

Yes, today is the final portion. This is *Part 8* of our current series *Elijah, Elisha, and More*.

Last Sabbath we finished *Part 7* by covering the fulfillment of Truth #31, which states that the first four Seals of Revelation are about the Church, and these parallel Matthew 24. So, we went back to that which was given to Herbert Armstrong to understand about Matthew 24 and Revelation here as well about the first Seals. I think it's Revelation 6.

But anyway, when you go through those, you look in the past and what we used to understand and comprehend, and we didn't understand that so much what was written there, especially in Matthew 24, or even Revelation there, that that was looked upon as being things that are going to happen in the world and war and so forth that's going to take place.

Then you come up all the way to the Trumpets and the events taking place there and it's like it's repeating some of the same things in the sense of war because that sounded the same to us at one time, in that respect, but there was too much destruction taking place in both of those categories, if this makes sense. It does to you who have been around for a long, long, long - and you're getting older with me.

Anyway, it's an amazing thing how far we've come because it's hard to grasp that this is what we used to think, but we didn't know it until God gave it to us, that no, these are not about physical things that are going to take place on the earth. You could say it's a "type" in a sense, but it really isn't even a "type" in that regard, in the strictest sense, because the things that are going to happen in the world have to do with the Thunders and the Trumpets.

Matthew 24 is about the Church. Revelation 6, the Seals, especially when you start going through those, the first four Seals, it's about the Church. It's about events in the Church. When it talks about famine, it was about the Church. When you talk about the shaking, and it was translated earthquakes so that kind of threw people off. It's like there had to be some kind of literal physical earthquakes. That's not what the word means in the first place. It's just a great shaking that took place in the Church.

Sometimes we can go through these truths and read them and not grasp what we used to think, what we used to see, because that was our present truth. God could have given more at that time, but we weren't ready for it, and the Church wasn't ready for it, and there were certain things reserved as we get closer to the end here. That's for our sakes, in that respect, to be inspired by, to be moved by, and to understand some of the things in the comparison here of Elijah and Elisha and what took place.

So, we're going to pick this up and continue on from what we discussed there last Sabbath. Let's turn over to 2 Kings 8. We're going to continue in the events now today, and finish today, on these events of Elisha's life that teach us so much in that respect that we need today in God's Church.

2 Kings 8:1—Now, Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life saying...

So, there was this friendship and relationship that went for a long period of time here, and now he's doing something special for her because of that relationship as well, and because of what was to take place at this point in time that God was still using her and her son and what took place there.

It's just kind of an unheard-of thing, somebody being resurrected to life again after you're dead. Awesome! God is using this in a very powerful way to be written for the Church, to be written for people later on so that can read these things and be inspired by them and the like, but much more.

He spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, you and your household, and go and reside for a time wherever you might reside, or wherever you may choose, in other words, for the Eternal has called for a famine which will also come upon the land seven years.

So again, this number, seven, just used over and over and over again in scripture to drive the point home, even as it starts out in Genesis, "On the seventh day, God rested." It's about God. It's about God's plan and God's purpose, and it's in God's involvement, and it's accomplished by what God does; it's not by what we do. Different ones, we can be a part of what God is doing, as different ones were, but it's what God is doing, what God is accomplishing.

He said, "There is going to be a famine for seven years, so get out of here, take your family, move, and go to some other place, some other region." **So, the woman arose and did after the saying of the man of God, and she went with her household and resided in the land of the Philistines,** which if you look on the map of the area where Samaria was, the capital region of Israel and Israel at that particular time, this area was closer to the Mediterranean actually into the west and south of where Israel was. So, it's saying she went there to the land of the Philistines.

Then after seven years ended, the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines, and she went forth to appeal unto the king for her house and her land. So, being away for seven years others had come in and occupied, as those kinds of things happen, and so now she's going back and she's going to go before the king and ask that it be restored to her, that

she be able to live there, that she have the authority and the right to reclaim everything that was there in that region.

Then it was that the king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me of the great things that Elisha has done. Now, it doesn't tell a whole lot in the story here, but Gehazi, whether he was brought in by the king to be worked with by him or to have some kind of favor, I don't know. Because Gehazi, if you remember the story here of what he did, he pulled some shenanigans when he went out and tried to get favor and wealth and money to take back after what had taken place in the area there. And so, he really betrayed Elisha, in that respect, and took things upon himself that he shouldn't have taken. So, we've gone through that in some of the story here.

But here he was, Gehazi, and he's, whatever it is, rubbing shoulders with the king. I don't know why he was there, but he was there, and so the king wanted to hear these stories of Elisha maybe again, or whatever it might be, what he has done.

Now, it was that he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life... He's telling the story at this time, that Gehazi now is talking to the king and he's telling him about what Elisha had done. Now, this is awesome because God has to coordinate all this. God does this. It's time for her to come back. It just happens that Gehazi is being asked by the king to tell the story about Elisha and this woman and her son, and here they are they're coming, they're on their way and they're at the court, and this is what takes place.

It says, **Now it was, that as he was telling,** in other words, Gehazi telling the king, **how he had restored a body to life that the woman whose son he had restored to life came in to appeal to the king for her house and her land.** So, whatever the process was that she was asking for presence before the king then Gehazi knew who it was, and so this excitement.

Then Gehazi said, My Lord, oh king, this is the woman! So, right then just before this the story is being told and the king is sitting there listening to it and he said, **This is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life. Then the king inquired the woman, and she told him. So, the king appointed unto her a certain officer saying, Restore all that was hers and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land even until now.**

So, why it states it this way, not fully sure, because there was a famine, so how there could have been anything of much at all, but the point being was he was going to make sure that she had plenty. And whether it was a matter of what it would have produced if things had been normal times and she was given that, don't know. But anyway, the point was she was giving it back, given the authority to make it clear that it's hers and ever who was there was to vacate. If there were other things to be restored to her it was to be given to her.

But the awesome thing is is to just to think about that for a moment how God coordinates things, and so much throughout the Bible, you read these stories and we tend to just read them as a story and we don't think about that fact oftentimes, what God's doing. It's all planned out. It's all predetermined.

