

## Doing the Works of God, Pt. 2

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This will be *Part 2* of the new series entitled *Doing the Works of God*.

As it was mentioned in *Part 1* we cannot coast, take it easy, or be idle in living the truths of God. It takes work. It takes work to have God's way of life that leads into His Family.

It's really quite an awesome subject, and I'm excited even about the next series we're going to have starting in December that will follow this one here because it adds even more to it in this process. And it really is an awesome focus to me of being able to understand what this is all about, what the works of God are all about.

Because that's what we're told to do, we're told, in essence, to do the works of God, and that means we're a part of God's work. That work is about us and there are things we have to do. We have to work at them; they don't just happen. They have to be planned. They have to be exercised in our life, and on it goes.

I want to mention something else. Last Sabbath I mentioned in going through the letter to Timothy, I think it was 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy, I don't remember which, maybe it was 1<sup>st</sup>. Anyway, whatever one it was, Paul referred to Timothy as his son. I made some comments there that there are some things we don't know. That was the primary purpose of the statement I made. It is not that we teach in any fashion or form that he was Paul's son at all. There'll probably be some sermons now because of some of the things looking into some of this and about Paul's life, but I think they'll be exciting in the first place because we really haven't gone through some of the things that are about Paul's life.

Anyway, so just wanted to make comment whether he was or was not, we don't teach either one right now within the Church, okay? There are some things there that are not absolute until God reveals it. So, that's why I'm not teaching either one in that respect because I have to be convicted of certain things before I can teach them obviously. I wanted to mention that there at this point in time we do not teach either one as being dogmatic, as being absolute, because there are different arguments on all sides, and it has to be solved at some point. And like so many other things that I've thought that, well, that'll be when Christ returns, but sometimes we're supposed to address it sooner. Just like Joshua. And I'm glad we addressed that sooner. So, awesome.

Now, continuing on. Last Sabbath we were looking at what was written by Paul that was about our time, which was about the time of the Apostasy in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2. A lot of us in this room, or quite a few of us in this room lived that, lived through that, and experienced that, and an incredible part of our lives, it really was, in the sense of what we've experienced and what we've seen.

We didn't finish those verses that we were going through so we're going to do a little review and then continue on to see how Paul was inspired to conclude and summarize what he did in his comments in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians. So, let's pick it up again here now, 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

We'd covered matters regarding the man of sin, the son of perdition, and then we read these two verses here, or three verses. **2 Thessalonians 2:8—Then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.** It was quite a process when God took us through this to show us what this was all about. We first had to come to the realization because of 280 days, 40 being a number in the sense of trial and test and so forth coming from God, and then 7 days that we understand the Sabbath and what the man of sin was wanting to do away with, basically, wanting to do away with the Sabbath, the Holy Days, and so forth.

And to understand then that this number because it was from God, God is the one who had to reveal it, that he was the man of sin. To say that in advance before that time would have been presumptuous. God had to declare, God had to show us, and that's what this verse here is about. God had to show us that this indeed marked that time because he died 280 days from the time he gave that sermon up here in Atlanta. That is an awesome thing to understand.

"Then shall that wicked be revealed." God had to do it. The reason I'm mentioning some of that, because I mention it in the book, that there is one out there who taught at one point that he was the man of sin. But then when he died he had to change it over to "It must be his son." Well, he was presumptuous in having said that in the first place earlier, so even though he was right, there was another being that knew that anyway. I've already mentioned that in the book.

"That wicked shall be revealed whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of His mouth," by what God declares, what God says. It is a matter of his life being taken at that moment in time. God did it. That's what this is revealing in that respect.

**...and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.** So, if you go back to the first few verses of 2 Thessalonians 2 the whole context of the beginning of the chapter is about Christ's coming. It's about his return. It mentions it three times in context there. It's about the coming of Christ. There was one thing that had to take place, Paul was declaring, before that would be made to the Church that he is now coming.

No one knew how long it was going to be, that it would be nearly 1900 years from the time that Paul was talking about some of this, that much later, and not quite 2000. So, anyway, to understand here what this was all about, that the Church was going to continue on before God revealed that this is now the time, it's going to happen in this period of time.

Herbert Armstrong, God gave to him that we were in the end time, that we are approaching the time of Christ's coming. But we hadn't experienced an apostasy yet. And Paul was declaring, was inspired by God

to write these words, that this event of a great falling away—as it’s been given in some translations, but the word literally meaning, having to do with apostasy, to apostatize—and that this event would have to take place within the Church before Christ’s coming was fully announced, in that respect, that this is the time. Because, again, that’s what the chapter starts out being about.

So, “will destroy with the brightness of his coming.” What an awesome thing we’ve been given that encouragement, that thing to understand we continue to go forward regardless of what is the period of time there but knowing it is in our time now. It has to happen in our time now. And to me, that gives a great deal of consolation.

You look at the world, the way it is. Like right now, it’s like, okay, new president, people are spazzing out, new cabinet, they’re spazzing out about that, but there can be a lot of changes made because they have control of both places of legislation in the sense of the senate and the house. That’s powerful. A lot of things could happen either way as to other nations or how they respond. And on and on it goes.

So again, we have to be on guard because we don’t know. That’s why we have to be ready at any time, to understand things could happen before an inauguration. Things could happen soon after that after certain changes are made. The world is not going to be happy. The world right now is not happy. You hear news reports that they’re trying to prepare. Well, they were trying to prepare in case he won. Well, now he’s won so now they’re trying to prepare again in the sense of other things. Because they fear the matter of tariffs. It scares the tar out of them.

But working as he did on a very large scale in construction he knew how to deal with various people that you go to an extreme and then somewhere in there you can kind of back down to something reasonable. He does that very well. So, he scares the tar out of other countries and things about tariffs and the like. I don’t care if it’s a small tariff, it’s going to be hard on the world because people are hurting, nations are hurting.

Reports here recently now Germany is really hurting. China isn’t really doing all that great either. But these kinds of things then scare world leaders. Well, no need to go into that. The point is we have to be on guard. We don’t know when the time is. If it is another ten years then in our minds and our hearts we have to be of the mindset, so be it. God is in control of all this, and He will help us through all this, whatever comes to pass.

