to do the right thing and then God will establish us by His power, protect us by His power, give us the ability through His power, **and keep you from evil.**

Now, we have confidence in the Lord toward or concerning you, as it is, that you will also do the things which we charge you. It's "command," but the charge is given. Might as well look at it as command because whatever we're charged to do within God's Church... Charged to do and won't do it! Because we don't grasp, we don't see, we have some different ideas. That's why it happened that way, so that we could come to see ourselves and what's inside of us.

What a blessing to have that mind opened up to see certain things. Do we do it because we grasp government? Is that more important perhaps than how we think about it, how we feel about it, or how bad we think something like that might be to our bodies? I'll be real candid with you. If Herbert Armstrong had said that and I had very strong feelings against something like that, I know what I would have done. It wouldn't have been any hesitation.

But even if I had very strong feelings against it I would have believed that even if I die with it, so be it, I'm in God's hands. And I'd rather obey God and do what is right, because I know, I know where God is, I know how God works. I know where God's Church is. I know the truth. That's the only way I can see these things. So, that's how we should think. We should act upon what we know, what God has given us to see and to know.

I just use that example because there are many other examples of things people do and are still doing to this day in some cases, doing things their own way because they disagree with something that's been given by the administration of the Church to do it. Shame on you. Where is your life? Where are you? You think you're going to be able to continue to walk around in the garden out here under the palms and whatever else is out there in that garden and think that God doesn't see it? You're going to get by with it?

I'll tell you what, we've got some sermons coming up. I think maybe it's during the sermon I give during Unleavened Bread here. But anyway, I'll try to stay out of that. Powerful, powerful, powerful what God tells us. But the ability to hear, well, that depends on a relationship with God. The ability to see depends on a relationship with God, if it's true or not.

Now, the book of 2 Timothy has more to say about the love of God as it adds an important contrast as to how agape is to work in our lives, how His love is to work in our lives. It adds to, it's a building upon things that God has already given us, but it takes it another step to understand some of these things. It's not going to be understood overnight but it's something to work upon.

2 Timothy 1:6. So, this is something that Timothy is being encouraged in, admonished in from Paul. **Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you** - New King James, I think, says "through." King James says "by." But it's that word "because of" again if you remember talking about that in the last sermon.

So again, “stir up the gift of God.” So, for Timothy, it could have been two things, but it will still go back to the first and add more to it because of the second, because of the responsibility that was given then.

But when does this happen, **stir up the gift of God which is given you because of the laying on of my hands.** Now, he’s pointing him to, “You received this because of, and no other way. Don’t ever forget that.” It’s through God’s ministry. How does God work? Through His ministry. How many have ever forgotten that? A lot.

...**because of the laying on of my hands.** So, first of all through baptism, and then we have the laying on of hands and we receive the impregnation of God’s spirit. We’re to stir up, then, God’s spirit. But there is also that when someone is in the job that is a matter of ordination, in this case here, Timothy, as well, to stir up. Because more is given for a purpose to do a particular job. It’s just the way God works.

He’s telling him, stir it up. So, in other words, we all have responsibility. Every one of us has received the impregnation of God’s spirit and we are to stir up God’s spirit. How do you do that? How do you stir up God’s spirit in your life? How do you stir it up? Does God have to do all the work or is He there ready to do that which He tells us: “You don’t receive because you didn’t ask?” So, we better be asking. It’s a matter of a relationship.

Prayer is such a huge part of that, obviously, in a relationship that we have with God and how we think toward God, how we pray to God and what we’re praying about, and what we want in our lives. We know we need His holy spirit, and therefore, we’re certainly repenting of sin because if we’re not doing that first we’re not going to be given it if we’ve been cut off from His holy spirit. We don’t want to be cut off so we ask God to forgive us of our sins because we know that’s the only way He’s going to dwell in us. And so, it’s sobering to remember those things and to hold on to those things.