This event after seven years, it was planned out. It was planned out before it was even a matter of the famine coming because it was this woman and her son that God was going to do this with. This was planned out already that the king was going to be there, that someone was going to be there telling the story. Gehazi filled the bill. Those are the kinds of things we should be in awe of, the power of God to work things out.

We should be in awe. If you have opportunity to be in God's Church today, to be baptized in God's Church today, you've gone through the things you have and you're still here, to understand what an awesome blessing and miracle that is. By the power of God, you are here. You're not here because of how good you are or because of what righteousness one might have. We're here because God has a plan for you. That's what it's about. We can choose to be a part of that plan and fight for it.

Some haven't fought for it. There are those who gave it up. There are those who gave away their crown. And for that reason, we've had extension of time because God knew this anyway, but there are some things we had to learn in all this and it's a matter of in large part even fulfilling the name of Israel. We persevere. You don't give up. You hold on to what God has given to you. You fight for it; you persevere. That's what we're to be because it's something in the mind. And so, if it's in your mind and God's working there, it's an awesome thing what God works out in the transforming of how you even think. So, to have such a blessing as this, it's awesome! Because there aren't very many.

I can't help but think of that three hundred that ran down the hill with Gideon. Incredible! It wasn't about vast numbers. The vast numbers were out there, and God turned them against each other. They were fighting each other they were in such fear. They went on down and killed many of themselves then, and then the rest of Israel came in and started helping to fight once they saw the tide and what had happened, and to get rid of them. Incredible stories!

We're not very big, but we are enormous in God's eyes because of what He's doing. This is all it takes to finish and fulfill the end of an age, the end of those who are part of the 144,000, and then to give others an opportunity to be the first to live into a new age. Awesome. It takes a lot of power. It takes a lot of planning. All we have to do is make the choice and fight for it. Awesome.

That's why it blows my mind, and I shake my head sometimes that people give up - the opposite of what it means to persevere - or pursue something else that's forbidden because

they want it so much. It's not understanding the value of what God gives to us. That's awesomely dangerous.

It's like these truths, and that's why we're going through this series, to understand what God gave to us. Elijah, Elisha - a double portion of God's spirit. So today, candidly, I'll just say it. Today, the example of what God has done during Philadelphia and during PKG is the same sort of thing on a spiritual plane. It's more of an Elijah and Elisha, candidly, of what God's fulfilling spiritually for the Church. So, we can talk about fulfilling Elijah, but I'll come back to that if I have time here, and if not, it'll be in the next series.

But these things are moving, these are awesome, and to understand how God works? To me that's one of the greatest blessings through PKG, is learning more about how God works, how He functions, His purpose, and how He fulfills His plan. The more He reveals that the more exciting it becomes.

Not many have had that opportunity. Not many in six thousand years have had such an opportunity to know such things, to perceive and understand such things. That's why sometimes we just don't grasp, just don't understand oftentimes how blessed we truly are with what we have been given.

Verse 7—Now, Elisha went to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick. Then it was told him, saying, The man of God has come here. So, the king said to Hazael, Take a present in your hand and go meet the man of God, and enquire of the Eternal by him, saying, Will I recover of this disease?

So again here, Ben-hadad, the king of Assyria, being sick, and he wants to know because "Elisha's in the area now, and I want to find out am I going to die from this?"

So, Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, of forty camels' burden.

Now, you think about camels. You've seen the pictures of them and the way they pack and stack stuff on their backs. Forty camels of the very best from Damascus, the riches, that's what he's doing here.

...every good thing of Damascus, of forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, You son Ben-hadad, king of Syria, has sent me to you, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? Hazael was sent to ask Elisha this and was bringing all this with him.

Now, you know what Elisha is going to do, though it doesn't address it here. He's going to do what he's done every other time. Forty camels, fine, but they're going back with you. Now, Gehazi, on the other hand, would have been a different attitude. He'd been happy to take them, or at least two or three of them. It's the kind of mind he had.

So, it was asked, saying, "Shall I recover of this disease?" That's what Hazael is asking Elisha. **Then Elisha said to him, Tell him, You will certainly recover, however, the Eternal has shown me that he will surely die.** So, you think, what is he saying? He's going to recover, but he's going to surely die? It's quite a story when you go on and see why he said it this way. It sends chills up and down my spine just thinking about what took place here.

Then he stood and set his stare upon him until he became uneasy. This is Elisha looking at Hazael. Not saying anything and just staring him down, if you will, until he became uneasy with the stare, with what was taking place here. Why did he do that after what he just said?

Then the man of God wept. It broke him down. It got to him what he had seen, what he was seeing, what was taking place, what he knew in his mind God was going to do or going to allow, should say.

So, Hazael asked, Why do you weep, my lord? He answered, Because I know the evil that you will do to the children of Israel. Their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will slay with the sword, and will dash in pieces their children, and rip open the pregnant women. Pretty bluntly, what it said, what was being said there.

So, Hazael replied, So, is your servant a dog, that he would do such a great thing? Or it really is like saying, "...such a horrific thing?" Then Elisha said, The Eternal has shown me that you will be king over Syria. Now, we don't know what was in the planning already, but Hazael was a traitor, and he wanted that place, and that's what it boiled down to. It was being shown to Elisha here, this was what was taking place. He was in the upper part of the government obviously, being sent out, trusted by the king to do this as it were, going to Elisha in the first place, and to take that wealth to Elisha. But his heart was treacherous.

So, he departed from Elisha and went to his master, and said to him, What did Elisha say to you? Then he answered, He told me that your life would recover. So, he told him what was said. **But it came to pass on the next day that he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water and spread it on his face so that he died.** So, he killed the king, Hazael did. This is what Elisha saw. This is what Elisha knew that he was going to smother him, kill him if you will. **Then Hazael reigned in his stead.**

It's interesting; the name "Hazael" means "God has seen." So, the purpose of that, the name that was given to him here to be recorded in scripture, God knew what he was going to do, what he had planned, and He gave that information, that knowledge, that ability to see to Elisha and knew what kind of a person he was in the first place, treacherous as he was, of what he was going to fulfill.