So, that’s what this subject is about, it’s about his coming. And it goes on to say, **even him**, speaking of the man of sin, **whose coming is after the working of Satan**. So, he didn’t do it on his own. Satan was very much involved. Satan hates God’s people. He hates the plan of God. He hates the purpose of God. He hates that which is about Elohim. He hated Christ, he wanted to kill him before he could ever get a start. On and on it goes, perverted, distorted mind, unsound mind. Nevertheless, that’s how he’s functioned.

Even here then, **whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders.** That was the power behind it all. You know, when people cut themselves off from God, which we don't know when that might have happened with him, we don't know what state he was ever in, period. But whatever it was, Satan had a hold very early on and was working to accomplish something that God was going to allow him to do.

It was our fault that it happened, but God allowed it for a purpose so we could learn one of the most powerful lessons ever, that even with God's spirit you can go astray, you can fall asleep. That's up to us. That's work on our part as to whether or not that happens, whether or not we yield our self to something like that of that magnitude. That's why it's mentioned in the very beginning of the sermon that we can't afford to be lax. We can't afford to take it easy. We can't do that. Of all times. And yet that can be the tendency, especially if we begin to think, "Oh no. Another ten years! Then another ten years ... and then another..." Whatever can happen in the human mind.

So again here, I remember too, I am pretty sure it was at that building we used to meet at where I addressed this very subject. I was down here, we were down here and talking about this here, about "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders." I gave a sermon about that, power, signs, and lying wonders.

**...and with all deceitfulness of unrighteousness in those who perish.** Whether they're perishing or causing others to perish it's really dual in that respect as to its meaning. The word meaning "destroy; to destroy." He set out to destroy everything that the Church was about and destroying people in the process, in their lives. But again, their fault, their choices whether they would succumb to those things.

**...deceitfulness of unrighteousness in those who perish because they did not receive the agape for the truth.** That's God's love. It's about God's love. Something we don't have naturally. We have to cry out to God for that. That's work. Our carnal human nature doesn't see those things oftentimes. There are things we have to go through in order to grow. There are things we have to go through in order to produce fruit in our life. There are things we have to do in order to remain and be close to God. There are things we have to do to stay on guard, to be alert. There are things we have to do. That's called work. It's a process.

God works. He has given us the means to our making choices to follow the process that He's already established! We have it made if we follow what God shows us we're supposed to be doing, we truly do. As far as God is concerned, from the moment He calls us we have it made. Everyone who's ever been called had it made in that respect as to the path laid before them. It's choices that prevent that, our choices.

And you think of the majority of people who have ever been called have turned against God. Their choice. They chose something else, something else in the world, something they didn't agree with, whatever it might be in time because of other things they wanted. The human mind is very deceitful,

very cunning, it truly is. And so, that being, if we begin to let down spiritually, it's open season. It really is.

We don't have the power to stand against that being. He's more powerful than we are of and by ourselves. That's why I love the scripture that talks about "Greater is He that's in us, than he that's in the world." That's our strength. But it doesn't happen just because we got baptized. It doesn't happen just because we had hands laid upon us and we received the impregnation of God's spirit. From that point on there is a work we have to be involved in. That's what this is about, doing the works of God. He works. He's creating something within us. Awesome to understand that! Elohim.

That's why I love what God gave to Herbert Armstrong. We're like in an embryo stage right now. We're not born yet; we're begotten of God's holy spirit, but we're not yet born. But whether we're born or not is up to us. God has made it all possible, but it's up to us by our choices. And we have to grab a hold of those things with all of our being. If we want it you have to fight for it. To fight—that's why there are so many examples in scripture about fighting—is work. There are things we have to do and backing off, taking it easy, whatever, becoming lukewarm is the opposite of work that we're supposed to be doing to do the works of God.

So, a love of the truth. That's why we keep stressing, or the truths are often stressed. Because they need to be at the forefront of our mind, of our being.

**...so that they might be saved.** It's the path.

You know, the Church hasn't had to have all these truths in times past. Philadelphia didn't have to have the truths we have right now. They were judged by what they were given at that time. People are judged according to what they have, what God has given them at any moment in time with their present truth. The disciples in the very beginning, people were judged according to the present truth of what they understood and grasped and what was given to them. It's gone that way for hundreds and hundreds of years now. And especially when you come to Philadelphia and the things God began to give through Herbert Armstrong, and then now in PKG, we're judged according to what God has given to us.

There's a lot more to this story. God prepares all of us for different places in the Temple, for different purpose. And going through the experiences we are is going to work to place us within a part of the Temple that will be exciting to us. Others, it'll be exciting to them, whatever part they've been prepared for in the Temple. They're all exciting. They're all inspiring. It's a complete Temple. But certain parts of it have to be different. It's by the nature of construction itself it's not all the same. It's different. Anyway, God's creation.

**Verse 11**, going on, **And for this cause, God will send them strong delusion.** What's that about? Well, because they didn't have a love of the truth. Do we love what God has given to us? You can't do it on your own. You have to ask God for help to love His truth, to love Him, to love His Son, to love those

whom He calls. It's not a natural thing in us, and just because we're in the Church and baptized doesn't mean it's natural. We have to work at it. We have to pray about it constantly in our lives in order to grow closer to God.

"And for this cause, God will send them strong delusion." Because they didn't love it and began to lose it. That's what happens. It begins to become, well, just like Laodicea, the truth begins to become lukewarm. It's not that important, it's not esteemed, it's not looked up to as being valuable, precious as God says it actually is if we can grasp it on a spiritual plane.

God says He will send them strong delusion just as a result of the choices made of not working. **...so that they will believe a lie.** Because if you start losing what God gives, it means there's something horribly wrong spiritually, letting down spiritually, not doing the works of God that He said we have to do to be a part, to grow, to conquer, to overcome. Then we're open prey. We become weak and we'll believe a lie. That's what this is about. It's about a process that's just natural, that's set in motion.

