

We are in Colorado Springs today and finally have a very nice day out there. It's been a little cooler. We were a little surprised. I hadn't really come for that cooler kind of weather. But we left from the Dallas area right away and went to Denver for a few days here so I could write, and then down here to Colorado Springs, I guess it was the day before yesterday. Anyway, whatever. Losing track of time.

But anyway, I've been able to get a lot of writing done. I think I have eight chapters pretty well completed. I have to go back through one to do some more editing, and another one to do some editing. But it looks like it's going to be about ten chapters now. At least I have a feel for that. Because since the chapters as a whole are a little smaller, a little shorter, I wanted to make sure it was the same size as the other books or the last one, and not much shorter if it was shorter. But anyway, it looks like it's going to be about the same.

But there's a ton of editing going on. We're actually at a point where we're going to have one, two, three, four, five, five editors. So, we have another one now that we're going to have when it's all said and done. So anyway, that's a lot of work because we're trying to make it as good as we can in every way. A few people have picked up spelling here and there of whatever different things that have happened. But as a whole, you can look at something several times a lot of times and you just go right over the top of some of that. But some of that's getting refined along the way as well, so appreciate that in that respect.

But, generally what I'm doing (just give you a little bit of background here), going through and writing a story flow for the different chapters once the direction is determined as to where I'm heading, what is being covered. It goes to Jeremy first, and he starts editing various things about organization and the flow and keeping the theme of the book all the way through, and how to do some of that, and catches different things here and there, and then I can reshuffle and see what they're saying. So, everybody's input is a little bit different, which makes it nice.

Then it goes to Audra after we're through with that. She has probably the more time-consuming of everyone. Time to be invested in it for what she's doing, the kind of editing. And then it goes to the Cincinnati area, Sarah and Pam, and they go through it. Then we're going to have one more at the back end of all this, of someone who's not a part of the Church who is going to go through it and review the things that are there to see if there are questions they have. Because someone who's not a part, if certain things aren't as clear to them that are being stated, if there's a matter of clarity, then we can take a look at that and see if there is a better way of expressing this. Because we want people to be able to grasp as much as they possibly can. So anyway, awesome.

I don't think it'll be a book by Feast time, but who knows? Anything's possible. So, we'll see what takes place. Anyway, I wanted to send that out there today so that people could have this. I'm going to have this on the recording.

Anyway, today's sermon, we are going into a series today that follows a sermon that was given last Sabbath. It was entitled *Called of God*. And that sermon, if you will, has a natural flow into what we're going to go in today, that is entitled *Begotten and Born Spirit, Part 1*.

I'm going into this subject matter because of writing certain parts of the book and trying to explain things, working at explaining things in a way that comes at it in maybe a little bit different angle, and trying to clarify things that are a little bit easier to understand. Because so much of the world, traditional Christianity, this matter of being born again has messed up people's minds. They have no concept of what that means. Anyway, going through and trying to explain some of those things, a little more challenging at times, but definitely doing that. So, we're going through that now. It helps me in that respect, and it'll help you.

So, again, this is going to be a matter of being born of spirit and how it's used in scripture, because a lot of times that's been unclear to people, and it is kind of confusing at times, mainly because of some of the translations.

So again, our relationship with God only begins if and when He calls us into a relationship. That's something that God has to do. Then we're given to Christ in that respect. But God does the calling and it's good for us to be reminded of those things from time to time and how awesome it is that of all, in 6,000 years, that we have that kind of a blessing to have our minds opened up to things about God, and especially toward the end here, because God has been progressively revealing more and more through time. To have all that we do is quite awesome. It truly is.

Then, after that, the choice is up to each individual as you move forward in that process there, to respond to the things that God is revealing. Because in a calling, before one comes to a point of baptism, they have to make choices. The choice is, as to whether or not they're going to respond to what God has opened their mind to understand. Free choice. That's an awesome part of the process as well.

Let's turn over to Acts 13. We're going to begin this by turning to some of these verses here. We've gone through a little bit of this in recent times, talking about Paul, but we're going to pick up there again and continue on with some other things that are being covered in this context.

Acts 13, that focus on Joshua the Christ and what was said of him. **Acts 13:15—Then, after reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them...** This is in Paul's travels now, that's where we read some of this. **...and those travelling with them.** So, their custom was to go first of all to synagogues, where people were keeping the Sabbath day, and where people were gathered together,

both Jews and sometimes gentiles, proselytes, and other people who would be invited to listen to what was being said.

And so, Paul would always go there first and wait for that opening. Because there was a unique custom there that is not really fully understood, but this is what they did at this particular time. It says, **the rulers of the synagogue sent to them**, seeing that they were travelers and Jews as a whole who were traveling, **saying Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, speak**. So, don't know how much of an introduction they might have had about Paul, but certainly had a little bit there. They asked him that if there are things to be said here that you want to speak and tell the people, speak on.