We've covered most of all the things then, again, incredible stories here as we've gone through them, most of the things that God did through Elisha. There is one more event that

God performed through him even though he was dead, and we're going to read that one as well.

2 Kings 13, jumping ahead a little way. So, it mentioned Elisha again here where it says, **2 Kings 13:14—Now, Elisha became weak from sickness of which he would die, or which he would later die**, in other words. In other words, it's just saying here he's going to die of a sickness that he had.

Then Joash, the king of Israel, came down unto him and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. Strange sort of terminology to us, something that they used as an expression back in that time because others used it before him. It was just a matter of respect and being moved by the fact of what had taken place, though he saw a lot of things he didn't like, as the kings didn't like a lot of what he had to say; but he still recognized the things that God had done through him.

Then Elisha said to him, Take bow and arrows. So, he took unto himself bow and arrows. This is Joash. And then he said to the king of Israel, Put your hand upon the bow. So, he put his hand upon it and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. Then he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. Then he, Elisha, said, The arrow of the Eternal's deliverance...

Now, we talked about that last Sabbath, about deliverance, about salvation and the word that's used there when it was a matter of famine and so forth, that God would give the deliverance. Here it's being used again now that this is going to be something that God is going to give. He's going to give a deliverance. It's on a physical plane for them.

...and the arrow of deliverance from Syria. So, that's what was being offered. That's what was being said here, "This is what God is going to offer, deliverance."

For you shall strike down the Syrians in Aphek until you have consumed them. Then he said... So, it's almost in the context here when you read the story and know what's being said, it's like this is what God offers. But it's not over with yet because there's more.

Then he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. Then he said to the king of Israel, Strike them upon the ground. So, he struck three times and then stopped, stood up.

Now, what all this indicates, don't fully know. Awesome story, what it's saying here. I could throw out some ideas and thoughts. But anyway, it says here, **So the man of God was angry** that he did what he did. Well, what did he do? Well, it's going to go on and tell here because it was something being offered, but he didn't do enough in what he was shown there.

“You're going to have this ability. You're going to be given this deliverance, and now strike the ground!” And so, whether it was the way it was said or what else might have been said, I don't know, but this is the story.

It says, “angry” but it was more a matter of, and sometimes things are translated so poorly, but it's a matter of being deeply irritated at him if you will, displeased with him as some texts give it. But anyway, **he was irritated with him and said, You should have struck five or six times!** It's like, “Don't you feel this, that God is going to give this to you? And if you're going to take those, strike the ground, mean it, you know, don't do it half-heartedly!” Because this was his spirit. This was his way of thinking. That's what's being brought out.

...five or six times; then you would have struck down the Syrians until you had finished them off. Whereas now you will only strike at the Syrians three times. This is what God was going to reveal by what he would do, so it has something to do with him knowing, Elisha knowing what was being offered and what was going to be said depending upon his reaction to it.

He just wasn't that excited by it, candidly. You know, he wasn't moved by what Elisha was saying. He went ahead and did it; he struck the ground three times, probably very weakly so, got down there and you know, felt like a fool maybe. No, he shouldn't have felt like a fool. If he believed this was from God and God was going to deliver this, strike the ground! Beat it! But more than three times. If you feel something like that, you're going to have more adrenaline going and that's kind of what takes place in life sometimes. Some things reflect how somebody really is in their thinking, and candidly, he just didn't have it.

So, Elisha died, and they buried him. Then the bands of the Moabites invaded the land in the coming of the year. Then it came to pass, as they were burying a man... So, this is going on telling the story, what happened here after he had died and had been buried, and now the Moabites were coming up and attacking. It says, they spied a band of men; so they cast the man into the sepulcher of Elisha. He is dead, the guy is thrown into there. It says, And when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood up on his feet.

So, it happened again. Here it was he was dead, they let him down into the grave, and it talks about as soon as his body was down there and touched Elisha, he's alive again. So, they saw all this. They witnessed something in a powerful way even after he's dead. Awesome.

But Hazael, king of Syria, oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. But the Eternal was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of the covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither did He cast them from His presence yet.

So, here you have Israel to the north and what they could have done as far as the Syrians were concerned. Now you have Judah, and you have the story here of where it talks about "he oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz." Again, going through here and explaining that He didn't destroy them yet, but He was going to. He was going to allow them to be destroyed, but He wasn't going to do it yet. That's the important part in this part here to understand, and He kept them going.

It's like today, we're kept going. Ephraim and Manasseh have been kept going for a long, long time, through a lot of different wars and things that have taken place and given favor. A lot of people don't grasp or comprehend God has blessed that. God has made sure that it happened that way, that various victories have been given through time.

I was thinking today, looking out over parts of Florida from the hotel there and thinking, seeing all the construction taking place out there from the window, and the wealth that this country has, and thinking, what a horrible thing, people don't understand why they have it. It's because God gave it. It's not because of how great we are. Then the technology and everything we have in the end of the age that's made this country even that much greater, it's not mankind that's done it. It's because God gave it to mankind.

But no one recognizes that, the wealth that this nation has from north to south, east to west, awesome, compared to the world. And yet, well, lessons to be learned. They won't learn them until they're resurrected, and won't have a chance to grasp and comprehend that God Almighty sustained this great nation. God Almighty has had part with things that have happened through nations through time, and especially with those having to do with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob because of the promises He gave to them of things that had to be fulfilled. Not because of how great we are above other peoples, it's just that this is part of God's plan and God's purpose to keep it at this pace until the very end.

So, reading all this throughout this series it's been shown how the work, or the works done by God through both Elijah and Elisha were shown mightily to Israel. They saw these things over and over again. That was on a very physical plane, but God did it for one primary purpose, "These are Mine. These represent Me." Awesome!

So, it was done to show through whom it was that God was working. God was doing it all, but it's showing where God works. That's how those things were being accomplished. It's been contrasted with the "types," again, of what I mentioned earlier here, that which is on a spiritual level and that which is on a physical level. God did it back then, but it's about our time now. Even back then it was all a part of a plan in preparation for what was going to happen at the end of an age, of what God was going to do when He revived the Church, when He strengthened the Church, when it was almost destroyed as it was as far as the beliefs and understanding.