...**because of the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us the spirit of fear.** What does that mean? You think you know, fully? Well, it’s something to build upon and to learn more. That’s what God is showing us.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, strength, if you will, as it is in the Greek, power, strength that comes from God to be different, to think different. Incredible, what God has given to us if we seek that day by day in our lives and want that and choose that regularly. Because it’s a choice! It’s a choice whether we pray. It’s a choice whether we repent. It’s a choice whether we search out and look at our own lives and examine our lives and ask God for help to see the sins we need to repent of and where are we blinded. Because there are some still blinded out there by things!

For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, strength, and of love, agape, His love, and of a sound mind. So, we want that kind of love. What does that mean? It means we’re going to be living our life better. It means we’re going to be thinking better. It means

we're going to think about God's ministry, about God's brethren, about God's Church better, better, better, better in how we think about everybody. Because if that thinking isn't there we have sin in our life that needs to be repented of. It takes God's help to do that.

"And of a sound mind." In a world where people's minds have just gone whacko. There is a power working out there where minds, it's scary. It really is scary, where this world is right now and how people are thinking more and more. And because they're able to think that way or they are thinking that way it reveals something else, there is spirit working out there in such a powerful way that in itself is sobering.

Satan, the demonic world, is having a heyday and they know they're about the end of their heyday so they're doing this. They're stirring up insanity. They're stirring up craziness. They're stirring up people to believe in things that are just flat weird. Weird! Totally against God's purpose for creating us male and female. On and on it goes. People's minds are going whacky, and they can't see soundness anymore because truth, God's way, truth, these things are rejected. And so, people are doing whatever they want to do and they're pushing whatever they want to push and "come hell or high water" they're going to have their own way.

We live in some really crazy times, and you get to live and see it. You get to experience it. You get to witness it, a time that is, candidly, worse than the days before Noah. It's worse now, far worse. Population alone, technology, everything else, the speed of the deterioration of the human mind, and how quickly things are going. We're witnessing these things that God is going to use later on because of what is being placed in the mind if you yield yourself to the process.

God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, strength, of love, His love. And yet that one there hurts me when I see people can't love each other in God's Church to the degree we are told to love one another. If we're resisting that love, where is the power and where is the strength? Where is the soundness of mind? And where is the fear? Because there is fear there. It's becoming stronger and stronger if we don't yield to the rest.

There is a stark contrast being made here between the love of God and fear. Again, why? Why? Why is fear being contrasted as to whether God's love is dwelling in us or to what degree it might be dwelling in us?

Fear exhibits a lack of faith, belief. Someone might think, "Well, I don't have fear." Well, you don't have peace that comes from God if you do have fear. Are you sure? Do you really see yourself? Do you really see what needs to change in your life? How strong is your love toward others within the Body? Toward the world? What are we willing to sacrifice to see a new age? What are we willing to go through?

So, fear exhibits a lack of faith or belief, or say it another way, that's what's exhibited when there is fear though an individual may not be able to see that. That's what's scary about this, the inability to see a lack of belief or faith in what God tells us.

It reflects more of a trust - and this is the problem - it reflects more of a trust in self. Self-reliance, "The way I see it." You might think you disagree with small things, but the small things are what will destroy you. We can deceive ourselves into thinking, "I disagree with 'this.' I disagree with 'that.'" That shouldn't be done that way." We don't realize what we're doing, how we're destroying the mind that God has given to us, the soundness of mind and the love that could otherwise be there, that we're not able to see even clearly as to how to exercise it. Because if it's not there how can you exercise it?

I'm just telling you some things here that are coming out more and more right now in God's Church in this area of life. Because these things are being cleaned up and cleansed. And either we're a part of it for what is good or we're a part of what's being cleaned up. Because this Body is being cleansed. I'm dumbfounded by it, truly, to the degree it is.

So again, it reflects more of a trust in self, in self-reliance. That's a scary thing, too. It should be. Because those who participate or practice in something like that don't get it. They don't... Because when you become the opposite of having strength and power working in your life through God's holy spirit, which means it's lacking in one's life, this is what's happening. There is an automatic growth in, reliance in, a trust in self that produces fear in your mind that you don't understand. For you don't understand what this kind of fear is.

