

Baptism and Our Oath, Pt. 4

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This is just to let everybody know we're in Hawaii. Hence, the dress, the outfit, whatever. We got it as a welcome to Hawaii, and so I thought I'd live the part today. So anyway, beautiful weather here. It's really nice. Hope it doesn't snow too much more. I have to get my snowblower out as soon as I get back. I hope that doesn't happen. But anyway, c'est la vie.

Anyway, today is going to be *Baptism and Our Oath, Part 4*.

We're continuing with that particular series right now, and it's about the promise we made to God concerning the oath we made at baptism. So, we're delving into this pretty deep in that respect, so that people can understand the seriousness of what we entered into with God because it's about a covenant we made with God. God gave His covenant long ago, but when it comes time for people to be called and drawn into God's Church then it's up to us whether we choose to be in that covenant relationship as well.

And so, when we say the things we do at baptism, we agree to the things we do at baptism, because it's a matter of agreement that we're making in the words that are spoken to us and should be taken incredibly seriously because it's a one-time thing in that regard. So again here, as a matter of this oath we've been going through and looking at the fact that if we, at this particular time, we acknowledge, at baptism, that we accept Joshua the Christ as our Passover, and that we need to continually be repenting of sin.

So, it's not just a one-time repentance, and that's what we were starting to cover in *Part 3*. It's not a one-time event done before baptism. It's something that goes on in our life that we're to do the rest of our life. We acknowledge sin, which is one of the hardest things for human beings seemingly to do, to acknowledge that they're wrong, and then to accept responsibility for that. God has us do that. So again, a matter of this covenant relationship.

I want to read that portion again here, what it says in the baptism ceremony: "You are here because you have chosen to acknowledge and repent of your sins and now desire to be baptized and be forgiven through your acceptance of Joshua the Christ as your Passover and Savior." So, accepting Joshua the Christ as a Passover continues on in our life for the rest of our life in the Church. And I think of all the people who have left in times past who quit acknowledging that. So again, ought to be very clear to us it's not a one-time event. It goes on and on.

And then in *Part 3*, we started going through the eras of the Church. That was primarily because it shows here a relationship that they were able to have at different periods of time in the Church with God with Joshua the Christ. But it shows in there, in the context of what God said about the Church, is that there

was always a need to repent. He pointed out specific things that each era had as weaknesses and things that they would have to be on guard against and to continually be repenting of.

So, let's pick it up here in Revelation 2. To me, this is amazing anyway, fascinating to go through and see. But God gave it to Christ to give to John on the Isle of Patmos, and then John recorded these things, but it's about each period within the Church, Ephesus being the first one that we looked at last Sabbath, and then the different eras that followed. We don't know the exact years that some of these ended and some of them began, although it's fairly well known on a couple of them early on.

But later on, we come to the period of Thyatira, which is where we are now in Revelation 2:18, and that was the longest period. It lasted over a thousand years. Incredible, this one particular era in itself. So, we'll start here.

Revelation 2:18—Now unto the angel of the Church in Thyatira write... And these things were lost very shortly after Herbert Armstrong died. It quit being taught by the Church. It quit being taught by the ministry, in that regard, and I believe a lot of the motivation for that was because they could see something that was happening in the Church but wouldn't acknowledge it. And that was the matter of Laodicea. Nobody wanted to be a Laodicean. That's the last Church era.

They understood, Herbert Armstrong understood well that we were in the period of Philadelphia, and we'll get to that later here. But again, these things were lost; they weren't being taught anymore. But these are specific eras of time. And yet they apply to the entire Church because there are some things that have happened in people's lives, that although it might have been written, as an example, to Thyatira, because it explains to them in that regard things that they would be going through, things that they would experience on a spiritual plane, but it can happen to anyone at any time. But it was more distinguishable or more of a matter that this is what they were going to emulate or live more than any other.

So again, God knowing what people would do at certain times of life. To me, it's incredible. He didn't cause it to be that way, but knowing what mankind would choose through time and how they would live depending upon the conditions. He knew of a great church, a great big church that would be a counterfeit church that would begin to grow. He allowed that to happen. He allowed Satan to have that impact upon the world. God knew how His people, as He would call them out of the world, would react to some of those things at specific times. To me, that is an awesome thing. God is incredibly powerful, great, things that we can't even begin to comprehend.

Unto the angel of the Church of Thyatira write, These are the things say the Son of God, who has eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet like unto fine brass. So again, explaining something on a physical plane to try to help us to grasp something that is seen in a spirit world that we can't grasp fully. But again, showing a life and the power that's there that we can't understand. **I know your works and love**

(agape). So, this is a matter of something that came from God that they experienced and lived toward others in the Church.

...and service. So, quite a few things here: **your works, your love, and service, and faith, and your patience,** and again, **and your works.** So, again here, very complimentary in that regard, the longest of all the Church eras, going to go for hundreds of years. And so, this was an extremely complimentary thing, in that regard, as to what they were living.

...and even the last is more than the first. So, whatever took place toward the end of Thyatira, which we don't know, God says it was greater than the beginning.

Notwithstanding, I have a few things against you, because you allowed (permitted), they allowed it, they didn't address it, they didn't deal with it, **that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants and to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols.**

Now, I'd have to say as a whole that in the time of Worldwide, we began a process of growing. We're going to come to Sardis a little bit later here, but most truth was gone by the time of Sardis. And by the end of it, only three truths were left. Then Herbert Armstrong was called to raise up the era of Philadelphia, and God began to restore truth to the Church at that time.

But things like this were taken on a very physical plane as to who this might have been, what kind of an impact could they have had if, especially if they didn't live for a thousand years. So, how could this be said of this particular era? And we had to grow. It took time to grow as a Church. So we had a lot of things that we didn't grasp, a lot of things we gradually began to come out of, but not all. It takes a long time in God working with people.

This is about the Catholic Church again. They're mentioned in different ways at different times. It's about that impact they had, the Roman Catholic Church had on the world at this particular time. And so, it uses someone here who is used in scripture, in that respect, what kind of a person they were. And here is one that had tremendous influence and sway, just like she did in Israel, in the nation of Israel long ago.

And so, that word is used here as an example of something on a spiritual plane. It wasn't a physical thing. It wasn't about people in the Church committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols. That wasn't the problem. It was on a spiritual plane, though. So, it's if they listen to those teachers at that time and begin to adopt some of their ideas and beliefs and bring them into the Church. We've experienced that through Laodicea. We saw the same sort of thing. It began to happen in that regard, different influences and so forth in the world. It's a powerful thing on a spirit plane. And so, this was taking place here.

"And which calls herself a prophetess." So, it's referring to her as a church and what she is saying, in other words, as a prophetess, that she's saying things, interpreting things in scripture because it's a

matter of interpretation. It's not a matter of foretelling the future; it's a matter of interpreting things of scripture and saying this is what God is saying. They were doing it improperly.