Only had three truths left in Sardis, and then God raised up Herbert Armstrong to do what he did. That's why he's referred to as a "type" of Elijah. That's why it wasn't finished with John the Baptist. That was just the beginning. Awesome, what God has given! It's because of a plan of six thousand years and bringing it to a close then before Joshua returns. So, those are the things we are talking about.

I mentioned here several times, it's been repeatedly stated throughout this series in one way or another, but I think of the last seventy years plus, what God has done at the end of an age because we're a part of that. We're blessed to live in the most incredible times. I can't think of a time that would be more exciting in the sense of seven thousand years than to be at this point in time here because incredible things happened before.

And you think of two thousand years ago and what the disciples, what they saw, what they witnessed, and what took place when Christ came to fulfill being our Passover, but this is a more meaningful and a greater fulfillment, in a sense, if you understand what I'm saying, of what's getting ready to take place because of Passover now (which has only been offered to the Church), but now it's getting ready to be offered to people who live into the Millennium.

It's going to be offered to all. Whether all receive it or not is another matter. The Great White Throne? Incredible! They're going to be able to receive of the Passover. But to receive of the Messiah, to see then Passover and the purpose of it come to pass? Because it's about the Kingdom of God. It's about God's Family. And so, this is the height and the pinnacle of so much of that, of what we're getting ready to go into as far as the Millennium and the Great White Throne is concerned. Incredible!

You get to be a part and see those kinds of things take place, to see a second coming, to see this world come to an end in the sense of man's government. God showing the world in a powerful way right now, "You can't govern yourselves! You don't know how. You can't do it well!" That's where we are. Awesome! To understand what's taking place on a spiritual plane compared to what happened on a physical plane back in the time of Elijah and Elisha, it's an awesome thing.

It wasn't until I came to this portion of this particular series that I saw what the conclusion of all this needed to be. Since we've completed the coverage about Elijah and Elisha, I went back and looked at some of the things we'd covered in a particular series because I was looking up certain words of something to bring back to memory a part of what I'd covered before, and I didn't know when it was.

But when you talk about the truths that God has given, and those things, the 18 and the 36, not by coincidence. The 18 wasn't by coincidence that finally was brought together. Even after Herbert Armstrong died, that this is the number of those things he would be noted for. So, God made sure that that was what was given to the Church. I don't know if you remember

that time period, but it came out and listed what those were. Sadly, most didn't even comprehend and grasp what they were all about by that time. As Herbert Armstrong said, "I wonder if ten percent of you understand, if you get it!" We were already deep in Laodicea. We were being swallowed up by it and getting ready to be thrust into it. Awesome!

So anyway, the particular series I'm referring to, I went back, and it's called *The Virtue of Truth* that was given back in March of 2016. I went through some different truths at that particular time, talked about some of these kinds of things and what God had given to us. Anyway, this is out of *Part 3*. I want to read the introduction to that again in that particular sermon, *Part 3 of The Virtue of Truth*.

We are currently focusing upon a sermon series entitled, *The Virtue of Truth*, and today is *Part 3* of the series. We have covered how truth that is given from God to God's Church is His word...

It reveals who God is. That's an awesome thing, to understand every time a truth has been given, whatever truth it is, it reveals the mind of God, it reveals the thinking, the being of God. The more we're able to grasp those kinds of things and come into agreement with this, the more awesomely blessed we truly are.

...from God to His Church is His word, and when combined with the power of His spirit to communicate that truth or word to our minds.

What an awesome thing that we can see it, that God blesses us, and the way we can see it is because of what He's communicated to us. Otherwise, you wouldn't see it, you wouldn't know what it was. You wouldn't grasp it.

...when combined with the power of His holy spirit that He has given in our minds to receive it then it becomes light and life to our spiritual lives.

Awesome! Because that's what happens in a spiritual manner that's so far and beyond the things the Israelites were able to see during the time of Elijah and Elisha because what they were to learn was strictly on a physical plane. It was being able to see these things that are happening from/through Elijah and through Elisha that man can't do. It has to be God, a God, whatever, but they had to acknowledge this is a power beyond mankind.

To be able to see God's truth is something He has to communicate from Himself to us into our minds. Going on:

Because it is God's truth we have been focusing upon in the context of the virtue of truth. Virtue, in this context, is about that which reflects good character, strong moral quality and excellence, righteousness.

And when we understand the pinnacle of that? It's God. It's from God.

There are several synonyms that describe virtue – goodness, righteousness, morality, integrity, dignity, honor, nobility, purity, and more.

Mankind has his ideas of some of these things, what they are, but that which is pure and that which is true is from God Almighty. He is the one who defines these things. He is those things. Going on the next paragraph, what was stated in that introduction:

As a reminder once again, the question at the beginning of this series was, how much do you value truth that God has placed before you and given to you?

That's always an ongoing question.

And the reason for asking that is because our human nature tends to actually devalue, reduce, downplay, diminish, and underestimate truth that God has placed before us.

It's just our nature as human beings, and with time, we can begin to drift from some of those things and not grasp. That's why we have to, when it talks about watching, keeping, if you will, like it talked about from the very time of the Garden of Eden. To keep and to preserve, to have those things that God has given to us, is something that is each one of our responsibility.

The only way you keep it the way God says to keep it, which the word means "to watch," "to guard," is in our minds. To make sure that we don't let it go. To make sure we don't let it become diminished in our thinking. On the contrary, it should be stirred up. We should actually be building upon this and growing more in understanding what an awesome thing it is that we see what we see.

Because everyone who leaves, everyone who's ever left, they lose it. They lose that ability. They might have certain physical things in the sense of understanding - or knowledge I should say, not even understanding - like so many used to back in the time of Herbert Armstrong when so much, thousands and thousands left, one of the things they would seem to be so proud of is, yeah, they might have gone off and did other things but they never ate pork again.

It's like, that's the big thing for them, never ate pork again. Well, what about everything else God revealed to you? They don't get it anymore. They just got out of it that pork isn't good for you to eat. What a sad, pathetic thing.

