

## Born As Children of God

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I decided to finish that series last week that we were on, end it there where it was. There's not enough to really continue with that particular series, but this ties in with it as well. Today this sermon is entitled *Born As Children of God*.

So again, we've been covering scriptures having to do with what it means to be born or begotten, and so forth, and understanding how that word is used in the Greek. And only by context can you know whether it's talking about a begettal stage or actual birth stage. The world has totally messed that one up, especially when it uses the term "born again," because it's not even the word "again," it's a word that means "from above," so meaning it's from God.

But anyway, the world has really, traditional Christianity, has really messed up that expression, what it means, to what they say, "be born again," and all the ways that they apply that and what it means to them. But so many things have been so messed up.

Anyway, obviously, this talks about the whole process. We've been going through that about our calling, the need to repent, and so forth. The reason for going through a lot of this is because some of it is contained in the book, things to explain, and what scriptures perhaps to use. So, I thought it'd be good for us to review that as well at this time. That's why we've been going through a part of it. And today we'll be touching on something just a little bit different in that respect.

So, this is a follow-up to something quite extraordinary in many ways—it's been brought to light—and that has to do with the term "sons of God" or "children of God." And of course, explaining some of this in the book, explaining that it's not a matter of the sex of a child, it's not a matter of sons or daughters, it's a matter of an expression that's just used and can refer to children of God or sons of God. Some of it is strictly sons of God. But anyway, we understand those things.

So again, this sermon today, *Born As Children of God*.

Let's start over in Genesis first, Genesis 50. We're going to be looking at some of these, how things are used in scripture, and come to grasp a little bit more deeply this phase of our just being human, in that respect, without God's spirit, and then one day being able to be begotten of God's holy spirit and that process that takes place – and then, of course, to be born later on.

But here in **Genesis 50:22**, we'll just cut into the verse here, or the chapter. **So, Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. Now, Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation**, speaking of. So again here, incredible, the age, the length of time, and what he was able to see and experience himself.

**The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees. Now, Joseph said to his brethren, I am dying; but God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land to the land of which He gave oath to Abraham.** Now, incredible what God communicated to him, gave him the ability to know this, and certainly something that had been passed down to him. He believed what had been said before, what had been passed down to him from the time of Abraham, obviously, Isaac, and Jacob. And so, he's speaking of those things and talking about a time when they're going to be leaving Egypt, that God would not leave them there, and that they would be given land.

So, this is what he's relying upon and relaying to them. He knows he's getting close to the end of his life, so he says, **Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.** He didn't want to be left there, his bones.

It's funny how we go through different times of life or experiences as far as humanity is concerned, mankind, and even within the Church, different ideas happened as far as death and feelings we have. But the more we know truth, the more we grasp and comprehend things about a resurrection, the first resurrection, or even the resurrection in the Hundred Years. We don't have the same kinds of emotions and feelings about whether someone went to heaven or not, and the things involved in that. We don't even know what that's all about.

Kind of interesting. I just finished writing about that, I think, this past week, part of it, going over it again. And you think about what the world sees. They really don't have anything, and people aren't excited about when someone, if they really believe that it's a great and a wonderful place, people aren't rejoicing that someone that they know is going to be able to be taken care of and live in an environment of peace or whatever it is that comes into minds. But they really don't have much there. If you think about what you've ever heard people say, there's not much to hold on to at all. So, they have no concept of what God really has planned for mankind. Incredible!

So, here even a feeling of what happens at death. We've had people ask about cremation: "Is cremation okay?" That's a very common method nowadays. It's nothing that's prohibited in scripture anyway. But sometimes people feel like, well, is it really right, is it okay to cremate a body? God says we're dust, and that's what we're going back to. We're made of the earth. And whether you speed up the process or not is irrelevant. It's far less expensive, and so, anyway, that's what I prefer to have done. But really, after you're dead, you don't know anything, so what does it matter?

And yet here, he wanted to make sure his bones weren't left in Egypt. I get a little bit of a charge out of that because there is more of an affinity towards, and a lack of understanding, or God just hadn't revealed it yet, about what happens. They believe in a resurrection, people did of old, it's very evident, but to still have this thinking here about the body and the tombs that they had. Sometimes, some incredible lavish tombs in that respect because of the respect and so forth toward the one who has died, which is all fine and good, I guess.

But I think of my wife's dad and some of the feelings he had about what was going to happen, and he went up and he looked at different caskets before his death. He knew he was dying. He had a certain amount of time they had given him because of the kind of cancer he had. And in one instance, there, he was going through, and of course, sometimes cancer affects your thinking, and it was affecting his to a certain degree. But it still kind of shows sometimes how people can think about such things when they happen. But he was going through and we were making arrangements and the like, and he came up to one that was made out of metal and he kind of tapped on it and said basically he didn't want that because, you know, when they throw the things in it's going to make a loud noise. You know, it's like, what does it matter? But anyway, just things like that. But those are kind of common things that people think about, and in the world, what they're buried in or what kind of a place it's going to be. Anyway.

So, here it is, he said he didn't want to be there, so much so he wanted them to give him oath. That's what this is about. To declare the fact that they will indeed take him out of Egypt when the time comes, his bones. He didn't want to be left there. That's why it says here, **He took an oath from the children of Israel saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here. So, Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.**

So again, in these verses here, we see a similar expression that's used in that respect here, talking about the "children of Israel." God chose Israel; they, in that respect, had a relationship with God, but they're not referred to as the "children of God" except in that kind of context because of Israel. So, most of the time you see the expression "the children of Israel" because it makes it clear who they descended from; this is what they're known as through time until they became scattered, and the twelve tribes lost their identity, and Judah was the one that continued on.

Let's go on then to **Exodus 3:7**. It says, **Now, the Eternal said, I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know of their sorrows. So, I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from the land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey.** So again here, this is the beginning of the fulfillment of this, of what he believed and why he told them he wanted his bones, in essence, his body to be taken out when they left, when God would deliver them out of Egypt.