And so, that kind of thinking, self, self-reliance, the way I see it - and we all have opinions about things. But when it comes to God's Church, when it comes to what God is doing even within the Church, we have to be ever so careful and we have to make sure that we're hearing and listening and exercising what He tells us to exercise.

So again, trust in self, self-reliance will always produce various levels of fear in one's life. It does not produce peace. It does not produce soundness of mind. It's so easy to deceive ourselves thinking we all have soundness of mind. Because why? Because when we rely on self we think we're right. We actually believe we're right. But if we're in conflict with something from the Church, from the Body, from God? Anyway.

So, it does not produce peace, again, or better said as peace of mind. That's a unique thing because it reflects God's spirit. When there is true peace there it reflects a reliance in God, a reliance and a trust in everything that God's revealed to us. No concerns. No worries. Our life is in God's hands. Awesome!

So, fear also tends to produce drama. Drama, drama, drama. Become a subject of something that reflects, that God has helped us to see more of, to realize what drama is. Because drama is a matter of fear. Drama is a matter of self-reliance. Drama is a matter that's produced in our lives that takes away the peace of God, the mind and being of God, the soundness that comes from Him, and stirs up more self-reliance.

Because when drama comes into life and we do things that are wrong and drama is the product, it's also a product of fear, wrong thinking, lack of peace, lack of God's spirit, which is often the

result of not getting our own way, “The way I see it,” “The way I think it should be.” Maybe in someone else’s life and the harshness we can have in judgment and not realizing, not yet quite fully embracing fully with all of our being that if one belongs to God you better tread lightly on how you think toward them. Because all you should think is, “I want to see them succeed,” and pray for them accordingly.

You see a weakness or a fault, pray about it, that God intervene to help them. Because that reflects in your thinking, that you’re thinking in the way God wants you to think. You’re asking for help for the right things. On and on it goes.

So again, fear tends to produce drama, again, which is a result of not getting our way, getting what we want, the way we think it should be. Who gave us the right, the responsibility to think something should be “the way I think it should be,” “the way I want it to be,” especially in someone else’s life? So, do we have drama that stirs up because of a lack of ability to embrace things that God shows us in this regard? That something is not truly in unity and harmony and oneness with Him when it comes to His spirit and His love in our life working in us?

Verse 8—Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony (witness) of our Lord. So, we need to understand what that’s about. Sometimes this is a matter of something that produces fear, of not standing up for His truth, His Church, His people, His ministry, and so forth because that’s what we’re talking about here, the witness, the testimony, how does God work, where is God working? What is that witness? What is that witness in our life? Are we living the way God says we’re to live toward one another? Because if we’re not it’ll come to the surface in its own time, in God’s time. Those things are coming to the surface more and more.

...nor of me his prisoner. Well, we kind of passed that one up in real life too. There was a time here when I think the Church was just blinded to it for a reason because when they came across scriptures like this about Paul and being a prisoner, they put it in the context of because he was a prisoner to God in that respect in the sense of this is what he’s chosen to be bound to. There’s a portion of truth, in a sense, in some of that, but that’s not what this is about.

It’s literally what it’s saying that there were people who pulled away from, were shy of, who found fault with even Paul going to do and going some of the places he went to. He got flak from the Church at different times, from different ones in the Church because they thought he should do something else. “You should go there.” “You shouldn’t go down to Jerusalem.” “You shouldn’t go over there.” “You should do something different.” “Why appeal to Caesar,” or whatever it might be. Crazy.

So, we’ve already been through something like that because a lot of times people don’t want to be associated with that. “Paul?” “Who’s the one you...” “Oh, he’s.... The Romans have him. He’s locked up.” So, he’s telling Timothy here, “Don’t let this happen to you because it’s happened to others in the Church.” It happened to some in the ministry that Paul addresses as well.

...nor me his prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the good news according to the power of God. In other words, if God has a purpose in something we do that. We all are to learn to suffer, whatever that might be. Maybe the chastisement of others, the berating from others that they give. I've heard a lot of that in times past. "You mean you're still tithing," not to God, "to him!" But you can't tell them anything. You can't help people see and understand certain things.