I'm going to read, again, that first paragraph: "We have covered how truth that is given from God to his Church is His word." And how much do we want that? His word? How much do we want to hold on to that, keep that, guard it? That's our life. It's our light and it's our life when filled with God's spirit. That's what this is about.

“...and when combined with the power of His spirit to communicate that truth or word to our minds, when combined with the power of His holy spirit, that He has given in our minds to receive it, then it becomes light and life to our spiritual lives.”

Let's turn over to John 1 where it talks about some of this because these are awesome things. These are the things we should be in awe of in a far greater way. Yeah, awesomely inspiring, these stories we've gone through, to realize the hand of God, the might of God to perform them, to do them. They are inspiring indeed, but these reveal the very being and the mind of God that we're blessed to have in our minds. Awesome!

John 1:1. We know these. We read this. But it's powerful. **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was "with,"** but it's really the word, **"unto God."** ...**the word was unto God.** In other words, it's God's. From the very beginning. The beginning of what? From the beginning of anything that was ever given, the mind, the being of Almighty God, the thinking, the revelatory thought as Herbert Armstrong used to explain some of the words and what it meant. The revelatory, what God uses to reveal.

That's why sometimes we talk about different things. This body is going to rot. It's going to disappear. It turns to dust in time; it's gone. But what's in the mind is what can continue on. What's in the mind is what's going to be resurrected, whether it be to spirit life or to a second physical life. It's what's in the mind. That's what we're going to have the next time around or the next change that takes place in the body. Nothing else. Nothing else goes with us.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with or unto God, and the Word was God. Because it's the mind, it's the being of God, the revelatory thought of God Almighty.

I don't care how many times I've gone through this, and I've gone through this a lot, it's always inspiring, it's always uplifting, it's always something I want and desire more of in my life. That's the way we should hunger and be toward God Almighty. It's God in us! That's an awesome thing to comprehend.

The same was in the beginning unto God. The Word, His being, His mind, the truth, His planning, His purpose. All the things that came from Him.

All things were made by Him, and without Him there was not anything made that was made. Only the Word. We can't comprehend this. We can't comprehend God, we really can't! We tend to think physically and it's like try to have this body. We really can't even begin to comprehend a lot of this until we're going to be changed. Once we are spirit then we're going to have a capacity and ability that we don't have now where God can give us more because there's only so much we can receive right now and grasp with these minds.

The same was in the beginning unto God. All things were made by Him, and without Him there was nothing made that was made. In Him was life. Look at all the life He gave. In Him

was the ability to give life. He has the power, the control, and He gives life to whomever, to whatever He wants. Awesome! I can't comprehend that, but it is, it's true.

And the life was the light of men. That's God's purpose. It reveals God's purpose. The life was the light for men, for mankind, God's purpose in mankind, why we exist. You think about some of the truths, the world doesn't know these things. They don't know why they were made. They don't comprehend God's great plan in the sense that we're to become Elohim and the process of being able to accomplish that, to do that.

They don't comprehend a transforming of the mind that we can have take place inside of us, in our thinking through the power of the holy spirit if we want it, if we cry out for it day by day by day because we want it, we want a change in mind. We get sick and tired... We're tired of this! We're tired...

I hate selfishness. It's why when I get on the road I see it so much. It's everywhere today! But when I get on the highway, it explodes because that's the way of mankind. I can't wait until people can begin to see that in themselves and change and not be so selfish about things that are done, when it's not the primary motivation.

And the life was the light of man. And the light shines in darkness, and the darkness doesn't comprehend it. What an incredible thing to understand that there's that which comes from God, and no one can understand anything save it come from God. God has to give it in your mind.

That's why I use that example over and over and over again, when my mind was first opened and I knew it was true. I didn't have to have a Bible in front of me. I had to hear the words, and with God's spirit coming into here, I knew. How do you explain that to someone? How do you give it? You can't give it to anyone. You can't explain it to anyone though I tried in the beginning.

I remember relatives coming down one night, and we were all in the living room there and talking, and they were dumbfounded. I think of Christ when he was in the temple, twelve years old, and the priests that were there, they were dumbfounded by the things he said. Sometimes we can experience that in the world. They hear something, but after they start thinking about it then it's like, "You're nuts." But at first, it's like never heard such things. It makes so much sense. It's so plain, but then you start thinking about it. Why is that? Well, because they have to make changes if they start accepting it, and they're not going to do that because they're not being called. They don't "see" it yet spiritually.

"And the darkness doesn't comprehend it." Where is there darkness? Everywhere in the world in the minds of people. They don't see, they can't see it. That's why you can't give it to anyone. You can't reason with anyone. And yet we've had so many people in God's Church

throughout time, through my experience in the Church, who have tried to explain it to people thinking they're going to be able to see it, thinking they're going to be able to understand it. Not unless God's working there.

And if God's working there, you know what? It's going to become clear. But that's in their time and in God's time. You can't give this to anyone! And yet so many people have tried. I think that was one of the best lessons I ever learned in the very beginning. They don't get it, and not only that, but they turn against you because they don't want it. It's scary to them, it really is. Without God's spirit?

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light. That which comes from God that was to be given to mankind. ... **that all through it, the light or him, because it's about Christ, the duality here, might believe.**

This is about what God is doing. This is about our Passover. And so, it's through him that we have the ability, because of the Church and because of God's calling, that we can be forgiven of sin. If God's calling us and drawing us and giving that truth in our minds, it's a beautiful thing. We can receive it then. We can live by it, believe it.

He was not that light, John wasn't, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light which lights every person who comes into the world. In other words, that which comes from God has to be that which comes through Christ because Christ is the beginning of it. Christ is the Passover.

Now, we understand, and I don't want to go through all that again, about the first four thousand years and what they were given to believe and understand and comprehend because they looked forward to this. They look forward to that ability and that relationship with God and they believed what God gave to them. They believed that there would be a Messiah, and so forth. They didn't grasp it all; they didn't have to grasp it all, and they were judged according to those things that were given to them at that time, their present truth if you will, and the power of God's spirit that was working with them. But when God started working with the Church that was amped up so much more.