Then Paul stood up, motioning with his hand, said, Men of Israel, and you who fear God. So, everyone would think that that's how they thought, that that was their thinking process. It's kind of like today, if you ask someone if they believe in God or believe Christ, and sure, but they don't understand. There's so much that's not understood.

Paul's going into quite a bit here as he talks to them about what he's getting ready to address. So, he said, **Listen, the God of this people, Israel, chose our fathers and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt. And with an uplifted arm, He brought them out of it**. So again, a great place to begin with the group that was there. Everyone's familiar with that story, everyone in Judaism, and it's a rich part of their history, so again, he has their attention. **Now, for a time of about forty years, He put up with their ways in the wilderness**. So again, here now showing that their ways weren't that swift, and how they responded to God during those 40 years.

And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment. So again, everything that they were familiar with. The tribes had allotments set out for them where they were going to be able to live and dwell, and what they would have as theirs.

Then in **verse 20—After that, He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years...** So, this just progresses on here showing what had to take place then at this particular time. So, the judges that came along that God used and worked through to work with Israel to the degree they would allow that. **...until Samuel the prophet**. So, all the way up until Samuel. We know the story of the things that began to happen there.

Afterward, they asked for a king... This is the account where it deeply bothered Samuel because he knew that that wasn't the right approach in that respect concerning how to work with the people of Israel. And yet, they wanted to be like the other nations around them, so they asked for a king. **...so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years**.

Now it's amazing as you go through stories like this, and I think we're starting to see this more and more, and hopefully in our thinking as well, that this wasn't God's ultimate purpose by any measure, to have the tribe of Benjamin reigning over Israel. It was Judah, because of the promise that was going to be

given later on through Judah, and about the Messiah. So again, God allowed this because he was an individual who was of high stature, who could be looked up to in that respect. And so, here he was; he was going to be made the king.

...and a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king. So, finally given to David to be king. It says, **To whom also He gave testimony and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.** That wasn't by fluke or by accident.

Again, it's good for us to remind ourselves of these things. Well, just as I'm writing in some of this book, to think about the things that are happening in the world and the timing. You think about, which I was looking up this morning here, again, science and technology and how mankind isn't sharper and better today, have the ability of greater mind than people of a hundred, 200, 3,000, 4,000 years ago. Mankind is mankind, made with the same kind of brain. They were probably even a little bit healthier and a little more astute in some things back then. Because they're still trying to figure out how they built certain things, like the pyramids, and on and on it goes.

So, not by chance that all of a sudden in the last 200, 150 years, technology and science have burst forth on the scene, and mankind thinking they have achieved these great things because they're better or whatever it might be. But the reality is no, God kept it away from them until it was time, time for them to press forward because knowing what mankind would do with that kind of technology in the first place.

The same thing is true here. God works with mankind to bring about His plan and purpose. And the longer time goes on, the more awesome that insight that God gives us that we're able to have. And so it was with king David. He wasn't just chosen all of a sudden, as though God didn't have a plan, and He saw this David, who was a man after His own heart. God prepared that in him. God worked with him as a young person for this very purpose, to be made the king, to be a man, indeed, who would be after His own heart. From some things that are written, it appears to be from the very womb. So even there, the ability of God to mold and fashion things within the womb. Incredible! The story continues on here, talking about David. He said he's one who will, in essence, do His will, be subject to His will, desires to please God, **who will do all My will.**

You think of David, you think of the kind of young person he was. And speaking of young persons, I think I might have misspoken last Sabbath when I made a comment about how young some of the disciples, apostles were. They were very young men when God was working with them, but as Christ came around to them, had to be in their 20s, mid-20s, maybe up to 30 at that age of Christ, but they were young men. Anyway, I think I misquoted part of that or said it in the wrong way. My wife caught that for me. Anyway, I was rattling on without enough explanation.

But here's a young man, you think of what he did with guarding sheep and a willingness to fight bear, lion, or whatever, with the attitude that God is going to give him the help he needed, and that was just in

his mind. Well, how did he know? Because he knew. Because God was working with him then, to work in his mind, to let him know that He was there. Incredible! And then all the way up to this point in time of being made king. And you think of Goliath, you know, and the different things that happened there.

So again, **He raised up for them David as king, to whom He also gave testimony and said, I found David, the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will. From this man's seed, according to promise, God raised up for Israel a savior – Joshua.** So, this is pretty powerful what he's saying now. So, it's like he's going into all this history, and now he's hit them with this thing about David. They knew what he was talking about because the promises that were given to David had to do with a Messiah and a King. And so, there are things here that they grasped, and for him to say now specifically who it was, they were listening.

It says, **Joshua – after John had first preached, before his coming...** So, the knowledge of John the Baptist and what he was doing spread throughout the Jewish world, and many people had come down to Jordan to be baptized by him, large, large numbers. So, they were familiar with this. **After John had first preached, before his coming,** before Joshua's coming, **the baptism of repentance.** So again, things that they were somewhat familiar with. Perhaps some of them had even been there, don't know, it doesn't bring that out. But certainly, some of them in different areas came down obviously at the time of Pentecost, a few years later than when Christ was there, after he had died.

