

Learning God's Judgment, Pt. 2

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Feast of Tabernacles Sermon

Once again, as we move into *Part 2* of the series entitled *Learning God's Judgment* it's good to be reminded that the laws of God, the statutes He has given to us, that the very ways of God are about His judgments. It's the way God thinks, the logic, which results in judgment, obviously.

In judgments He gave to Israel and so forth, things that people as a whole don't grasp and comprehend in the world in what's called traditional Christianity. Within the Church, we're ever learning what a lot of that means ourselves.

So, for us, again, it's about coming into agreement with His will and His very purpose and the laws, statutes, and obviously the judgments in all His ways. Easier said than done because so often we just tend to think that's the way we are. We're in God's Church and we have these things and sometimes even when people get into difficult troubles and make different decisions that shouldn't have been made, it's so very difficult - and they can bring God into the picture and talk about how they feel that certain things, they're close to God, and certain things are going right in their life now.

It's like when you have sinned and you've moved away from God and there are things that have happened in your life, it takes time to rebuild a relationship with God Almighty. It just does. It's not like all of a sudden, just because we have repented of something or feel that we've repented of something, we say that we've repented of something, and it's been an ongoing thing for a long time, it doesn't mean all of a sudden you snap right back into the place you were when you first started that process.

It's a process to draw closer to God once again. It's a process to be at one with God. It's not something that's just granted automatically by, you know, wave of the hand or something.

God's way of life and living close to God, being close to God, developing a relationship takes time and you have to work at it. So, forgiveness can always be there, but it doesn't mean that we don't have to pay a penalty. We have to pay penalties oftentimes in our lives for things that we do. We learn through that process, that it isn't the same and there is a payment for those kinds of things that happen in our life.

That's why it's so hard for us then sometimes for us to receive guidance and direction and instruction because we hear of things like judgment. I've given a lot of sermons. I remember going down a highway from one of my favorite places after driving down into Missouri and then coming up by this one place in Indiana (and some know exactly what I mean), called

Terre Haute. I remember driving through there and I was working on a sermon about judgment as Laura was driving.

Some of the things stated in that particular sermon still in my mind, obviously, and we're repeating some of those scriptures here. So, every time I talk about judgment I think about some of these things, and yet it's not just something we can absorb quickly. It's not something we can grasp instantly. We hear the scriptures, we think we know it, and the reality is they're spiritual and we don't all receive everything that's spiritual all at one time just because we hear something.

So, that's a little bit of my dilemma, and even speaking through the Feast here about this subject, the ability to receive the things that are here is something you have to ask God for because there are things of a spiritual nature here that just don't automatically come into the mind and are grasped and understood because we hear them in the air.

We need to be reminded of what was stated toward the beginning of *Part 1*, and I'm just going to read this: We're going to look at some scriptures that we should be familiar with when addressing such a subject as this, but we need to dig deeper so we can grow more as we learn more. The truth is that although we have gone through some of this subject in the past and we have focused on such scriptures we have not fully grasped the full depth of the seriousness of what we've been told. Before we go further we need to focus on an element of truth that we must acknowledge if we are to grasp what we're going to continue covering at this Feast. The truth is if we do not learn to more fully judge ourselves and judge ourselves first in all areas of judgment we are not going to come to grasp and learn about judgment in the manner that God wants us to at this Feast.

There is a lot said there.

Then from *Part 1* toward the end of the sermon we went to John 5:30, and I'm going to read that again. **John 5:30—Of myself I can do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just and righteous because I do not seek my own will but the will of the Father who sent me.** That should be our desire, to seek God's will, to understand that our natural, normal reaction and response to things, especially when you talk about this particular subject matter, is that we believe that we're right.

We judge from how we see things and sometimes we mix God in with that as well, if you understand what I'm saying. We feel we're right because we think we're justified before God because we believe that we understand exactly what God wants, and so forth, and something needs to be changed or addressed or something is wrong, the way we see it.

The reality is so often that's not true because it truly is a matter of understanding God's will, God's purpose, God's laws, everything that God says. Then as time continues on and we

examine various things and think about certain things the desire is that our thinking, our reasoning, the logic we use is that which is in agreement with God, that comes from God's thinking.

So, start today in Romans 10.

Again, to understand by nature we do not tend to seek God's will, yet so often in God's Church, we think we're right because we think we're right with God. And what should we do rather than just taking it for granted that we understand everything there is in the sense of we're in agreement with God and our thinking is right? You need to go to God. We need to go to God and ask God for help and guidance and direction.

That is what prayer is about, asking God for help to lead and guide and direct our thinking, and to help us to truly see things the way we need to and not just from selfish human motivation. To make sure that we've gone through that and looked through those things because that's going to determine the outcome of whatever it is we're considering.

Especially in relationships because this is where the greatest need is of all. It's about Family. It's about relationships. It's about the world as well, judging things in the world and people and so forth in the sense of being able to see things clearly and knowing how to deal with them, knowing how to talk to them. There is so much in the world that you just have to have exactly the mind and the attitude of Christ when he says, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing."

If we understand they don't know what they're doing, we're supposed to know what we're doing, and that has a big impact in our lives and makes an incredible, gigantic difference then in how we respond to various things that happen to us. So, we're wronged a lot as far as the world is concerned. How we respond to that, how we think about them we should be able to handle that.

I can't imagine standing there being whipped with cat-o-nine-tails, flesh being ripped off your body, and taking it quietly because you understand the purpose, you understand them, you understand where they are, and you don't try to respond to that. You suffer. You suffer for righteousness's sake. You suffer because you love them.

Therein is the test for us so often. Where is our love? Is it our love? Is it God's love? Because our love is first based on selfishness, what, how we see things, what we think is right. When it's a matter of God being in the picture that can affect exactly how we think then in the sense of an outcome and how we're to respond in a certain way, and it's different than what we would normally do.

So, if we could understand that so often in relationships when it comes to matters of judging we have to get self out of the way, because we want so much, as a whole, for things to be,

the outcome to be our way, the way we think it should be, which isn't always, obviously, in agreement with God and God's will. That's hard.

That's why we have to go before God and ask for His holy spirit and ask for help in these matters because this is not something that's just simple. It determines the outcome. Is it a matter of peace or is it in God's way or is it going to be a matter of drama because we're not dealing with it properly and it stirs things up more oftentimes? That's tough. It's not easy because we're carnal as far as our nature is concerned and we rely on God and God's holy spirit.

Romans 10:1—Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. Now, it's just showing his spirit, his attitude, his desire for a people. In this case, he's talking about Israel. He's even going beyond just Judah, in that respect. Don't know, perhaps in his mind too, that which had to do with the Church, because he's really speaking to the Church, and understanding then the people who come into the Church, they're dealing with various problems that are a matter of their upbringing, their lives.

He's just reflecting something here that's really looking forward, and as far as God's plan, for what he could see at this point in time. Which we don't know fully what that was except by the writing of what He's written so far, that there is that in history through time as a matter of Israel.

He was trained. He was molded and fashioned to become a great leader in Judah, in the Judaic way and to be within the government of Judaism if you will. He had incredible education and teaching in that regard and already had a high position when things first came along, when he was out to do the will of and thinking the same way as those of Judah, as the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and a desire to stamp out anything to do with Christianity, anything to do with those who would follow Christ, Joshua.