So, we have choices. That's what's great about God's Church and going from area to area and seeing people who are holding on with all their being. But it also hurts very, very much seeing and knowing of some who just still aren't doing that, holding on with all their being. Because I know their day is coming, and some I don't even know of yet because that hasn't come out. But God brings it all out in time.

He's telling him how to think, be careful of certain thinking, and so he says here, **But share with me in the sufferings for the good news according to the power of God.** In other words, it's there, it's available, stir up that spirit that was given to you from the beginning when hands were laid upon you. Strive to... Because that's where the help comes from. It comes from God. You can't do it on your own. It has to come from God, and you have to cry out for it.

...who saved us and called us with a holy calling. As far as God is concerned, the moment He calls us we're saved. What an awesome thing! It's all there in front of us. We have every opportunity to change, to grow, to conquer, to overcome, and be born into His Family as far as God is concerned. But you know what it rests on? Our choices. The choices we make. That's where the problem is in human life and whether or not we're going to fight this with all of our being, self.

"Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling." He's already given us a holy calling and He set us aside, sanctified us through the power of His holy spirit. We're unique on the earth above billions and billions of people who have lived through time. Can we grasp that? We can try, but we really don't. But we're to strive to and give God thanks. That's the answer, thank God.

...not according to our works. It's not by that though we're to have works. We're to obey and do things. But not to think we're to receive because of that or that we are owed something because of that. That's not how it works. It's just the opportunity of being a part of God's work.

...but according to His own purpose, whatever that might be and to have faith in that and trust in that, whatever we go through, "My life is in God's hands." "My life is in God's hands." My life is in God's hands. How much happier can I be? How much more fulfilled could I be than knowing that?

...**His own purpose and grace**, the patience He has, the time He gives us, the continual forgiveness that He's given us, the ability to be forgiven over and over and over again through our Passover. Awesome blessings. On it goes.

...**which was given to us in Joshua the Christ before time began**. Before there was anything. Because it's God's plan.

So what an incredible thing to understand that, to be blessed to comprehend that.

So again here, "was given to us in Joshua the Christ before time began." To comprehend that, where we are and who we are is an awesome blessing, truly. But what an incredible thing here to think about, again, going back, that every era, every period of time God has a purpose for how many, whom He calls and so forth, and then chooses us or whatever at any time.

...**but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Joshua the Christ**. So, it was referring back to what had just happened and what has changed in the world is so incredibly great. This was in the beginning. I mean, this is in the period of Ephesus, the first era. They didn't even know they were an era. They didn't know they had a name. They didn't know they were the Church of Ephesus, the era of Ephesus. They didn't need to.

...**who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the good news**. Through what we're told Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day, through whatever truth and whatever means it's given to us.

Verse 11—to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the gentiles. What an incredible thing. He knew why he was called. He knew his purpose.

I think of Herbert Armstrong. He knew. Matthew 24:14. He knew why he was called and what he was to do. There was a commission he had to go out into all the world. God gave that to him in his mind.

For this reason, I also suffer these things. And we all do. We all go through things that are just a part of our calling. What a blessing to be a part of that because of God's purpose. Because it's through that that people are going to be taught. Because right now they won't listen and haven't for the past six thousand years. But there's coming a time now in the Millennium, in the Great White Throne, when people are going to have the ability to hear. Whether they choose it or not is another matter. But to see it, to hear it, what you live... Incredible.

So, he says, **nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day**. So, the work that's gone into it, it's in God's hands. Those who have been called and He worked with in different areas, it's in God's hands. It's also then, obviously, in the choices that those people make, and it's up to them. But as far as God is concerned, and as far as Paul was concerned, God will take care of it all because it's His from the beginning.

Sad that so many chose a different course then, now, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Sardis, Thyatira, Pergamos, all the way through. Incredible.