So, we can see that in their doctrines and so forth, whether it be the trinity or Sunday worship or whatever. That is their interpretation. That's why she's called a prophetess here **...who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants**. Well, their objective was to seduce the entire world, in that respect, as many as they could, especially within the Roman Empire, to live this way of life, to think this way, to adopt their practices, and so forth. Because that was the cohesiveness of the Roman Empire in a social way, and that's what they used throughout their history. That's why they lasted so long and were so great as a nation, in that respect.

...to teach and seduce My servants, and to commit fornication. So, because they became very strong in the world, God knowing they would become greater in the world, that the Roman Empire would be incredibly powerful in the world, have the backing of a government like that, a church that has the backing of a government, and the things being taught by it as it grew and more people becoming a part of it and practicing that it would have an effect upon God's people. And that's what took place. So, here is a situation where some begin to give in to some of it. We don't know how much.

...and to eat things sacrificed to idols. So again here, we've already covered this in part. So what is "sacrificed to idols"? Well, the false worship that they have. And if you eat of it, you're partaking of it spiritually. You're beginning to believe it or live it, talk about it perhaps to others. It's like eating of the unleavened bread of life. We have God's way of life. So again here, it's a matter of things that they were teaching that some in the Church began to imbibe upon themselves, eat, drink, whatever of that way of life, that kind of thinking.

Verse 21 it says, **Now, I gave her space to repent of her fornication**. So again, we don't know the timing of this, how long it might have been, but for those who were indulging in this, God says He gave them space. This is an amazing thing in many respects because I've seen that since being in the Church, since 1969, that God is very patient and very patient with those who begin to think a different way, those who begin to sin, those who begin, especially when it's on a matter of a spiritual plane, with other ideas other than what they've been taught. God has been very patient with people.

Very few, in my experience, have ever fully repented of those kinds of things and come back into a strong fellowship in the Church. However, there are some who have. But as a whole, it's a tremendous power. Once you begin to move away from God and begin to adopt different ideas and beliefs, God may give you a lot of time to repent, but a lot of that is so God can say, "Look how much time I gave you." In the Great White Throne, "Look how much time you had to repent and to change, and you didn't do it. So, I gave you that time, and you still didn't respond."

So again here, God gives ample time for people to be able to live a different way, think a different way, and gives them that chance to come back, to be able to repent. But again, it's a matter of a choice. But

once you start polluting the mind on a spiritual plane, like Lucifer did (human beings, it takes longer), but if we start to do that, we could begin to destroy the impregnation of God's spirit working with our human spirit. The end result of that is not a good one, obviously.

So He says, "I gave her space to repent of her fornication." So again, we all ought to understand God is very patient. I've seen many kinds of things where people have been given a lot of time. Sometimes, depending on what it is, people begin to repent. I've seen more of that in the last many years than I ever did in Worldwide or the period of Laodicea.

I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she did not repent. So, incredible. And if we talk about some who were a part of that system, that false system, God even gave them opportunity, it sounds like, in some of this of what He's saying here, to be able to come out of some of that.

Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. So again here, I look forward to a time in the future when God shows us, gives us ability to see and understand more about what happened during those periods. Because amazingly so, there are going to be people in the Church who are going to be resurrected out of every period of time, and we're going to be able to learn more about the history of what took place in those times. Because the witness is there in people's lives who lived it within the Church, as a whole.

So anyway, if people don't repent, God lets them go their course, and as it says here, "And I will cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds." So it's a strong warning to the Church.

Again here, we ought to understand because of what we have seen during Philadelphia, Laodicea, and the Apostasy, that the majority of people who were called during Thyatira turned against God. It's been that way in every period of time in the Church. Many have been called, but few have been chosen. That's because of personal choices. So, the majority have turned away.

Verse 23—And I will kill (destroy) her children with death. So, when it's saying here of children, it's speaking of those who imbibe of that way of life, who are carrying on with it from generation to generation, choosing to live a wrong way of life. It's them, it's their choices that end up with a matter of death. So, it's a matter of a death sentence.

So, when does that happen? Well, some, especially because of the Church, have already been judged in time. There are people that I became deeply convicted of during the Apostasy who were part of Worldwide, who are part of Philadelphia, that went so far away from the truth and hated the Church, hated the doctrines of the Church, and their minds were so distorted that you can become set in that. And once a person is set in that wrong thinking... God knows our minds. He knows when we've gone too far, and we'll never repent.

He knew as soon as Lucifer did what he did, obviously, because he's created spirit, that he was set in evil and he would never repent. But for human beings, we have ability still to repent if we choose to do so, though seldom does that take place.

He shows here, again, the result of those kinds of choices, of turning against God. It isn't a matter of everybody who was in Thyatira, or any other era, because they knew the truth, they lived the truth for a time, they were impregnated with God's spirit at baptism because of the laying on of hands, and if they turned away from that and turned away from the very one who is our Passover, turned against Christ (that's why the terms antichrist are used), if those choices were made and the mind becomes set in that there's only one outcome. They will be able to live in a hundred-year period, a time of judgment, but again, if their minds are set, their time is just a matter of waiting for judgment.

I don't understand all that, why God has done it that way, but that's what God has done. He allows them to live in an environment where they're going to see, as a whole, the entirety of those around them, or many in a vast way, millions and millions of people who want this way of life, who choose this way of life. But there are going to be so many who don't, as it talks about the sand of the sea at the very end who are destroyed.

So, the descendants of those who follow those things from generation to generation, and they turn against God and turn against Christ, there are those who already have the death penalty set before them because they've seared their conscience. They've seared their minds to such a degree they won't repent. It's not a matter of that they can't. God allows it. But they don't want to. That's an amazing thing to understand about the human mind, that it can become that messed up.

...and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the reins and hearts. He's saying here that this is something that can help those who are choosing God's way of life to understand the seriousness of their calling and to become more deeply convicted that God is the one who judges us. He knows what's inside of our hearts, minds, whatever (it uses these expressions).

I search the reins and the hearts, and I will give to everyone according to their works/to your works. He's saying here, this is how we're judged. How we live, how we choose to live, that responsibility is no one else but our own. And so, it's a help to the Church now to understand the seriousness of our calling and the oath that was made at baptism because we still have people who, every year, that go by the wayside. And it's a hard thing to watch, it's a hard thing to observe, but it still happens. So, by wrong choices, it's a matter that we're going to be judged by what we do, our works, whether we respond to God or not, and seek to become right with Him in every way. He's saying here, in essence, this is for the Church to know that God, "I am He who searches the hearts and the reins, and I will give to everyone according to their works or your works."

But unto you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not hold to this doctrine, and who have not known, in other words, **have not learned the depths of Satan...** So, a strong warning here that this is

of Satan, that this Jezebel, this organization, this teaching of all these false doctrines, that it comes from Satan and he is the author of it all, in essence. He is the one who inspired the trinity and all the other kinds of crazy doctrines that are out there.

So again here, “and as many as do not hold to this doctrine and who have not known or learned the depths of Satan.” In other words, they didn’t give in to it, they fought against it, they sought to draw closer to God so they could be able to distinguish between the two very easily. And if we’re close to God, it’s not hard to see those things, to see the falsehood of easter, to see the falsehood of the Trinity, and on and on it goes. But if people begin to dabble in it, it begins to do something to the mind; it begins to destroy the mind and how we think.