**...to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me.** So again here, they're not referred to as the "children of God"; they're referred to as the "children of Israel" because of the lineage. This is going to become more important as to what we're building upon today that we haven't really seen in the same light.

So, referring to the "children of Israel," **has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people...** So, in the context here, "My people" because He chose Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel here,

and the nation to work with, but still not referring to them as His children. To me, this is important because of what we're going to continue to look at as we go along here. They're referred to, again, as the "children of Israel." They have a lineage, and God was working with Israel for a purpose. He says, **and out of the land of Egypt.**

Another one here, Psalm 107, again, just picking up a few verses here in these expressions and how they are in scripture. **Psalm 107:8** it says, **Oh, that men would give thanks to the Eternal for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of mankind!** So again here, "children of mankind." The process here of when it's talking about Israel, there is a lineage specifically here, but it's just referring to generation after generation after generation. That's what it's talking about.

Another one here, Psalm 14. You don't need to turn there if you don't want to, because they say the same thing, just a little bit differently. **Psalm 14:2—The Eternal looks down from heaven upon the children of mankind.** So, it's a matter of God observing His creation, observing mankind and what they do, and this is what it's referring to; it's part of the context here of the Psalm.

**...to see if there is any who understand, any who seek after God.** So again here, this repetitious thing, because as a whole, the story is, people weren't, mankind hasn't. Only if God begins to work with someone, begins to draw someone through the power of His holy spirit, do people take attention or pay attention. Even then we found in the Church that doesn't happen all that often because there are a lot of people who get that process started within them, but they can't make the choice that they're ready to do what is required of them to go ahead and get baptized and be a part of God's Church.

Might as well say it today, still amazed, even more amazed now looking at news and seeing what's happening in the world and realizing we are edging closer and closer and closer. And I think about what God gave some time back, and the comment was made that all the way up to the timing and the time, if you will, of Christ's coming, there are going to be people who leave God's Church. Now, in some ways, that's quite mind-boggling, astounding, and maybe a little bit difficult for the mind to conceive that that's going to happen that way, but it's still going on.

I've been amazed here in the last few weeks. Usually, these things happen more at a time before spring Holy Days or just before we get a little bit closer to the fall Holy Days, but now people choosing to leave the Church. Another individual just left here a few days ago, and before that, an individual with two children. And you think, "What have you done to your children? Do you grasp the opportunity that has been taken away from them?" Because there is a lot to do with individuals being called, and if you remember past posts, especially when I was in camp (prison) over in Indiana, to realize what that means in a family and the opportunity of someone being reared in this way of life to make choices as they go along. That's available to them, to be able to have that opportunity to learn, and then to make their own choice as time goes on.

So, to understand the world, where it is today, to understand how close we can be, I'll tell you, there are some scary things. And they're going to come to pass anyway. But you think about where is it going to start? Where does it begin? Well, we know where it begins because of what happens in this country on a small scale, but a horrific scale. It'll make 9/11 look like nothing compared to what's getting ready to happen. But you think, it only takes one or two devices to go off, to create a state, especially in the atmosphere, that would cripple this nation. An EMP. Powerful devices in what they can do to a normal way of life. People no longer having electricity, no longer having vehicles that operate in the same way because of what they can do. So, we really don't know, or science doesn't fully know, all that can happen, how extensive it can be, communications. You don't have electricity for anything, as far as across the country, because it wipes out grids.

So, how bad that will be, we don't fully know because it hasn't happened anywhere. You can't look at anything and say, "This is what has taken place." But again, with the understanding that is there, they feel it will be incredibly destructive.

But to see those things, and you think of what happened here just recently, all these pictures of all these trucks that were lined up. They still don't know what, if anything, happened. Did they take that, whatever degree it was at at that moment in time? Was it 60%? There are different percentages they keep talking about. 90%?

Whatever happens in this country is going to catch people off guard, and it's going to take time for them to find out where it came from because it isn't all that easy. Unless you see something leave a particular country, in the atmosphere there are things you don't necessarily know if it comes up out of a submarine or whatever. There are different countries that have that ability now. And just speaking along these lines to show how things can happen in a way that are very difficult to track and trace. If that was taken someplace else, which there are rumors out there that China helped in doing some things, what if some nation received that from that particular region? If they continue to work with what is already there and make it weapons grade, it has a signature, and the signature is Iran.

So, that's just how crazy things are in the world, to be able to pinpoint something before you retaliate, but you've got to be quite certain who's responsible. And you think it's not that easy, and that could take some time. I hope you understand what I'm saying.

So, wherever it comes from, whether it be Korea, some rogue nation, but it's going to be someone. Whether it be something that is used to make it look like it came from another country, time will tell. But we are in a state in this world that we have never been in before, and you can kind of watch things and be alert to them and be on guard, just being aware of the state of things.

That's why when I say things like this, I think, "How could anyone...?" Where is the human mind with the impregnation of God's spirit, to make choices that you don't want this way of life anymore? What kind of life do you want? What do you believe? Do you have beliefs that are strong?

You know, our beliefs should be very strong in God's Church, and it's up to us as to whether or not we nurture that, whether or not we want to keep and protect and guard what God has given to us. That's something you can't do by your own ability. It requires the power of God's spirit. That's why we should be even more deeply convicted of how much we really need God on a daily basis in our own lives, in order to have keen spiritual vision in that respect, and a commitment in the mind for this way of life. Because I've seen it happen so often, too often. I hate it when it happens, but every person is responsible for their own choices – to give up everything, to throw it away. It's mind-boggling. It really is. But it's going to continue to happen, and it's not over with yet.

**Psalm 127:1—Unless the Eternal builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.** So true. For us, we should have deep understanding of what that means. And if we're working on something and building it and know that God has to do it, we rely on God. We can't do it ourselves. This way of life, we can't continue in this way of life without God's help, to be focused spiritually.

