

Keep Focused on God

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I would like to begin today with something that Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians. Paul wrote about a treasure that was in earthen vessels, and those of us in God's Church understand what Paul was saying when he wrote those words.

I hope everyone understands about what Paul wrote, this "treasure in earthen vessels," because that's exactly what you and I have. That's what has been offered from the Great God of this universe. But I know the human mind cannot comprehend what God really has in store for those that He has called.

God had it written that it is likened "to one who finds great treasure in a field," and in another place He had it written about "a pearl of great price." So, that's the examples that were given in God's book about that treasure that is in earthen vessels, speaking about the holy spirit that God has given to each one of us.

So, what this is saying is it's something that is very valuable that God is giving to you and me. I hope everyone realizes that that gift came from the Great God of this universe. God expects something from those that He has given this gift.

When God was calling us we were told to count the cost. God told us that if we didn't forsake all we could not become His disciples. This treasure that we have is so important that God has given to us in our minds, and we understand once we have that gift that God is always first in our lives regardless of the circumstances we find our self in in this physical body in this life.

But we have seen so many forget that very thing. There have been so many that walked side by side with you and me on God's Sabbath and they are no longer here. It can happen to anyone, brethren, and it's an amazing thing what the mind can do. The mind can forget everything that they said at baptism to their Savior, and we've seen that very thing happen.

When one lets down the human mind that is up here can begin to justify one's actions. We've seen that happen as well in God's Church, and that is why anyone that has been called from the Great God of this universe has to keep their mind focused on God.

So, that will be the subject today, *Keep Focused on God*.

Paul and Peter spoke much about the mind in God's book, and we will cover a few points today about what was written about the human mind by those two. I think God lets those of us in His Church, through the governments that we have now upon this earth that mankind has created, I think all of us can see that mankind cannot rule themselves regardless of the government that they live upon.

We can see that mankind with that human mind and those lusts that are in man is bringing about WWII. We can see that we are on the verge of that war taking place. So, it's very important to you and me that we protect what God has given us in this mind, His holy spirit.

We can see that most of the governments in this world think that they have the answers to mankind. They know what is the best rule for man upon this earth. But we know exactly what it takes. It takes the Kingdom of God to govern man upon this earth and to bring about peace to mankind, finally, in a spiritual Body. That's what it will actually take.

Mankind in this human carnal mind never really wants to know anything about God. They don't want to give God any credit. It's an amazing thing how God contained this human brain in such a small package. Man has the capacity to let this human mind, this human brain swell beyond its capacity. Man has the capacity to think how intelligent he is, how great he is. We've seen that, and we see it now in the world scene with those leaders. They will eventually bring about WWII.

We know that only the Great God of this universe can understand our human minds. That's because He created it. God gave Peter and Paul some insight into the human mind and into the spiritual mind, and God has called a few through time for that purpose, exactly like Peter and Paul to teach us, to always focus on God and the importance of focusing on God.

We understand that this mind takes God's spirit to focus upon our God and His plan. It's been only a few through the sea of mankind that has existed upon this earth. We know what ancient Israel did over and over by using that human mind. We understand that they did not have God's spirit. But God says that it's an example for you and me, those that the end of the age has come.

Those of us in God's Church can see that mankind thinks they have the answer, as I said earlier. But we understand that it is only by the rule of God's Son upon this earth that can begin to bring about peace, and it is through the mind that that will be done, by God pouring out His holy spirit upon mankind in just a short while.

God has been creating a purpose for this spiritual mind down through time to those that He has called. God is preparing His Church at this end-time, and it's through the mind, through that holy spirit that God is doing it. Therefore, our name, Church of God—Preparing for the Kingdom of God, that is coming to this earth to set up God's government upon this earth.

God's words tell you and me that we should love the Eternal with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all of our mind. Our minds are susceptible to this human nature that God gave us for a purpose. He gave us this nature. These influences of that human nature are very powerful, and these influences are not to be taken lightly by those of us in God's Church.

We have to be alert to the influences upon the mind by a demonic world as well, not only our human nature and those lusts that are in this nature of man.

So, let's turn over to 1 Peter 1 and let's see what Peter wrote. We are facing the most awesome times in man's history with what's on the horizon for mankind. It is this spiritual mind that you and I have to guard with what's on the horizon for mankind, and because of this precious treasure that we have, that God has given to those that He has called through the holy spirit – all of us understand that the Church of God has to be clean, and that has to take place.