Hold fast. That's a choice. **Hold fast the pattern**, which is a form or the outline of the example of what it is we're to have in our lives, **of sound words which you have heard from me.** So whatever we're given we're to strive to live within that, to learn from that, and to make sure, to strive to see and to recognize where maybe we're not in harmony with that outline, that pattern of whatever is given to us. And how do we do that? By what's given Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day, and there we go. That's how we learn. That's how we're able to see. God lets us see it. Whether we choose to respond and do what we're supposed to do is another matter.

...of sound words which you have heard from me in faith. So, it always goes back to what do we believe? Do we recognize what we're receiving, how we're receiving it, and on and on it goes?

...in faith, which means belief but more. Because to believe it is one thing, if we really believe it, and there's the challenge. It's up to us if we believe what we're given Sabbath by Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day. Do we hold fast to what we're given in faith? Because belief comes first. Choosing to live by it, choosing to be in unity is in our court. See, God gives us the ability to see it, to believe it, and then it's up to us to live by it. That's faith.

...and love. Again, this matter of agape. We should understand that's about relationships then. Where do you use such love? In the Body first. In the Body first. Maybe in family in the Body first and then farther out within the entirety of the Body. Because that's how it works. Wherever we are, with whomever we are in contact with more, that's where it's going to be working.

See, if someone is from Detroit, or let's say Cincinnati, or let's say wherever, and there is someone in a congregation in another area, say, Spokane or Modesto or down in Rancho Cucamonga... where it might be, you're not with them. Maybe you see them at the Feast but you're not with them on a regular basis so this ability to exercise God's love is not the same as it is with those whom you know, those with whom you are with more often or are exposed to more often.

So, that's where we are tried, if you will. That's where it reveals and reflects whether or not God's love is in us and to what degree it might be in us. We have to be careful we're not deceiving ourselves in that. So, there's so much involved in this.

But again, it's being genuine and true before God and evaluating it by what we're given, by what God gives us the ability to hear.

...and love which are in Joshua the Christ. What does that tell you? These are in Joshua the Christ. So, what should be first in that that we understand? You have the ability to repent. It's

in Joshua the Christ. It's where it starts. That's what this season is all about. We're coming up to it. Passover. That's where it starts. It's in Joshua the Christ.

How blessed are we that every time we sin and do something stupid and maybe think something wrong toward a brother or say something wrong about a brother, or to them, whatever it might be, something is in our thinking that's wrong toward a brother, time to repent. Time to repent and ask God to forgive us and help us to think right toward His called, toward His loved ones. We want to see the best for them. We want to see them succeed.

That's why it hurts to see people go by the wayside, who just refuse to listen and do their own stuff that should be flushed down the toilet. To do their own stuff, to do things their own way, to think they're right. "I'm right in how I'm doing this." Are you? Are you really? Think about your lives before you come to the Passover.

"Oh yes, I love everybody." That's a cop-out. How is it reflected in your life then? What is the fruit of that? What is every thought you've ever had toward everybody in the Church, or is right now? What is it? How do you measure them? Do you measure them?

So, it begins with Joshua the Christ. Then as our High Priest, we're thankful to God that we have an intercessor. We pray to God accordingly.

That good thing, which was committed to you, keep. So, we could read through this and think, well, that was committed to Timothy and he was a minister and Paul was in prison so Timothy, a lot was being placed on him of what he needed to do and how he needed to do it and so forth. Then we read over it like a story about Timothy and Paul.

No, it's about us. These apply. Every one of these things apply to us. "Stir up the spirit of God that's in us, that was given to us at baptism." "Stir it up constantly." "Be on guard." "Be watchful." "Strive to draw closer to God." "Be certain that you believe what God says in the sense that you not only believe it when you're given the ability to see it and you're not using your own human reasoning to work around it somewhere but that you're living it then."

"That good thing, which was committed to you, keep." That word means "guard; watch." That's what we're to do. Everything we're given Sabbath by Sabbath we should treasure because we're constantly being given things to give us a better understanding. We're building upon things constantly.