So, unless the Eternal is doing it, what are people building? They go back to some other group that's a scattered group out here and lose everything that God has given to this point in time. How can you address that?

**Unless the Eternal guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.** So again, it's a reliance on God, knowing that we have to do our part, we have to work at what we do in applying what God has given to us to the degree we can, but it's a matter of relying on God even when we're doing that. It's looking to God for the help to be able to do those things well, to be watchful, to be alert, to be on guard for whatever takes place, and the timing and anything else that happens.

**It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.** So again here, there's human life that's futile of and by itself without God in it. God has to be a part of it, and especially in the context of the Church. Because that's what these things are about. It's not about the world; it's not about mankind apart from God or trying to do something that they read in the Bible. It's not about that. It's about those with whom God works and is working.

**...He gives His beloved sleep. Behold, children are a heritage from God.** So, even here, speaking of children, of what God has given. He's given the ability of a lineage that people can have in their families, and the blessing that can be.

You think, one thing I'm writing about, talking about, people have the idea of going to heaven and maybe looking down on loved ones, and maybe sometimes being able to intervene and help them, and the ideas that people have that some might be doing once they're in heaven. And yet, understanding here that isn't what's taking place.

But to understand here that the most meaningful thing in life that human beings can really experience in large part is family. That's what God's planned. He's planned for a Family that lives forever. The

relationships that are there are going to be far above and beyond anything we have ever experienced in physical human families, and yet it's something I think that everyone kind of craves. No matter if they've had bad experiences in families, it's still that desire.

Children have a desire toward their parents, toward their father, toward their mother. And sometimes those things never leave. Sometimes people are dealing with that when they're old, those relationships and what messed up in their mind, their thinking of things they couldn't have or didn't have, and regrets, and the like. Because that's where the greatest part of existence is, it's in the relationships we're able to have and the closeness we can have with one another.

We experience that in God's Church in a very unique way because it goes beyond what is physical. It goes beyond physical friendships and family, where there's a bonding there that can be much tighter, much stronger than in a physical family, and that's the beauty. Even when it was Worldwide and primarily known as phila, philadelphia, there was that fraternal kind of love because we were all in this together in a larger way, we were able to do things in a larger scale on a regular basis, and there was a camaraderie and unity and a oneness there that was very unique. But unless God's love is there—obviously, it requires that to experience even more the meaning and the purpose of what God is creating—well, then we miss out.

**Behold, children are a heritage from the Eternal; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth.** You know, if we can just grasp that, think how much more God has toward us. We're children of the womb, as it were. We're begotten children of God. And that excitement of waiting for birth, it's an excitement that people experience in life as a whole. How much more does God have that toward us, and the love that He has for us is far beyond things that we can see. We can try to appreciate it, but we need to be able to see it to believe it as well in the sense of the mind spiritually.

**Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them.** Especially through times past, and you talk about periods like this when David wrote, and generations ago, when larger families were an incredible blessing just because of strength that it gave, because of enemies and the like. It's always been that way with mankind. There have always been enemies to people and nations that want to conquer and overcome and enslave, and on and on it goes. And so again here, the strength, the ability.

I remember, when I was younger, families that had certain beliefs as well, generally had large families on farms and the like, and there might be eight, nine, ten, twelve in a family. They were able to do a whole lot more in the sense of productivity and prosperity because of the number of people they had working together to do this in large farms and the like.

**Happy is the man whose quiver is full of them. They shall not be ashamed but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.** See, that's a lot of what this was about. It's about the strength that it gave as well in different times.

So again here, the use of the word “children” and how God uses it. But you can’t find where He says, “They’re My children” in the Old Testament as a whole. It’s not there. He speaks of children as a heritage, the children of mankind, and on and on it goes. To me, it’s a very sobering thing to grasp and comprehend that we have life, and without God, that’s all we have. That’s all we have, human life. And if people don’t choose God, that’s all they’ll ever have, even in the Great White Throne. Still human, resurrected to a second life, having the opportunity to become the children of God, but if they don’t act upon that and don’t choose that, they never become the children of God.

Children of God only begins at begettal of His holy spirit in us. Before that, it’s just human life. And to me, that’s a very sobering thing to understand. Because if we don’t grasp what it means to be a part with God and what God offers us, then that’s going to happen to a lot of people, actually a lot of people too over the past two thousand years who have been called, who have rejected God. They’re going to be resurrected and still reject God because of what happens to the mind. That doesn’t mean everyone will, and there will be people for different reasons that will be able to come to a repentance then, but we aren’t able to judge that yet.

But it’s a horrible state to be in. What a horrible state, to become an enemy to God. Because God says the carnal mind is enmity against Him, and we were called out of that to no longer be an enemy to God. On the contrary, to become His children. And what a horrible thing to bear the title of antichrist, to work against Christ, to work against the very reason why he died for us in the first place, so we could be forgiven of our sins and have that relationship with God. It’s a sick and a hideous thing for a human mind to do such things. But they have to live with those consequences. They’re not nice consequences, they truly aren’t.

So, for all who remain, there are still going to be some who leave, and my desire would be that we would very deeply think about where we are, what we’re doing, and how much we love this way of life and what God has given to us, and how committed we are to holding on to it. Because this is what we have, and without this, it’s just human life, not the children of God. If you reject being a child of God, what does that mean? If God’s spirit is not dwelling in us anymore, what does that mean?

Well, spiritually, it means a miscarriage, unless that condition changes. It’s just like an embryo of a child; it can be miscarried and never experience human life. Never. A spirit life can be the same way. It can be miscarried. God has made that possible. Where He’s not going to give it spiritual life. He’ll let us experience it, but if we reject it, we choose to be miscarried. It’s by our own choice that we become miscarried in God’s Family because His desire is that we be born spirit into His Family.

What an incredible thing to understand, that we are an embryo right now. But if we don’t choose to keep fighting and keep desiring and wanting this way of life and keep being nurtured by the power of God’s spirit coming into our life, just as a baby has to have the blood of the mother to keep it alive, we have to

have that to keep alive, and if we reject it, we can become a miscarriage spiritually, never, never, never to receive eternal, spirit life, or everlasting life in God's Family, to be born into it.