So, in **1 Peter 1:13** let's notice what Peter wrote. Peter wrote to **Gird up the loins of our mind**. So, how do we do this that Peter is speaking about? How do we gird up the loins of our mind? It's a unique way of saying to do that for our mind, or spiritual mind.

Another way to say this is to bring the mind into subjection, in subjection to this human nature that we have in those lusts that are in man, to use this mind, to prepare our mind and stay focused on our God and His plan for mankind.

We are to protect this treasure that God has given to you and me. God tells us through Peter to **Gird up the loins of our minds and be sober minded**. So, in other words, to be "sober minded" it means to really weigh and look where we are spiritually, to realize the times that you and I are facing. We live in Sodom and Gomorrah. That's what it's like with where we live.

It tells us to **rest our hope fully upon the grace that God has brought to you [and me] through the revelation of Joshua the Christ** our Savior, our Passover.

There are seven scriptures that liken our calling to running a race. It's been a long time since I've run a race. But believe it or not, when I was young I used to race a lot in school, and actually, in those days I was pretty fast in those days. Not so anymore. That's what most of us did. We did most of that in school or maybe in college, and we understand what it took to complete a race. Took some endurance and it took some focusing on the finish line and just how far that finish line was.

God tells us to "gird up the loins of our mind," to focus on that finish line, so to speak. To do that we have to prepare our minds just as if we were running a race. That's actually what we're doing, brethren. We're running a race for our spiritual lives.

Let's look at **1 Corinthians 2:14—But the natural man [and woman] does not receive the things of the spirit of God, and they are foolishness to them; and they cannot know them**. We know why. Because it takes God's spirit. **...and they are spiritually discerned**. So, we understand what is being said.

Here God tells us about the mind and how it thinks without God, and we know that human nature takes over without God's spirit. The mind thinks it needs nothing from God. It thinks that it has the power to do the things that it wants to do. That's the influence of that human nature that we know that God instilled in all of mankind.

So we need God to let the swelling out of that mind when it takes place. That's exactly what God does once we're called; He lets that swelling out of this mind and lets us see through to the plan of mankind.

Down in **verse 16**. It's really a question. **For who has known the mind of the Eternal that he may instruct Him?** We know about Job and those questions that were asked of Job, like, "Where were you, Job, when I created all of these things?" So, it's a question, "Who has known the mind of the Great God of this universe?" But let's notice, **we have the mind of Christ**.

So, we understand what is being said. Paul wrote much about the human mind in this book, and we know that we can never instruct the Great God of this universe. God tells us that our mind is so minute compared to His mind, that human mind.

But back up in **verse 15** we are told that **One who is spiritual judges all things**. Now, I think a better word that is used for "judges," it's better said, "to discern; to examine or search out or even to sift." So, that's better said.

But it's speaking about the mind and how we should do it once we have God's spirit, and we have that capability with God's spirit. We now have the ability to sort out, to sift through it so we can direct the mind to the things of God so that we will not find our self in sin. But even though we have that ability, we still end up with sin. We understand that's why we need a Passover.

God tells us to bring every thought into subjection. All of them. All our thoughts. When we are focused on God and His plan that focus will keep us close to God when we do that. Then when we are hit with trials or things that come into this mind that could cause us to sin we can now see through with God's spirit to bring those wrong thoughts into subjection.

So let's look at some more scriptures. Let's look at Ephesians 4 and let's move through some of those scriptures that tell us the things about this mind.

Ephesians 4. God instructs you and me of the way that we should live our lives and He tells us how to use this spiritual mind that He has given to us through the holy spirit, God's holy spirit, the mind that God has enlightened to His ways.

Ephesians 4:17 we find, **I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind**. Now, Paul was writing about during his time upon this earth. We understand that that's what they called those in that day, gentiles. But when we apply this to the world around us, the world that we find our self in at this time, we apply this to our time, and we understand what is being said.

We have to recognize our human nature, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." That's what we see the rest of this world walking in. It has taken so many out of God's Church, those lusts, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." We are witnesses to that very thing. But

we have this human nature by design. God had a purpose for this human nature in those lusts that He put in man. Because as we just read earlier, we are to overcome those lusts.