...and not known the depths of Satan, like they teach, that’s what it’s saying here. It says, “**as they speak,**” but that’s not it. It’s like “they teach.” In other words, that’s what they’re teaching, and if you reject those things, and that’s what we’re to do. **...I will put upon you no other burden.** So, He’s saying here, this is their primary battle during Thyatira, is to resist this powerful organization. Because this is when they had some of the greatest power ever, when they had the greatest control ever.

They had incredible control throughout Europe during this period of time, and you can see it in so much of history, of the sway that they had. Until finally, the printing press came along, and until finally certain things began to happen in different parts of Europe, like in, especially in Britain and the like. Then some began to rebel against some of that, Germany, and some of those areas, the Netherlands. But as a whole, it had tremendous sway. And even those who were in those other areas they might have left that group, but they started their own. Just like Henry VIII didn't agree with things in the church about marriage and so forth, and so basically started the Church of England or the beginning of it anyway. Incredible.

So, God says if you don't take in those things that they're doing or saying, this is your battle, this is your primary battle, and I'll put no other burdens upon you. This is enough. Awesome.

But that which you have, hold fast until I come. So whatever truth, He’s saying, whatever you have, hold on to it. And that’s for every era of the Church, I don’t care when it is; that’s what God gives us the charge to do, to hold on to what we’ve been given. I think of all the truths given through Herbert Armstrong’s time and how much those things weren’t held on to. They weren’t held on to fast by the Church by the time Laodicea was over with.

And whoever overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to them will I give power over the nations. So, what an incredible thing to know what this is all about, to understand this is about people who are called out at different eras of time. They’re called out, as those in the previous several thousand years, to be worked with, to be molded and fashioned, to become a part of God's government. That's why He says you're going to help, in that respect, to have power over the nations, over peoples. And so,

it's about 144,000, and they're being a part of a government that's going to be so incredibly awesome on the earth. 144,000 under Christ and helping to establish God's government.

Well, it's what God's promises to those who come through all of it. It's not that you want, necessarily, in that respect, to govern. It's just a reality. God says that's what you're going to be given. That's what you're being molded and fashioned to do. You're being molded and fashioned to be able to handle the kind of power that God's going to give. We can't comprehend that kind of power. We can't comprehend the kind of mind power that God's going to give to us. As I get older, I'm looking forward to more mind power. Things happen as people get older in life. Anyway.

Incredible what begins to take place because this is that transition in time from Thyatira into this period called Sardis and much of it is because of the invention of the printing press. And because of that, the ability to mass-produce books grew to begin making books and printing copies of the Bible. There were individuals; it started out small. But individuals didn't have to rely upon what they were being told by this big church in the sense of the only thing they knew is what they were told Sunday to Sunday to Sunday, generally through Latin that a lot didn't understand anyway.

Anyway, it's really crazy some of the things that took place. But when they were taught various things in their own language, then people came along, and they were able to read certain things for themselves and they'd come up with different ideas and say, "Well, this isn't what you're teaching." It's not that hard to do, to have different ideas come along. And so different ones that would consider themselves scholars or studies, those who would study the scriptures, and they would begin to have problems then with that church. Luther, as an example, you know, and nailing those things up as he did, different ones that came along, and on a door, I believe, it was of the church.

But anyway, these things where they disagreed with the Catholic Church and the authority of the Catholic Church. These were not small things. Some of these went through a lot because they were speaking out against this very powerful organization. Because they had government on their side. And so, this is a process where a lot of different groups begin to emerge. Well, what does that do to God's Church? To God's people? You have all these different groups out here now saying different things, disagreeing with this great big church, and so many different ideas coming along that it begins to stir up doubt. It begins to stir up different ideas that they've never heard of before. They can't help but agree with certain things they're saying, in some cases, because they can see these wrongs within that great organization.

And so, someone else is saying something different, and especially if they attach to the Sabbath, which some did, to the Sabbath day even more so, because now here's a group that's saying the Sabbath should be kept. And so, this is where Sardis came along. They began to lose truths because they began to be swayed by different groups that were out here. And because of that power of different ones teaching

things different from what this great church was teaching, some people latched on to it, a lot of people, candidly, in Sardis.

Revelation 3:1—Unto the angel of the Church in Sardis write, These things are said by Him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. So again, speaking of seven particular eras, things that would happen uniquely so, more so as identification of what they would go through.

I know your works, that you have a name that you live... Well, what is that? Church of God. “You have a name that you live.” You carry or claim, in that respect, have God's name as an organization, the assembly of the called-out ones, if you will, of God. **...and are dead.** You have this name, but spiritually you're dead, you're dying.

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die. So, what an incredible thing to be able to learn our history, and primarily because of what Herbert Armstrong was able to see when he came along, that there were only three basic doctrines that they had left. The name of the Church was one, Church of God, tithing, and the keeping of the weekly Sabbath. They lost all things having to do with Holy Days, the annual Holy Days of God, and so forth, that have been carried through time, and here they've been losing them.

So, he's saying, “What you have hold on to it.” “Whatever it is you have, hold fast.” And that's what every era is to do, to hold on to the truth that God has given to them, that present truth.

He says, **that are ready to die. For I have not found your works perfect before God.** So, quite a condemnation here of what took place in this particular era. Again, we don't know for sure how long it lasted, but it looks like it lasted around 300+ years, maybe a little more.

Therefore, remember how you have received and heard; and hold fast. So, “When you hear those words, remember how you have received and heard.” This is important because this is something for every era of the Church, but it certainly was for them. If you knew truth, and especially if you lived during this period of time of Sardis, if you heard specific truths, where did you hear them from? Through whom did you hear them? And so that's what He's warning them about, is that if you've heard the truth, remember where you heard it, because if there's truth there, then God is working with them to help.

...and hold fast and repent. So this matter of repentance, again, not a one-time thing in life. It's ongoing. And here was a big battle for several hundred years for Sardis. And as time went along, they just became weaker and weaker.

If, therefore, you will not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I come upon you. So again, we can read this here about Sardis, but this is for every Church era. It's just stated here in a very strong way because of what was going to happen during this period. It's going to have tremendous devastation on God's Church, the period of Sardis. It wasn't a good time to be in God's Church. People went by the wayside. They were dying out spiritually.

By the time Herbert Armstrong came along, it was at the point of being dead spiritually. And so He's showing here, no matter what happens through this period of time in each individual's life through that several hundred years, "If you latch onto other ideas out here and don't hold fast to what I've given to you, you're going to lose it all because you're being judged." That's what it means by "come as a thief." We're going to lose what we have. It's going to be taken from us.

That's an incredible thing to come to understand that only with God's spirit can we hold on to what is true. And if we don't hold on to it, it's going to be taken away. We're going to lose it. Only God can help us, through the power of His spirit, hold on to truth that we have, because it's a spiritual matter. And if we begin to become weaker spiritually, it's just a law, it's just the way it is, we'll lose it. We won't have it. So again, that's why that particular warning there is there to Sardis.