He was there when he gave consent. He was the authority that gave the others consent to stone, to kill Stephen. Incredible! Now then, seeing things in the perspective of God, through God, what God had given to him, what Joshua had given to him, in that respect, this is his response.

"I pray to God," in essence, "for Israel. My prayer is that they may be saved." Our desire. I look forward to the time when there are so many people—and I know you do—people you know in various areas. I think of people in our subdivision, people that we get to know in various businesses around there that we are familiar with and see on a regular basis, certain ones that we have even greater desire that they be able to live into the Millennium. But that may not be God's will for everyone. We don't know their situations. We don't know how God is going to work with various ones, but we certainly even pray about some of those things sometimes because that's our desire.

Then when you think about a broader range of people through humanity and a desire for them, to see them not to suffer any longer, to look forward to the time that the Millennium is established, that there is one government. And in the midst of all that, to look forward to the time that everything that is evil, as a whole the majority, the worst of the evil is destroyed. Those who are destroying the earth, that they're destroyed.

I rejoice in that! That's a lot of mankind, but it has to come to an end, and there are minds that are so far gone and to start with that government in the way that God is going to, to understand why even the population of the earth is going to be whittled down dramatically to begin to work with something in a more focused, easier manner, if you will, striving to establish one government, striving to establish one religion on the earth, the truth, that the truth is rampant throughout the earth to put down those things that are false.

God makes it very clear that even as the Feast of Tabernacles is revealed, the Holy Days are revealed, if they don't come up wherever God has placed His name for people to go to, in that respect, for them to come together at a festive occasion and to learn about God, they're going to suffer He said. They're going to go without. They're going to go through hard times in that area, of that region of the world.

Then if they still don't listen, what did He say? He's going to destroy them. In the Millennium. During the Millennium. That's just, that's righteous, and resurrect them in another time when they can be worked with, when the next moment in their life they're going to wake up and they're going to know they've been dead. They're going to be told, "You've been dead for a thousand years." ...or whatever, at that point. Nine hundred and ninety-nine, whatever it is. There's going to be a humility there, an ability to work with them in a way at that moment in time, better than when they were still stubborn.

Can you imagine after seeing everything they're going to see, after going through everything the world goes through, it's going to happen. It is going to happen early on in the Millennium, even after they know that Joshua the Christ and 144,000 are on the earth. The world is going to know this. They're going to see.

That's God's whole purpose in everything that's going to take place here at the end, is that the world is going to know there is a God that's intervened. They may not grasp all the ins and outs of it and so forth at the very beginning because they're going to still try to hold on to some of their ways. They're going to be so stubborn in some cases they're going to resist it and insist on their own way but God's not going to allow it. Incredible, the human mind.

So, how do we feel toward the world? Well, I deeply look forward to, I think we all do in that respect, in that context, a time when people begin to be delivered from bondage. There is a horrible bondage upon mankind in their governments, with their governments. Every government on this earth there's a type of bondage with it that's not right, that's not good,

the thinking that goes on that's getting worse and worse, let alone other countries that have some governments come along that are so evil, harmful to people, killing people.

This is just his desire, he said. But when I read this, and when we read this, and we think about Israel we should see the Church. My desire for Israel, my prayer to Israel is that they all might be saved, but knowing full well they will not all be saved at the beginning here, that all are not going to come through this.

Every year I know this, you know this, that not everyone who is with us this year, if Christ hasn't returned by that time, by next year's Feast there will be those who won't be with us. Every year! So, not all are going to be saved from what's coming. There are going to be those who just die. God has that power.

I wish we could grasp that with all of our being, that within the Church of God we are judged in a unique way, and we are in one respect very akin to, on a spiritual plane and a physical plane, the children of Israel being brought out of Egypt. Ours is going to be a speeded-up process here at the end.

But they had forty years and God made certain not one person who rebelled, to a specific age, in the wilderness, was able to cross the Jordan into the promised land, if you will. They all died. God has that power. God Almighty has that power that every person who has ever been baptized into God's Church, if they turned against Christ, if they turn against God, if they turn against the Church, if they turn against me as God's apostle, if they turn against you as God's people, they're gone. They will not live in the Millennium. They're not going to see it!

Is that any of you? Anyone listening out there today? Because I know there is! And that hurts, in one respect, because this is my prayer, this should be all of our prayers, that we are able to come through this and bet together as a family because we love each other, because we want to see each other succeed.

If that's the first and foremost thing in the front of our mind we're going to treat each other in a unique way out of love and not have drama, not have disputes, not fight fault. Never, never, never, never at a Feast of Tabernacles or any Holy Day have a dispute with someone else in God's Church. That's a shameful, sick, perverted thing to happen, to have words with others, to have bad feelings towards others, "Well, you said that!" Then drama, drama, drama.

I hate drama! I learned to hate it at that camp, prison camp. I didn't know men could be full of drama like that. You pen them together in an area together and all of a sudden their ownership of something may be very small in a single room with eight people, and all of a

sudden you have all kinds of drama if anybody steps over the line into their area. Crazy. Crazy. Crazy.

I got an extra dose of learning to hate drama. But I hate it so much more when it happens in the Church because we hurt each other, we cause harm, we stunt other's growth. We can be the cause of hurting other people in their growth and their development spiritually by things we do, by things we say, by how we treat them. On and on it goes. So, we have to be ever so careful.

This has to do with judgment. How we think. Are we thinking as God wants us to think? Because it's not a simple thing.

For I bear witness that they have a zeal for God. So, I love it when I see zeal for God. I start to hurt when I see a lack of zeal. I start to hurt when I see people pulling back and letting down. Because I see it. I see it all the time in God's Church. I think how dangerous that is to let down, to begin compromising with things in life to where God, the Church is not first in a person's life. I saw too much of that during Laodicea where the Church was no longer first in the sense of the congregation, in the sense of activities, in the sense of everything that is done, a desire to be together with God.

Sometimes we lack zeal, and we need to pray about that so we're on fire, to learn the lesson of Laodicea - hot, cold, lukewarm. Lukewarm is not acceptable. Straddling the fence is not acceptable. Walking in the middle is not acceptable. God spews it out of His mouth and that's what's happening even now in the Church. Where there's just that kind of a middle ground, it's being gotten rid of.

So, we need to ask God for help to be zealous, zealous for Him, zealous for His way of life, and on it goes.

For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Yet we are supposed to have knowledge. We have the knowledge; it's a matter of what we use, how much we love it, really love it.

Sometimes it boggles my mind to think that people can leave the truths. And what do you go to? Of all the truths that God has given to us where do we go, what do we do to preserve them, to guard over them, to watch them, to keep them in our lives? Back to one of the other organizations which they came out of that don't believe any of them? It's an astounding thing how far the human mind can go, a fearful thing.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness... Sometimes that can happen to us, not really understanding the mind of God, not really understanding. We hear it but to understand what it means to be a peacemaker? Those are words. But to put it into action that means you

have to do something, and the major thing you have to do is suffer. To be a peacemaker you must suffer.