That's the way it should be. God has designed it such. We all are free to make our own choices. God created us to be able to make choices, to be free moral agents. And with that, when He begins to work with us and draw us, we still have that, and we have to make the choices. What is more valuable to us, what God is offering us, or is there something out here in this world that we begin to think is more valuable to us temporarily?

Because when a person gets to that point, they've already lost a lot in the mind that they might have had earlier because it begins to be lost. You can't hold on to truth or the truth of God's spirit and His way of life working in us if we're not genuine, if we're not worshipping Him in spirit and in truth. We begin to lose it. And so, you get to that point of thinking, and you can't think right anyway. What a horrible thing when you can't think right anymore spiritually on a spiritual plane.

I hate seeing things like that take place, but I know they'll continue, and I know they're going to be massive in the Great White Throne. That's been one of the most sobering things that God has revealed to us in the last five years or so, of how massive it's going to be, multitudes upon multitudes of people, "as the sand of the sea," it says, who choose to follow Satan at the end. That's what they're choosing. They're choosing death instead of life.

That's a mind-boggling thing to me, how the human mind can think. But if you look at the world today, it's not so hard to believe. There are minds out there that are absolutely screwed up. They can't even think right on a physical plane. The things they reason about are not reason at all. It's not sound reasoning. And it's worse, you see some in office (a lot of them), and you think, what about all the people who voted them in office? What is wrong with them? Because they're of the same kind of thinking and mind that's distorted, that's messed up, that wants something that's strange and weird.

I think of New York City. It's going down the toilet! They've just given it a giant flush. It's like it's just swirling around in there, ready to go down. People are starting to leave on a larger scale. I wouldn't stay there if I were living there. Sometimes you don't have a choice. But I couldn't in that environment. I hope you understand what I'm talking about, the person who's been elected now, or looks like he's going to be elected.

And you think, what is wrong that people can begin thinking this way? That you'd wipe off an entire city, an entire population? But the sad thing is the majority think the same way. That's what they want. Why? Because people want what they want in their own way, the kind of society and the kind of world that they want. It's not God. It's not about living a way that has morality to it at all. It's about being immoral and living what they want to live in an immoral society.

This world is in sad, sad shape right now, and thankfully, we're so close to God intervening, thankfully.

So again, although there are references to children who are of Israel and many others who have had children, the expressions that are used there about who they're descended from and so forth and how these things refer to those children of mankind, but the use of sons or children of God, God doesn't use that term. We should understand why.

In the Old Testament, there are expressions in some places, again, like this that I've mentioned here. But let's notice Job, what it says in Job. We'll read a verse toward the beginning in Job 2, and then we'll jump ahead to Job 38 later. But let's just notice one verse here. Again, I'll just read it to you; you don't need to turn there.

**Job 2:1—Again, there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Eternal.** Now, this is talking about the angelic realm. They're referred to as "sons of God." Why? Well, because they are a unique creation. But they are created. They are spirit in composition, and so, they're referred to in this respect as the sons of God. There are those who rebelled against God and there are those who have been faithful to God, but they're spirit in essence and there are those who will continue to live forever in that respect, those who haven't turned against God, obviously, like the demonic world and what's going to happen to them and what's going to happen to Satan.

So again here, it talks about **the sons of God came to present themselves before the Eternal, and Satan came among them to present himself before the Eternal.** So again, we're familiar with some of this, but we recognize the difference here between mankind and what God has done in the creation of spirit life. Totally different and had totally different purpose.

But to become a part of God's Family? That's another thing altogether. Because God says we're to become greater than the angels. He's putting everything under us in that respect. The inheritance of everything that's out there, God has given to His Family, what He's promised. Incredible. We can't even begin to grasp it or imagine it.

Then Job 38. God reasoning here with Job about various things. He says, **Job 38:4—Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?** Now, if anybody thinks that they have a lot of ability and strength and so forth, it's not recognizing God for being God and the power that's there. Job believed to a point that he had a certain relationship with God, but he didn't. It was all about himself, it truly was, until he came or went through this and finally came to a point of conversion. Before that, he wasn't being drawn by God to learn various things, and God was going to work with him, obviously.

It says, **Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements?** So, you think about God and what God has done, and that's so long before things of science that we have today at our fingertips. And I think, what excuse does mankind have today with all that we know out there? It's just like in evolution or anything of that nature, or the Big Bang. You think, "You have lied, and you have to know that there are lies in what you've said because you're not using science by any measure or the laws of science in what you are choosing to believe. Your premises scientifically aren't even right and sound."

So, it's kind of mind-boggling that people who are educated as well as they are can do such a thing and believe in such things or uphold such things. An insanity of the human mind.

**Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched out the line on it?** So, he's using expressions here that he would be familiar with in stretching out a line, whether it be at a distance or plumbing something in straight up and down, whatever it might be that you can use in construction. So, He says, "Who did this?"

**To what were its foundations fastened?** How can you answer that? Because if you worked with a building or whatever, and you know you have to have certain foundation if it's going to stand for any length of time, and there is something you can see and something that is clear, so what about what God created, the earth itself, or its foundation?

**Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together.** Speaking again here of the angelic realm. **And the sons of God shouted for joy?** So, where were you when all these things took place? What understanding do you have? It's amazing here what God went through with him for quite a while, talking to him and explaining, going back and forth, and He was able to work with him to a degree where finally, it's amazing what Job, how he responded, "Now my eye sees You." He began to see himself. He began to see how wrong he was in his thinking, how wrong it was. God gave him that ability. It's a beautiful story.

So again, turn over to Romans 8. We grasp the difference in the angelic realm. They were created spirit. So, God's referred to them in that regard because they will be, in that respect, those who have been faithful to Him, will continue everlasting to serve God. They have that ability. But not as literal children of God in the sense of what God is offering to a spirit Family, Elohim. That's on a totally different plane.