That was the true light which lights every person who comes into the world. So, the ability to see, the ability to comprehend, and that which God gives to us.

He was in the world and the world was made... not "by him," through him as God's purpose. Everything. He is the Chief Cornerstone. So sometimes, and we have done this in times past, and that's why a part of the trinity was held on to, is because it was easy to see (at least for the Church in the beginning) that the holy spirit wasn't a being, and then God blessed us to understand that it was the power of God Almighty.

But to understand the rest, about who we called “Jesus” at that time, to understand about Joshua is a totally different matter because it's like, well, “he made everything.” No, it tells us who made everything, how everything began. But this is about a process that was to take time through time, if you will. That's why the word is “through him.” So, “the world was made through him.”

So, what is it? Is it about the creation of the physical Earth this is talking about? What is the purpose of the world? What is the purpose of the universe? It's the creation of mankind and what we can become. All of God's purpose is about Elohim. Everything else in time, what does it mean? So, it's about Elohim.

And the world was made through him, “and be established upon him,” upon Christ, and everything that is able to be changed through time to become a part of God's Family because that's what it always comes back to.

And the world did not know him. So, if you look at the world as it is, it's in darkness, and so until the light comes, you can't see, you can't comprehend, you can't understand.

He came unto his own, speaking of Christ. He was amongst the Jews, Judah, **and his own did not receive him,** because they were in the dark. They couldn't see. They couldn't understand.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even those who believe on his name which were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. So, it goes through and tells a story here of how we're begotten of God's holy spirit and what happened in Christ's life, and him being, if you will, the Chief Cornerstone, because everything is built upon him. And so, we have the blessing of that in our lives, of being a part of that.

And the Word was made flesh. So, the mind of God, the being of God. We can't comprehend that fully, but that was God's purpose, Elohim; he's the first of the first fruits. Everything—everything—has to go through a process that he set in his life as an example. Everyone else has to go through the same. That's why he had to be baptized and go through the same process though he had God's spirit working and powerfully within him; he had the being, the mind of God in him. Which we don't... You can't comprehend that fully.

That's why at twelve years old he was able to do what he did. He had the mind... but he wasn't baptized yet. He had to be baptized because the impregnation of God's spirit had to be in that word, that mind that was given to him. He still had to go through that and be baptized just like everyone else. So, he set the pace for everything else that is to follow, and everyone else is to be made in what? The same likeness, as human beings, the things we have to go through.

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Again, you can't comprehend that, the mind, the being of God. We have opportunity to partake of the mind of God, but to comprehend to be born with that in your being from birth and to grow in that and to know the things you hear you know? Because God's there, it's from God. Not God. Not the Father, but that he had that mind through the power of God's spirit to see things.

Just like when you're called, you're not baptized yet. You begin to be drawn and there are things you can see. There are things I believed long before I was baptized. Everything that I was shown, it's like, yeah. Everything that I read, yeah. You could agree with it because God's spirit's working with you, drawing you. That's a small portion of what it was like, but he had it fully in his being. He still had to be baptized.

And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father. That's why I love John 14 because he says, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." They said, "Just show us the Father and we'll be satisfied." That's how they responded. "You don't get it." Well, you can't live without God's spirit. When we have God's spirit, we can understand this.

...the glory of the only begotten of the Father; full of grace and truth. All truth comes from Christ because it's from God, and Christ has been given it all. Christ has been given all the authority for everything to follow now until everything's brought under his feet. It'll be under the Father's feet then, and as the scripture talks about, it's all given to God, the glory, the honor, the majesty of what was accomplished in and through His Son. Awesome scriptures!

Verse 15—John bear witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spoke, He who comes after me is preferred before me for he was before me. You know sometimes people wrestle with some of those kinds of things. I hope no more in the Church. But because of our past and so forth sometimes this can be difficult. "What?" "He was before me?" He was the first. He was the first in God's plan. He was the first. Everything was based upon Christ. Everything. His own Son, His own begotten Son. That God could do that and work with him through his life to become a Passover, the process of how mankind could be forgiven of sin and then the government that would exist, him as the Messiah, the King of kings. Incredible!

He's preferred before me, for he was before me. Purposed, planned, so forth. **And of his fullness, we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by/through Moses, but grace and truth came through Joshua the Christ.**

So, grace and truth. It starts with the ability to be forgiven of sin. That's God's grace. Even before that, God begins to pour out His love upon us because He starts drawing us with His holy spirit. He has to do the calling. It's not Christ; it's God Almighty that does the calling. God determines who is going to be called and drawn and given to Christ. Then people have to make choices along the way because there are many who have refused when their minds were

opened, offered a calling. That's why some of the parables Christ gave are so awesome to understand, of what was said, even from something like that before they could, would even make a decision about baptism. Because they couldn't go that far.

So, grace and truth. We have that working in our lives, forgiveness, the ability to be forgiven of sin through our Passover, the ability to receive of God's spirit through our Passover, through our High Priest if you will. Our High Priest, that's how we're able to have this relationship with God Almighty. Awesome!

As we continue on here, I feel it's very fitting here to go back through some of the truths that were given, spoken of back there in that sermon in 2016.

8 (5) What is man? Man does not have an immortal soul.

The world doesn't understand that. I remember in a classroom, in this very little classroom because school only had twenty some people in it, high school, and here we're sitting in this classroom and some of them started talking about having a soul and what it meant, what their idea of a soul was. It was, like, this is really strange. It's this concept that something is inside of us, something is living, and it continues on.

From this, people get the concept of when you die then, because of this immortal soul that's inside of you, that you've got to go someplace when you die so you either go down to this place that's burning hot and where the devil is, or you get to go to heaven type of thing and look upon God's face for all eternity or whatever it is.

And you think, how shallow. And yet we see it, we understand what God's purpose is.

8 (5) What is man? Man does not have an immortal soul.

Herbert Armstrong had to restore this truth to the Church. It was lost during Sardis.

Man is a temporary living, mortal being that returns to the elements of the earth at death and does not go to heaven or hell. Only God can give mankind immortality in His Family.