God had Paul and Peter both write about this nature that is in mankind. Those of us in God's Church we have to guard against the demonic world as well as this nature that we all have. That's what we're being warned about, the nature that we have and a demonic world that is here at this time. So, we are to keep our focus on God and not let down, to protect what God has given to each and every one of us.

Verse 18 speaks about being blinded. We understand this because this world is blind. If God does not give His spirit, one is blind.

It says, **they were given over to lewdness and greed and uncleanness**. That's exactly what we see in our world, and it's a sick, sick world that we see. It seems that everywhere you turn that's all you see, is that lewdness and that greed that has encompassed mankind, and you can see no soundness of mind anymore that is out here.

Verse 20, let's notice what is said, **We have not so learned**. So, we have been, we are being taught a different way of life, to come out of this lewdness and all the things that we see in Satan's world. We are to learn a different way of life is what this is saying. We are to learn God's way of life.

As **verse 21** tells us, **we are in the truth**. God's Church is the only way you can find the truth of God. It says here **the truth is in Joshua**. He is our High Priest, he is our Savior, he is our Passover, and He is the head of God's Church upon this earth. So, it's where you and I are to direct our mind, is how we are to let God prepare our mind, and it's by and through the truths of the Great God of this universe. It's where our focus should always be, on those things, those truths.

At this end-time God has given you and me so many truths through His apostle. That should always be our focus, on those truths that have been given to God's Church. Let's notice **verse 22**. It says that **we put off our former conduct**. We are told to get rid of our past conduct. It says, **The old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts**, those lusts that we have been speaking about that are in mankind. Those lusts are so deceitful.

It has been the cause of so much ruin of people's lives. Those lusts have caused the downfall of so many in God's Church and we are witnesses of that very thing, as I said earlier. They gave up that pearl of great price when they let down. They gave up that treasure that was given to them in earthen vessels, and they no longer have access to that treasure.

We are told to **be renewed in the spirit of our mind**. In other words, it takes focus on what God's truths are and what we are being taught. That we **put on the new man which was created according to God**, through that spirit, through that treasure that you have in your mind.

2 Corinthians 4:3. We understand that this world has been blinded to the truths of God and they live in the deceptions of this world. We know those deceptions are many, but the religious deception being the strongest.

Most of mankind does not understand what they worship because there is a being that has blinded them, and he has put a veil upon their mind. God tells us that this whole world is deceived. We are told of the influence of Satan upon mankind. I don't think we understand the magnitude of those influences and that power that he has had on mankind throughout time. But his influence is coming to an end in just a short while. We understand then his end will come about at the very end, and he will be no more.

So, in **2 Corinthians 4:3** God tells us, **If our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those that are perishing. Verse 4** tells us what has blinded them; **whose minds the god of this age has blinded, which do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine upon them.**

So, we understand that that veil will be taken off in just a short while and God's spirit will be poured out upon mankind. Now they will be offered, once it is here, the Millennium, their minds will be opened up and they will have God's offer for them. It's going to happen in just a short while now. We can see that the Millennium is on the verge of being here.

Verse 6—It is God who commanded light to be shone out of darkness. It's a way of saying it. **...who has shone in our hearts** – better said, God's influence upon our minds to what He has installed in our mind, to give us the knowledge that we all have. It's how it's done to direct the mind to the things of God – through God's holy spirit. That's how God does it. That's why it's so important we protect this mind and that we keep our focus on our God.

2 Corinthians 10. It's just over a short way. We'll drop down to verse 3. We are in a spiritual war, and I think all of us understand this. The apostle, Paul, spoke much about this war that we find our self in. He also told us about the weapons that we use in this war. We all have, like I said, what Paul was just telling us about this human nature that we have in this flesh, so you and I always have to be alert about this nature and those lusts that are here, those lusts of the flesh that has done so much damage to mankind.

In **2 Corinthians 10:3**, we find, **Though we walk in the flesh**—let's notice—**we do not war according to the flesh.** That's not what it's about. It's not about this. This flesh is dying. We pictured putting this flesh to death at baptism when we went under that water. It's a spiritual war. That's what it's about.

Verse 4 tells us **the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.** We saw this coming on the scene when the Apostasy took place. We saw one doing this very thing, exalting themselves above the Great God of this universe.