Angelic beings were never given of the impregnation of God's holy spirit. They were never given His holy spirit. They are spirit, period. Free moral agents, they have their own minds, of a spirit essence, but they do not have the holy spirit. That's an incredible thing to understand that God has given.

**Romans 8:1—There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ.** So, we understand what that means, to be in Christ, the blessing of having him in us on a spiritual plane, that we are able to be in, on a spiritual plane, in Christ and Christ in us, to be in God, God in us.

**...who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.** So, there is this process, and a marvellous process that begins to take place once we're baptized and we begin making other choices in life. Looking to God, God gives us greater understanding in the mind about Himself, about His purpose, His plan, how we're to live our lives. And that which we seek to conquer and overcome in our thinking, we look to God for help in doing that. And because we want to walk in the spirit, we want to be close to God. To walk in the flesh means to do things your own way. We want, for us, we want to get away from that. We want to run from that. We don't want to think our own way without God in the picture. We want God to be in there. We

want to do things in a right way. And where we don't do it or where we fail to do it, we recognize the need to repent quickly so that God will continue to be in us.

**For the law of the spirit of life in Joshua the Christ...** So, there is this power that works, and it's referred to, in a respect, a law that works, of the spirit of life. There is this power in Him that can work inside of us, to candidly change the way we think, to where a creative process takes place in the mind to help us not be selfish anymore, to become less selfish, to fight against selfishness, and we can't do those things without God's spirit.

**...has made me free from the law of sin and death.** So, what is the law of sin and death? It's our own human nature. We're not going to live God's way of life; we're not going to choose God's way of life. We choose our own way; we choose to do things the way we want to do it, not the way God says it should be done. And so, there is that which follows, sin. And the result of sin is death for all time. That's the penalty.

**For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh...** Some try to say, "See, the law has been done away with. The law is bad." And it's like, you think, you feel for them because they really don't grasp what they're saying. They don't understand what you've been blessed to see and grasp in your mind. So, when it's talking about such a thing here, the problem is sinful flesh, the problem is with human beings. It's the way we are, and it's about our selfishness, inward, "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." It's just like a black hole sucking inward. It's about self.

**Verse 3—What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh...** There wasn't anything wrong with the law; it's about us. We can't do it without God's help. **...sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and because of sin, condemned sin in the flesh.** So, lived a righteous life, was able to be our Passover, the Passover Lamb. We're able to be forgiven of sin through him because of what he lived, how he lived, and then this process whereby God has chosen to help us to change, the mind to change through a process of repentance, so God's spirit can work in us to change the thinking. It's a marvel.

**...that the righteousness of the law, so, the law is righteous, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, so that we can live it (awesome!), who walk not after the flesh.** It's just the opposite. We don't want to walk according to the flesh, according to physical life anymore.

Anybody who leaves, they've chosen the flesh, they've chosen the world, something in the world. Oftentimes, it's a matter of sexual relationships because they want to do something that they know is wrong, it's forbidden. And then other things as well that are in this. Sometimes it's a matter of finances because they don't want to give anything to God; they want to keep certain things for themselves because they want to buy this or buy that, or these things here look appealing, and we want something more than what we should have, and not realizing, no, what we have now is sufficient.

God has blessed us mightily. You think about this country and how blessed we are. Whatever state we are in, we're very blessed to live in this country, and this is for a short time. God is offering something that makes this look like less than a dot on a piece of paper, here and it's gone. Without God, it's gone. And without God's spirit, without choosing God's way of life, without becoming begotten child of God, we're just human and we'll die. That's all there is.

So, no sons of God, no children of God, just human beings. God created human beings in the beginning. Better, higher than the animal kingdom, obviously, with the minds, but for a greater purpose, to receive the impregnation of God's holy spirit in order to become part of His Family. And those who don't choose that or don't want that, they don't receive that, then they'll only have human life. That's all there is.

You think of all the Great White Throne, all the billions of people, like the sand of the sea, who aren't going to choose and want God; that's their choice, just human life is all they've ever have experienced. Some live it twice. Well, a lot live it twice. But to have to go through all that in order to learn something, to understand what you're doing, and to not care?

You think about people in this country right now, and some of the ideas that are out there, I mentioned earlier. They really don't care. All they care about is themselves and what they want out of life now. That's what's important to them. You can't talk about God to them. And if that mind is opened up, will they really choose God? May be a smear of them that wouldn't.

So again, this process through Joshua the Christ, **that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled.** Lived in us. We're able to live it. We're able to begin applying it in our lives. **...who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.**

**Verse 5—For those who were after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.** It just means that's what their mind is upon. Again, everybody who leaves the Church, this is where their mind is. Everybody who chooses they don't want this anymore; this is where their mind is. There is something else they themselves have chosen for themselves. I feel for them, but it's their choice. So be it. That's the way God gives it as well. So be it. You are free to make your own choice. Wished you wouldn't have. Wished you'd make the right choice.

So, who is left? Who else is going to go over the next several months? Because there are going to be others who leave God's Church. Mind-boggling. Astounding. Really, kind of unbelievable that such things can happen. They're going to happen right up to Christ's coming.

"For those who are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." That's what becomes more important to them: physical things. Whether it be in family, whether it be someone else, whether it be finances, whether it be whatever it is that's important, that becomes more important than what God has placed before us. How do you think God feels about that? Same thing. "It's your choice. Wish you hadn't of made it." But it's your choice.

**...but those who are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.** So, if that's what we really want, God has given us that ability; we have to fight for it. We have to fight against self first and foremost. And it's a battle, and we have to keep fighting. There is never a time we give up and quit... until we're dead. We're in this until we're dead. And then we'll be alive. Awesome!

**For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.** It produces something. God's life, way of life, produces peace, soundness of mind, soundness of thinking, peace in how we see things. It's beautiful.