So, again, **the baptism of repentance to all people of Israel.** So, it doesn't mean that all people had been addressed in this. It just means that this was what was offered to all Israel at that time, a baptism unto repentance. It wasn't for the forgiveness of sins. That couldn't be offered through that. But it was a matter of their repentance and acknowledging of their sins, and a desire they had to be right with God and to look ahead to a time they could be forgiven. All this was a part of what John preached, but again, strictly a baptism of going under the water, coming back up, of repentance.

Then, as John was finishing his course, he said, Who do you think that I am? I am not "him." So, the word "him" isn't there, but that's the context, and making it clear he's saying that John asked the question. And again, they know what he's saying. Is he the Christ? Is he the Messiah? And that, basically, that's what he's asking and answering here, so that it can be put out there.

He said, **I am not. But behold, there comes one after me, the sandals of whose shoes I am not worthy to loosen.** So again then, this is John, though he was well known and many people came out to him to be baptized, he was letting them know, and make no confusion about it, he was not the Christ. This was not the time for the fulfillment of various things written in scripture (Old Testament).

Verse 26—Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. Pretty bold. Pretty strong. But he had that confidence. He knew exactly what God had given him to do, to go out into the gentile world, starting first in synagogues to the Jewish people.

For those who dwell in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not know him, nor even the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath... So, he's letting them know, things of the prophets are read every Sabbath in services when they gather together on the Sabbath day, and he said, in essence, they didn't know these things. They didn't understand them. They didn't believe, in essence, a lot of the things that they heard, because they were things about or that were said about (given from the prophets I should say), as they were going through scripture, that pertain to the Messiah.

But it shows here, their minds weren't open to those things. They couldn't see it, and they didn't believe it in the first place, and so he's telling them this is what's taking place.

...the prophets which were read. So, he says, **They did not know him, nor even the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning him.** So, he's saying the leaders right there in Jerusalem, the people of Jerusalem who went every Sabbath to the synagogues and have heard the prophets, didn't know him even though they spoke about him, is what he's saying. Going on here and saying, "They have fulfilled what has been written." Basically, that they killed him. Because that's recorded, of what would take place, that he would die.

And though they found no cause for death in him, they asked Pilate that he should be put to death. Now, when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. So even that was prophesied. The different things, the beating he was going to receive, that his appearance was going to be so marred that it couldn't be seen, as recorded in Isaiah, wouldn't be recognized for who he was, the kind of beating that he would take, and then being put on a tree, being put on a pole, all those things that are recorded. So, he's saying this is what happened to him, to this Joshua.

But God raised him from the dead. Those things don't happen, you know, so again, what they were hearing, what was going through their mind, had to be quite a mixed crowd there, and what was taking place. So, quite an eventful moment. **But God raised him from the dead. He was seen for many days by those who came with him from Galilee to Jerusalem.** So, he's saying the disciples, others who were with him in his travels, that they saw him after he had been put to death and had been resurrected. **...who are his witnesses to the people.** He's saying there are plenty of people who witnessed this event, and they are out there.

And we declare to you good news, that promise which was made to the fathers, God has fulfilled this for us, their children. So, things about the Messiah, things that they've heard from the prophets, saying, basically, "This is what he came to fulfill, and this is what you're able to hear and receive."

...in that He has raised up Joshua, as it is also written in the second Psalm, You are My Son. This is something that really stirred up the Jews at different times in Jerusalem, and they hated that he claimed to be the Son of God. And so, that was part of the reason they attacked him in the manner that they did.

He's saying this of him, that this is what God said to him, this is about this Joshua. **You are My son. Today, I have begotten you.**

Again, this word here "begotten" sometimes is by context, but it can even have dual meaning at times, that literally it's the same Greek word whether it's "begotten" or "born." It just depends on some of the context. But it's saying here, "I have begotten you."

This scripture in **verse 34** here, it's really saying "**because of that.**" So, it's saying here that something was done **because of** because it says, **He raised Him from the dead. No more to return to corruption.** He's showing here that things were fulfilled in Christ, and things that God did. God raised him up after he had died, had been dead. And again, "No more to return to corruption."

So, all this is being brought out of what's written in the Old Testament, that he never saw corruption. In other words, his body didn't decay; he was only in the tomb for three days and three nights. And showing again here that he fulfilled this about his body not seeing corruption.

He has spoken in this way; I will give you the sure mercies of David. So again, all these things about Christ, about Joshua, and all the things promised through David, this is what the "sure mercies of David" are about, that he would be that Messiah. **Therefore, He** (speaking of God), **also says in another Psalm, You will not allow your Holy One to see corruption.** So, driving that point home, that his body won't see decay.