We were in Atlanta, Georgia on December 17, 1994, and we saw this man destroy everything that we were taught, everything that we had been taught by God's apostle at that time. He was tearing

everything down. So, my wife and I at that time were there and we saw that war beginning to take place. Actually, it had begun earlier, but now it was being made manifest to God's Church.

It was a spiritual war that was beginning to take place upon God's Church, and the battle for the minds of God's people would now take place like never before in the history of God's people. The result of the man of sin, as we know, was Joseph W. Tkach. We saw that it was going to be massive as was prophesied in 2 Thessalonians. It was the falling away of the truths of God that began.

I understand how important the focus on God's truths are. I know because I was part of God's Church that fell asleep. But by God's mercy, I'm still here in part of that remnant Church of God's Church that is preparing for the return of God's Son back to this earth. He will set up the Kingdom of God upon this earth and install God's government upon this earth for mankind to finally learn the way to peace.

Let's notice what else is said because we can just read through these verses and not grasp the importance of what is said. It is the most important thing that one can focus upon. Those of us that lived through the Apostasy saw what happened when everyone stopped focusing on God and every idea under the sun was taking place at that time.

So, hopefully, today we can see the importance of our focusing on the Great God of this universe and His Son. God says that we are to "bring every thought into captivity." It's about the mind and the spiritual war that we find our self in. That's what takes place to bring those thoughts into captivity.

We are told that we are to focus on God and God tells us how. **...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.** So, you and I have to bring our thoughts into captivity to the obedience of our God.

Let's turn over to Romans 8. Today we are looking at instructions and we are being taught about this spiritual mind that we have, and we're being told how to keep our focus on God. **Romans 8:5** tells us **those who live according to the flesh set their minds—let's notice—on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit, they set their minds on the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

We understand that, and that's what it takes. It takes a spiritual mind and a spiritual body at the end to have peace forever.

Verse 7 tells us **the carnal mind is hostile against God; it's not subject to the law of God and it cannot be. So then those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** It will take a spiritual body eventually. **But you are not in the flesh—let's notice what we're told. It's not about this flesh. It's about what's been put in the mind, brethren. It's about the spirit. ...if indeed the spirit of God dwells in you.** That's what it's about, that pearl of great price, that treasure that you were given in this earthly body.

Now, if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he is not his. If you lose that treasure you will not be in God's Kingdom upon this earth. ...**and if Christ is in you the body is dead,** right here, **because of sin.** We pictured that at baptism, putting this body to death, this physical body, and live according to the spirit, this "body of death" that Paul called it.

Let's notice, **The spirit is life because of righteousness from God. But if the spirit of Him who raised Joshua from the dead dwells in you He who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies through His spirit which dwells in you. Therefore, we are debtors, not to the flesh.** It's not about this flesh. It's about what's in the mind. To live according to this flesh, that's not what it is. It's not what it's about. It says we will die if we do that.

But if through that spirit God has given you, you put to death the deeds of the body, to bring every thought into subjection, brethren, **you will live.** When you slip up by not bringing those thoughts and it gets by and it causes sin, you have a Passover. **For as many are led by the spirit of God, these are the sons and daughters of God.**

The remnant Church is what God's Son will return to, this end-time remnant Church, the one that is preparing for the return of God's Son and the government of God to be set up.

God is telling you and me how to keep our focus upon Him and how to prepare our minds for what is coming. We are to always direct our mind to the things of God. That's what the spiritual mind does. That's why it was given to you, so that we can stay focused on our God and His plan.

Romans 7:15. Paul wrote this, and he understood the struggle. Paul had a lifetime of experience once he was called on how to prepare his mind and how he directed his mind. So, he writes about it in God's book for you and me, and he spent his whole life doing it once he was called and he left us some words of wisdom in this book for you and me.

Romans 7:15; let's see what he said after so many years in the ministry. He said he didn't understand always what he was doing. He didn't always practice what this mind knew he should do is what he's saying. He said, **If I do what I will not to do I agree with the law that it is good.** So, he knew about God's laws, and it was good to regulate man's conduct. But as we know it doesn't always work.

He said, **It's no longer he that did it,** but that sin crept into his life. He recognized that's what caused that sin. He said, **For I know that it is in his flesh,** it's what he's speaking about, **nothing good dwells.** There is nothing in here that's good except what you were given.

For to will is present with me. In other words, it was there in his mind, but always how to do it, he never found that way. Just like you and me. We never find it. That's why we have a Passover.