I look at series that are given and I think, I love it because I see the patterns. I see how God is building upon it. It's like this here. If we had this six months ago it wouldn't have the same impact upon the Church because there are other things we needed to build upon first to get to this point. That's the way it works! There's a building process, and if we're a part of that and we grasp that, man, we're trying to guard that, protect that, watch over that, keep that. It's not that word "by." **Keep, guard, watch because of the holy spirit which dwells in you.** All the more reason then to cry out to God through Joshua the Christ, Passover, forgiveness of sin,

be repenting, desire to do things God's way, the way God says to do them, examine ourselves to see if we love in the way God says we're to love. Because that doesn't take a whole lot.

There are a lot of scriptures about how we're supposed to love one another and yet it's still not being done in the Church. It's still not being done like it should be. There is room for growth and that means we have room for growth. I have room for growth. We all have room for growth in that. That's what we should strive to do. We should want that with all of our being.

Now, some in some cases are so far off base in that you think, what on earth? Lives falling apart? It's happening. Have to deal with it week by week. Some people's lives are just falling apart because they haven't been living this, they haven't been doing it. It gets to a point then where what remains? What can be done? Well, you can always repent. Some not even willing to do that. Maybe feel bad about something, but repent, desire to draw close to God, desire to be close to God's people? If that's lacking what's going on? Some scary stuff.

...because of the holy spirit which dwells in us. So, it's a good way of measuring. How strong are we in God's spirit? Because it's reflected in the mind, in how you think about and toward others in the Body of Christ first. That's what this Passover season is all about.

1 Corinthians 10 and 11, in through there, powerful what it says in how we think toward one another. How we think toward the Body, which means everybody that's in the Church. How we think. Is that thinking good? Is it healthy? Is it beneficial? Is it rewarding? Does it build up or does it tear down? Does it hurt?

So, this matter of contrasting fear to that of love is something we should strive to grasp and pray that God help us to grasp it more and more, to see it more clearly and why these things are said in the way that they are as powerfully as they are. Because they truly are.

This matter of fear has already been addressed in this series and I pointed that out at times, but we didn't know where it was headed, or you didn't know. But we've talked about it already. I mentioned it and I said it'd be discussed later on in greater depth.

So, I think it's a good thing to go back and notice that in a few verses of things we've read already because it's constantly being contrasted to God's love. Where are we?

Zephaniah 3:16—In that day... Well, we know a lot of things are going to happen in that time, in that day, but exactly what that day consists of right now, we don't fully know. God just hasn't revealed it. He's shown us different things that it could be, so what do we do? We watch. We strive to be alert. We think of the potential, the possibilities because we know that God is very succinct and exact, very exacting in His plan concerning time and events.

And so, we look at some of these things and it can work, it can serve us in the sense of those markers along the way. Whether it be a thousand yards, five hundred yards, a hundred yards, but we've got to look for them. God has given us tools over the years to be able to do that better. Those are powerful because they can stir you up.

They can help you keep focused and realize as we should right now with the Thunders that are taking place out there that we live in some scary times in this world and we're going to see some things that we really have no comprehension of yet. And hence, the need to look to God more, to trust God more, and our lives are in His hands whatever happens, whatever comes, and to know that God can deliver us. If something happens then that's a part of God's will, whatever and whenever. Beautiful.

"In that day." Maybe it'll be for thirty days, maybe forty days, maybe a year, maybe six months, maybe three and a half years... We don't know, but we sure have all these places to look at.

In that day it will be said to Jerusalem, Do not fear, Zion. That sends chills up and down my spine right now. Are we there? I hope you grasp that, what I'm saying. Who is it talking to? I hope we understand that by now.

Do not let your hands be feeble, in other words, don't hang down in weakness. You should be strong. We should be ever so strong in the power of God's spirit, truly, to know where we are, to realize what's happening in this world, to realize how quickly things can take place. How much farther out ahead, how long is that day? That's in God's hands, and in His time we'll see more and more, and we'll understand that more clearly.

Even after the First Trumpet event we still don't know how long. It could be very quick, or it could be longer. It all depends. I pray to God that it be short. Short and not long. How can mankind survive?

The Eternal your God in the midst of you is mighty. That's our focus. Thank God. Thank God. Over and over again thank God. What else can be said? Thank God. **He will save.** We're in His hands.