For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption. So, there was this part of what was being said that the Jews never really grasped a lot of, because they felt a lot of this was about David. Whether they thought he would be resurrected at another time, or whatever, that they had this confusion in their minds. Even within the Church, we've had some of that in times past, of not understanding some of those scriptures.

But a point is being made here in that respect, about Joshua. Again, saying that David is different because he was put in the grave, in the tomb. He's still in the tomb. His body saw corruption; it's still in there. So, it says, **buried with his fathers and saw corruption.**

But he (speaking of Christ), **whom God raised up, saw no corruption. Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins.** So finally, not just a baptism unto repentance, but what they had always desired, the ability to be forgiven of sin. You think of all the sacrifices they did year by year, and it could never take away sin. They understood that portion, that it wasn't about taking away sin, it was about coming before God, obeying God, going through ritual. It was about a desire for a relationship with God, and all that that was a part of it. But now, he's saying this is good news, because now, because of Joshua, you can be forgiven of sin. Now, that's quite strong what he was telling them.

...the forgiveness of sin, and by him everyone who believes, meaning not just it's easy to say you believe something, but living what is taught, that's what believing is, because that's what faith is about, is justified from all things from which you could not be justified in the law of Moses. So, he's driving that point home – sacrifices didn't do it.

Beware, therefore, lest what has been spoken to the prophets come upon you. So, pretty stern warning. A lot said here in this respect about this process of what Joshua went through.

I mentioned in times past how that he went through a process of being born, obviously in a unique way, from the Word. Because this is something I believe is really a little hard for us to understand because this has only happened to Joshua. But as he was first born, in the sense of being in the womb of Mary, it was the mind of God that was worked with inside, and Christ grew into “the Word that was made flesh.”

So, this is about the very mind of God, if you will, and what Christ was being given so that even as a young person, there were things he understood, he knew just by knowing in a very unique way. But he was not yet begotten. He had to go through the same process everyone else did. He reflected that in his life by the fact that he went to John to be baptized. John didn't want to do it. Christ told him that he had, in essence, had to do it because it had to be fulfilled, had to be accomplished. That's when the begetting of the holy spirit was given in his spirit, which, had a mind, again, that we can't comprehend, from God. I don't fully comprehend that, and I've known this for a long, long time. But the knowledge of it, the reality of it, how it really works, we really don't understand yet fully.

So again, begotten and “This day have I begotten you,” of the dove that came down upon him, and what happened, all symbolic of him receiving then the impregnation now of God's holy spirit. Because everybody has to receive that. And so, he set the pace or the way, if you will – the example may be a better word – for this process, that everyone has to be begotten of God, of God's spirit in their mind. And so, he fulfilled that as well. Incredible.

And then, our hope and desire is for all who live this way of life, once begotten, is to be born spirit. He is the first that was born spirit. So, he set that example and the pattern that everyone must follow, will follow in order to be in God's Kingdom.

So, let's turn over to Mark 1.

So, everything begins with Joshua. Everything begins with Passover. Everything begins with that entire process that then we have to follow in the same manner in our lives. As it says, "Let this mind be in you, which was in Joshua, the Christ." Awesome, that we can receive of that after begotten of God's spirit.

Mark 1:1—The beginning of the gospel (good news) of Joshua, the Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets. So, over and over again, so much written in the prophets. That's why you read little bits here and there as different ones are talking about Christ and the things that are quoted that were fulfilled in Christ, that candidly, until God revealed those things, you wouldn't, you couldn't know it.

Just like the ones that Paul talked to there that we just read about in Acts 13. They couldn't see. They couldn't grasp what was recorded by Isaiah because it's a spiritual matter. And so, some of the things they have to be told, "This is what this is about." To me, this is an amazing process too, that you can go through and read various things in the Psalm, and all of a sudden, you might have a verse or two verses that are strictly about Joshua. But if you were reading that, you wouldn't know that unless God told you, "This is about Joshua." So, to me, that's an amazing process that God inspired various things to be said. On and on the story goes.

That's why I think of something going through it the other day as well, the king of Tyrus. There are a lot of people who think that when they start going through that in Ezekiel, that it's talking about a literal king of Tyrus, a physical king. And the reality is, it starts talking then says, "From on the day you were created," speaking of Lucifer, and people can't, can't see those things. Incredible. Things that God has revealed to us that we can see and understand.

So again, **The beginning of the gospel of Joshua, the Christ, the Son of God, as it is written in the prophets. Behold, I send My messenger before your face.** So, this is a fulfillment of this part. **...who will prepare your way before you. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight. John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.** So again, here, it was a part of the process, but couldn't be forgiven. But their desire was that they would be able to. But it was about the Messiah, because he said, "There's one coming after me." So, he talked to them about one who was coming. That's why he let it be known for certain, so they didn't say things that were wrong or some story go out, that's why he answered, "I am not him."

So again here, it was all about in the context here of one who was coming, and the ability that would be given as time goes on here, the forgiveness of sin. But forgiveness wasn't given just in this baptism. They had to start a process of desiring it, wanting it, and wanting and acknowledging, admitting their sins. So, this is a part of that story.

Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. So, that's all it was. It was a matter of confessing sin, being baptized, all with the desire of having and being able to enter into a better relationship, a right relationship with God, a desire to get rid of sin, but even a desire beyond that, to be able to, whenever that time would come, to be forgiven of sin.

So, again here, it says, "All the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem." So, again here, this "all" doesn't mean the entire population went out. It's an expression that's being used that "of all the land of Judea," that's where they came from in essence, "and from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins."

Now, John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist. Very meager in that respect of how he was dressed, how he was clothed. He had a job to do, and he was deeply focused upon that. **He ate locusts and wild honey.** So, we don't have a whole lot to complain about any time in our lives as a whole. But you think, "What a diet."

I couldn't help but think of my peanut butter and honey. But anyway, that was for a short time, and it wasn't that bad. They had other things. We had other things too. But you think, "Locusts? I'm not as keen on that one." But anyway. Maybe the honey, that helped him. But sometimes it's good to think about some things that people did in times past and what they went through in serving God and did so with all their being and all their might, and it's quite a story.

And so, it goes on to say, **And he preached, saying, There is one coming after me...** So, again, this is what we saw before there reading before. He's making this very clear here, **There's one coming after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loosen.** So, quite a statement here in that regard, written over and over again here.

Verse 8—I indeed baptized you in water. What an amazing thing that we even understand what the word means. There's one church that names themselves after this because they understand a simple little doctrine, that baptize means to immerse under water. Incredible. **I indeed baptized you in water,** which means to immerse in water, **but he will baptize you in the holy spirit.** So, again, it's about being immersed into God's spirit, and so he's talking about this process.

It came to pass in those days that Joshua came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Then immediately, coming up from the water, he saw the heavens parting and the spirit descending upon him like a dove. So, I just talked about that. Incredible. Impregnation: receiving the impregnation of God's spirit.

Then a voice came from heaven, You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Awesome. There are going to be some interesting things about part of this that we're going to read, be able to read in the book that we haven't fully known in times past. Little tidbits here and there that sometimes God shows at times like this, that kind of go along with these verses right here.

So, again here, this, again, being the first stage of being begotten or born of the spirit. It's a process whereby we have God's spirit essence that comes into our mind, and that's why I love what was given to Herbert Armstrong, the analogy, being an embryo. The Church of God is the Kingdom of God in embryo until it's born spirit. And so, the second stage is actual birth. But they always use the same word that's in the Greek here.

Let's go to 1 John.

But sometimes some translations and all the things that are sometimes put into the mind, it's easy to get tripped up in some of these when you get into specifics and what the world believes and what

traditional Christianity believes. But let's turn over to 1 John 4:6 and see how some of this is addressed by John.

1 John 4:6—We are of God. I love John's writing. First, the book of John, because it starts out talking about the Word, which is God – the mind of God, the being of God. Then it goes on into as it continues to go into some of the verses, you go into it a little bit farther, and before it starts talking about the Word of God was made flesh, it's still talking about God. And sometimes some of those verses have been confusing to people. But it's still talking about the light, what comes out of God, what comes from God. It's talking about God. Then it finally gets down to the point where it mentions specific things about God and Christ and the Word being made flesh.

We understand who that's about in verse 14, and from verse 14 on and some of the things covered there. Then you get up to chapter 14, and it talks about this unique relationship. And he tells them, you know, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." Again, these things that we grasp, we comprehend.

Just like in the very beginning of the book, John 14, when it says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." We believed for a long, long time that it's about our reward and how much we're going to get. And too much on the get side, and this lavish life that people are going to be able to live. That's not what it was about at all.

It's about God. It's about the house. It's about the structure. It's about the Temple that He's building and the fact that we can become a part of it. That's an awesome thing to understand, what God has given us in the period of PKG. To understand that when he's coming and that when it says he's going to be coming in the flesh, what that means. Not a future tense of his coming back, or that he even came the first time. It's talking about him coming into our lives through the power of God's spirit. Again, these are awesome things that God has given to us to understand.

And so, when it says we are of God, it's something we can understand. **We are of God.** Because we receive the impregnation of God's spirit in our minds. We know who we are. We know what God has given to us.

Whoever knows God hears us. That's an awesome comfort, especially to the ministry. Because if people don't receive the truth, you automatically know they're not being called, they're not of us. The ability to judge such matters has been, in times past, very needful: "Is God working with and drawing someone?" Because the reality is, if it gets to a point where they're not moving past it, they're holding onto something, it becomes quite obvious they are not of us. They're not being called.

So, what an incredible thing to understand things about a calling and how that works. So, whoever knows God hears us. It's quite simple. In John here, he went through a lot, he experienced a lot. And there are things of this nature that they didn't fully grasp in the beginning. They had to experience it. They had to experience, like Paul did, "People are leaving the Church. What's going on?" and on and on

it goes. And people who wouldn't come on along, who understood certain things. Choices, choices. So again, it helps a lot when you understand "Whoever knows God will hear us," in essence.