He said, **The evil I will not to do that I do.** That's what he practiced sometimes. Not always. But we understand what Paul is writing about. Let's notice what he said, **he finds a law that evil is present with**

me, the one who wills to do good, and he said, **I delight in the law of God according to the inward man,** the mind, brethren.

But he saw something else in this flesh, this human flesh, is what he's saying, and let's pay attention to what he's saying. He found that this flesh was warring against what God had given in his mind. Sometimes it would "bring him into captivity of the law of sin," is the way he wrote it, "which is in his members," and it is. It's in all of us. We all have this nature that was put here for a reason.

Let's notice what else Paul said, **O wretched man I am.** I hope every one of us feels the same about this flesh. And Paul wrote for you and me so that we can understand about what God has given to us. He said, **who will deliver me from this body of death?** He knew this, but he wrote it for us, **I thank God through Joshua the Christ our Lord,** our Savior. That was his focus.

It was upon God and His Passover, and Joshua the Christ, that Paul understood what it would take to accomplish God's plan for mankind. He understood that it was about that pearl of great price that God gave in this human mind to you and me. It was about that treasure in earthen vessels that he wrote about that would make it possible through the Passover for you and me to have eternal life forever, with peace forever.

Let's notice what else he said, because this is important. **With the mind, I myself serve the law of God.** In other words, he knew he had to direct his mind to the things of God. He said that was always in his mind. That was his focus until his end. He said, he knew it was through Joshua the Christ that it was going to be made possible, and with the mind, he served the law of God.

Romans 12. Let's see what God expects. All this is written for you and me so that we can direct the mind to the things of God and keep our focus upon God.

Romans 12:1—I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. So it is what we are expected to do. That is our service, our reasonable service to God. That's what God expects from those He has given His spirit to the mind.

Let's notice what it does. It will transform your mind. That's what that spirit will do. You can **prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.** In other words, you will know God's plan. It tells us to direct our mind to the things of God, and he says we do that by being a living sacrifice, by bringing this flesh into subjection – bringing every thought into captivity so that we can focus on God, focus on the correct way to live our lives, to come out of Satan's world, to live a different way of life, one that will be acceptable to God is what he said.

By doing that it does renew your mind and it prepares your mind for the Kingdom of God, which is in our near future now. It's what we should always be focusing on, that Kingdom that is coming to this earth. All of us should be letting God prepare our minds for that Kingdom that is coming.

Let's look at verse 9. It gives us rules of conduct, brethren, and living this way does prepare our minds. By directing the mind to the things of God it automatically brings about a different way of life. God tells us in **verse 9** through this writer... And we don't always do this. We see it in God's Church. **Let love be without hypocrisy, abhor what is evil, cling to what is good.** In other words, focus upon that, focus on what's good. We understand there's only one good and that's God. All good things come from Him. That's where we should focus.

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another, not lagging in diligence. In other words, don't let down. **...fervent in spirit serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, in our trials, continuing steadfastly in prayer.** You cannot prepare this spiritual mind without prayer. You cannot direct the mind without prayer, and it tells you and me to continue steadfastly in prayer, not to let down, to stay focused.

I've said this before the world is headed to a third world war. Every emotion that we have will be tested in the near future, so we should heed these words that we are hearing today and prepare for what's coming.

Verses 13-14 tell us to **be hospitable to one another and to be of the same mind toward each other** and not to get caught up in the things of Satan's world. Not get caught up in drama – drama, drama, drama. I hate to inform everybody drama still exists.

Not set our mind on the things of this world, Satan's world. It's his world. God tells us to direct our mind and prepare our mind, as Paul wrote.

...don't set our mind on high things, associate with the humble. That's God's Church. **Don't be wise in our opinions, repay no one anyone evil for evil, have regard for the good things in the sight of all.** Everyone, brethren, even those not in God's Church, but especially to those in God's Church. **Do not avenge ourselves. God says that vengeance will be His.**

Romans 13:1—Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities. It's not speaking about the world. We're speaking about God's Church today. **...for there is no authority—let's notice—except from God.** The authority that exists is appointed by God.