Sometimes we don't realize what we've been given. When's the last time you thought about this truth, that you understand it? When's the last time you've gone through them, and you went through some of these earlier ones, and you think about what was stated? Moved by it? Well, we should be if you understand your past, if you understand people around you. They don't understand this.

So, we can't oversimplify it. We can't just kind of brush it off as not being that important. It's awesomely important! This is one of the big things that people are so screwed up by in the world because when death comes, they don't know where "so-and-so" is going to be and so

they have to talk in terms that are a very protestant fashion because it's not real. "Joe's up there fishing. He finally gets to fish for all eternity."

When I hear things like that, that's so sad. What's he fishing for? You know, take it out further for their logic. Who's cleaning them? Do you clean that kind of fish? What is it? You know, people don't think it through. He's up there playing golf. You know, you can only play so much golf where you're going to be bored out of your mind. You know, for all eternity?

So, how moved are we that we're blessed to see that, "What is man?" Nobody has an immortal soul. That's a peace. When you understand that, there's a peace. To comprehend, when you start to comprehend things about the Great White Throne, God's plan, and offering people life forever but in peace, not in the way we think as human beings in a selfish manner that we do.

9 (6) The human spirit in man. The difference between the human mind and the animal brain is that there is a human spirit within the human brain that gives the ability of free thought, creativity, and memory.

Awesome! It comes from God. There is a spirit essence. I remember when Herbert Armstrong first gave this. In the early 70s it came out to all the Church when he wrote the book about it, *The Incredible Human Potential*. He started explaining. We didn't know it before that that there's a spirit essence inside of us. Every living thing has a spirit essence inside of it. Human beings more because of the plan and purpose of God, more the ability of individual thought, reason, creativity, and so forth.

The animal kingdom, if you will, still a spirit essence. That's why mankind can't measure and can't understand why geese do the things they do, why certain migrations take place, and they know exactly where they're going. Like I mentioned the butterfly, monarch butterfly last week. I believe it was last week. Going all the way down into Canada, it takes three generations to get there, one generation coming back.

Now, how do they do that? It took three generations to get down there. They all died off. They get down there into Mexico in this mountain area, where some of these trees and pictures of them, they're just orange from all the way up. Then they make a migration in one year coming back into Canada again. Mind-boggling!

They have little heads, but it's God's spirit inside that little head that it does what it does. That's why they can tag them, take them to another part, like some did in some experiments, take them clear up the east coast and they come right back and then start heading south again. Now how did they figure that out? It makes our GPS suck. It really does. We're pretty puny. We're pretty small. If we could just get something that small to do everything. We can't do it; it's spirit. We can't comprehend it because it's spirit from God that He's given to His

creation to exist by. I don't understand that. It's passed along because of its kind and it's always going to be there in them to do what they do.

Mankind? That's the spirit God's spirit will work with that we have in our minds to help us to understand things, to see things, to reason about them. It's not given to the animal kingdom to reason about things.

Now, there are certain things that God has given them ability to figure out and to do, different animals that know how to go get food or whatever, and things they'll figure out. I love to watch squirrels sometimes try to get certain food and how they're going to get around it and fly through the air from a tree and farther away. Then come to a point where you get it farther back where they miss it.

Anyway, they try to figure things out, and a lot of animals do. It's not a reasoning like we have as human beings and doing the things we do and we have a plan and map and everything else that of so many things in life we can do to plot and purpose and work out.

Anyway, going on. So, just to understand this:

This human spirit must be united with the spirit of God for man to be able to come to know the true ways of God.

Awesome, awesome, awesome to see this, to know this.

10 (7) The Church is only the first fruits.

What an awesome thing. We didn't even understand about it being just 144,000. We used to think that there is going to be this huge multitude at the end time. Incredible, what God's given to us, and it gives us greater peace, greater boldness. It's beautiful.

The Church is only the first fruits of the beginning of God's plan of salvation. God is not yet trying to save the whole world.

What an awesome thing just to understand this that God's not trying to save the world because that's what people out here think. Missionaries and people going off to do certain things and why they do certain things. They haven't been given the understanding. It's not of God and they don't comprehend that, but they think they have to go out and try to save people.

God is doing that. Christ is doing that, and it's only for a few. You tell that to people and that the rest of the world, God's not trying to save mankind at this time? You're not going to make any friends. They're going to turn against you. They're going to hate what you have to say and probably hate you. The more so-called religious they believe they are, the more they're going to hate you.

How blessed are you to understand this? Sometimes we don't understand the peace in our thinking, in our minds, that we have because of what we have, because of what we see.

10 (7) The Church is only the first fruits. The Church is only the first fruits for the beginning of God's plan of salvation. God is not yet trying to save the whole world. The first fruits are those who have been tried and trained to become part of God's government, in His Kingdom, when Joshua the Christ returns as King of kings in the Millennium.

We have the ability to believe this because we see it, and we know it's true.

Those who are converted during the Millennium, along with the first fruits, will become kings, priests, and teachers for the rest of the world that will be resurrected after the end of the Millennium.

It just gets bigger and bigger. The opportunity becomes greater and greater in God's plan.

11 (8) The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God.

Because some think that the Kingdom of God is in them, different ideas that are out here in religion because they read about some of these things and try to put it together. But no one can. They're in darkness. They can't have light until they're given light, and God is the one who chooses to do that and when He does it.

The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God, but it is the embryo that will become the Kingdom of God.

What an awesome example that Herbert Armstrong was given because it makes it so plain. That's why I love the name *The Plain Truth*. Plain truth. With God's spirit, the truth is plain; it's so clear. You can't explain it to anyone, you can't give it to anyone. They can't see that, but to you it's plain.

"The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God, but it is the embryo that will become the Kingdom of God." To understand that example that we're begotten but we're not yet born into God's Kingdom?

I heard someone on TV the other day, some advertisement on one of the news stations talking about some of this. Right now, because of what's happening in the world, they're pushing a little bit harder in some of these things about the end and so forth because they see this world is a mess. They start talking about this "being born again." "You've got to be born again." What an awesome thing you know it and you live it. You understand what it means that you're begotten of God's spirit; you're in a state of embryo waiting to be born.