What does that mean? Self. Because you have to tell self no. You have to tell self this has to be done God's way. To be a peacemaker is not a simple thing. They're not just words. There are things that can be active, and active in what we say, how we say it, things that come out of our mouth. We're all guilty of those times in our life that we regret when we have not been peacemakers—we should be—where we have not been peacemakers, when we haven't swallowed our words, choked on them a little bit if need be. Go ahead and choke! It's far better than hurting someone.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about—I love this how it says it—and going about seeking to establish their own righteousness. It's almost like you want to puke on that one. Because that's what we do as human beings. We're right, and the biggest problem in not being able to be a peacemaker is that "I'm right! You have wronged me! I'm right. Don't you see it?! Can't you understand what I'm saying and how I'm saying it, my reasoning?"

That's the problem, it's not God's, it's "mine," - "I'm right. Can't you see the right in what I'm saying?" So, I'm kind of laughing at this a little but because that's the way we are as human beings. We seek to establish our own righteousness. We are right. That's what it's talking about.

We don't think we're wrong about things we do and things we say. We tend to think we're right. Why? How? Are we always right? Is anyone perfect among us? So, it's just a matter of so often just acknowledging what we are.

I remember Herbert Armstrong talking about he knew, he believed, what he was of and by himself. I could picture certain places I've seen in Kansas growing up, and maybe a washed-out riverbed or a washed-out area that has an old vehicle there that somebody just abandoned, no tires on it because it's old and it's all nothing but rust on the body and parts... Then he said, "That's what I'm like. I'm just a rusted-out piece of junk, a hulk of a vehicle," or whatever. He gave that as an example of something he felt that's what he was.

We have to see ourselves, of what we are, and realize how blessed we are that God is blessing us with something that's working to change this mind as we yield to the process. But to understand we're full of selfishness, we're full of rust, decay. Thank God we have God. Thank God we can pray to have more of God in us, to stir up God's spirit and of Christ to dwell fully in us so that we can dwell in them.

...going about seeking to establish their own righteousness and have not submitted... That has to do with government, but it's more than that because we shouldn't... How do I say all

this? We should understand government. It regulates life. With God it regulates, should regulate our life. But it's not something we should look upon in a negative way. Because oftentimes government is looked upon in a negative manner. But we need government as human beings.

You know, in God's Family it's not going to be an issue because that's what we are. We're going to live what we are in God's Family, Elohim, because we're at one with God perfectly so. But now we're not. There are things we have to change and grow in and seek to become more at one with Him, and it has to do with submitting our will to His will. That's what this is about, submitting to God's government.

Most people who ever leave God's Church, if not all, do not submit to the righteousness of God. There's something that gets in their craw. Well, we don't have a craw, but you understand what I'm saying. Chickens have craws. But it's like this sand, this stuff that they pick off the ground to mix with the grain that works to help prepare it to go into the stomach from what I understand. But it's the expression we use and meaning you just can't get it out. It gets in there and it's just something that works away at you, gets in our craw.

I think of Covid. It got in people's craw! There are some people who got so upset about me mentioning things, some who have left, because I stated it many times since we started the process, and certain guidelines were given to the Church that some never ever agreed with. Some of it they would never even submit to, period, because I was wrong, not understanding how God works in our life.

And I think, what a horrible thing that you can become so upset because you're so right about something because you have studied this on the internet, and you filled your mind with what people say on the internet. Especially Wikipedia because nothing is wrong in Wikipedia!

I'm sorry, but I hope you understand what I'm saying. You can write anything you want pretty much and sometimes you get it in there and a lot of false things with a little bit of truth and people can stir the pot and make whatever they want out of it. There is so much pot out there and sometimes that's a problem with people in the world.

What a horrible thing. It's whatever you want, whatever you want to believe is there, whatever you tend to lean toward, it's there. That's what we do as people and we establish our righteousness that this is what is right, this is what is from God.

I've seen all kinds of things in the Church like that that have crept into the Church. Certain diets, certain kinds of foods you eat, and if you have this thing and that thing... Whatever you do in those areas. I take different kinds of supplements and stuff that some probably wouldn't. And that's me. I'm responsible for me. But I'm not going to get to a point where I say, "This works so good for me that you have to have it, and this would help you and this

would save you and this would make you do better...” But we get this sometimes where people get so fanatical about some things that they believe in that they think everybody in the Church should have it. They should do the same things that they’re doing because they’re the specimen of good health.

I’m sorry but we have a lot of battles, and they’re with self. We need to keep self to self. We’re all individuals. We shouldn’t try to make or try to work to make others agree with us all the time because we’re right about everything. We want our way; we want to establish our righteousness. Sometimes in conversations people talk and visit and sometimes they’re establishing their righteousness. They want you to listen to their way of thinking. And if you could only agree with them you’d be so much better off.

Had one person leave recently because of that. Nobody would listen to them anymore, basically, is what they said. “They won’t listen to the news. They won’t stay up to date on things that they need to know.” But I know what was being said that they thought that others needed to know, and it wasn’t about the news.

...have not submitted to the righteousness of God. Which is a matter of faith, submitting to the truth, God’s word, God’s government, His instruction.

So, we’re to judge matters in life all the time. It’s just we have to. It’s a part of life. We make decisions, decisions, judgments, choices—choices, choices, choices. All choices are a matter of our judgment, and there have been a lot of choices that have led people directly out of God’s Church. Judgments that they have made because they don’t agree with God.

So again, the test is always whether or not it’s a matter of God’s way according to His will or not. It always boils down to that. That’s why I love that word “logic.” We may think we’re logical in how we think but the truth is it must have God in it. That’s why I love the word “logos.” We heard on Atonement there, logos, God’s Word, how we think, in His word that it’s His Word, not ours.

Let’s turn over to Matthew 7:1. Read these so many in times about judgment, concerning judgment, concerning relationships. It’s always in the context of relationships and how we think about one another and so forth.

Matthew 7:1—Judge not. Now, it’s not a matter of that we shouldn’t judge in our life and make choices and decisions that are based on judgment and reasoning and so forth. It’s about a relationship with others. It’s about looking down upon others. It’s about finding fault with others. It’s about our being right and other’s being wrong. That’s the kind of thing that’s in the context being spoken of here.

Judge not so that you not be judged. Because the reality is if we do that kind of thing, we’re in judgment and we are being condemned for doing what’s wrong by God, cutting

ourselves off from God's spirit because of finding fault, especially if it's His people within the Family of God. If we start doing that, we start cutting ourselves off from the flow of God's spirit we're in big trouble. So, it's always a matter of the way one judges.

For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged. It's like that mirror. We should be seeing ourselves. As it comes out of us, it should smack us right in the face and know that should be for us and not for someone else. "That's for me."

...and with what measure you give out... It's what it has to do with here, that you use, with what measure you use against others, if you will, toward others that's wrong, that's not balanced, that's not sound, well, we've already sinned.

So, it's being measured right back to us. It's a mirror. It's a boomerang, comes right back, and should hit us. Should hit us right here to wake us up, "This isn't right! Because I've just condemned myself for doing the very thing that I feel that someone else should be doing something different in, where I've looked down upon them, where I've lowered them in a relationship in the Church with God, where I've found fault."

Well, that's not so hard to do in life if we just look for faults in different people at times or we see the negative and the fault of someone else in their life. None of us are perfect. Why think that way? We should never think that way. We should want to stir up that which is the good and look on that and hold that up, keep that, forget the other.