We understand that God has His hand in the rulers of this world and when He needs to, but this is about God's Church, and that as God's apostle at this time in God's Church. Let's notice what it says about those that resist that authority – **Therefore, whoever resists that authority that has been appointed from God, God's apostle, resists the ordinances of God.**

Let's notice what happens when one does that – **Those who resist will bring judgment upon themselves.** That's just how God works, brethren, and it's for the good of the whole Church that He does it this way.

Let's notice what else was written. **Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority** that is placed here by God? **Live the way you should**, brethren. Don't find yourself in sin. Don't resist that authority. **...and you will have praise from the same.**

Let's notice—**For he is God's minister to you for good.** Brethren, it's for the good of the whole Church and it's here to help prepare the mind and to direct the mind to the things of God. That's why he's here, to keep everyone focused upon God. He is God's apostle, he is God's minister for good.

Verse 11 gives us a warning, **knowing the time, that now it is high time to wake out of sleep.** This is more true than when this was written. It's not a time to be sleeping in the Church of God that is preparing for God's Son to come back to this earth. It's a time to stay focused on God for what we will face in the near future especially.

For now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed, and we can see it. We can see WWII is on the horizon for this earth, for mankind. So, this is very true. Time is running out for mankind.

Let's see what else was written, but it's just as true for you and me as well as it was for them. **The night is far spent. The day is at hand.** And it is. We're on a countdown, brethren. It's not long before our salvation will be a reality. We can see just how near it is upon us. All we have to do is look on the horizon and look at the news.

Putin just had his past president write if he loses the war in Ukraine he will use nuclear weapons. So, that's what we see on the horizon, those nuclear weapons.

It says, **Let us cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light.** In other words, put on the armor that God tells us about in this book, **and let us walk properly (verse 13).** So, we are given instructions.

We pictured putting this body to death at baptism, "this body of death" that Paul calls it that we are to constantly be putting to death. We need to always remember what we said at baptism, and we are always **to walk as in newness of life.** We are to walk properly, as it says, **not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lusts** like we see in Satan's world.

It is so lewd now the TV, it's impossible to sit down and watch a movie even with your children now. It's so embarrassing. That's what we have descended into, this lewdness, this lust that we see.

We are told to **put on the Lord Joshua the Christ and make no provisions for this body that has died,** this body of death that Paul called it, **to fulfill its lusts.**

Don't take part in Satan's world, brethren. Stay focused on your spiritual lives. Like I said, this body is dead, this flesh is actually of no use. It's what's in the mind that is of use to God. That's why our spiritual lives are so important, not to partake of these things, to bring those thoughts into subjection.

We are told that we are **to be redeeming the time because the days are evil**. We can see that. We know the days are evil. Crime is everywhere. Murder is everywhere in our world, Satan's world. So we do have to redeem the time. This body is dying either by time of our death or losing what God has put in your mind.

We live at the end of an age when the demons will be released to do some awful things upon this earth. Some will live to see that evil that will take place. Some will have eyes to see that evil. So, we do have to redeem the time that we have now and keep our focus on our God and His plan for mankind, to do away with all of this evil that we see, to do away with all those lusts that cause so much pain and suffering.

Let's turn over to Ephesians 6:11 and let's notice what we're told. **We do not wrestle against flesh and blood—let's notice—but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness**. We know who that is.

It's a spiritual war that Paul and Peter both tell us about, and we have to put on the spiritual armor that Paul told us about so that we can stay focused. These scriptures we have read so many, many times, but these scriptures are going to take on a more awesome meaning to you and me in the very near future.

We know that a demon world will be released and do what it will do upon mankind in the near future, so God tells you and me to take up the whole armor of God, all of it, and let's notice.

Now, Paul lived during the Roman times and those Roman soldiers used armor on the places that the arrows might get through to their body to kill them or incapacitate them, so they wore those helmets, and they wore those shields. We have to put ourselves in the times that Paul was living at, and it was during the time of the Roman soldiers, so this is the examples that he used during his time.

That's what Paul likened that you would need to go into battle, and he tells us to **take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand—let's notice—in the evil days, having done all to stand. Stand, therefore, having gird your waist with truth**. That's what we have. **...having put on the breastplate of righteousness, having shod your feet—let's notice—with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith...**

So, when we start to see these things unfold upon this earth—because that's where we are in time, so that's why we speak about these things—it's how we will be able to stand, **to quench all of the fiery darts of the evil ones**. That's how it will be done. **And take up the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit**.