**That they all might be...** It's not the word "damned," it's "judged." **...judged who did not believe the truth.** It's not a pleasant judgment. Very serious. We've gone over that for two years now since the Feast two years ago, and God's helped us to zero in on it in a more powerful way to understand the responsibility on each person's part, that there are things that just aren't automatic because we were baptized or because we attend services, or because we tithe. There is more, much more that we have to live.

So again, "That they all might be judged who did not believe the truth." So again, serious. Where do they stand? What's it going to be like when they're resurrected in the Great White Throne...or will God give them opportunity in the Millennium?

**...but had pleasure in unrighteousness.** Not living and doing the works. In other words, we can begin to drift. If we begin to let down, that's where we begin to find our joy, our pleasure. I think it's awesome, we've just gone through the series about how to rejoice spiritually in God's way of life because of drawing close to God, because of being close to God, because of the power of His spirit in our life, that that's something that's going to be automatic then in us. It's going to be a product then of that closeness, that mind.

That's what this is talking about. If we come to a point where we're not rejoicing in what God has given us and placed before us and that's what fills our life, that's what fuels our life, that's what encourages us in life then what's happening? Well, we begin to turn toward the world or toward our own thinking, how we see things, how we can work things out, or something we want in the world. That becomes more our pleasure than God and God's truth and God's way of life. Don't believe it can't happen because we have the testimony of what took place because of an apostasy and what's happened ever since PKG was started.

We were talking about some of that last night, thinking of all the people. We go from one area to another and any people that were with us. I'll just go up to say, even just to 2008 who are no longer with us. That's what we see in our minds. We see different ones, which even after a time I can see their faces, but I've forgotten their names. It's amazing. They weren't here that long. They didn't continue in it. Others, you think about and then you remember a name. But so many, far more who have gone by the wayside, this has happened to. It takes work.

**But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren.** Do we do that, to thank God for one another, that we have fellowship, that we're able to have fellowship with one another, that we have special times of fellowship, and we're excited about that? Well, you know, I know there is rejoicing in us in coming together on a weekend like this, that people sacrifice to come farther even and fill up this room. Awesome! And that time we spent together, that we share together. Powerful. And if that continues to fuel us and fill us with God, with the mind of God, with the love of God, well, then we're doing what we're supposed to be doing. We have to keep doing it. We have to keep fighting for it.

**Bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, the beloved of the Lord, because God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation.** Every one of us. It's true. God called us to be part of Elohim. That's what the purpose of a calling is. **...to salvation through sanctification of the spirit**, being set apart for holy use and purpose, God's purpose in order to become part of His Family, part of His creation.

I don't know about you, but every time I think about this and even mention the word, I think about the creation or creation of life once again on earth at the very beginning, and then Adam and Eve, and what is such a marvel is to understand that was minor compared to what was going to follow. That's the creation in us that takes a lot of time. Seven days things were readjusted, redone, whatever, things created that hadn't existed here. It happened quickly in that regard. But what happens in us takes a long time through our choices, God making it possible that this mind be changed.

I think, what an awesome thing God gave us to understand, that we can have our minds changed, the way we think. The way we think transformed into something different, not filled with selfishness but slowly but surely conquering that and having a different mind that's in unity with the mind of God. Awesome.

**...chosen you through salvation of the spirit and belief of the truth.** God gives us that ability. Through the power of His holy spirit to believe, to see, first of all, to have knowledge of the truth, and then our choice in the ability to believe it because we "see" it, we can learn that it's true. We learn very quickly Easter, Christmas, so easy to see with God's spirit. All those things, see how false they were. Sunday, all the things that have happened through history concerning Sunday. Then to see the purpose of the Sabbath, to see the meaning of the Holy Days, the annual Sabbaths, and to learn those things. God gives us the ability to believe it.

But living it? Well, that's what determines whether we grow in understanding, and then eventually filled with wisdom, more of the mind of God, oneness, and unity with God. It's a beautiful process.

**Whereunto He called you by/through, as it says here, our good news, to the obtaining...** In other words, the good news of God's purpose, God's plan, all that was given to them at this particular time that had been given, that Christ had given to the early apostles and then taught Paul separately for a time before he then began to go out to the gentiles. He's talking about that good news, the truth on a spiritual plane that hadn't been given in the previous four thousand years. They didn't have these things that Christ came along and gave, that were given to the apostles, that were given to Paul, and on and on it goes.

**Whereunto He called you by/through our good news, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Joshua the Christ.** That life that can live in us, that life that can be in us.

**Verse 15—Therefore, brethren, stand fast.** It's a choice and it takes work, takes conviction. We have to cry out to God to have that kind of conviction, to have that kind of a mind, to have the determination to stand fast and to hold on to what we have, to not let go, to be fearful of letting go or slowing down, or backing off, or taking it easy, becoming lukewarm, whatever it might be. Just the opposite of being zealous, on fire for God's way of life, working for this way of life.

God has to know those things because He can't work in us, He can't create within us if we don't yield to it, if we don't fight for it, if we don't cry out for His holy spirit day by day. Because it's through that power that these things can happen. So, we have to do that! We have to cry out! It's because we believe it, we know it, we're convicted of it. You can't do it on your own.

**Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold to the traditions,** the teachings, the things that are given at any moment in time, the present truth if you will, **which you have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.** It takes work to do all this.

**Now, our Lord Joshua the Christ himself, and God, even our Father, who has loved us and has given us everlasting consolation and good hope through the grace...** You know, we have hope. You know, the closer we are to God, we see where we are especially now in time, and it becomes even more exciting. We see the world taking shape now in a way that nobody did in the past two thousand years. They didn't understand things about a great falling away or an apostasy but knowing that it hadn't happened within the Church. Herbert Armstrong understood parts of that in that regard, knowing that a great falling away had to take place. No one really understood how great that was going to be, how massive it was going to be, and the kind of shape it would take within the Body of Christ, within the Church. Incredible!

"Given us everlasting consolation and good hope through the grace." So that we're able to have this transformation in our thinking if we understand grace.



**...comfort your hearts.** Let your hearts be comforted is another way of saying it, "Let your hearts be comforted." This is our strength, our hope. **...and establish you in every good word and work.** Over and over again it's talked about in different ways, scripture. "To establish you in every good word and work." So, we want that. We want to be established in the work, to be a part of God's work, to see it and understand it in a unique way.