Have you ever had a bad day? Still think about the Atonement sermon about hangry. I've been that way before. I get in a car, there should be a word for that, but something happens. Now, if the road is clear I'm fine. But if there are other human beings out there driving? And you know what's amazing, so often in driving, especially when you get three lanes of traffic and it's full, you almost know exactly what different ones are going to do. You know how? Because that's exactly what you do, I do. I've done it. I know what they're doing. So, you pull up a little closer so they can't get in.

Sick games we play as human beings. Has anyone ever done that? Okay, hold up your hand, admit it, fess up. Okay, excellent. And the rest of you who didn't fess up, you've got to work on that. No! But it's amazing what our human nature is like. I mean, isn't that a waste of time? But the reason why we get worked up so often is because we know what they're doing and it just aggravates the tar out of us, because "I do that. I know what you're doing, and I don't like it." But the main thing is we learn, don't do it.

So, why do you look or focus upon the splinter in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank/beam of wood in your own eye? When I think of that I think of you know, you have something that's barely big enough to stick in there and it sticks into your eye. And you think, what an incredible example here, analogy in that respect of what we're like. We're nitpicky.

We pick at little things and sometimes build little things up in our minds about others, and yet we don't realize where it's coming... why we think that way. It's in us! If we could just see ourselves and begin to battle those kinds of things things could be so much better.

Or how can you say to your brother, Let me remove the splinter from your eye. So, what it's saying is that you have a way that they need to listen to that will make their life better. "I can help you out with that." We start giving them advice, guidance of something, that "If you'll just try this, I think that would work. Things will be better in your life," or whatever it might be, whatever kind of advice there might be.

Basically, saying here, that's our problem so often, we just know what's better for others. Sometimes we're not so keen to know what's better for us. We need to judge ourselves constantly. That's what the problem is. We need to see ourselves first. We need to look at ourselves in all situations in life first and realize that we have things to work on.

If we really grasped our frame and our thinking and our mind in our weaknesses in the sense of human nature and that we are selfish it should help us to have a mercy and a patience with others and a love to them to realize we're in this together, we're fighting this, we want to change and we want that for others.

Hypocrite! First, remove the plank in your own eye. So, that's basically what this series started out with. We have to see ourselves first if we're going to be able to really be a help to anyone else by example, whatever it might be. But we really must see self first and that helps us then, so often then in our response, if that's really living in us, in thinking toward others. To have the patience whatever it might be, to have the humility we need to have in our thinking.

I thought it'd be good to pause and consider the actual definition of judgment: "The process of forming an opinion or evaluation by discerning and comparing." Discerning and comparing. So, when it says "opinion" there it really isn't relevant when it comes to God's way because we all have opinions, we form our own opinions about things. So, not a good example in the context of what we're talking about here and it's good for us to see that and to understand that.

Again, opinions aren't relevant when it comes to God's ways and His laws. It's a matter of forming, how we form the way we think, the opinion, the conclusion, whatever it might be, to be able to evaluate something, to make sure that God's in the picture. Whatever instruction is given through scripture in relationships that God is indeed in the picture and that we're doing it His way.

You ever think when you're starting to have a wrong feeling toward someone else that first of all you look inside and say, "Am I dealing with this in a humble spirit?" What does that mean?

“Do I have a humble spirit before I go into this?” Because individuals, if we think we’re right, if we believe, if we know, because it’s not a matter of thinking, it’s just we know we’re right, then where is our listening? Are we listening to someone else, what they’re saying, or does something else close off what’s coming into here because we’re forming an opinion about things that are being said without really considering it all, thinking about, listening to what someone else is saying, listening to their side of the issue, because we’ve already made a judgment?

If we don’t understand that in our relationships, that that’s exactly what happens, then how can we ever change and make things right? How can we be a peacemaker? And yet God charges us with that, to be peacemakers. Individually toward others and wherever we can in life, but especially in this Family. I was going to read more there but I’ll pass over it.

So, this process of discerning: “A quality of being able to grasp and comprehend what is obscure.” Well, that fits even better in some ways because if we can grasp it, if we really have God in the picture... Sometimes we think we understand it but sometimes it’s a little obscure, we don’t really see it as clearly as we need to, and that’s why we always need to go to God and ask for help. You know, when there are decisions about situations in the Church, about different things that people are going through I have to go before God and ask for help to be able to do things in His timing. Because my timing, our timing isn’t always God’s timing because God is working with everyone in the Body in different ways. Not the same way. There are different things and struggles that people go through and so sometimes to address something may not be the right time because it interferes with what God is doing in their life.

I hope we understand that. You could interfere with what God is doing in someone’s life by sticking your nose into something that you shouldn’t stick your nose into that God is striving to work out. Then when the time is right, if something is good to be brought out in the open ask God for the help of that and it’s amazing how that works. My experience has been it always, always, always comes out in a way that works to offer what is best for another individual, and if they cannot receive it then it also reveals there’s a time to address something and deal with it even within the Church.

We have to be careful in how we work with matters and how we work with one another, how we think toward one another, and ask God for help and guidance in our choices, in our decisions, in the process we go through, because every one of us, we belong to God, and we don’t want to interfere with how God does things. We don’t want to be the stumbling block with what God is doing.

I don’t mean to come across in any fashion or form as being hard, strongly corrective, but I am striving to reveal or to talk about things that we all have battles with. I do. You do. Change is what it’s all about. We should all want change, to draw closer to God. That means

we have something to work on. I do. You do. I guess sometimes, especially Feast of Tabernacles, I can tend to cry out even more so in a stronger way and that's because every Feast of Tabernacles I am reminded of those who are no longer with us—every Feast.

Because I know from Feast to Feast there are those who won't be with us. Don't know who they are. Sometimes I see some drifting in that direction and I'm always so thankful when I see someone get a hold of certain things and brought back in in a stronger way, become more zealous for God's way. I also see the things of danger, of what individuals do and I do not interfere with that process except or when God reveals it something has come to the surface and needs to be dealt with, needs to be addressed to help someone or to help others in the Body by taking care of a matter.

1 Corinthians 1:4—I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you in Joshua the Christ. What a beautiful thing, a way of thinking. "I thank my God always on your behalf." Thinking of others, thinking of the Body, thinking of the Church, thinking of our fellowship wherever we are and how blessed we are to have it because there are quite a few people out in various parts of the world who aren't able to come together on the Sabbath with others. How blessed we are when we can because so much of this is our training ground.

"I thank my God always on your behalf for the grace of God which is given you in Joshua the Christ," the blessing of repentance, the blessing of forgiveness, the blessing of growth, the blessing of patience. All the things that God has given to us to help us grow.

...so that in everything you be enriched in him in all speech, how we talk. How we talk. How we communicate and why we communicate it, what our conversation is like.

...and all knowledge, even as the witness of Christ was established in you. What does that mean "the witness of Christ was established in you?" It means as we yield ourselves, submit ourselves to God, to God's way, and strive to live that way and seek to change and our minds to be transformed, which is the greatest blessing of all that we don't have to stay the way we are. We can grow, we can get rid of things that are wrong, we can become stronger spiritually. Our lives can become better and better and better, richer, and richer in God's way of life.

And so, that which we live is the witness. You can't do it on your own. You can't have things that are right. You can't have right judgment. You can't live right toward one another God's way without God's help. We can't live this way of life, we can't retain and hold on to the truth God has given to us without God's help. That's why it should be something that we're endeared to and love and recognize how blessed we are.