**Because the carnal mind is enmity against God.** It's an enemy to God. Who wants to do that? Especially once you've had the Church, once you've had the blessing of the death of Christ that you can receive into your life, to know that he paid for your sins, so that you could be forgiven and so that you could be impregnated with God's holy spirit?

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God." To go back to that? I think of different people in the past who have left for different reasons. For a woman? A man for a woman? Woman for a man...or other things in there. Choices, choices, choices. People can make those choices.

**...for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.** Once it happens, once a person turns against Christ, turns against God, you're on your own. You're not subject to God's law anymore because you've said no, you don't want it in your life. So, whatever you have that you might think is religious is nothing at all. It's nothing but waste and garbage because it's not of God anymore, whatever variety it is out there in the world.

We've had plenty who have gone back to different groups. And you think, where is your mind? Some of them are far better off because they haven't rejected it fully. They haven't seen it yet, certain things. They're asleep. They'll be able to be awakened out of sleep, but will you?

**Verse 8—So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** So, if we turn away from God and we're doing things because we're carnally minded and we've turned to the flesh, to physical becoming important, more important, God says we can't please Him anymore. Because there is no relationship there anymore. We've been cut off from it.

**But you are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you.** How blessed are we that we have that measure of something of God's spirit in our minds, helping us to change. It's a slow process, but it's one that you have to keep fighting. And the more you fight it, the more you're actually coming into greater agreement with God, that God is right, that this is what we want. Character is developed. That's the only way it can happen, by living in this, in a carnal body, human body that's still selfish, but to fight against that selfishness by choice because we choose God, because we want God.

**Now, if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, they are none of His.** They're not children. They're not His anymore. They're a different state. Can they be brought back? That's between them and God. But as a whole, it's a horrible state to be in.

**Verse 10—Then if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.** The blessing of being able to be forgiven of sin on a continuing basis and to understand what it's talking about here. We've buried the old self. That's what it's talking about. It's dead, and we want to keep it buried under the water. We walk in newness of life—that's what we've chosen—and we keep walking in it and wanting that.

**But if the spirit of Him who raised up Joshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised up Christ from the dead will also make alive your mortal bodies by His spirit that dwells in you.** So, we understand those things about a resurrection, that this is what God places before us, that there is another life, a different life, and that's the life we want. Not a temporary, physical life. This is awesome when it's used right, but it isn't the height of what God has placed before us that is so far beyond this. And all friendships, relationships, closeness that is going to go far beyond anything we've experienced, even in the environment of the Church.

**Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if we live after the flesh, or you live after the flesh, you will die.** That's what awaits.

**But if you through the spirit,** through the power of God's spirit living in us, crying out for help, seeking strength of God's spirit every day and of our life, **But if you, through the spirit, do put to death the deeds of the body** – fight against this, that selfishness, the wrong thinking – **you will live.** Beautiful!

**Verse 14—For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.** That's what it says over and over. Verses like this that talk about when we are the children of God, when we are the sons of God, is when we don't just have the impregnation of God's spirit but also are led by God's spirit. Because just like a baby has to have the lifeblood of a mother feeding it to nurture it we have to have that life living in us that nurtures and strengthens the mind, which is a power of God's spirit that comes into our life on a daily basis.

That's why I love the scriptures that talk about Christ coming in the flesh. It's a continual progressive thing that has to happen in the mind or else we become weak, and we can die, we can be miscarried. That's what can happen.

**If we're led by the spirit of God—beautiful—they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father.** It becomes real in our life the longer we're in the Church. It becomes stronger in our life.

And this word "adoption," I've never liked that word. And now, I understand even more so why. Because of its real meaning. We have a concept of adoption in the world, and it's not what this is saying at all. It's

not like all of a sudden looking around and saying, “Well, I’ll adopt them. Let’s adopt them and bring them into our family.” It’s beyond that. It’s more than that. This word used for human families, again, is not what this means. Not at all.

This is a compound Greek word, which means it’s made up of two Greek words. The first word simply means “son.” Literal. The second word means “to appoint; to put; to place; to set.” “Set to become sons” is what it’s about. Set, if you will, or placed. We’re placed within the Church in order to become literal children of God, born into God’s Family. The process begins once we’re begotten and we’re in embryo, as it were. But that a miscarriage does not happen is in our hands. It’s our choice. Awesome!

So again, I don’t like the word “adoption,” but we need to understand that’s what it’s saying when you read that word, that you’ve been appointed. God has chosen you and appointed you now to become His children. He determines when we’re called to be begotten of His holy spirit. So, it’s more than adoption. It’s the blessing of being begotten of Him. That’s what it’s about, being begotten of God to become His children, His Family.

In this case, because of what God is doing, it carries the meaning “appointed to be children,” “appointed to be sons of God.” What a blessing! What an awesome thing to know when we’re called this is our time, and we’ve been appointed so by God. He’s there to see it’s successful. As far as God is concerned, once the process is started, it’s accomplished because everything is there that is needed. It’s just up to us and our choices along the way as to how that progresses and whether it grows. Incredible!

**Romans 8:16**, going on here. **The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit; we are the children of God.**

That impregnation of God’s spirit within the spirit that God has given to human beings, that gives us the ability to think and reason, and so forth. And now we have that, where God gives us the ability to see things on a spiritual plane that we had no ability to see before, but now we can see them because of that essence that’s there. But to keep them, to retain them, to grow, requires constant supply, feeding of that life into our minds, if you will.

**...and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.** There is so much said here that’s so incredible and really kind of hard to even grasp and comprehend the magnitude of it. Joint heirs with Christ to receive and inherit everything that’s been given to him, in essence. It’s the universe. It’s everything that God has put out there, and for what’s going to be done with it, into trillions and trillions and trillions of years that we can’t even begin to comprehend. I can’t think much past seventy-six right now.