Whoever is not of God does not hear us. It's quite simple. That same thing happens in the Church when people quit listening to God, when people quit hearing God. They've done something. They've removed themselves from the Body themselves and they can no longer hear us.

So, when you can't talk to someone or a minister can't talk to someone about what they're doing and address various things of that nature, what they're doing to themselves, if they won't listen anymore, it's because they're not of us any longer. So, it works in other ways as well.

By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Because God's people are at one. God works to bring people together in unity and oneness. We're experiencing that in a plane and in a way that we have never experienced it.

Beloved, let us love one another. That's why I love, again, things that John writes because he started writing about them before in the book of John, but you see an incredible step forward, thrust forward, and things that God was revealing to him later in his life when he wrote 1st John, 2nd John, and 3rd John. There is a maturity spiritually that God had given to him. Because he gets down to the nitty-gritty of what this is all about, the life we live, how we live it, things about the Church that we should grasp and understand.

...let us love one another, for love is of God. So, he hits on the things that are the basis, the foundation of everything that we are to be. It's about this relationship with others, with God, and so forth, and it's about love.

...and everyone who loves is born... It's the beginning of God. So, in other words, you can't have this kind of thinking, this kind of a mind until you're begotten of God's spirit. And so, if we're doing those things and thinking that way toward one another in the Body, and there's that kind of unity and that kind of care and concern toward one another, it's something that God gives. It comes from God's spirit. And so, this is what he's saying; this is evidence.

...everyone who loves is born, in essence, the beginning stage, which is begettal, **of God, and knows God.** So again, evidence of things that we can be comfortable with, know, and understand. The only way we see what we see, the only way we're able to love other of God's people, is because of God's help and God's favor. So, that should reassure us we are, what we are. An encouraging thing, in other words.

Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. So, he's getting down to the most basic elements of who we are, of what we are once we're begotten, if we continue to be of that state, of that mind being fed through God's spirit. Because just being begotten of God's spirit is not enough. There has to be a continual flow for that to stay alive, for that to work, for that to be active, for that to produce fruit, of God's spirit coming into the mind.

Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this, the love of God was manifest toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. So, what does that mean? Well, he's saying here, look at the kind of love that's there. A willingness to sacrifice your life for the sake of others, a willingness to give of your life. Now, that's why God talks about a willing sacrifice for us, that this is the way our life is to be, because it's about saying no to self in order to be able to, in essence, to love others. That's a process we go through as well.

Then the second stage is actual birth, a change to spirit, born of spirit into God's Family that was spoken of in Acts 13. But I'll read it here. "And we declare to you that good news, that promise which was made to the fathers, God has fulfilled for us, their children, and that He has raised up Joshua. And it is also written in the second Psalm, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten you.'" So again, a begetting, which is the same word in the Greek, and then a birth. Because for him, twice. He was begotten and he was born, resurrected.

1 John 5:1 it says, **Whoever believes that Joshua is the Christ is born of God.** So, it's about God's spirit again, the ability to believe. It's only to God's Church, the ability to understand, the ability to believe things about the Passover, what he fulfilled, and so forth. And to make that contrast with what the world believes (traditional Christianity), it's so night and day it's not even funny. It's good for us to understand those things sometimes and to be reminded or to think upon them because we are exceedingly blessed.

Whoever believes that Joshua is the Christ is born of God. Begotten of God's spirit. **...and everyone who loves Him, who beget, or who begot, in essence here, gave to be born unto Him, in other words.** "Everyone who loves Him, who begot." So, if we, if anyone loves God, who did the begetting, in essence, is what it's saying, also loves whoever is begotten of Him. Well, that, that's pretty powerful, and something that I tried to strive to do at different times in telling the Church that that's why we have to be ever so careful in how we judge one another, how we think about one another. Because it boils down to this matter of belonging to God.

Who are we that we would judge God's own children, God's own servants? Because that's what it's akin to or spoken of in times past, those who serve God, those who are called of God, and those who are forgiven of their sins through Christ toward God. All these things that add together.

So, again, it's about loving others. It's something that should be automatic within us. We may have to work at it, we may have to pray about it to have the strength to properly think about others and work right toward others, but indeed we should. Even to be a peacemaker requires God's spirit and help, and that's in here as well.

By this, we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. So, it's all a part of obeying God. All this that we just read is a part of obeying God. **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome.** They're not

heavy. The world thinks they are. Traditional Christianity thinks they are. They're too hard, they're too much to bear.

For whoever is born... Again, that first stage, begettal, the impregnation of God's spirit, **of God overcomes the world**. This is when we do work to overcome the world. God gives the help to accomplish that. So, as far as God's concerned, it's a done deal. He gives us the begettal of His holy spirit, and if we are praying and seeking God and desirous of God the Father and Christ dwelling in us so that we can dwell in them, then this is what happens. We conquer, we're blessed to overcome, as it says here, the world; we conquer sin. That's an ongoing process throughout our life, fighting against it. And so, it's showing here the only way that's accomplished is by this relationship.