Just like at a Feast here, to think about all that God has given to us. I think of what was given last year, and sometimes we lose sight of that, a woman ordained to be an evangelist to speak in God's Church. Beautiful, awesome what God is doing. Sends shivers up and down my spine. Just thinking what God has given to us to experience, making things right that went off base six thousand years ago, and God now establishing them in the Church so that they will be established as soon as God's Kingdom is established on earth. That's the way it'll be.

Making things right, making things fit into God's purpose. As a matter of fact, I was thinking the other day with all the sermons that have already been given by her, thinking, seems like this is old hat now. It's like this is the way it's always been. And it hasn't. It's only been within the last year. I don't know if you feel that way, but I do. I think, this just feels so normal.

It's like Joshua, it was all of a sudden, and it's like that's normal. In the beginning, it was a bit of a struggle just because of the habit of using a word and it would pop out every once in a while, you know, I just loathed it. After a while, it just seemed so normal. Joshua. It's beautiful. So, that's our relationship and we see that, we know that.

Having a woman get up and give sermons, it's just normal, it's just natural. I'll tell you what, five years ago, ten years ago I thought, it's not going to happen. That's how screwed up my mind was. Still locked into the past. Because some would ask me sometimes, "Well, if they're in the ministry, you know..." "Well maybe when Christ returns, you know..." Because I'm not going to go there unless I know, and after a while, you know what? I knew that's what was supposed to happen because God said now, in essence. So, awesome! Sometimes it's hard for us to understand how blessed we are with everything we have been given.

...so that in everything you be enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge even as the witness of Christ was established in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift waiting for the coming of our Lord Joshua the Christ. If we recognize what we receive, we don't want to be lacking in those things. We don't want to be lacking in using the opportunity that's been given to us to repent of sin because that's the beginning because of our Passover and being so thankful that we're able to do that and that God will forgive us then.

Then to understand that through that we can cry out to God, He hears us, we ask for His holy spirit He'll give it to us, He'll help us in battles and things that we have. He'll give us the things we lack.

...who shall also establish you unto the end. What a beautiful thing, "be established unto the end." I believe it is our desire for one another in the Body, hopefully, and prayerfully that everyone has that desire for each other, that we all be established to the end...in a sense the beginning when God's Kingdom comes. But I know it won't be for everyone because God has made it clear right up to the end there will be that or those who are lying to God, who are antichrist right to the end who will not be allowed into God's new age.

“Who shall also establish you unto the end.” Because, you know, it should hurt us when we lose people in fellowship. I think of the past and I think of the years back when things were right and that song, “We walked to God’s house side by side, and counsel blended sweet,” and right now faces and people flashing through my mind. We spent time together, we’ve eaten together, we’ve had incredible fellowship together in times past, and then something began to change somewhere along the line. It didn’t happen overnight.

Sometimes we didn’t know what it was until we kind of look back and then we began to see certain traits and things that began to pop up, but always having that desire that we’re all together to the very end. That’s what it should be. But understanding that it won’t be in all cases. But God reveals what is lacking and what is not right, and still those things are hard.

“Walking to God’s house side by side, counsel blending sweet.” When I think of that verse I think of Big Sandy during the Feast of Tabernacles, and if you’ve ever seen the layout of Big Sandy, which some may have and some may not have. Some may have seen pictures. But there is what we call the Tabernacle building. It was a huge metal building that would hold five thousand plus people. And right below that on the other side of the street there were pines, thick with pines and there were streets, divided up into streets all along, one huge street that went all the way down. Then on both sides where there were pines, different paved streets. Thirty-some streets, thirty-one or thirty-two going all the way down from there to where all these people, as a whole, the majority were living out there in tents, in things that could pull behind a vehicle, whatever, at that point in time.

And to see them come together off of those streets throughout the morning, walking down through there, pulling wagons with children and so forth, and walking up to that building. To realize that so many of them are gone, so many of them who had that experience walking to God’s house side by side, counsel blended sweet, the good times, the morning, visiting like we do together downstairs, visiting together like we do out here. It hurts. It’s like a knife cutting deep when we’re not all together.

The struggle of humanity, the struggle of the mind when called by God, and realizing that sometimes people just don’t choose God. You got to hold on to it with all of your being.

That’s why I’m encouraged when I see the growth that I do from area to area when we visit because something I have seen in the past year is as we go into various areas it’s so refreshing to see a growth and a greater zeal that people have toward one another. Because I can see it, I hear it, I know it, and it’s a beautiful thing. It’s beautiful.

Something we should all desire for each other - never to hurt one another, never to get into a situation where we say something to someone else that’s cutting, that’s hurting. Words can cut so deep and last for so long. Some flash into my mind right now of things that I have done

and said in times past, even at a Feast of Tabernacles, even here. I so regret the stupidity of my selfishness.

And so, we all have to repent of things when we say something wrong, when something comes out of our mouth that shouldn't have toward someone else for whatever reason that might have been, that might hurt or cut in any fashion or form. Should never exist. But it does because we're human beings because we're selfish and sometimes we're hangry and sometimes we've been on the freeway (and my wife wants out). Anyway. Just kidding.

It's a battle. This way of life is a battle. You can't quit fighting. You've got to hold on to it with all of your being. You've got to strive with all of your being. You've got to cry out to God every day for help. If we don't it shows that we don't grasp it. If we're not crying out to God for help every day, for His holy spirit to live in us we don't really get it fully like we should and need to.

We should be able to say, "I get it! I want Your help. I want to be forgiven of sin. I want to do better," in whatever it might be, "I need help to do that. I need Your spirit because I know I can't do it right or on my own. I need that help! I want it!" Ask God for it. Then repent mightily when something has been done that's not right. If we're not doing that every day we're lacking something in our understanding. But if you keep fighting and keep fighting it'll come.

...who shall also establish you unto the end that you might be blameless in the day of our Lord Joshua the Christ. God is faithful. Boy, that's comforting, awesome verse. "God is faithful." We're not always faithful, obviously, but God is. We can rely on that always, always, always.

God is faithful through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son Joshua the Christ our Lord. Were called into the Body of Christ, called into His fellowship. And it's His! If we really grasped that in our deepest part of our being, we will fear to hurt someone else in this Body. We will fear because we should fear to hurt someone else in this Body.

Now, I implore you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Joshua the Christ, that you all speak the same thing. That means we're of the same mind. Of the same mind, because we're in agreement with God, we're in agreement with what God has given, we're in agreement with God's Church, with God's government, we're in agreement with those things, we're in agreement with the truths, we're in agreement with guidelines and direction that's given and say, "Yes, absolutely I'll turn right if you said we're supposed to turn right. Quick left? Absolutely!" "Get a shot? Without a doubt! Without a doubt no matter what the outcome is because I trust, and I believe that there are guidelines and directions that are given to us and that's what we do."

Sometimes we resist, and we fight against those things because we have some knowledge of something that “I” have read and how these things are going to bore into your brain and it’s going to begin to rot. I’m sorry. It’s a horrible thing to get on the internet and think you know things, think you become expert in things that interfere with things that God has us do.

Now, I implore you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Joshua the Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you. What a beautiful thing, no division. No argument, no dispute, no disagreement because of false judgment, because of stupidity, because of selfishness. Those things get in the way.