He will rejoice over you with joy. He will work in, as the word is, **He will work in His love.** Wow. So, right now we're going through some things and we're talking about some things that hopefully we grasp what God is doing more and more of right now and what we're to be responding in so that God can work in us more powerfully within the Church, within the Body.

He will joy over you with singing. As we respond, as we live what He's giving us to live it's a beautiful thing to God. Truly is.

Now, I'm just going to toss something in here in the midst of all this. It's one of those little marker things. I think of the Sixth Trumpet. You know what that one is? It's when those two nations strike out at the world to destroy a third of all the earth. Wow! A third! God is very explicit about that, exacting in what He says. They're going to destroy a third of the earth before He intervenes, a third of mankind. No small thing. Now, this is right up next to the Seventh event, so prayerfully that will be exceedingly short.

And so, just as another marker of something that gives me a little bit more to look at and to focus upon. We have those things. I think of something that has really shocked a lot of people out here in the world, of something that Herbert Armstrong taught, of something that we have known for a long time. Russia and China are going to get together. It's kind of shocked some people out there that China visited Russia. It really has.

If you listen to some of the people and what they're saying it's kind of worked toward tending to give a shaking to and bit of a waking up to some who weren't as clear. Some of them are commenting in a way that this is going to have, well, they know where it's headed in the sense. They believe it. We do too.

I think of how long it is God has given that to us to know, and last week we lived it. We lived it in the sense of two coming together and discussing things amongst themselves in a way. Then, what did he say as he was leaving? That should send some chills up and down your spine. And if you don't know, ask around. Basically told Putin... Well, I'm not going to tell you. But it's sobering because he meant what he said.

I think of, well, it may or may not have significance, but I look to it. It says about the Sixth Trumpet it was in planning a day, a month, and a year. I was a little bit sobered when I went back and looked at a day and a month and a year from when they first started their talks, and it leads exactly up to Passover next year and the first day of Unleavened Bread. Awesome!

May not have significance. It may have every significance in the world. We just don't know yet. But it's these kinds of things that God has blessed us to realize that there are things out here and we're to keep our eyes on them and to understand that there are markers, there are things to watch, to be alert to, and to understand this can come upon us at any time and we need to be prepared.

We need to be ready, and God is telling us in what ways we need to be ready. And do you know what the greatest way is? How we think toward one another. It's not about the world. It's not about the Thunders. It's not about the Trumpets. It's about how we think toward one another within the Body, within the Church, and that we truly are exercising God's love in our lives and we're striving to change the things where we're messing up in that.

We just repent when that happens. When you say or do something that shouldn't have been said or done you can repent of it, but strive to do it better next time and asking God for His help and power to do better the next time. Which reminds me of a sermon we're going to hear... Anyway. Awesome! Beautiful.

Have meaning? I don't know. But I'm watching, striving to be alert, thinking what might happen between now and then. Because if that's how long it is and they do what they do in a very short time then that would give tremendous encouragement that hey, if it isn't this year, it still could be next year. We got to keep alert and on guard. We're ready. We better be ready in our thinking.

Romans 8, let's go on there, look at some scriptures there then we'll stop for the day. It's just a time to be sobered. It's a time that we should want to be alert and on guard and draw closer to God. This Passover should be more meaningful to us than any Passover we've ever taken. To be more sobered to realize the Thunders are ramped up out there something fierce. The woman in labor, we'd have to be totally dumb and blind not to grasp that there is labor going on very powerfully so right now.

I even heard one of them on the news the other day talking in this vein. He didn't mention being in labor, but they were talking about the intensity and how closely these different things are happening in the world right now - in the news. It reminds me of the scripture that talks about, "How can they help but prophecy?" Because it's happening. It's like, "Do you see it?" They're living it, but they don't understand it. We do. What an incredible blessing!

Romans 8:13—For if we live after the flesh, or If you live after the flesh, it says, you will die. Even in God's Church. That's what this is about. It's not about the world. It's about us.