**...if so be that we suffer with him.** So, we learn very early on that choosing this way of life and fighting against carnal human nature, there’s a suffering involved. Saying no to self, humbling ourselves, learning how to be humble in how we think around others, toward God, toward God’s Family, toward others in the world, to be of a humble spirit and a humble mind and to understand that there is suffering, and

we're going to suffer things in this world because the world doesn't agree, doesn't like what you're doing. They're not jumping up and down.

Family doesn't jump up and down because you keep the seventh-day Sabbath. They don't jump up and down, you're going to the Feast of Tabernacles, and on and on it goes, all the beliefs we have. Or that you're going to come eat with them and you won't eat pork, or that you won't eat whatever stuff it is that they throw in front of you, things out of the ocean that we shouldn't be eating. Doesn't make them jump up and down for joy and be endeared to you that much more that you have such beliefs. You just make it harder for them. So, we suffer through things like that in life. They're not easy. They're uncomfortable.

**...if you suffer with him, that you may also be glorified together.** So, in time, it means we're going to receive the same life that he received, spirit life in the God Family, Elohim.

**For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time...** What is it that's been too hard for us? What is it that's too difficult? What have we experienced? Health issues? Financial issues? Is that so difficult to go through in this human life that we would throw away what God offers us? Or do we keep our eyes on God and keep fighting and keep working for what He's placed before us. "This is what I want! I don't care if it's a matter of death; this is what I have chosen."

We should have chosen that on baptism day. Even if it's death, you're willing to go through whatever. A lot in the Church in the beginning, that's exactly what they had to do. There are a whole lot of people in the very beginning who really had it hard compared to us. It didn't take long. Ten years, twenty years, a lot of people were being killed right and left who had been brought into the Church. Incredible!

**I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.** It's all out there waiting. Piles of rubble in one respect, because if you see the moon, you've seen pictures of Saturn or Mars, they're not so pleasant. God says there are things that we don't grasp and don't comprehend, of what we're going to be doing into time. Beautifying the universe, being a part of beautifying what God is going to give us the blessing and the ability to be a part of. We can't comprehend that right now, but we can latch on to it and become a little more excited about it.

If you're excited about building things, working in a yard, a garden. I love stuff like that, being able to do those things, and this pales into insignificance such things as that. Makes them look pretty small compared to what we're going to be doing. Don't understand it all, don't know how it's all going to happen, but I know it's going to happen, and we have part, we are able to play a part in it.

So, I love this verse, **For the earnest expectation of the creation,** everything that's out there, all the trillions of years that it took to create it all, if it took six days to remold and refashion this earth and put life on it and you start multiplying that through time and what it's going to take to work to beautify

everything that God has brought into existence—because this is what it’s about—we can’t comprehend it. It is everlasting life that’s out there, truly. “What happens when we get finished with that?” Well, ask me that in a trillion upon a trillion years. “Okay.”

**For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who created the same in hope.** So, there’s a purpose why God made us this way, and God has shown us a great deal of why we’re this way, why He made us this way, how we think and what it is we’re to combat in order to be proven, if you will, to grow spiritually, so we can become a part of His Family.

He doesn’t just pass it out to everybody just because they got baptized, just because they said, “Oh yeah, I want that. I’m going to do that,” or calls God, Father, or calls Christ, Joshua. That doesn’t mean they’re going to be in God’s Kingdom. Like the world does today, “If you just accept Jesus.” And so, people can get in that frame of mind and say, “Well, I accept Joshua.” What does that mean in words? Very little. It’s what’s in the heart, what’s in the mind, what’s in the thinking, what’s in the actions that follow as to what we’re actually living that proves that this is what is enduring to us and what we hold on to with all of our being.

**...because the creation itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.** So, a destructive state or a state of incompleteness, or whatever you want to call it, and especially in this world, but even beyond that. So, it starts, first of all, in this world, and what’s going to happen in the next one thousand years, and what will happen in the next hundred years, and what God is preparing because of His Family. Because His Family is resurrected first. The 144,000 are going to have incredible responsibility and work to do to help the thousands and millions that are during the period of the Millennium come through that. There’s a great deal of work.

Then the Great White Throne, it’s going to require a whole lot more. So, there is going to be a whole lot more because of what happened in that thousand years that are going to be able to serve and help in awesome ways all who are resurrected, knowing full well that not all are going to choose it, but it’s going to be there to help them, to give them the best opportunity, to show them what mankind with God and God’s Family ruling on the earth has brought about after a thousand years.

I think of how fast technology has grown in the last twenty years. We can’t even begin to comprehend what this world is going to be like a thousand years from now, and what the potential is out there. Awesome!

**For we know that the whole creation groans and labors in pain together until now.** So it’s like, it’s waiting. The thousand years is waiting. The hundred years is waiting. The universe is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, the children of God, the God Family. Because that’s why God created it and put it there, for the God Family. It’s all by design.

**1 John 3:1—Behold what manner of love** (agape; God’s love)... Far beyond human love. We get to experience it in parts, and the closer we are to God at any moment in time, the more that we can experience that in our thinking toward others and deal with things of patience, mercy, forgiveness, love, care, concern that comes from God. Because it’s by the power of His spirit that helps us in that.

**Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!**

So, that’s why I mentioned earlier about if we can comprehend just a little bit about physical human life and the excitement of a child coming in the world, that’s going to be born, after seeing the development, stomach getting bigger, and then there is going to be a birth, and then there is going to be a family, starting of a family, or maybe addition to the family, and you think of how exciting that can be then for families, how much more for God with the kind of love that He has that’s so far beyond ours that He has toward every one of us to see us succeed. He wants to succeed.

He doesn’t want anybody to reject Him. But He left that as a choice because if somebody doesn’t want it, they should never have it. They shouldn’t. It can’t be given that kind of life and power. That’s what God’s going to ensure. I remember Herbert Armstrong talking about those kinds of things. The only one that God could trust was Himself for all time. The angelic realm, there were those who turned against Him. They had that capacity.