...but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. The reasoning, the thinking of God. There is no more beautiful thing than that, that we be able to do that, joined together in the same mind and judgment of God Almighty. That is my goal constantly, to have that in the forefront of my being. It is my joy. It is what stirs me up, that desire and then this reward and the feeling and the knowing of those things as they take place in life to be of the same mind and agreement and thinking of God Almighty. Because when that’s there there is absolute confidence, boldness of life, peace that is a spiritual thing.

Philippians 2:1—Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ... And there is. Tons of it if we yield to it, submit to it, draw closer to it, desire it, want it.

...if any comfort of agape, God’s love. We don’t automatically have it, but God gives us access to it. We have to pray for it, we have to ask for it because it’s not our love, because ours is selfish. All the time we are selfish. I am a very selfish being because I am carnal, but I have the blessing of God’s holy spirit in here, in the impregnation of my mind, to fight against that which is in here.

That’s what we have to see. You have a fight. I have a fight. We must be in the fight fighting against those things that would otherwise come out first. Because our tendency in judging is to first rely upon self and “The way I see it,” and that isn’t right. It’s asking the question, “What does God say? What is God’s purpose in this? Is there something I need to see more clearly?” Then to have the smarts to go before God and even pray about it when that comes up, “to help me to see.” Because it’s not automatic.

...if any fellowship of the spirit. See, fellowship is to be a matter of God’s spirit. The kind of fellowship we’re to experience is a matter of God’s spirit that’s living and dwelling within us. And so, if we’re yielded to God and God’s spirit is working through the spirit He’s given to us in the mind there is that which is going to come out to us that is His love toward one another. How could we think badly toward each other? How could we be offended at one another?

For whatever reason they may have a bad day today, I don't know, but I love them. Maybe they said something, having a tough time and going through some things that I'm not aware of. Can I have some patience with that and just wipe it off the map here kind of as I would hope they would do the same for me because we love each other? Peacemakers.

...if any fellowship of the spirit, if any affection and compassion, fulfill my joy so that you be like-minded. If we could see these things on a spiritual plane that's what we need to see. I mean, truly, that which does give joy if our mind and heart is right with God, and to see the like-mindedness then.

Because I have to be candid, every time something comes up that's not like-minded it causes ripples in the Body. If conversation comes along and it's not in unity and harmony, whatever that might be, it's like going outside and seeing these jet plumes go across the sky. "Got to get inside. The government is trying to kill us today!" I mean, there are people who think like that who have been in God's Church.

My wife and I will go out for a morning walk. She does some jogging, I don't, I walk. Try to do it briskly, save my knees. We see these jet plumes. Every time we see jet plumes running across the sky, "Oh," it's like a private joke because we knew of someone that this was a big thing to them. Actually, we've known of quite a few but one in particular.

Think, how can anyone get so far off base to latch on to conspiracy theories? To think that the world is flat. Now, if that comes up and happens in God's Church you know that something is going to happen. They're not going to be with us too long. Matter of fact, as soon as it comes out of the mouth it's pretty much over with. How do you deal with that? Because if that's off base there's a whole lot more that's off base. If that's off base there is a whole lot more that's off base. If there are other things that people latch on to that are just weird in the world then there's a whole lot more that's wrong spiritually.

...if any fellowship of the spirit, if any affection and compassion, fulfill my joy so that you be like-minded, having the same love, being in full accord, of one mind. That is such an awesome, beautiful thing to strive for and to have.

Let nothing be done through strife. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing done through strife because of disagreement, because of our false, faulty, whatever judgment, reasoning, logic that we're using that's coming from selfish human nature, so much so that we're blinded to what we should be able to see and how we're supposed to respond and act toward one another.

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory. Actually, they go together because if it's a matter of self it's always going to be there when things aren't right. That's where the strife comes from, it comes from self being right. Seeking to establish our own righteousness. I love

the way the scriptures are written like that if we see what they're talking about because that's what we try to do as human beings. We want to be seen as right.

Sometimes we'll live a false picture because we're hiding something, because we want to be seen as a certain way, or our lives to be seen as a certain way and not realize that this isn't healthy, this isn't good. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory." A matter of judgment in how we protect ourselves as human beings. "I'm right." "My life is right." "I'm right in what I say and what I think." That's the first clue that we're in big trouble.

...but in lowliness of mind let us esteem others above themselves. In other words, before self. It's not a matter of above or below it's how we think. We try to raise self up—that's a good example—and then put others down. Because whenever we find fault in someone else it's a perverted thing that happens in the mind. We think we're better. We see things better. "You should be doing the way I think because I'm right."

Do not look every one on their own things, but everyone on the things of others. It just means be ready to do what others might want or listen to them. How much does that hurt to shift something in your life in order to give to someone else? Do we have to hold on to our right, our righteousness, our right in "The way I see it," or are we willing to give that up? If there's not sin involved what's wrong with giving in and giving to someone else?

So often we try to hold our ground and we feel that something is wrong. Well, there are so many ways of doing things and living things in life and sometimes we don't grasp that because our way is so right. It's like the other ways are sin. There's no sin involved.

And candidly, that comes out a lot. That comes out a lot in the Church because someone is so right about something they see it as the other person is sinning. That's the conclusion because we're so right. Don't be so sure.

There are, again, so many ways of doing things in life. Can't we give? Can't we suffer a little bit our way, give in to have the peace, to see someone have more joy and happiness in their life or that moment, whatever that might be in whatever it is?

As I talk about these things I think about the human spirit and the human mind and selfishness. It's so ugly, it really is. It's just filthy. So glad we can get rid of it and fight to get rid of it and be cleansed. Because it does nothing but hurt, causes hurt. It causes the suffering. It causes the drama.

That's why I love the difference in the two because it's a good example, between peace and drama. Whenever there is drama there is no peace, and it's the opposite. It's not God's way. Drama is the way of evil. Satan loves drama. He loves to see us have drama because then he can have a way in.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Joshua the Christ. What an awesome thing to know that that same mind, that same thinking, the logic, the Word, and the reasoning that goes with it can be in our thinking if we yield and submit to that and cry out for that help. Incredible!

...which was also in Joshua the Christ, who, having been made in the likeness of God... Now, some of this is very poorly translated and actually done so falsely, and it's because of the concept of a false belief in the trinity. That's why some things have been translated in a distorted way because people have seen things through the eyes of what they believe that's twisted and distorted, and here is one that has to do with the trinity.

So, that false thinking, if you will, led to false reasoning. It wasn't God's thinking, it was their thinking because of something so distorted.

This is about Christ not lifting himself up in any way. He didn't choose that in any fashion or form throughout his life. He knew who he was, and he didn't lift himself up. It's what it's about. He didn't try to prevent what he knew was coming. He asked God for help. "But," he says, "if there is any other way, take this cup from me."

Because it's something that is hard for us to grasp and comprehend what he knew was so strong in his mind because of that oneness with God and the mind of God, the Word that was in him made flesh was so strong that what was written about what he was going to go through was as him living it.

I don't know how you even explain that. But it was so real to him that he knew what it was going to be, like feeling it. Because even as he prayed, when you have droplets of blood come out in your perspiration because of that kind of anguish, I can't comprehend that.

I remember walking from a car and going into a building because I had to go into a secure area that had gates around it and wire and so forth. It wasn't in the camp part. That's where we didn't have to go to report in, we had to go to the minimum security area—yeah, there was a maximum and a minimum—minimum security, loaded with guards and so forth. I remember walking from that car into that building and it's one of the worst feelings of my life, and it's still in my mind. That was one of the hardest things, to walk through there.