We know when God speaks about the sword it's the word of God, that sword of the spirit. The word that you will use that sword. It's where the spirit dwells, it's in the mind, brethren, and it's the spirit of God that is in your mind, that word of God that is in your mind. So we will have to put on the armor as we face these future events.

We understand that God has had so much mercy upon you and me. He's opened our minds through that spirit that He has given us, and He's begotten you and me through the mind. He opens this mind so that we can understand, and He tells us that the god of this age has blinded all of mankind except for those that He has shown mercy to, and that's you and me.

We're on the threshold of God putting Satan and the demons in a place of restraint for 1,000 years, and then mankind will be able to see, by God pouring out the spirit upon all of mankind. Now they will have the ability to see, by God pouring out that spirit, and their minds will then be open to the truths of God. It doesn't mean they'll accept them, but they will have that ability. God will offer them salvation. He will offer them to live for an eternity.

God tells us that we are like pilgrims in this world, and we are pilgrims for very few in the scheme of things when you look at the massive beings that were upon this earth at that time. It's only a few that became pilgrims, and just as Abraham sought that city we look for that same city that Abraham looked forward to, that city of God.

He looked to that spiritual temple that God is building. We do look at the things that mankind cannot see, and it's only by God's spirit that you can see that spiritual temple that is coming to this earth.

Let's turn over to 2 Corinthians 5 and let's notice what else we are told. We are told about so many promises in God's book, and this is where God explains to you and me, for those that have that spirit, that treasure that He has given in the mind to you and me.

2 Corinthians 5:1 tells us, **We know that if this house** (this tent, our temporary dwelling) **is destroyed we have a building from God.** So we understand what is being said. We understand God is building that spiritual temple and He's calling some to be a part of 144,000 and some to live on into the Millennium of His Son upon this earth. We understand, regardless, if you have God's spirit you have that building from God, **a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this, we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from above from heaven.** And we do.

This physical body is of no use for you in the future. It's what's inside of us that is of use to you, brethren.

Verse 4—For we who are in this tent groan. And we do. We long to see God's plan fulfilled. We do groan. We are burdened in this flesh. It's not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, as this scripture says. We understand what this is saying. **...that mortality may be swallowed up by real life,** eternal life. For an eternity, brethren.

We look forward to the day when those that accept God's offer can become part of God's Family, all of those that will be in God's Family in the future.

Verse 5—let's notice what else is being said—**Now, he who has prepared us for this very thing is God.**

It's what we've been speaking about today, preparing us at this time for the Kingdom of God that is coming to this earth. It's God that is doing it, brethren. We know that it's through this that He does it.

God has given those that He has given His spirit as a guarantee. God is the one that gives that guarantee. We look so forward when we will shed "this body of death," as Paul calls it. God is building that spiritual temple for the millennial reign upon this earth and it's through trials that it has been molded and fashioned, that temple.

Just as surely as you can liken it to a molding or fashioning to a piece of pottery God uses the examples of the clay. He says that He is that Master Potter and He has been forming and molding the whole time – the whole time of man's time upon this earth – to prepare for the Kingdom of God that is coming to this earth in God's government that is coming.

The Feast of Tabernacles is a perfect picture of what is in our future, the millennial reign of our Savior upon this earth. It's not owed to anyone, brethren, but it is a privilege from your God, that gift. Some will see the things unfold at the end of an age and live into the millennial reign of God's Son upon this earth, and some will become spirit beings.

God tells us that the Church of God will have made itself ready at the return of His Son. We know, as I said earlier, that this Church has to be clean. All the minds have to be prepared for what is coming to this earth because of what we see in our future. It's not going to be easy. Any time you speak about nuclear weapons we know that it will not be easy for those that are living.

But God lets you and me know what is coming and He's preparing you for what is coming. He's preparing you for the destruction that is coming, and He's preparing you for the millennial reign of His Son that is coming. He's teaching you and me a way to look at death, death and destruction. We are to look beyond that, to look at what He's doing.

Just like Noah. We know that Noah was ridiculed while he was building that boat, but Noah knew that death was coming soon for them. He knew that when that boat was finished the rest of man that was out there was going to die. But Noah agreed with God that it had to be done. Mankind had become so evil. So, Noah agreed with God that it was good.

Our world is full of evil too, just as Noah. It is just as it was in the time of Noah. Evil is everywhere we see today, brethren, and there is much death coming in our future, just like Noah's. Not as much, but a lot of death is coming.