...but if you through the spirit do mortify, put to death, the deeds of the body, you will live. Very simple. This is a battle we have all the time. It's not something we can let up in. It's something we have to focus upon and strive to do better and pray to God about, that we're able to do this.

For as many as are led... And that's the key. It's up to us whether we're led by God's spirit. That's a choice. God is there willing and ready and always has been to lead us, to work with us. But it's our choice as to whether He does or not.

And I get so frustrated when I know of some, and different ones who aren't doing this! They're not being led by God's spirit. They're not yielding to God's spirit. They're not thinking right toward other brethren within the Church. They've got their own way of seeing things, their own way of doing things, and justified in it. It's a stench to me. I'll tell you right now, I know it's a stench to God.

For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. So, if we're being led by the spirit of God, only you can know that and feel confident of that and bold in that.

For you have not received the spirit of bondage again, and it's not just "to." The Greek literally means, **for the purpose of fear.** That's not what we've been called to and yet that too often is what is being lived in people's lives. We live that. That's been lived in times past within the Church too often. Bondage, again.

It's like being in bondage to drama. Drama, drama, drama. Our life is, if it's full of drama, wow, you know what, there's a reason for it. You have the power to escape it. You have the ability to escape all the drama in your life. It's all in the mind in how you deal with life and the circumstances of life around you and whether or not you truly have the peace of God in your mind. It's a powerful thing.

And so, that just can't be given to someone to see this. It's something we've got to cry out about if we don't grasp it, if we don't see it fully, if we're not experiencing it fully. If we feel we have too much drama there's a reason for it and that's saying, "Look at this! Pray about this! Ask for help to be freed from the bondage."

You know that's what Days of Unleavened Bread are about. It starts with the Passover and goes into coming out of sin because it's about sin. You can't give that to anybody. Has to be because we want to be close to God, we want to see things the right way, and we're crying out to God for help to do this.

For as many are led by the spirit, they are the sons of God. For we have not received the spirit of bondage again for the purpose of fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption. God loves us, in other words. Consider the calling we have! That's what He wants us to see. Do we grasp what He's placed before us, in everyone else in the Body, and do we love that in them?

What I love the most is what I see in people's lives as they yield, when they yield, and as they yield to God's spirit and are growing and are being strengthened in spirit. It's a beautiful thing. I get very frustrated when I see the opposite taking place.

...whereby we cry, Abba, Father. That's the very thing if we grasp and comprehend it, that there is a relationship with God Almighty. He is our Father. He's my Father. He's your Father. And you call upon Him accordingly with that mindset and you cry for help and you want to have His mind, you want to have a right mind toward His people. They're His people, His people! Every one of you, you're His people. So who are we to judge unless we have a temporary responsibility for being involved in some kind of judgment or whatever.

The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. All this is the matter of the love of God in us. And so, that's what has to be there and seen, if that's the witness, if that's what bears witness. Because, you see, when it's all said and done that's what bears witness. Whether Christ is in us, whether God's love is in us, whether God's spirit is in us it boils down to what God wants us to see, what He's wanting to work within the Church more, His love. Zephaniah. Think about it.

Verse 17—So, if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, something we can't even begin to comprehend, how great that is and how awesome. We want to see everyone become a part of that. That's why I get frustrated. It hurts. You think, "Don't you see?" But I can't tell you. I can't come up and slap you upside of the head, say, "Sober up!" It's between you and God what you hear, what you share with Him.

...if so be that we suffer with him. That's always going to be a part of it. What's that mean? So often that's about ourselves. It's not about trying to get our own way or the way we see things, we want things done our way or whatever it might be. That's a bunch of you-know-what! And

boy did I want to say it then. I'm trying to hold back today so my granddaughter won't hear me saying those things. "What did Grandpa say this week?"

...that we may also be glorified together. What a beautiful thing. We suffer with him, joint heirs, that we be glorified together. The Body. The Church. The Body of Christ. What a beautiful thing if we see it that way, see it in the right way.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Do we believe that? How deeply? For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. And we're almost there. What an awesome thing!