I knew I was going to have to do it, but it wasn't as real as what Christ went through. With him, it was as though he was feeling it, knowing it, so that as he prayed droplets of blood. There was blood mixed with his perspiration. I can't comprehend that, that kind of agony because you know you're about to get whipped, beaten... He knew what pain was like living in a human body. He was experiencing it growing up. To imagine that you're going to have someone come out there and whack you with leather straps that have things tied to the end that will rip your skin off your body and then eventually to have your hands put up here and a

nail slammed through it? You're going to feel that? You're going to feel that big time. Then your feet put together like that and another nail?

I can't comprehend knowing that's so real in your mind. Only with that simple, little, stupid example of something that was minor in comparison. Walking from a car to that building, knowing it's going to be three years of lost life in one sense. But it wasn't lost, I was able to grow.

But to understand what Christ went through, to understand that mind? But he didn't resist it, he just said, "Father, if there is any other way can this cup be taken from me." It was painful in the thinking.

How painful have you been in your thinking to fight against this to submit to what is right? See, we don't fight that like we should sometimes to give up our way, "The way I think it should be done," and still lash out at, speak at someone else in a way that really isn't good, that isn't just, that isn't sound, that isn't living according to God's law and God's way. And so, if we see those things clearly in our minds we'll loathe them so much that we will change, never to repeat, striving never to repeat. Sometimes it can be a battle, things can crop up.

Just like when I'm on the freeway, I fight battles. I use that example because it's true I have to fight battles when I get out there on the freeway and there are other people out there. I just wish they'd all stay home. Just kidding.

The world is getting crazier and crazier and doing crazier things, and sometimes it gets frustrating.

I'll just share another one with you, one of my pet peeves, and it happens all the time. People are coming at you. I'm not old, old, but I'm old, old, I mean, old. My wife has grey hair. We're walking down the sidewalk. There are two people coming straight at us, hand in hand, a young couple, and they're not going to budge. They're not going to give way to someone older. They don't care. Matter of fact, I don't think they even see you. It's like, "They're invisible; we're going to go right through them. We're in our own world we love each other so much." "We just love ourselves so much." And you think, where am I supposed to go? No courtesy. No care. No concern about others. Well, we're supposed to have care and concern.

I guess the more you know and the more you understand of God's way of life and the more you strive to live that way of life sometimes the harder it gets to deal with what's in the world. It's like we want to see things change, we want to see people begin to think right, to have some soundness.

To hear some of the crazy ideas that people come up with sometimes? To watch the news? I can barely take it. It's heavy. Thank God we're almost to the end of this. But we're going to see a lot more and it's going to be hard to take, the stupidity of mankind.

Sorry, I just had to unload there a little bit. We all have our different battles, different things, and it's a matter of how we see them and how we think as to what the result is going to be.

So again, this is very poorly translated. It's not about a thing of being equal to God and it's like this thing with Satan and wanting to be like God. It's not that at all but that's how it's poorly, sickly translated.

So again, **He took no thought to seize upon being together with God.** He knew he was going to be together with God. He knew what was going to take place. He knew he was going to suffer mightily. He knew that he was going to be resurrected from the dead. He knew that he was going to be in the tomb for three days and three nights dead. He knew these things and he knew that he was going to be given spirit life forever, that he was the Son of God, that he was the cornerstone, that everything that God is building in Elohim is built upon him.

It didn't go to his head. He wanted it. He willingly with great desire humbled himself to go through it all. He wanted to. "With great desire, I desired to keep this Passover with you," he said because he knew what was going to happen on that day and he knew what it meant for them. The Church would begin after Pentecost. That was exciting.

Keep God's purpose and plan in our mind - it's exciting. A willingness to go through whatever we need to even for one another sometimes.

Verse 5 going on here or reading it again as it should be: **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Joshua the Christ, who being made after the form of God took no thought to seize upon being together with God.** He didn't try to change it. He did ask if there was any other way, and that was the max he went to in that regard. But it wasn't about being lifted up in any fashion or form to change anything.

Verse 7—but emptied himself and received... I'm just reading it the way it should be. Some of these other things are not in there... "**made himself of no reputation**" is not in the scriptures. "**took upon himself**" is not in the verses at all.

...but emptied himself and received the form of a servant. He willingly did that, in other words, is what it's saying here. He humbled himself to go through whatever it was he had to go through in human life. And you know, again, we can't grasp and comprehend that because he had the mind of God in him. He saw things and understood things on a spiritual plane that we cannot comprehend that was in his mind and his being. And so, to have that mind and

willing to do that in a human body, knowing full well this wasn't his purpose, except for that period of time. Guess that was just wrongly said, period.

He says he took on the form of a servant. That's what we are; we're servants. We should see ourselves in that manner. That should be a whole lot easier for us.

...took upon himself the form of a servant made in the likeness of mankind, and finding the form even as mankind he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of being nailed to a pole.

So, whatever God's purpose is in life we're God's. That little walk, as I said, from the car to that building, minor, minor, minor in the scheme of things. But it wasn't for me in my thinking. It was excruciatingly painful in the mind, it really was. Ripped apart. Whew. When you're in it it's something different. When things happen, we're different. We go through all kinds of trials and tests in life.

I mentioned some of the ones who weren't able to make it to the Feast this year, the things that they're going through. They're hard! They're difficult! Things that we sometimes go through in the suffering we go through in life. But if we yield ourselves to the process we're in God's hands, He's there to help us. It's just the way it is. So be it. If something is being molded and fashioned in our minds that becomes better and stronger because of what we go through and experience, bring it on! I want it. We should want it.

And finding the form even as mankind he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of being nailed to a pole.

1 Peter 4:1—For as much then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh... All that he went through for all of us. We can't comprehend that, that he did it for everyone, everyone that could be given the opportunity to be called to be brought into a Family, to have their minds transformed, a willingness to work with them, to help them to grow, to overcome, to go through various things to help mold and fashion the mind.

For as much then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. Meaning, the battle is there, and you have to suffer. The biggest thing we have to suffer so often is in self, just fighting it and saying no to self. It's a sacrifice, whatever it is we're giving up. And spiritually it's not, but it is, if you understand what I'm saying. We want certain things, we're drawn to certain things, whatever that might be, but the battle has to be there to say no to that which is wrong, whatever that is. And in that, we're able to cease from sinning because we seek to do what is right.

...that they should no longer live the rest of their time in the flesh to the lust of mankind, which is selfishness. "The lust of mankind" is about selfishness, self, self, self. "I love self." And getting rid of that, fighting against that. ...but to the will of God.

So again, they seem like simple things. Sometimes we hear these things, and we maybe feel we're doing them, and the reality is, no, we have so much more to grow in. We truly do. This is just the footing, if you will, of something far greater of things that need to be built upon it. This needs to become stronger in our understanding, in our thinking, and applying it in our lives toward one another because we're constantly tried in these things, we truly are. But we have to know what the battle is in order to fight it, in order to succeed, truly.