Then we come to Philadephia. You know, I didn't even put it in here, the parts about Philadelphia. I guess, to show more of the matters of repentance and so forth. But there are things stated about Philadelphia that are unique to Herbert Armstrong's time. It wasn't my purpose to go through there because it doesn't give the condemnation in the way that it does here for some of the others, and primarily just focusing on the fact that repentance is an ongoing process for people, even if it goes over hundreds of years, we have to repent of sin and hold on to what God has given to us.

And so God began to give truth then to Herbert Armstrong, and he knew that, he understood that he was seeing and understanding things that had been lost during a period of time. That's why he was able to recognize Sardis even more so. And some people even knew that they were of Sardis. They carried the name. And so, there was that concept, that idea out there within the Church, and Herbert Armstrong knew that something different was happening here because God was revealing to Him more.

The Holy Days, that was a big thing. Because early on, he and Loma, they kept themselves the Holy Days for seven years before He would start giving it to the Church. He wanted to be deeply convicted. I can understand that, especially coming out of Sardis, not having a lot of truth, and all of a sudden you have all this about Holy Days. And slowly but surely, God was giving him more about each Holy Day to understand. So, they kept them.

Then he came to that point where he was so deeply convicted of it, he knew this was to be taught to the Church. Because you want to know, if you're teaching, that this is of God. And so, especially coming out of what they were coming out of, or what he was being used to come out of in the sense of that particular era and what God was giving to him, that he wanted to know, and know that he knew this is of God and this is to be taught to the Church. Not a small thing if you're in his shoes.

So again, sometimes it's hard for us to grasp some of those things, to understand why certain things happened the way they did. Why did he wait seven years? Why didn't he start in the first year teaching it? And it's a matter of how God revealed it to him over the period of seven years. He became stronger and stronger in those doctrines. The more he kept and observed them, the more that God continued to

give him about the meaning of each one, until it finally came to that time where it was clear to him, very powerfully so, now is the time. He relied on God to give him that and to know when and how to do it.

So, to me, it's not a small thing either that God gave them seven years to do it, to practice it before it began to be taught to the Church. Incredible. A matter of refining, preparing, and then giving it. Because once it's given, it becomes a lot more difficult to come to other truth about some of it if it changes some of it. I'm speaking of Pentecost. Because God didn't give him everything about them. He didn't give him the actual day that Pentecost was to be observed. Pentecost was supposed to be observed on a Sunday, but the scriptures were written in such a way that it appeared as though that it was to be kept on a Monday, and the way to count it and the like. Well, God didn't give him the ability to see, no, it's on a Sunday. So, in his mind, he saw that it was on a Monday. That's what was taught in the Church.

But God also used that in a very powerful way to refine the Church. That didn't happen for several decades later. It wasn't until 1974, when finally it came to a head, and he addressed that to the Church. Well, thousands of people left because of what happened during that year. And there were those who became upset with Herbert Armstrong.

He told the Church. I remember reading the letter. He sent us a letter, sent it out to the Church. He did that regularly. And in that, he explained that he was going to take a year before he would make his decision. Again, he wanted to be absolutely certain in his mind, in his being, after going through this, before making a change to a different date, that he was going to look at all sides of the issue, have different ones tell him (in the ministry) what they had studied into, and he would share it, and they would share that with him. He made it clear he was going to take a year, in essence, to go through and review everything before a decision was made for the Church.

It's easier to look back sometimes and understand certain things, why they're done that way. But because of how God has worked in the last couple of decades, it's easier to comprehend a lot of that stuff. Because, again, he wanted to be absolutely certain. It wasn't a small thing. That's why the seven years for the Holy Days before teaching them. Before making a change, he wanted to know, and know of certainty this was of God, if it was going to be changed.

Again, God used this in a very powerful way to help cleanse the Church, to make it stronger, to get rid of those who weren't of the same mind, who weren't truly loyal and faithful to God and to Herbert Armstrong as an apostle, in that respect, of what was being taught, and knowing that truth was coming through him to the Church and not by any other means, absolutely no other means, that God was using him to do this. And so, there were ministers that rose up and became unhappy—that was their claim anyway—that he wasn't changing it quickly enough, he wasn't addressing this quickly enough, and changing it to Monday, as they had become convicted in their own thinking that it was.

Now, they were right about the day, and God allowed them to see that, what was right, what was true as far as the date, but they rebelled, and they took it upon themselves and began to judge Herbert

Armstrong for not doing it more quickly. That is not how God's government works. I mean, this is an incredible thing to come to understand, that to decide and start talking about it amongst others, it causes wrong feelings, wrong thinking, wrong judgment toward God's apostle, in that respect, and how God was going to work to teach the Church.

He already said he was going to do it in a year's time, he would make the decision. And by all rights, they should have waited. But taking it upon oneself to make the change, even if it's true, is wrong. And sometimes that's hard for people to grapple with, to grasp, is that by becoming presumptuous because you were able to see something, to know something, and God allowed that for a purpose to see what you would do, what people will do.

And we saw what happened. There are ministers who came to a point where they wanted to move away from the Church, wanted to move away from Herbert Armstrong. So, there were those who were upset about that because he wasn't moving fast enough. There were others who were upset because he would consider changing it at all. Because they were so deeply convicted that it's Monday, and they were going to keep doing it on Monday. "Because you can't change truth! If you have the truth in the Church," it's like, "well, how can you change something all of a sudden? If it was given that we've kept Pentecost for all these years," some decades now, "in the Church of God on a Monday, and you're going to come along and consider to change it to a Sunday?"

But anyway, both sides of the issue. Condemned if you move it, condemned if you don't move it. All these people were wrong in their approach, in their spirit, in their method of how they were going about it. They made themselves, in essence, an apostle. That's what they were doing even though they weren't saying that or thinking that. That's why that condemnation is given in other scriptures that we've gone through in the past. It's to raise oneself up to say they have the right to tell a Church, "This is what we're going to do, regardless of what he does. If he changes it, we're gone." "If he doesn't change it, we're gone." So, you had both sides of the issue.

It was even back then that there were certain groups that were starting to emerge who wanted to go back to Sunday and worship. Some of this was already brewing in the Church way, way back in the mid-70s, and they popped up later on. Some of these popped up even later on. They held on to some of these ideas. Passover, 14/15. This was their chance to come up with different, or to espouse or push different ideas and doctrines. That's how they saw it.

Anyway, it's amazing what the Church has gone through through time, but we're to learn order, we're to learn government, we're to learn how God works, we're to learn how important it is to stay close to God. Because we're not going to be able to see spiritually if we're not close to Him. We're not going to grasp what He gives us when He gives us the truth. On and on it goes.

So, Herbert Armstrong lived in a unique era. God gave him truth after truth after truth that He built upon. I think of one that was fairly early on, of seeing within the trinity that the holy spirit wasn't a

being, it was the power of God. And yet the trinity talks about this triune Godhead, if you will, the holy spirit being individual, at that time Jesus being an individual within the God Family, and then God the Father. And he came to see, God let him see that no, the holy spirit is God's power, it's not a separate being.

But the idea that there were still two, God didn't show that yet. And to me, that's a unique thing too, that He was going to save that as much as He did the right day for keeping Pentecost, to try the Church, to teach the Church, to work with people. Always for a purpose. We ought to be humbled by that, that if you're able to see certain things that have taken place, to realize everything has to come from God through Joshua the Christ.