Elohim, once in Elohim, there’s not that capacity and there’s not that mind in anyone because there’s that which takes place in a change of the mind, transforming of the mind that prepares us to have God dwell in us all the time in unity, oneness forever. Because that was the choice. That’s what we fought for. Then God gives that as something that’s always there. The mind of God. Everyone is going to have the mind of God fully in them in ways we can’t fully comprehend yet. There is that unity and oneness. God’s trusted forever and forever. It’s the only way it could be.

You can’t give that to someone who hasn’t gone through the process. That’s why in times past we hadn’t really clearly seen a lot of these things because some of these protestant ideas have still been out there that, “Oh, in the end everybody is going to come through this in the Great White Throne.” But we forgot about the other verses that talk about, no, it’s going to be like the sand of the sea, those who are gathered together who are destroyed. Can’t comprehend all that. I do now, better.

But the exciting part is God’s Family. That’s what it’s all about. That will go on forever. And that which rejects it, so be it. Wish it wasn’t so, but so be it. It’s just life for as long as it lasted. And those who have that extra hundred years, we know it’s going to be a hundred. So, whatever life they lived before, that’s what they’ve had, and that’s their reward. That’s it and no more, never to be, in so many cases, then, the children of God, or have become miscarriages or whatever.

**Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!**

I hope that means more to us today than it did before we had this sermon today. To understand what it means. That human life without God is just human life. It’s here and it’s gone unless God is in it. And

then if God is in it and is in our minds and we're blessed to be impregnated with that spirit and can grow in embryo, then we are the begotten children of God, we're in the first stage. But we're not there yet, and we're not in that Family until we're in that Family, when this has been changed from mortal to immortal, from physical to spirit, or from dust to spirit.

**Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know him. Beloved, now we are the children of God.** That's awesome to understand what that means! Because we weren't identified, as physical human beings, as being the children of God. We don't have that relationship. The world doesn't yet have that relationship until they receive the impregnation of God's spirit. Then that process can begin. But not born until born.

**Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he does appear, we shall be like him, because we'll see him as he is.** So, we can see spirit and be in a spirit life, and so forth.

**Now, everyone who has this hope in Him purifies in Him,** in God, in God's purpose and God's plan, **purifies themselves, just as He is pure. Whoever commits,** in other words, **practices or makes sin,** is what the word is, **also commits lawlessness,** transgression of the law. Because that's required, that we live according to the law, according to God's ways. ...**and sin is lawlessness** or the transgression of the law.

**Verse 5—Now, you know that he was manifested to take away our sins,** speaking of Christ, again, **and in him there is no sin. Whoever abides in him does not sin.** It doesn't mean that we won't have sin come into our life, but again, it's in the context here of practicing or living it apart from God, choosing our own way, and not repenting. We're always going to have sin, but we're always going to be able to repent of it and be free of sin, be forgiven of sin, and have this relationship with God and His spirit dwelling in us.

**Whoever sins does not see Him.** So again, this thing of being cut off from God's spirit and the ability to continue to see goes by the wayside unless we repent, until we repent, and there are things in our mind that aren't going to be thinking right. We're going to have battles, and God lets us experience those things. The quicker it is that we repent and finally get to a point where we're actually catching it in the mind before it happens in a physical carnal way in the world, physically, and we catch it in the mind and ask God to forgive, help us in the thoughts and the thinking, that they not be there either, and more assuredly fight against the thinking to do something that is wrong because it starts in the mind.

**Little children...** So again here, "little children," begotten children of God, **let no one deceive you.** Can we be deceived? Not if we're close to God, not if we're fighting for this way of life, not if we're in this battle and we're convicted and committed to this way of life and staying close to God and crying out for His help every day. We won't be deceived by others who come along with different ideas because there are a lot of crazy things that pop up.

Sometimes I'm kind of shocked, things that will pop up. Something that somebody all of a sudden believes. You know, wanting me to go out and study and research other religions because I may be missing truth that's out there. "Is it just out of the Bible that you're going to learn?" Duh. That's a stupid question. It shows the mind isn't thinking right when you start thinking that way. Go to Eastern religions to see what they're doing and what they've been doing for eons? And you think, where are they in a relationship with God? Nowhere. They have nothing. They have no relationship with God whatsoever.

The only ones who have a relationship with God are those who are part of God's Church.

**Whoever does sin, practices it, is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.** The sin, in other words. Again, familiar with a lot of these scriptures.

**1 John 3:9**, going on. **Whoever has been born of God...** So again, this process here of being begotten. We know there are two stages of it. If we're literally born of God, then we know what that means that we're in the God Family. If it's a matter of begetting, we know there is a process that takes place.

**Whoever has been born of God does not sin, does not practice, work sin, for His seed, that which germinates life, remains in them, and they cannot sin because they have been born of God.**

**In this, the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not...** So, John speaks in terms here that require the full scope of everything in all the chapters of what he's talked about in 1 John, if you will, when you go through all of it. He goes back and forth constantly here, referring to the mind that should be on being born of spirit and what that means, but being begotten, that that should be the same, in the same state and the same mind, but understanding we still have it in our life. That's why it's so important to repent quickly so that it's forgiven. That's a totally different mind than someone who starts practicing and fails to repent of sin because that's happened to a majority of people who have ever been called into God's Church. It's what people have done.

**Whoever does not**, in other words, **does not make/practice righteousness is not of God.** So again, that's the other side of the coin. We have to practice it. We have to work. We have to do it, work to do it, ask God for help to accomplish it. **...nor they who do not love their brother.**

So again, it gets down to the nitty gritty here. John, I love the way he goes into this and talks about how we think toward others. If we don't love others, if we don't have a right mind toward others, then where is God's spirit, where is God's mind?

**For this is the message that we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.** Good way to test ourselves, how we think about one another.

So often we have people who leave who say, "We love you. We've always loved you. We've had such a great relationship." It's a lie. It's not true, and they're not being truthful to themselves. If you really loved

us, you would have stayed with us. If you really love God, you would have stayed with God. So, call a spade a spade, call the truth the truth.