Today I am going to end here with some news, okay? I'm going to pick up if we have a little bit of time toward the end of some of these sermons to read some various things because we need to be moved by a realization of seeing certain things that are going on the world and realizing, yes, indeed, we are speedily moving forward closer and closer not knowing when. But all the more reason to be stirred up in spirit to want to do the things that are right before God, to realize time is short, we have to work on self, there's more to be done, and to yield ourselves to the process. To fight, fight, fight against self, striving to do what is good and what is right, being sobered by what we see going on, and not letting it become the norm in the world.

Because that's so easy to do even with news. Blows my mind how the world was before WWII! Mankind, nations willingly wanted life to go on, "This is just the norm, and that's what's going to happen over there, and we're not going to be a part of that, you know, we don't want to be involved in that. Let them do it."

It's like sending everything over to Ukraine right now. "Let them do it. Let them fight this fight because they're getting bigger..." Why? Because they know that there's going to come someday a showdown. Someday it's inevitable. Leaders understand that. Someday it's inevitable. Some are even starting to talk about it. They understand that China is preparing for war against the United States. Duh! But the world becomes numb to that, and it doesn't mean anything as a whole. It's like we live our lives and there is no fear of anything like that and just put it out of your mind because you don't even want to think about it.

People don't want to think about it. They don't want to even hear it. "China? Yeah, they're fighting over those little islands. I heard that." "The Philippines, some of them, yeah." "Japan, they might have some problems," "and South Korea, they may have some problems over there with some of them," but don't realize where it's headed. This is a worldwide thing that's building up more and more. It's insanity!

That's why the news has changed. I marvel at how much the news has changed over the past year, just the past year alone, and it has to do with Thunders. They're just getting louder and

louder, and more things are happening together more often. They truly are. And we can't become numb to that, to think that that's just the way it's always been, that's the way the world has always been. Certain things have happened in times past through life, yes, but to build up in this manner, in this respect? The news is witness of that and what's on people's minds and what they see coming.

And so, sometimes if everything doesn't happen all at one time...? You know, God spaces things. His timing is different than our timing. I think of things since WWII. I think of different things that happened after that and you move ahead seventy years. Now, if you look at that perspective and you see things that have changed and how they changed, this is the mind of God in time, if you understand what I'm saying.

We look at things in a shorter period of time and think that things have to happen here in this period of time, and this is how they have to take place. No, it's just like understanding when so much of this began in 2001. It's a longer period of time.

Having the baby, you can think about that, nine months. It's done, nine months, and so we see that, that toward the end it starts getting bigger...well, yeah, bigger too, but the pain, the suffering I'm talking about and the labor that takes place at the end. That's the example that God has given here. Because there are times when it's like morning sickness and different things that take place and people don't feel good and so different things happen at different times and that's just the beginning. It's going to get a whole lot worse. Sorry for anyone that's in the situation. I'm so glad the men never have to carry that.

But again, so we tend to think things too much so in a human way and not the way God does. So, if we look at that period of time, 2001 on, and you start looking at the different things that were spread out that happened, there's a long period of time sometimes in between them.

To understand now because that's when it began, the labor. That's when it started in earnest, prophetic things that took place at that time as a type, if you will, of what's going to take place in the title of the book leading all the way up to the things that are happening more and more right now.

Two weeks ago, a week and a half ago watching the news, and for the first time they were talking about what could happen in the U.S. with the strategic nuclear weapon that goes off as far as the electric grid is concerned. First time I've heard them address this publicly in a news-type thing like that as far as the U.S. is concerned. They were talking about different things that can take different scenarios that are very real, that can very easily take place and things that as we know it, in that respect, as far as life, as what would happen.

We're so reliant on electricity, computers, and cell phones, on and on it goes. It doesn't take a whole lot to start the process of wiping some of those things out.

Anyway, thought I'd just read a few here. Earthquakes. Although not as loud as some in the recent past they continue to rumble from time to time, strong in that respect. Thunders continue to get louder. I think of the Türkiye and Syria earthquake death toll. It's confirmed that the death toll was 59,300, with nearly 130,000 people injured.

You know it's easy to go over these things and realize it's not just this one instance; it's all the other things that are going along with it that are getting stronger and stronger and stronger. Not something that is news and just maybe five years later something else happens somewhere.

At least 15.7 million people in Türkiye and Syria have been impacted by the disaster. So many people without homes, so many people adding to the mess of the life that exists there in Syria anyway because of war that's taking place. People are living in such horrible conditions in the world. We're so blessed. We don't have those kinds of thoughts and worries that so many do. Millions have been displaced from their homes.

Morocco earthquake: the death toll was confirmed to climb in the wake of a powerful 6.8 earthquake that struck Morocco, and according to the government, the disaster claimed over 3,000 lives. Well, that's about what 9/11 was, you know, real close to that. Look what it did over there. Well, it's because of the way it happened and because of what happened and where it happened and how it affected.

So, little thought for the 3,000 people who died as far as the world is concerned, in Morocco. I'll be candid with you, just not a whole lot of concern about it. "Well, that's Morocco. I've never been there, don't plan on going," you know, the selfishness of mankind and how people think, and thinking of the kind of suffering people are going through because of that. Any kind of feeling or empathy? Governments? Another 5,500 were injured. One of the strongest in more than a century.

So, have they happened before, absolutely. But see, all these things are happening together that I'm going to read day by day.

Destructiveness from weather. So far this year over 6,300 fires have burned over 42.9 million acres. This is larger than the state of Florida, almost the size of Missouri. I can't imagine that. Just up there alone. Half the size of Germany.

Fires in large areas of Europe, North Africa, North America, Hawaii, Siberia, Canada, Western U.S.A., Tunisia, Algeria, the Spanish Island of Tenerife and the Greek mainland, the islands of Rhodes, Corfu and Crete, and the Italian island of Sicily.

So, we can read through that, “Oh, okay, fires, fires, fires.” But it’s all these things building up in the same time period over and over again here.

Greece floods. They’ve gone from fires to flooding. Libya has had floods, if you saw the dams that burst and so forth and the people who died in that. Hong Kong and Shenzhen were deluged by the heaviest rains on record.

You don’t get a whole lot of news really that comes out of China. It’s like Covid, “We had some cases.” You don’t get much truth that comes out of a government like that so there are people who actually report on various things in various regions.

I saw some of that stuff taking place. There was one typhoon and they got hit by two in one area and these were powerful ones that came through this year. One came in and going straight in toward China and they showed the track of it. All of a sudden it backed up a long distance and then went straight north through the same area the other typhoon had gone into, and flooding, millions of people displaced.

Mind-boggling some of the things they’ve been going through, but you don’t hear it on the news because it’s people, other kinds of people that have to report those things, and news places don’t pick it up anyway and a lot of people don’t care.

I’ll stop there today. It’s the point that all these things are building up and happening together at the same time. The economic thing that’s hitting this world right now, we are on a thread, a very poor thread. Not nylon but a cotton one that’s thin and has been deteriorating for a long time. And it’s holding more and more weight and it’s getting ready to snap. But you know what? It’s not going to snap until it’s time and it’s all going to go together with this whole thing.

Because it’s everything building up, as Thunders do, to one great crescendo, and they happen at the same time when it finally blows. So, we live in that kind of an age.

My point is that these things that I’m going to be reading at the end of the sermons at times here should sober us to the core of our being if we get it, if we understand what’s taking place, that we are nearing closer and closer. We had better be and we need to be ready spiritually for what’s coming.