So, we went through the period of Philadelphia. I'm trying to think how it says it toward the end there in Philadelphia. "I'll make you a pillar." To me, it's an awesome thing to understand the history of the Church, and when you read through things about Philadelphia and what was given, talking about the key of David, and understanding things on a spiritual plane. But even a physical plane because a lot of this was taken on a physical plane in a way that it's more spiritual than it is physical.

But there's one organization out there that has taken it more on a physical plane and has to do with what they believe in a lineage physically in Judah that leads up to Christ. But this is more of a spiritual thing about Joshua the Christ.

So it talks about [Revelation 3:7] **...setting before you an open door. No one can shut it. You have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.** So, you know, some awesome things that took place during Philadelphia. It was an incredible time where God called a lot of people.

It speaks of a time when he'll **make those of the synagogue of Satan...** Because there were churches out here that hated, hated the broadcast, hated the telecast, hated *The Plain Truth* magazine. We lived in Texas, and we started *The Plain Truth* program and we were organized in a way that boxes, tons of boxes were sent out month after month of *Plain Truth* magazines, and different Church areas all over the country would take these out and put them in grocery stores. They'd get permission to put a stand at the grocery store (that was the most popular place), or train stations, airports, wherever they could put them. They would go out and make sure they were stocked with *Plain Truth* magazines.

And there were groups out here, churches, that would go out there, throw them out, complain to management to try to get them thrown out. There were stands that were bent up and thrown out or just bent up and destroyed because people hated it so much. And this is a part of the story here.

And so it says He's going to **make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews,** meaning spiritually, **but lie. Indeed, I will make them to come and worship before your feet and to know that I have loved you.** So to understand what that's about, you have to know God's plan. A Great White Throne, that all these people who were deceived, didn't understand what they were doing,

thought they were doing a good thing by getting rid of something that was exposing or saying something different from what they believed, and one day they're going to know, no, Herbert Armstrong was an apostle at that time, and God was working with him, and that was the truth, and the truth about the Sabbath and the Holy Days. So to me, this is an awesome thing.

And when it says, "to come and worship before your feet," that's what it means. The God Family. People are going to be in the God Family, and there are going to be people on earth who are going to remember things that they did and things that they spoke and it's all for a purpose. What would that purpose be? Hopefully, to humble people. Hopefully, to help people to see how wrong they were in things that they did and be able to come to admit that, so that God can begin to work with them. Because if they don't repent and have a humble spirit, God won't be able to work with them.

There will be people who are going to be so set in their ways and so filled with pride, they will never admit this. That's an amazing thing to understand, too. Even though they're in the God Family, they can appear before you and be right in front of you and speak to you, and then gone; they're not going to be moved by that kind of power. Pride is pride. It's a powerful thing what human beings can do.

[Verse 10] Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which will come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth. Many have felt that was a matter of World War III. But the greater trial for the Church was the Apostasy. Because the Laodicean Church was going to be short-lived. There would be those into the thousands and tens of thousands who would live on after Herbert Armstrong died, after Philadelphia was over, into the period of Laodicea, and this is about those kinds of things that began to take place.

The greater trial was going to be upon them of what would actually happen within the Church. It's going to try the whole world. It doesn't mean mankind. It's about God's Church. This is to the Churches, the seven Churches, and to those who dwell on the earth in the Church. It doesn't have to say that. We know that. It's about the Church. It's to the Church. It's not for the world to understand. It's not to try them, it's to try people in the Church. Where are you? Where is your mind?

So by the time Laodicea was over, God allowed the Apostasy, and this came to pass, this is the trial that came upon, in the whole world, upon God's Church. Incredible.

He who overcomes, I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And some felt that this, some of these things said, are only to this Church, to this Church era. No, that's not true. That's to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, all of the Churches. That anyone who does this, they're going to be made a pillar in the Temple of God. That's what it's about. Not just to the era of Philadelphia. Because there are things that are said to the different Churches that apply to everyone who ever comes into God's Church.

Now, let's see. This is beautiful. "He who overcomes, I will make them to be a pillar in the temple of My God." That's what our calling is about. I think of all things, this is one of the powerful things that was given to Herbert Armstrong to understand that the Church of God is the Temple of God. He gave this information to the Church before he died. Not long, but before he died. And then during Laodicea, this was virtually gone.

Because if we really knew that we were the Temple of God, we would have understood more clearly what took place in the Temple concerning the Apostasy and what happened when the abomination of desolation came along. But what happened, the prophecies having to do with the end time, the prophecies having to do with what was going to come to pass, some only saw it physically.

That's why there's this concept within some of the organizations that things have to take place in the Temple Mount area where there's a mosque right now, and that some of the stones have to be brought in, or as one evangelist said, at least an altar has to be there in order for there to be a desecration of the altar.

And you think, well, who's going to start doing the offerings and stuff? Who can do this? There's no Levitical system. There's no one who can do this before God. The Church of God isn't going to do this, you know, start offering up sacrifices to God. That's insane. And yet there's this concept still out there by some of the scattered group that they think certain things have to happen in Jerusalem before the end comes. No idea, because they forgot this. What is the Temple of God? It's the Church of God. The desolation and the abomination of desolation is in the Church of God. Not on a physical altar like was done in 70 AD and different things that took place.

He who overcomes, I'll make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out. I shall write upon him the name of My God. Which is what? It's about Elohim, being Elohim. ...**and the name of the city of My God.** Talk about New Jerusalem. It's spiritual; it's all spiritual. ...**which comes down out of heaven from God.** So, we know what takes place.

Anyway, I wasn't planning on going through Philadelphia, but it's an incredible history we have, it really is. Let's go ahead and pick this up with Laodicea, Revelation 3:14.

So, Herbert Armstrong died. The Philadelphia era came to an end. That acknowledgment couldn't be made within the scattered Church later on because that would be to acknowledge that everyone was a Laodicean. This was a big no-no in God's Church during Philadelphia. If anyone becomes a Laodicean, you have basically no hope. It's like, you're pretty bad.

Everyone wanted to be Philadelphian. That's why one group out here still holds on to that name, "We're Philadelphian!" and no one wanted to be a Laodicean. And yet everyone who went through this period of time, when it was all over with, in order to come into God's Church out of Worldwide, had to

acknowledge, "I was Laodicean. This is what happened to me." And if one's not willing to humble themselves, God can't work with them.

Revelation 3:14—Now unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write, These are the things said by the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning (origin) of the creation of God: I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot. Oh, this is an age-old desire within God's Church, that everyone be hot. In other words, on fire, desirous of God's way of life, wanting God's way of life, convicted of God's way of life, and not becoming lukewarm, not becoming cold, especially, and God's spirit not in a person, and that being evident.

So, what happened? Well, the Church wasn't hot; it wasn't cold. There was a resemblance of things as far as Holy Days, people going to the Feast, people tithing and going through the motions of various things, but it wasn't with strong conviction anymore. It was kind of a lull, in that respect, of what was taking place within the Church.