But once we get through that destruction that will take place upon this earth it will be a better time upon this earth. God tells us in the book of Hebrews to strengthen our hands and our feeble knees because it's not going to be easy for some that live into that destruction.

So we have to stay focused on God. We have to make straight paths for our feet. God tells us how to do it in this book. There is so much that God told us through David, through the Psalms, so be turning over to Psalms 37.

We know that David was a man after God's own heart because of what is written about David. David understood and knew that His God would keep His promises. There's been some awesome promises made. David understood that every good thing would come his way in God's time.

We look around at the destruction that is coming. We understand that is the same and true for you and me. God has called each one of us to a calling that our minds cannot comprehend at this time. We cannot imagine it with this human mind.

We know that God tells us about that pearl of great price and He tells us about that treasure in earthen bodies that He has given His spirit to. God only gives us a glimpse, and He says, and we know that it's just like looking through a dark glass.

Psalm 37:1 is some of what David wrote about. **Do not fret because of evil doers.** We see evil everywhere. **Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.** We see sin everywhere. **For they will soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb.** We know that is coming.

Trust in the Eternal and do good, in other words, live God's way of life, focus on God. **Dwell in the land**—and let's notice—**and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Eternal and He will give you the desires of your heart.** It's like I said earlier, our minds cannot comprehend what He has for His people.

Verse 5—Commit your way to the Eternal; trust also in Him and He will bring it to pass. It will come to an end, brethren; we will get through that destruction that is coming. We will get to that other side, the Millennium.

Verse 6—He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Rest in the Eternal—let's notice—**wait patiently for Him. Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.** That's what we see all around this earth, wicked schemes. **Cease from anger, forsake wrath; do not fret—it only causes harm.**

Let's notice **verse 9—For evildoers will be cut off;** It will come to pass, and it's not long now. We are on a countdown, brethren. **For those who wait on the Eternal**—let's notice what David wrote—**they will inherit the earth. For yet a little while,** God's time, brethren, **and the wicked will be no more.**

Verse 11—But the meek will inherit this earth and will delight themselves in the abundance of peace. But it's in God's time and it's in our future. It's not far away, as I said. The beginning of peace is being brought to mankind now when Christ returns and sets up the Kingdom of God upon this earth at the beginning of the Millennium.

The wicked plots against the just, gnashes at him with his teeth. The Eternal laughs at him for He sees that his day is coming. We understand that too. **The wicked have drawn the sword and have bent their bow to cast down the poor and needy, to slay those who are of upright conduct. The sword will enter their own heart and their bows will be broken.**

A little that a righteous man is better than the riches of many wicked. What you have up here, brethren. **For the arms of the wicked will be broken, but the Eternal upholds the righteous,** those that He has called.

The Eternal knows the days of the upright and their inheritance—let’s notice—will be forever. In peace, brethren.

Be turning to Matthew 10 and we’ll finish up. I’ve said this before, but we are like a well-watered garden in the middle of the desert. It should bring you to your knees, what you have been offered, to understand that calling. God has called you to this inheritance that we just read about.

Let’s look at Matthew 10. It’s a scripture that we read about many, many times, but you and I as the Church of God should understand why God said these words more than ever now.

Matthew 10:34, let’s notice what is said, **Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword,** that’s why he came. The sword will cut through all the deceptions. We know that sword is the word of God—it’s what he’s bringing—and it will cut through all the deceptions that have been taught in Satan’s world.

God says it this way, “that it will cut through to the bone.” He understand that His sword is His truth, His word, and He will bring it to mankind beginning with the Millennium. It’s a blessing to understand what God is doing and why these things are coming to this earth.

God told you and me so that we can prepare, and He is giving us understanding of what is coming. We know that God is going to intervene in the affairs of mankind in just a short while and He will do it in a mighty and powerful way, brethren. We know that this world has been left to its own governments, but God’s government is coming now for mankind.

Satan’s world is coming to an end quickly now so you and I look forward to the Kingdom of God that is coming to set up God’s government upon this earth. So, let’s heed God’s instructions that we heard today and stay focused on God and His plan. We have seen so many lose this treasure that God gave them and they are no longer here. I don’t know that I can stress the importance of staying focused on God at this time so that we can become a part of God’s creation and live for an eternity.