Revelation 3. Let's look at what was given to the era of Philadelphia viewing it through our time now.

**Revelation 3:7—Then to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia write, These are the things said by he who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, shuts and no one opens,** talking about Christ, speaking of Christ. "These are the things said by he who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens."

So, the "key of David," here, talking about the word "key" as it's used in the New Testament, it denotes power and authority, and it's associated with whatever is the subject of the context. So, I'm going to read a few scriptures to you. You can just jot them down, I'll just read them to you.

**Revelation 9:1—Then the fifth angel sounded. And I saw a star fallen from heaven unto the earth, and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit or the deep abyss.** So, we know what this is about, and again here, a key denoting authority and so forth.

**Matthew 16:19,** where it says, **Even I will give unto you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.** So again, to understand first of all, it's coming from Christ, that which Christ is giving that comes from God through Christ to us as our High Priest and our Passover, but as our High Priest and those things that are given within the Church. **Even I will give unto you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatever you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven.** So again here, this has to do very much with the government of God, the Church of God, and the government of God within the Church. There's a power and authority that God gives. That's how He works. It's an awesome thing if we grasp that, if we comprehend those things. Because so many in times past haven't.

"And whatever you will bind on earth will be bound in heaven." It's not a matter of just whatever a person wants to bind. It has to do with that which is a matter of being in a unity and a oneness with God in the first place. There are those things that God works with and gives that come through that, part of that authority, but again, it's with that mind that's seeking to be and is more at one with God in that regard as to how we govern.

We have to do that ourselves. We have to learn how to judge in all things, work with various things in our life, and we have to do it according to as Christ talked about, if he judges his judgment is just, it's right, because it's a matter of God, being in agreement with God. That's what we all have to strive to do in our lives in how we live, in how we judge various matters. We find that there are things that we are not in unity and judgment in our judgment. We tend to judge from our own carnal human nature, "The way I think about it..." That's a dangerous thing.

**...will be bound in heaven, and whatever is loosed on earth will be loosed in heaven. Or, whatever you loosen on earth will be loosed in heaven.**

**Revelation 1:18.** Again, just looking at the word “keys” here. **I am he who lives, and was dead, and look, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And have the keys of the grave and of death.** So, it’s to understand that power of life through, frankly, what is taught through the power of God’s spirit, teaching those who receive it as we do. That transformation that begins to take place in our mind, the ability to be forgiven of sin through our Passover, then the ability to receive truth and grow in those things that God gives us within the Church, the truth that God gives to us, and it all comes through Christ, and he gives the keys to those things so that we are able to have them, in a sense, unlocked as well.

We can see things that otherwise we wouldn’t be able to grasp nor see except that they’re given to us. Then the ultimate here is about what? It’s about becoming a part of God’s Family. It leads all the way into Elohim, being a part of God’s Family forever.

So, going back to **Revelation 3:7—Then to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia write, These are the things said by he who is holy, he who is true, he who has the key of David, he who opens and no one shuts, and he who shuts and no one opens.** Now, the physical is only a “type” of the spiritual here.

I mentioned this a little bit, I believe, last Sabbath in talking about “the work.” We had focused upon, very much so in Philadelphia, “the work,” and it was a work that was given to Herbert Armstrong. As much as there was a work given to Paul. His work was to go to the gentiles, and he knew that, he understood that very powerfully so because Christ taught him directly and told him what his job was. And so, he was deeply convicted of that.

Herbert Armstrong was given that by inspiration of God to understand Matthew 24 and talking about this gospel is to go into all the world. And so, he was very motivated by that. He understood, had deep, deep conviction this is what he was to do, and did it powerfully so as far as colleges being set up, as far as TV, as far as radio before that, and then a mixture of the two, and then all the printed material and the printing press and powerful tools that weren’t available a hundred years before that, and then even less, obviously.

So, that was a work for that particular era, for things that God was doing and raising up the Church in the manner that He did. That would take several sermons to go through all that, what was taking place.

But again, we saw it as a work. But within the midst of that, we didn’t talk about it in the same regard, but we knew there were things we were supposed to do. We understood that. But we didn’t focus upon it as much in a spiritual sense, in the sense that we have to do the works of God on a spiritual plane, each and every one of us. So, we were given measures of that, a little bit here and there, but not as strong a focus in that regard as what we’re talking about, candidly, in the sermon here in going through some of these things and discussing them.

So, to understand there are things that are a physical “type” but the most important is to understand the purpose of it all in the first place, of what was given during Philadelphia. It’s for the raising up of the Church. It was for the ability to work with many within that process who would yield themselves to the change, to the growth, having God’s spirit in them and growing, dying, that would be resurrected when Christ returns. Anyway, awesome to understand that spiritually, what was given to the Church at that time, the numbers of people that came along and were worked with.

Now, **verse 8** it goes on to say, **I know your works**. So, making it clear here it wasn’t just a matter of “the work,” it was how people were responding to what was given. God says here, a hallmark, something unique about them in a magnified way. Now, every era had things that were more about them as a group, as an entire body—that’s what’s written here—though it has applied to everyone in that regard, as all the eras do.

Just like Laodicea. We’re to learn from that in this era and anybody before should have thought about those things when they read about Laodicea, “I don’t want to be lukewarm.” It’s a powerful message that was there. And for a time, even within Philadelphia that was taught, you don’t want to be lukewarm. You don’t want to be Laodicean. As a matter of fact, that was taught in such a powerful way that it was hard for people later on to acknowledge, “I became a Laodicean. I was a Laodicean.” Because people still in Laodicea wanted to be Philadelphian. Some even called themselves that.

So, “I know your works.” God knows what we do. God knows what we put into drawing closer to Him, whether we do or don’t or to what degree. God knows whether we love the truth He’s given to us. God knows if we’re fighting for it, if we’re fighting against our own human nature and really wanting His way of life in us, for Him to live within us, that we’re fighting for those.