I'm speaking from my part as a pastor, thinking that I would far rather be able to see that everyone is hot, desirous of God's way of life, wanting this way of life, convicted of this way of life, not letting down spiritually, not being questionable in things they do, because then it becomes unclear. Where are you? Are you fully in the Church? Are you fully convicted? Because this is an ongoing thing that's happened forever.

And thankfully, as a whole, the Body is far better off than it ever has been. But there's still that portion there. I'd far rather be able to see, yes, you're in, you're fully in, or you're not. So this middle part is a dangerous area. It hurts the Church.

I would that you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. I love this, in that respect, to help us to understand something on a spiritual plane. After seven eras of God's Church, toward the end-time, finally, we're being told something that all can learn about in the Millennium, all can learn about in the Great White Throne. And that is, you can't be partially in the Church.

We're either convicted, and this is our life, to death, when we die, when it's over with, or not. We're convicted we want what God has placed before us. We want to work toward that. We want to clean up our lives. We want to be repenting. We want to do what God said in the sense of what Christ said about prayer, to stay close to God so that God's spirit's working in us constantly, continually. That's what we want.

Because if we turn lukewarm, God can't use us, if we just kind of coast and drift along and just pass time. Our life is not about just passing time until we're there. It's about living this life and how we think and how we treat others, and on and on it goes.

“So then, because you're lukewarm.” God making it very clear, He will not accept that. He will remove it from Him. It can't be a part of the Church, and this is how it was done. The entirety of the Church spewed out of His mouth. In other words, making it very clear it was separated from Him, but exceedingly distasteful. Because that's why the word vomit or spewing out of the mouth is given, to show how distasteful this is, that it came to this point that you can no longer be in the Body, in God, in God the Father. So, it's very descriptive in that regard. God makes it clear.

So then, it says, because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing...

That's where a complacent kind of spirit begins to come in, where if we feel that we have all that we need, and it's like, well, we know this and we know that, and we have this knowledge, and it just becomes ho-hum, and we're not excited about it, we're not thankful for it, we don't give God thanks about it, it's not living, it's not alive in us, this begins to happen.

And so, this is the attitude, “I am rich, have increased in goods, and have need of nothing.” We can never get to that point spiritually. That means we have arrived; we don't have anything to change. We always have something to change in our being. There are things that as we're refined, God helps us to see more and more deeply into the thinking in our minds, and we constantly go through a process as we grow in the Church over decades, of refinement, and that's a growth pattern. We're either growing, or we're not. We can't be stagnant, because to be stagnant is to say, “I am rich and have no need for growth.”

...and know not that you are wretched. I love that word because it's used one other place in scripture, where Paul says, “Oh wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death?” Then he thanks God through Joshua the Christ because that's how, through our Passover. So, that's the problem. That was the problem with Laodicea. There wasn't this matter of repentance and people, everyone constantly saying, “This is what we are. And God's very patient with us. God's very merciful, very loving, very caring. He works with us. But I know my spirit. I know that I'm a selfish human being, and I need to change, and I have to keep fighting this.”

One who doesn't see this can't grow. If we can't see what we are, if we can't see our nature, if we try to defend it in any fashion or form, the parts that are wrong, then we're wrong. So, to me, it's a beautiful thing. “Oh, wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death?” We have to see what we are, that we need to be delivered. And if we see that, we have need of a Savior. The one we said, made the oath to at baptism. We need to be saved from this carnality, from this selfishness.

...and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Without God, this is what we are. Without God's spirit alive and working within us, what do we have? We have nothing. **I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire.** So this is a matter of refinement. It's a matter of desiring to be refined. “I want to change. I want to grow. I want to fight against sin. I want to be on guard against it.” That's how we need to think. **...that you may be rich.** So, we're only rich if God's spirit is in us, and that's the riches we want to embrace.

...and white raiment, that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. I could give a whole sermon on that, but we'll pass it along here.

Verse 19—As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. God loves everyone that He calls. So, everyone that He calls, He'll rebuke us, He'll show us where we're wrong, and we should want to know where we're wrong, and we should desire to receive chastening when we begin to go off course. That's what that's about, to be corrected. But this matter of rebuke is a matter of being able to see, or desire to see, things that need to be changed in us. If we don't want rebuke, if we don't want to change, we're in bad shape.

So, it says, **Be zealous, therefore, and repent.** So, God gave that opportunity after the Apostasy took place. I started to say, "hit the fan." But that's where, spiritually, things did hit the fan, and all the truth came to light. Look what God allowed to happen, what finally happened because of carnal, human nature and becoming Laodicean, weak. So, He says, don't be weak, be zealous and repent, change.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. What a beautiful thing. So, this is what happened at the end with the Apostasy. God wants us to repent. He wants us to see what we did because the question should be asked indeed, "How could this happen in God's Church?" "If this is God's Church, how could this happen?" Well, we know it's not God's fault, so whose fault can it be? Why did it happen? And that's what we had to acknowledge. It was us. We all sinned. We all did this. We became weak and didn't grasp the depth of how much we needed to change.

So, it says, **I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door...** Well, what's that going to be? Well, I can tell you what it was at the Apostasy. There were so many doctrines that were already being hit. One of the strongest ones was Passover. For several years in a row, we had to address Passover. And all the splinters out here, they should have been addressing Passover, because it was being attacked, 14/15th Passover. Then it went on to Pentecost, and then other things, doctrines, were being attacked.

And this is the part of hearing God's voice. God is there to help us to get back on track, to grasp and hold on to the things that were given to us through Herbert Armstrong, and make sure those are strong and vibrant and alive again.

Just like the teaching of the Church eras. It was gone. It wasn't being taught that I know of at all. It just wasn't there. And many other things as well. So much so that there were people in the Church making it quite vocal, "Oh, those Church eras, we really didn't understand that, and it was about something that happened back then." No, it was about the Church.

If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to them. So, what's that about? Well, if we hear what God is telling us, most of it, especially here, comes back to this matter of the need to repent. We need to repent. And if we'll listen to what He's telling us that we need to repent of, He's there. In this

case, He's the one knocking on the door trying to help us to see what took place, why we had it, what took place in the Apostasy. And if we'll listen, then we can repent and God will come in, come into us again, because we've been spewed out.

I will come into them and will sup with them. This is a spiritual thing, the food that's given to us that comes from God, the bread of life. **...and they with Me.** That's why I love the doctrine that was given to us in a very powerful way of what Joshua did in John 14 and John 15 and on, when He revealed that God the Father dwelt in Him and He in God the Father, and that we can experience the same thing, that He's coming again, ongoing, in the lives of those who are in the Church. Awesome! Beautiful!

...and they with Me. To those who overcome... It's about fighting, conquering. That's what this means. **...I will grant to sit with Me in My throne,** Christ is saying this, from Him, **even as I overcame and am sat down with My Father on His throne.** Be in the government of God, in Elohim. **Whoever has an ear, let them hear what the spirit says to the Churches.**

So, incredible verses here about repentance, the importance of repentance, something we have to do all the time. But all this is a promise, an oath to God that we will, that we want to repent, we know the need for our Passover. Not just a one-time thing at baptism, but for the rest of our life in this physical body.