Now, this is the victory that has overcome the world, or conquered, if you will, because those are the words that are used here, **our faith**. So, we're always being reminded it's because of what God has given us the ability to believe, all that is true, and then this matter of faith is our choice. And so, if our choice is to live that, to hold onto that, to guard that, to protect that, to be watchful of that, to strive to live it, asking God for the help to do it, well, that's the victory. That's where it comes from. Well said.

Who is it who overcomes or conquers the world? In essence, it's talking about this battle with sin, the way of the world. The word "but" isn't there. It's just, **if not, whoever it is**, in essence, **that believes that Joshua is the Son of God**. So, everything built upon Joshua, everything. Everything that happens, if you will, built upon the Son of God.

Let's go back a few chapters here now to 1 John 2:18. Incredible things that were written. Because you think about what Paul wrote, what John wrote, and experiences they were having very early on in the sense of just beginning stages of the Church in the first 30, 40 years there.

1 John 2:18—Little children, speaking to the Church, **it is the last time**. That word can be end-time. It's the same word. And basically, this is where they thought they were. From the very beginning, they were waiting for Christ's coming. And I fully believe that every generation, every era of God's Church, that this is what was the primary thing that they looked to – a desire to see Joshua return, to come back a second time. It's just that God didn't let people know for a long, long time when that period would be. That began to be given through Herbert Armstrong that we are in the end times. That's when God began to reveal it.

Philadelphia and Laodicea, if you look at 6,000 years, definitely at the end-time. And even sometimes that was referred to at the time of Christ, because you already passed the halfway mark of 3,000 years, talking about getting up to the end of 6,000 years. Because this is what we're talking about, the end of man's age, the end of 6,000 years. We're on top of it now. It's like we're there. It's amazing. Sometimes you read some of the things being said and Paul, he wrote in the context that this is what they're looking to, this is what he's looking to. Anyway, it was a focus.

It was a focus that the Church had to have. You have to have that focus of Christ coming, of the battle you're fighting, of what it's all about, to fight against this until you can be born into His Family. When you're born isn't as important. The fact that you achieved it, the fact that you died in the faith, that's what's important, so that you can be resurrected. So, all those people through that period of time of the past 2,000 years that lived and died in the Church, they're going to be there at his coming.

That's why I love the way it's talked about in certain places. It's in the context that yes, he is coming, and we better be ready because you don't know the day or the hour. So, it doesn't matter whether you're in the era of Ephesus or every era after that, as far as your life is concerned, when it comes to an end, you'd better be ready. Because your next waking moment is going to reveal whether you were or not.

So again here, John is writing. He says, **Little children, it is the last time, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now, many antichrists have come.** So, this is in reference to things that Paul wrote, references that they had back and forth in some of this about what this meant. The man of sin, the son of perdition, this is something that was given fairly early on in that regard, of something that they knew had to take place.

Because the context of what Paul was given by God to talk about there in 2nd Thessalonians 2, three times it mentions before he goes into talking about the man of sin and the son of perdition, is the context of Christ coming and saying it's not going to happen until this happens first – an apostasy and a great falling away from God, from the truth.

And so again here, recognized as the antichrist, the son of perdition, the man of sin. But John adds to that, and he says, "Look what's happened within the Church. Already, there have been many antichrists." Not the one specifically spoken of that's going to be a part of determining Christ's coming, the timing and so forth that has to happen in the Church, but there are many. So, they went through a lot when they saw so many people, as we've gone through the story about Paul, so many who had left the Church.

That's no longer a mystery, obviously, because we look at the period of Laodicea and all the people who left. We think of, we look at the period of the time of the Apostasy and the masses then who left in extremely large numbers. It actually started with Herbert Armstrong and some of the people who revolted, his son, namely, one of them, and people before that in the early '70s, of different ministers in different areas, and finally superintendents of certain areas. They were ministers, and they had several ministers of them.

I always think of the Washington region, that this one man was a superintendent of. And it wasn't just the Washington, DC Church, which was big, it was many other churches, that region as a whole, went with him. All of them, antichrist.

And so, this is what Paul, John, all the apostles were experiencing, that people, even though they were called and began a journey in the Church, the majority left. I'm still baffled by such things, but the evidence of that happening is our history.

Anyway, **As you have heard that antichrist**, in essence "the," **is coming, even now many have already come**, in essence, **by which we know that it's the last time**. So, it wasn't the last time you thought it was, but God allows us to think those things sometimes, to be of that mindset, to see what we see as a present truth, that we don't know any better. And so, He lets us hold on to certain things to indeed be able to hold on, to grab hold of, and so forth.

Then **verse 19—They went out from us, but they were not of us**. Well, they became that, and some may never have been in some cases. But some were. **For if they had been with us**, in essence to remain, to be a part, they would've stayed with it. **...they would've continued with us**. So, that's the context.