In Philadelphia, God knew what their works were. This is talking about that which is spiritual. **I know your works. I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it.** What an incredible thing! This isn’t just about a physical work. This isn’t just about the printing press. This isn’t just about TV. This isn’t just about the radio broadcast and so forth. There’s a lot more contained here.

**I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength and have kept my word.** This applies to every individual ever called at any time within the Church! This was a hallmark of Philadelphia. It was something that was going to have greater purpose and meaning during Philadelphia in that regard as far as the Church was concerned.

But again here, “You have a little strength.” We don’t have a lot of strength. We’re very physical. We’re very carnal. The very reason why we had better have works in our life so we can have more of God’s life within us, God’s spirit within us. You can’t live this way, you can’t conquer and overcome on your own. It’s a matter of yielding to God, God’s spirit at work within us, crying out for God’s spirit. That’s what this is about.

The open door for God's people is the calling He's given to us, and there's no one that can shut that but you! ...by your choices. I hope we grasp that with all of our being. No one can. It's up to us when you talk about it on a spiritual plane. So, the way is made for us, truly, as far as the truth, as far as being able to see things that we otherwise couldn't see, and God gives us that ability.

"No one can shut it. You have a little strength and have kept my word." Because that's how it's accomplished. We keep what God gives to us; we want it, we desire it, we want to draw closer to Him, we want to utilize the tools that He's given us to grow.

**...and have not denied my name.** Philadelphia was noted for this, "have not denied my name." Because Laodicea did. That's what happened. It's by how we live our lives. How does this take place? It's by not working, first and foremost. It's by not doing the things we should be doing. They were striving as a whole, as a body, they're noted for that, for what they put into it, for what was given to them.

"And have not denied my name." To dwell in. I think of all the people who began to turn away. I think of even this here, the eras not being taught and people beginning to not even believe them anymore. There got to the point where there were just a whole lot of people in the Church that didn't even believe in eras anymore within the Church, so didn't take the warnings to heart like should have, so that we'd be able to see where we were and what was taking place within the Church. Just slumbering and sleeping, getting more and more that way as a Body, as a Church until finally it happened, an apostasy within the Church.

Denying God, denying Christ to live within us. Because, you see, if we had been wide awake they would have been within us so that we wouldn't have been caught off guard, so that we wouldn't have fallen asleep, so we'd been doing the works we should have been doing in order to stay hot, on fire for God's way of life. That's why God says, "I wish you were hot or cold. Then it's easier. But you're lukewarm. But I can't have that either." Can't have that. Powerful.

I thought I'd mention here, too, just about this thing about the "key of David." There are some who have taken this in a total physical way and more about individuals and about people than it is about what it stands for. It's about Christ. In a very powerful way, it's about Christ. He has it, it's from him. He is the Messiah. It's not just about a lineage of kings that have lived down through the ages. Yes, that's a part on a physical plane, that that would continue on, that there would be that throne that would exist up until that moment in time, that God gave that to Herbert Armstrong to grasp and comprehend. That's a part of it.

But it's not about them. It's about the one who takes the throne who was meant to be, who would come out of David in lineage, who was the Messiah. It's all about him being the Messiah and his return and his coming back to establish God's Kingdom on earth. It's a beautiful and a powerful thing.

So, I went back. I was kind of dumbfounded how physical and how carnal it really was, about those who have this concept about what the key of David is all about. They're way off base. They missed the point totally because it's about Christ, it's about what comes from him, what can live in us. The High Priest and about his coming back to set up and establish that rule on earth.

It says here, **And have kept my word and have not denied my name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but do lie, behold, I will make them to come in to worship before your feet.** Well, we can look at Philadelphia specifically and see Herbert Armstrong in that regard, but it's more than that. It's about the Church and it's about understanding those who are going to become a part, if you will, of Elohim that's offered to us when God calls us.

So, just because when it talks about here, "And I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews," it's easy to say this is about the protestant world. And it's not. It's about the Church. Because we've had so many through time who claim that they're in the Temple, who claim spiritually that they're a Jew, of Judah if you will. That's not what this is about. It's not about a physical tribe. It's about what is in the mind and how people have responded to God's calling through time here, and especially here toward the end.

"I will make those of the synagogue of Satan." What an incredible thing to understand and to see especially what happened in Laodicea at the end of it. "...who say they are Jews and are not but do lie." To understand that can happen within the Church, that it has happened over and over and over again but came to a crescendo from so many who came out of Philadelphia and lived right on into Laodicea and did what they did. Those who fought against Herbert Armstrong, to where he couldn't even trust different ones.

I think of the treasurer first and foremost. When we lived in Houston, the pastor was Leroy Neff, and Herbert Armstrong couldn't trust the department heads at headquarters. We didn't know that at the time. But you see what happened in our history, you see the things that took place, you see what some taught... well, most of them taught, went off course, went off base. I think of the one who taught about Passover. He, being a 14/15'er if you will, teaching so many ministers, individuals in classes who went out as ministers and did what they did. He fits in here, of the synagogue of Satan. He wasn't in the Church of God. He was cut off.

I hope we understand these things, what was in our midst and what was in the midst and what Herbert Armstrong was dealing with even toward, especially toward the end. Because it became more cemented. Evangelists who wanted to take over the work, who wanted to take over the church. Let's call it that. Who wanted to take over, who wanted to be in charge. And so, people were vying for different sides, whose side they were going to be on. Horrible! That's not of God!

These things were happening before Herbert Armstrong died, and yet so much of that which was in the departments out there, this is what happened, and this is what describes them. The individual who

taught 14/15, there isn't a better description here, he's of the synagogue of Satan. He wasn't of the Church of God. He wasn't loyal and faithful to God. He wasn't faithful and loyal to the one through whom he learned the truth, being Herbert Armstrong, who they all sat in classrooms and were taught by in the early days. That's who they were taught by. Incredible, what took place.

Things we're never, ever to forget. And call a spade a spade – "say they are Jews and are not," say they're in the Temple and are not, claiming to be because of going through certain motions that they're in the Church of God and they are not. They're of the synagogue of Satan. That's a powerful thing to acknowledge, candidly, and to say, yeah, that's right. They weren't in the Church of God, and they were yielding themselves to a being who is plotting and planning all along knowing full well the era that's going to come, knowing full well there's going to be a great falling away in the Church, knowing how he was described by Paul.