Anyway, I want to stop there today because I do want to read a little bit of news. It's been a while since we've gone through some of this, so I wanted to use a little bit of time here today to read through some news articles just to show a trend that's taking place more and more in the world, and being aware of it, and grasping a little bit more how close we're getting. Just going to read some news headlines and some things that were said in the past couple of weeks.

It says, **Rubio Reportedly Planning to Miss NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting Next Week.**¹ "Reuters reported on reported on Friday that the US Secretary of State plans to send a deputy in his stead. If true, it will be the first time that the US Secretary of State has missed such a meeting since 2003." Well, what's that all about? Why go through this? Because it's about a trend that's taking place right now. Europe is swinging farther and farther away as a group of people, away from the influence of the United States. They see a need to protect themselves. They see bad things coming out of this country, and their attitude toward this country is increasingly getting worse and worse and worse.

I've been really kind of amazed at this over the past several years because there has been that time in writing of the other books, it's like, but how? It just is mindboggling how they could end up doing what they're going to do during the Fifth Trumpet. Candidly, it's just been hard to see. But I believed God; God says it's going to happen. Now, we see it happening in the sense of their attitude changing more and

¹ Watson, Sophie. "Rubio Reportedly Planning to Miss NATO Foreign Ministers Meeting Next Week." *Kyiv Post*, 28 Nov. 2025, <https://www.kyivpost.com/post/65214>.

more and more, that it's really pretty easy right now to see why they're going to do what they do. It really is.

And because that attitude just is continually being worked with, stimulated, if you will, because of events that are taking place, and by this country in particular, this is happening, and it just is another indicator of how close we really are. Not a time to rest, not a time to take it easy, but a time to realize this is coming at us pretty fast. How fast? I don't know. But if we can't see the speed of which things are changing and happening? That's why we go through things like this.

Another article here. This is from Russia, Russian news source. **NATO Suggests 'Preemptive Strikes' Against Russia Could Be 'Defensive.'**² Now, they said this, it's true. Just because they say it doesn't mean it's false, doesn't mean it's propaganda or something, or whatever terms people like to use. They do report on things that are very true because they want to push it out there and say, "See what's happening? See what you're doing?" So, they want to say things and add to it because this is, like, "See, this is where you're headed if you don't make some changes here," and poking fun at, in a sense, the West, primarily Europe, European nations. Anyway, so this kind of stuff just keeps going on. It's like them goading, and yet they know this is true. This is what they believe. And if they believe this, then what does this do to their mindset about how long does this go before someone is going to push a button? That's what it's about.

US tells EU to hand back frozen Russian assets.³ Now, you might think, well, that's a headline, but what does that mean? Europe is really sick and tired of being told what to do. They've had it up to here, and that's becoming more and more evident. This has so much to do with what they're going to do.

Another one here: **Putin Says 'Ready For War' Against Europe If Attacks on Russian Tankers, Energy Continue.**⁴ So, this rhetoric of war just keeps going on and on. If people are trying to back away from a confrontation, and that's pretty easy to see, even in just two people about to get into a fight. But when you're talking about nations and so forth, there are things you don't say if you don't want to head toward that direction. But if you're headed in that direction and you keep poking, there are reasons for this. So anyway, I want to read this.

"But on the question of Europe, which has been largely sidelined when it comes to the US peace plan version, Putin is angry. He denounced a recent series of drone strikes on oil and gas tankers carrying Russian energy exports as acts of **'piracy.'**"

² International, Sputnik. "NATO Suggests 'Preemptive Strikes' Against Russia Could Be 'Defensive.'" *Sputnik International*, <https://sputnikglobe.com/20251201/nato-suggests-preemptive-strikes-against-russia-could-be-defensive-1123203878.html>.

³ *US Tells EU to Hand Back Frozen Russian Assets – Politico*. <https://nexusnewsfeed.com/article/geopolitics/us-tells-eu-to-hand-back-frozen-russian-assets-politico/>.

⁴ "Putin Says 'Ready For War' Against Europe If Attacks On Russian Tankers, Energy Continue." *ZeroHedge*, <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/putin-threatens-ready-war-against-europe-if-attacks-russian-tankers-energy-continue>.

Give me a break. Isn't that crazy? You think how lunatic people are today. And it's like they can keep fighting and keep destroying things in a particular nation, and yet if it happens to them, it's like, "How could you do that to us? This is piracy!"

"He also, on Tuesday, made clear that European demands related to Moscow are not at all acceptable, suggesting that they are, by intention, an effort to prod and anger Russia. He said that **'Europe only proposes unacceptable demands,'** according to Interfax. **'They are on the side of war,'** he said of the Europeans. ***'Russia has no intention of going to war with European countries. But if Europe wants war Russia is ready.'***"

So, this kind of rhetoric, it's incredible.

"— Putin has told journalists before meeting Witkoff and Kushner." That's what he told them, about war, that Russia is ready for war. "...he also **vowed to expand strikes on Ukrainian ports**, as retaliation for the some four tankers which have already been hit by Ukrainian attacks." So again, they're upset because "How can you destroy our tankers?" Anyway... "...which are believed to have had the support of Western intelligence. According to more of his words."

When Russia does this, they throw these things out. Look, you're getting your intelligence from somewhere. They talk about the United States giving them intelligence. Undoubtedly true. But it's making a barrier there more and more as far as a war is concerned.

Another article here: **"We Must Protect Volodymyr": Leaked Call Shows European Leaders Conspiring Against Trump Peace Plan.**⁵ That's incredible. You think, leaked? Anyway. "In a development that is not entirely surprising, European leaders are claiming that Washington is **looking to 'betray' Ukraine and President Zelensky** during potential formal peace negotiations with Russia. 'There is a possibility that the **United States will abandon Ukraine on territorial questions** without providing clarity on security guarantees,' French President Emmanuel Macron reportedly said, according to a **'leaked' phone call** record with other European leaders."

Yeah, all this stuff going back and forth, and the games they play and what they're saying here leaked, I'm sure, on purpose, but it's to cause a divide and cause others to join together in a cohesiveness that they don't have.

"Also reportedly on the line engaged in the conversation were German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, Finnish President Alexander Stubb, and of course Zelensky as well. Finland's President Stubb followed with, 'We must not leave Ukraine and Volodymyr alone with these people' - after NATO Secretary General Rutte chimed in: 'I agree with Alexander. **We must protect**

⁵ "We Must Protect Volodymyr": Leaked Call Shows European Leaders Conspiring Against Trump Peace Plan." *ZeroHedge*, <https://www.zerohedge.com/geopolitical/we-must-protect-volodymyr-leaked-call-shows-european-leaders-conspiring-against-trump>.

Volodymyr. 'The underlying assumption seems to be that Zelensky is in a weak position and is being bullied by the more powerful US officials who have leverage.'

So, what does this do with Europeans who want something done different than what the US is doing? It puts more of a wedge in between the relationship. That's what's growing over there right now over Ukraine. It's the biggest thing that's causing all this.