A false gospel in traditional Christianity teaches that the church on earth is the Kingdom of God.

If that were true, what a horrifying mess the Kingdom of God would be. Really. To see it for what it is, for what we see. If the church, whatever they believe whatever churches are out

here, is the Kingdom of God on earth, especially if it was in the protestant world... I did that a long time ago, chose not to be a part of it. Not for me.

Mr. Armstrong clearly saw that the coming literal Kingdom of God is the message Christ brought from the Father.

It's about His Family. It's about the Family of God. Awesome!

We're going through these, and they should be exciting to us. We're going through these, and they should stir us up. These are things for prayer life. If you have any struggle with prayer life in any fashion or form, go through the truths, think about them, cry out to God in gratitude, and thanking Him that you can see it, that you grasp it, and that you know no one else out there knows.

Just like today, looking out there over part of Florida and thinking, "No one knows that God gave this to Manasseh to fulfill a promise to Abraham, Issac, and Jacob at the end of an age because He promised He would do it, He would fulfill it." And it's been fulfilled. It's already been fulfilled and look what we're doing with it. That's why we're almost there.

12 (9) Only those whom God the Father calls and draws to Him can be converted.

Awesome, awesome truth. And you know what? The majority of those who have been scattered in the Church, they don't even grasp this anymore. It's not real anymore. It's not a truth anymore. It's not alive anymore. There is no light there anymore. It can only be a light if God's spirit is inside of you working actively inside of you. Then you can see it. Then it is a light, and it is inspiring to grasp and comprehend that God does the calling.

This was lost during Laodicea. Very few ever taught about it. I truly believe by the end it wasn't being taught, period, that God the Father does the calling. Then after the Apostasy, if everyone had truly believed this, they would have come together and understanding we're here because God has called us, and we are to be one, and how are we going to be at one. Well, that gets into a mess with human beings.

Only those God chooses and calls now can come into the Church of God.

That's the only way you can know where it is because that calling is a matter of God's spirit being alive within a person and the ability to continue in the truth. It's one thing to receive it, it's another thing to continue in it. Almost the majority of the Church that was scattered lost it, didn't have this anymore in their lives. It wasn't working anymore in their lives. They didn't know where the Church was. Because if it was there, we wouldn't be in this hall today, we'd be in a much, much larger hall today. That's just reality. If it was really seen, if people knew where it was because they could see the truth and see this truth. Awesome!

So, it goes on to say in this truth here:

Satan has deceived the whole world, and the Church is called out of the world. (John 6:44)

I'm going to continue on. One more:

13 (10) The resurrection to judgment.

Just this one here. Just to have this and to know and understand it.

The resurrection to judgment is the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20). This period of judgment covers 100 years and follows the time of the Millennial reign of Christ on earth.

What an awesome thing to understand after the Millennium there is one hundred years. I think of chapter 20 of Revelation when it goes through there and starts talking about the second death. And yet I never heard that ever when anyone was talking about that, whether it was before I was called or even after that as far as the world is concerned, talking about a second death. They didn't. It's like skipping over those verses in Revelation. What does it mean?

Because if you have to think about it a little bit, to have a second death means you had to have a second life. It's not a spiritual one because you don't die from a spirit life. It's a physical life. What an awesome plain truth that God gave to Herbert Armstrong to grasp, to see, and to understand, and to teach the entirety of the Church.

This period of judgment covers 100 years and follows the time of the Millennial reign of Christ on earth. God has not been trying to "save" the world over the past 6,000 years, and the billions who have not had the opportunity for salvation during that time will have it at this coming time of judgment.

That's an incredible thing of peace in the mind. Not worrying about something, someone, whether they're down there being tortured because of how they lived or they're up there. That's why I think of that one church, if they'll just come and throw a little water across you, or I think they even got away from doing that, just basically the hand or whatever it is, and by saying a few words that somehow you've been forgiven of all your sins while you're dying. Live how you want to, be as ugly as you want to, be as evil as you want to be, but as long as you have that priest standing before you when you're just about to croak and he says a few words over you, and somehow, it's all okay.

You think, what a horrible concept of God! What a horrible concept of what God is doing! And you can see it. You can understand it, what is true, what is right.

That's why I love the sermon series we had at the Feast this year, to understand in a deeper way than has ever been given to God's Church, candidly, that we are each held incredibly accountable for what He's given to us in our minds, and it's a highly horrifying judgment that comes upon someone who receives of God's spirit and turns against Christ. You think that

could just be shrugged off? That's kind of like the priest standing before someone and doing the magic waving of his hands and all of a sudden they're forgiven of everything.

It's not that way in God's Church. I feel for those, I ache for those that I've known who have left God's Church. And I know, and I know that I know now more than I've ever known before, there's going to be a whole lot of them that will not be in the Kingdom of God, period, because they became antichrist. A third of the Church in a very powerful way became antichrist; they turned right back to the swill they were called out of!

You think God takes that lightly when you've been given forgiveness of sin through your Passover? That's why it talks about you can't kill Christ twice. You can't do it two times. So, if you've gone too far, you know what? You've gone too far. That's pretty powerful.

I think of the timing that God has given that to the Church. Right up smack to the door of the end, brethren. We are blessed to be ready, to be prepared for what's coming.

Their time for salvation is coming. Over this time of judgment, those resurrected to a second physical life will have to prove they want to live differently than they did in their first life.

What an awesome thing. It's not going to be a cakewalk. It's not going to be easy. That's why I think I am so glad to have found out that all those during the Millennium who come into it are able to become a part of the Kingdom of God. Because the first 144,000, that's for the Millennium. But all that comes later, it's about the Great White Throne because it's going to take a whole lot more than 144,000 to be in God's Family to help what's resurrected to life during that period of time because it's going to be huge, and the proclivity is to go back to what they were. There's going to be order and there's going to be government. There is going to be one truth and they're not going to be allowed to just teach and have anything they want. Awesome!

That doesn't happen without power and strength, strong judgment, where people know where God is and what God is doing. Anyway, something to chew on.

With that, we'll stop this series and continue on next Sabbath.