"I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews and are not but do lie. I will make them come and worship before your feet." Do you realize in the future, in the God Family, there are going to be those who were a part of Philadelphia, who they're going to have to come to acknowledge as an example, Herbert Armstrong, he's in the God Family. On and on it goes. This portion of time as well, those who will become a part of the God Family. Individuals who are going to have to acknowledge, "Yeah, you were right. God was working with you, God was working through you," ever who becomes a part, comes out of this particular Body at this time at Christ's return, at Christ's coming.

So, the reality is they have to come to acknowledge, "You were right," because they have to repent. If they want to grow and conquer and overcome they're going to have to come to the point where they acknowledge these things, "I was wrong," and see themselves, and repent in a powerful way. But if they won't do that? And I believe there are those who won't do it. What an incredible thing, they're not going to acknowledge the past. They're not going to acknowledge the truth even when they see, as an example, Herbert Armstrong in the God Family, a part of Elohim.

**...but I will make them to come and worship before your feet and to know that I have loved you.** If they want to be a part of the Church they're going to have to learn from different ones in the God Family what is true and what is right. And if they want to worship God, if they want to have a right relationship with God, they're going to have to learn what it is they did wrong so they can come to see themselves, so they can repent of what they need to repent of.

Because I know I'll be there. My desire is to be there, to teach different ones, "Look what you did." I think of Johnny and Myrtle back there – saw the Apostasy. They were there in Atlanta. Different ones they're going to be able to talk to that were there that day, say, "Look what you did. What you did was wrong. How you hurt the Church, it was wrong." And if they want to worship God, they're going to have to acknowledge that. If those individuals want a right relationship with God then they're going to have to acknowledge what they did deeply so.

**...and to know that I have loved you.** God loves His people. If you're in Elohim that pretty well puts the seal on it after Christ's coming, whether it be any who might live on or if it's up to the period of the Great White Throne and they're resurrected finally, which a majority will be at that time, and they're going to have to come to acknowledge certain things.

I think of yesterday driving down here, I think you made a comment about somebody that we know of that said, "Even if he is," speaking of me, basically, if I am God's apostle, if I am the one that God is working through at this end-time in PKG, "...then I won't be a part of it." Just because of hatred for me. Anyway, you think, well, you think that's going to exist in the Great White Throne? Absolutely. There are going to be people like that. They just are not going to repent. But those who do, if they want to worship God, this is what they have to acknowledge.

It's not a matter of bowing down and worshipping. That's not what it's about. It's not about bowing down and worshipping the person. That's not what it's about. It's about if they want to worship they're going to have to do certain things. That's what this is about, "come and worship before your feet." In other words, to acknowledge who you are, that God loved you, that they were wrong, and you were right, and whatever you're able to teach them in that point in time about their past and what they did and point out to them where they were wrong. They're going to have to be of a humble spirit to receive that. That's what this is about.

**...and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of my patience.** Yep, you have to keep it, keep God's word, which means work. **...I will also keep you from the hour of temptation.** So again, for Philadelphia, unique in that respect for their time period that they weren't going to see the things that were going to take place as far as the Apostasy and be a part. They wouldn't have to, most in that respect, wouldn't have to be a part of that or see that that would take place.

"I will also keep you from the hour of temptation." Many died, but it's, especially if you look at Herbert Armstrong and realize that, yeah, there are things they're going to have to come to acknowledge, the different ones he talks to and speaks to. His own son, "You were wrong. What you did was wrong. Look at how heinous it was, some of the acts, of things you did at Feast of Tabernacles and different periods of time." He's going to have it pointed out to him. Whether he can receive it or not? Well, don't know. Time will tell. And on and on the story goes.

**I will also keep you from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world.** So, it's not just about the end time. It's not just about, in the sense of nuclear war and the like, about all the world. This is about the Church. It's always about the Church. The Church is first and foremost. Yes, there are "types" of certain things that will be in the world and the like, but the primary thing is about the Church and about God's people. **...to try those who dwell upon the earth.** So, yes, but people in the world aren't being tried in that regard, in the same regard as what we are in the Church.

**Verse 11—Behold, I come quickly! Hold fast what you have.** Hold on to it. That takes work on a spiritual plane in a relationship with God and Christ. ...**that no one take your crown.** A lot of crowns been taken by others through time, a lot of crowns. Even in PKG, it's had to happen. Incredible. Some who just for whatever reason did exactly what it warned against through some of this, they began to deny God, began to deny Christ. To deny them is to deny them to live in you. That's by choice. Out of neglect, whatever it is, pulling back, letting down, getting pulled toward the world. Because if God's not in it, well, that says it all.

**Whoever overcomes...** Conquers. That's what the word is about. It's a word that has to do with conquering, which is about war, which is about fighting. We have to fight for this way of life. That's why I harp on it so often. Fight. You have to fight, and you have to fight. You have to fight against self first and foremost because here is where the great battle is, because this determines whether there is going to be change in the mind and transformation. Because you're fighting, because you're determined you want this, you want to hold on to what God has given to you, you don't want to let go, you want to hold fast, and you want to do the things that it takes to be in the fight.

**Whoever overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God.** So again, spiritually, on a spiritual plane, that which helps to uphold the rest of things that God is building upon in that regard. Not a literal pillar. It's spiritual in what we're to have and able to do on a spiritual plane. ...**I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and they shall go no more out. And I will write upon them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem.** In other words, in Elohim. That's what it's all about, becoming a part of God's Family. ...**which comes down out of heaven from my God. And I will write upon them my new name. Whoever has an ear, let them hear what the spirit says to the Churches.** These are all about God's Church and what we're to glean from these through time.

Anyway, going on here, John 4. Let's turn over to John 4. So, knowledge of what is meant by the works of God is one thing, but understanding this with conviction is a result of ourselves practicing, living, doing the works of God, that which God says we have to have.