This word "continue" is some of the same words "to dwell," "to abide," and so forth. They had that opportunity. They were able to abide in the Body, in the Church. They were able to continue in, to remain in, to dwell in. All those words mean the same thing basically, and they're used interchangeably throughout the New Testament, meaning the same thing. Our ability to dwell in God, because God's dwelling in us, and Christ as well.

But showing here that this is when someone becomes antichrist, when they go out from being a part with us and no longer part of us. So, it's a large part of our history. It's a horrible part, but it's a large part of it.

That's why I think of the Great White Throne because God has used that as an instrument to help us to learn more that there are going to be masses and masses, billions of people who do not want God. After everything they see that has been accomplished in a thousand years by one government in the world, one Church in the world.

We can't even begin to comprehend the things of technology and the things that God is going to allow us to do, the things that are going to be built, the kind of science that's going to be there, where you don't have to dig for oil anymore in the ground and run your cars by that or vehicles by that. The things that are going to come are going to boggle our minds. Things of health and so forth, the age of people, and the like that is going to be extended just because of what God's going to give to us. That's going to happen throughout the Millennium. Incredible!

They're going to be able to see those things and still say, no, they don't want to be a part of it. It's astounding! But we have to know and understand they're going to be resurrected with the mind they had before, what they lived before, and some people aren't going to be able to separate themselves from what they really want that isn't from God. Because to them, to a lot of minds, this is an insane thing. But that's what happened to Lucifer. The mind can go so far that it enjoys evil, it enjoys taking

drugs, it enjoys unfaithful sex, it enjoys all the carnality of the human mind. That's what it enjoys. And that kind of a mind, if that's what it wants and chooses, you can't help it.

God's not going to force His way on them, and so, if they don't want it, so be it. "That's your choice." What is the choice? Well, they're going to be told loud and clear over and over again, "It's a second death." Incredible! Mind-boggling! That is a mind; people would rather die, do their own thing while they can, than to live by that—that's how they're going to view it—than to live by those laws. Astounding!

So again, **That they might be made manifest that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.** Well, we know, in the context, all things that have been given to us, all things that God has given to us of the present truth at any particular time. Knowing all things in the time of Paul was a little bit different than what it was in the days of Herbert Armstrong. God gave a lot more, so judged accordingly.

But it's an anointing, it's the power of the holy spirit that's been given to us. It's in our minds, in our being, and that spirit that then comes into us, into the spirit essence that God gave to us when we were begotten.

"And you know all things." We know all things that have been given to us because of God, because of that spirit that works in us. That's how we see things. We don't figure it out on our own. I'm amazed that we had to learn that within the Church, that we couldn't all grasp that in the beginning, and during Philadelphia, even, that everything we have in our minds, we have it because God gave it to us. Incredible.

Verse 21—I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Awesome.

Verse 27—But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you. So again, it's a matter of God's spirit with which we're begotten (that's the anointing), for God's spirit to dwell in us.

And you do not need that anyone teach you. I think back about different people who used this, used that quote, that scripture, and say, "We don't need to have ministers. We don't need to have someone else teaching us what, you know, we already know, because God says we already know. We know all things. We know what's been given to us, and so we don't need someone to teach us." But the reality is, yeah, we do.

"And you do not need that anyone teach you," something different. That's the context, that's the conversation taking place here. If it's different, if you know the truth and you've been given the truth and you don't forget where you learned it and how you learned it, and you are able to see it and grasp it and comprehend it, then it's in the context here you don't need something else to be taught to you, you already are able to believe the things that are true.

But as the same anointing teaches or has taught you, in essence, in other words, that's how we learn because of God's spirit. **...but as the same anointing teaches you of all things and is true**. So, that's how we were taught, that's how we continue to be taught. **...and is not a lie, and just as it is taught you**. In other words, not someone else to come along and teach something different. **...you will abide in Him**. You will abide in God. I think of the thousands who've lost that during Philadelphia and especially Laodicea.

Acts 10. We'll stop here today after we get through these verses.

About this word, "anointing," it comes from the Greek word that's used here in Acts. **Acts 10:34—Then Peter opened his mouth and said, In truth, I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation, whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him**. So again here, hitting some of the basics to those who are listening. Whether they be Jew or gentile is not the issue, the issue is this – those who fear God, who honor, who desire to have a relationship with God, who fear to sin because of the penalty for sin, and work righteousness, strive to live what is right, it says, "is accepted by Him," especially because of a calling and who they were talking to.

The word that was sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Joshua the Christ—He is Lord of all—that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached, how God anointed Joshua of Nazareth with the holy spirit. It's about being born, it's about a matter of being begotten of God's spirit.

...and with power, and went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. So again, Christ always the example there of that which he set, and that which we follow in the steps of in that respect.

We'll continue in this in *Part 2* next Sabbath.