God wants to work. God wants to create within us, but we have to be a part of it. Isn't that an amazing thing to understand? We have to be a part of yielding to that process, doing the work in self, whatever it takes within us to yield to that process. But God is the one who does it spiritually. We cry for His holy spirit to help transform the way we think. We need His holy spirit. We grasp that. We want that. So, God's power is there to help transform or to create, if you will, Elohim within us, that we mature and grow until we can be born into God's Family. But it's up to us to yield to that, meaning we're doing it, we're exercising what God tells us we need to exercise.

So, we work together with God. That's why Christ said, "My Father works, and I work." He yielded himself to the process of things taking place in his life. He wanted what God had shown him that was to take place. He understood what was happening and what was going to happen, candidly, on that very



last day, on the day of Passover, and he wanted to fulfill and accomplish. Those things filled him up, filled him with a fullness on a spiritual plane that was an exciting thing. Not to have to go through something physical that was going to be something that is hard for the human mind to deal with on a physical plane because he knew it was going to be suffering, but that which strengthened him.

That's why I think of the scripture that talked about "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work." His meat. That means that's what really satisfies. That's what encourages. That's what lifts us up, if you will, and feeds us in our life. That's what's exciting in life. It doesn't mean there is not going to be suffering and hardships and so forth. We want to go through whatever we have to go through to get where we're going because that's what we've chosen and we're ready to fight for it and we're willing to fight this.

So, what is it you want to change? What is it that you see in your life that you know needs to be changing, you need to be growing in? What are those things that I've referred to at different times? What is your number one, two, and three? ...or whatever. What is it? Because we have them. There are things we should be able to see and recognize that we better be praying about them on a regular basis, on a constant basis, if you will, to keep on top of it.

We know what our weaknesses are. You know what your weaknesses are. You should! You should know where you let down. You should know what's taking place in your life where you can look at it and say, "I want this to change." Well, if you want it then, see, that's something that God looks at in our life. How much? How much do we burn inside this is what we want, and because of that, we're convicted to do the things, the work that we must do, that we cry out to God, "I need help!"

I fear ever being in a state where you wouldn't be crying out to God...or I wouldn't be and saying, "I need," with conviction, "I want Your holy spirit to be in me. I want help in this battle and that battle." And even if they're not in front of you, to know what your weaknesses are so you can ask God, "I want to be on guard. I want to be alert so that when it pops up in any fashion or form..." in the slightest bit of your mind that right there you're able to nip it in the bud, fight it here before it ever comes out of our mouths or whatever other way in life when we do things that are wrong.

Because we all have imperfections. We all have weaknesses. We all have sin. Every one of us. On a different plane, different levels. Sin is sin. We should know what our weaknesses are. Those are the things we have to ask God for help, if you're convicted that you can't do it on your own. And if we're not, then we're in bad shape. "I need help!" We need help. And so, that's what we do. It's about the works of God because then He can work in you. Then on a spiritual plane, He can work within you to give you what you need to be able to continue on and to grow and to mature. It's a beautiful process, it really is.

**John 4:34—My meat is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work.** It's about doing a work that serves to create Elohim. That's what it is. First in him, the first of the first born, the firstborn of

all, you know. Then all the rest that will come who are the firstfruits. So, he had to be the first of those firstfruits, and the first born into Elohim. He had to work at it.

**John 5:1—After this, there was a feast of the Jews, and Joshua went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the Sheep Market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda, which has five porches. In these were laying a great multitude of weakened individuals, of blind, crippled, and paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel had gone down at a certain season into the pool and stirred up the water so that whoever stepped in first, after the troubling of the water, was made whole of whatever disease they had.**

So, incredible thing that God did at a particular point in time, that an angel was given the task of performing, to have something like this, and possibly for this very purpose, for this very thing to be taught. God plans. God prepares. Because this wasn't a common thing obviously.

**Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity for thirty-eight years, thirty-eight years it says. So, when Joshua saw him lying there, and knew he had been there now a long time, said to him, Do you desire to be made whole? The weakened man answered him, Sir, I have no one when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool, but while I am going, another steps down before me.** So again here, didn't have the ability to be down there first.

**Verse 8—Joshua said to him, Rise, take up your bed and walk. Then immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked. And the same day was the Sabbath. Therefore, the Jews said unto him who was cured, It is the Sabbath day; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.** I mean, think how far out in left field they were.

I think of being over there during the period of Unleavened Bread when we were over there, and three days before Unleavened Bread begins there is no leaven to be found. We found a place, I think it was one day before, where they were selling pizza, and all the young people were there because they still wanted leaven. It's like the rest of the area of Jerusalem is, a lot of it, obviously, is very orthodox, but there was a Pizza Hut in town. So, anyway, we found that and had pizza. You think, and then the sirens would go off an hour before sunset and an hour after sunset. It's like, then you had to stop then. It's like there are things you've got to stop doing. We take it a step further than what God said.

I think of an individual who used to teach in the Church, a minister, that if you went to have something to drink or eat immediately after sundown on Atonement you're sinning. Basically, you're sinning because you're lusting for, you're desiring to do something, and you can't wait just a little longer? Well, it's down. It's over. Nothing wrong with that whatsoever. It's fine. As soon as the sun is down, that's it. You go get a drink of water – you're not sinning because you obey what God said to do. You fasted for the 24 hours before that. It doesn't say go another half an hour. What's righteous then? An hour past that? Then it's okay to go ahead and have your drink, have something to eat?

It's crazy, human beings, how we can think sometimes. We take things just a little bit further because that's righteous. Well, that's the way the Jews were. They didn't have any idea whatsoever about what was taking place here and why and the spirit of the law. They had no concept of the spirit of the law. That's what Christ came to show, the spirit of the law, what is spiritual and what isn't spiritual.

**Therefore, the Jews said unto him who was cured, It's the Sabbath day; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.** And you think, if Christ told him to, it's obviously lawful. **He answered them, He who made me whole is the one who said to me, Take up your bed and walk. Then they asked him, What man is it who said to you, Take up your bed and walk?**

**Verse 13—But he who was healed did not know who it was, for Joshua had moved himself away, leaving a multitude in that place. Afterward, Joshua found him in the temple, and said to him, Look, you have been made whole. Sin no more, or otherwise, a worse thing will come unto you.**

**Verse 15—The man departed and told the Jews that it was Joshua who had made him whole. Now, therefore, the Jews...** Isn't this crazy? **They persecuted Joshua and sought to kill him.** For this. You think, to deny that this had to be of God, to deny that there was something unique and special, that God had to be in it. Because no one can do this except that God did it. And you think of the stubbornness of human beings and an unwillingness here. **...so they sought to kill him because he had done those things on the Sabbath day.**

**Verse 17—But Joshua answered them, My Father works until now, and I work.** Beautiful! So, "My Father works, and I work." God had a plan and a purpose; Joshua knew what it was, and he worked to fulfill it. He worked to accomplish it. He yielded himself to the process, that which we have as well, the choices we make in our lives, to yield to that process. And so, we have to act upon it so that God can work within us what needs to be accomplished through the power of His holy spirit. This is fully about what he was teaching and what he was fulfilling in his life.

**Therefore, the Jews sought all the more to kill him because he not only had broken the Sabbath but also said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.** That's how they saw it. **Then Joshua answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself.** He set the example of this. There is nothing we can do of ourselves, but God gives us the help and the power of things on a spiritual plane to accomplish things that otherwise wouldn't be able to be accomplished, because the mind and the changing of it is a spiritual thing as far as we're concerned, and the various things that we're able to be a part of and to accomplish and do. That's why we're to cry out and ask God for His holy spirit on a daily basis. It's about prayer and about having the habit of that in our lives because we know we need it because we know we must have it.

**Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself.** That's quite a thing to say. He knew that. He understood that. We have to know that and understand that. **...but what he sees the Father do; for whatsoever things He does, these also does the Son likewise,** in the same way, in other words.

So, there's a way that God has shown us that we're to do, to live, to accomplish the various things, whether it be teachings, whether it be fulfilling certain things, whatever it might be that God gives to us to hold on to.

**Verse 20—For the Father loves the Son.** He loves every one of us. It should be very obvious. Sometimes people get down because of trials they go through or hardships. You know, all you have to do, if it's because of sin, because of weakness, just repent, and know you're clear, you're clean. That's what's been given to us. And to be lifted up by that, to be strengthened by that.

That's what we all have to do. That's what we all go through. We're the same in that regard. We repent and we move on, the past is the past. You don't have to beat yourself up. Don't have to feel down. Don't have to be down. On the contrary, just the opposite, to understand God loves you. "God loves me." To be able to say that. "I know that God loves me," and understand what that means in our life. We should be able to do that.

**...for the Father loves the Son and shows him all things that He does.** God's showing us on a spiritual plane what He's doing, what His purpose is, what His plan is, and He gives us more and more and He shows us more and more. And why does He give us those things? Because He has a plan for us, and He wants us to have more. And so, it's exciting and we're strengthened by it.

**...and He will show him greater works than these so that you may marvel/wonder. For as the Father raises up the dead and makes them alive, even so, the Son makes alive whom he will.** A unity and a oneness with God. He knows it's God's will and God's purpose when he does it, like what took place with Lazarus. He knew it was God's purpose. It was in his mind.

**For the Father judges no one but He commends all judgment unto the Son, so that all people should honor the Son.** These are powerful things that were revealed right here. That everything was going to be through Christ. Everything. Everything! All enemies to be placed under his feet until the end of the Last Great Day, and then it's all under God. That's what it's all about. Everything is given back to God. It's God's anyway, but that's the order of it, of what has to be accomplished through Christ.

**...that all people should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. So, he who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who has sent him.** So again here, things of the Jews and so forth, and yet we are to learn from this process as well, that uniqueness, that oneness that existed there, and what we're to strive to do to have a oneness, a uniqueness in the same mind with God, to be in agreement with God in things we judge and so forth, as it talks about here even in judgment. It has to be that way. So again, God gave Joshua a work and He gave us a work, and we're to be doing it.

1 Corinthians 1. I'm going to go on just a little bit more. We'll just start this, come back to it next Sabbath to complete it. **1 Corinthians 3:8—Now the one who plants and the one who waters are one.** So, what does that mean? Here is the situation. Well, obviously in the very beginning here everyone is very carnal.

Corinthians were carnal added to carnal. Tough cookies in things that they lived and customs they had. And to be called out of that environment, it was an incredible thing that was taking place.

But again here, people got into squabbles and about different things and wanting to make some people more important than others and Paul is explaining to them this whole process of transformation, this whole process of our becoming a part of Elohim – not specifically said just here – but again with that understanding is that we're all one. It's a matter of working together to accomplish. We have to have a fellowship. God has given us the fellowship, thankfully, and to recognize the value of that and the importance of that as a part of our growth.

I hope we see that. This is a part of our growth. The relationships that God lets us have, for us to grow in an understanding that God dwells in those who are baptized, who receive the impregnation of the holy spirit, who are seeking to conquer and overcome self, and that's our Family. And we're to be at one – at one with God, with Christ because it's a seeking a desire here in the mind to be at one in everything that God gives to us and to be at one with one another.

That's why we have to get rid of drama. That's why we have to see it for what it is. That's why we have to learn to love each other in a way that God wants us to through the eyes of seeing, "You are God's." So, what else could we do? What else should we do? It'd be a horrible thing not to think in that manner.

So, he says here, teaching them something very basic, "The one who plants and the one who water are one." Both are needed. You can't have one without the other. It all works together as one. We work together as one. We're strengthened by that if we grasp that. It's a part of how we're strengthened, and rejoicing in that as well. So, there has to be a thankfulness, doesn't there? A thankfulness for one another.

**...and everyone shall receive their own reward according to their own labor.** So, it's not about getting a reward or getting something for it, though we want what God offers us. We want to be in His family. We want to be in Elohim. There is work then. That's what this is about.

"Receive their own reward according to their own labor." Each one of us, we have our own labor. It's as simple as that. We have our own work.

So, between now and next Sabbath think about those things. What are the kinds of things we could be doing more of, better as far as things that God has told us as a part of the process of becoming Elohim or being able to be born into Elohim? It's work. What is that work? What are the different things that make up the work that God has laid before us so that He can work in us as we yield to that? Awesome!