"Finland's Stubb seemed to agree with Merz, according to the transcript. 'We cannot leave Ukraine and Volodymyr alone with these guys,' he said, apparently referring to Witkoff and Kushner, which attracted agreement from Rutte."

"Der Spiegel [German news source] admits in its report that 'These and other statements reproduced in the notes of the conversation **illustrate the Europeans' deep distrust of the two Trump confidants**' [It's not just them, it's the United States.] Michael Weiss, who was one of the report's co-authors, framed all of this as focused on countering **'American dirty tricks to the end war.'**"

Some of the stuff about peace is hard to take in the way some sometimes things are spoken of. But it's causing Europe to turn more and more, and an attitude against the United States, to distrust the United States, and realize if they pursue and do have a conflict with Russia, which they more deeply believe now than ever before, that they're not going to get help. That's where they are. And if you think that way, then that's much easier than to react in a way that's prophesied.

Another one here: **Exclusive: US sets 2027 deadline for Europe-led NATO defense, officials say.**⁶

"The United States wants Europe to take over the majority of NATO's conventional defense capabilities, from intelligence to missiles, by 2027, Pentagon officials told diplomats in Washington this week, a tight deadline that struck some European officials as unrealistic."

"The shifting of this burden from the U.S. to European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would dramatically change how the United States, a founding member of the post-war alliance, works with its most important military partners."

"In the meeting, Pentagon officials indicated that Washington was not yet satisfied with the strides Europe has made to boost its defense capabilities since Russia's expanded invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The U.S. officials told their counterparts that if Europe does not meet the 2027 deadline, the U.S. may stop participating in some NATO defense coordination mechanisms, said the sources..."

Anyway, it's just a further deepening of a rift between Europe and the United States. That's what the Church needs to grasp and understand right now, that the more this rift is there, the closer we are to events that are going to come to pass happening.

⁶ "U.S. Sets 2027 Deadline for Europe-Led NATO, Defense Officials Say" *Reuters*, 5 Dec. 2025, www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/us-sets-2027-deadline-europe-led-nato-defense-officials-say-2025-12-05/.

Thought I would read a couple more here as well: **As AI Booms, US Ignores One Threat That Could Turn Off Everything.**⁷ “Our government formed a commission to assess this risk in 2001, which reported in 2008 that 90% of Americans would likely be dead 6 months after a HEMP attack on the U.S. [It means High Altitude EMP attack of a nuclear weapon in the atmosphere] because our modern civilization operates as a system of systems, but all of the systems require electricity and electric components to function.”

The point is that these things are happening more and more, where people realize this is what we're edging closer and closer to, and beginning to see more and more, it's a matter of time. So, what are the possibilities? What could happen? And what could happen to us? What could happen here?

“Americans are even more dependent on electricity today than we were 17 years ago, and our dependence on electricity will grow even deeper as we integrate AI into our lives. *So, as we depend more on electricity and AI, the policy question is: Are we actually implementing strategies for mitigating EMP risk, as the expected cost of this known risk is massive and continues to grow?*”

“Note in this regard that triggering a HEMP,” [I don't like that term. It's not about marijuana or anything. It's about a High Altitude EMP attack] “is actually the easiest type...” But you know what? There's kind of an analogy there, that we're kind of in a state of delusion to believe that something like this can never happen, or “everything's fine.” Anyway.

“Note in this regard that triggering a HEMP is actually the easiest type of nuclear attack a rogue state or actor could launch against us – because a missile only has to go up and explode over the U.S. and does not have to be targeted back to a particular location on earth. It's also relatively ‘clean’ in that radiation fallout to the ground is lower the higher the bomb is detonated. Some scholars believe that HEMP weapons are central to China's nuclear and cyber strategy against the U.S.”

So, the point being, if it goes off and they don't know fully, but it can get rid of all electricity across the United States. All electric grids, everything that runs on electricity comes to an end, and the death that's going to cause is massive on a scale itself that people don't think about.

“It's uncomfortable to consider this risk, and it's human nature to sometimes ignore small risk with major consequences...” You think small risk. And you think, “No, that's a big risk.” “...but a rational policy maker should increase investments to mitigate the risk of the expected cost of the risk increases.” Oh, sometimes these people just drive me nuts. All this intelligence and so forth that people are supposed to have, and if we do this, and if we do that, and nothing's going to get done. It's going to happen.

⁷ “As AI Booms, US Ignores One Threat That Could Turn Off Everything.” *ZeroHedge*, <https://www.zerohedge.com/technology/ai-booms-us-ignores-one-threat-could-turn-everything>.

German parliament backs controversial military service law amid Russian threat.⁸ So, big step.

They're getting more and more worried. Germany, several other countries over there, more and more worried. They know a war is coming with Russia. They know a showdown is coming with Russia. And we should know that. Especially within the Church, we know it's coming. How it transpires and how it takes place, and why they pivot and attack elsewhere? Well, this is what these news articles are about: a distrust of the United States, a distrust of a power they don't believe is going to come to their aid when the war begins.

Another one here: **Marco Rubio vanishes from Putin summit as insiders reveal audacious power grab.**⁹ I'm reading this for a purpose, this article, because it illustrates the same thing we're discussing here, and hopefully we can all see it. I'll comment on it later.

"NATO foreign ministers descended on Brussels on Wednesday for urgent talks on the rapidly shifting Russia-Ukraine war - but one chair was conspicuously empty. For the first time since 1999, a US Secretary of State skipped a NATO government meeting, leaving allies stunned.

The missing man: **Marco Rubio.**

While Europe battles its most consequential security crisis in decades, Rubio has been nowhere near the negotiations. Instead, he has plunged himself into a separate geopolitical battleground, Venezuela, the oil-rich adversary accused of facilitating the industrial supply of drugs into the US. 'If you are focused on America and "America First," you start with your own hemisphere,' Rubio told Sean Hannity in a recent interview, arguing that threats closer to home matter more to Americans than 'fights wars abroad.'"

This is a part of the trust again. They see the U.S. turning inward, protecting ourselves, and people can argue back and forth about it's a high time that some of these things were done. There's some truth to some of those things. But when you have Europe being hit as hard as they are, financially as hard as they are, because to make big changes over a short period of time is really unrealistic in nations like this. A little bit at a time and continue to grow is one thing, but because of what's happening with Russia, they don't have that kind of time, and they know that. And so, they see something like this, more evidence "They don't care. They're not coming to our aid. They're turning inward and they want to protect themselves."

And so, again, they see a war coming on Europe, with Russia, and with China because they're finally wisening up to the fact that China is a part of this process as well.

⁸ "German Parliament Backs Controversial Military Service Law amid Russian Threat." *The Star*, 5 Dec. 2025, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/world/2025/12/05/german-parliament-backs-controversial-military-service-law-amid-russian-threat>.

⁹ "Marco Rubio Vanishes from Putin Summit as Insiders Reveal Audacious Power Grab." *Daily Mail*, 5 Dec. 2025, www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15349181/Marco-Rubio-vanish-putin-trump.html.

I'm going to continue on a little more. This is just in two weeks, and there are a lot of things I haven't even read.

Musk calls for abolition of EU.¹⁰ You think, well, who cares about what Musk says? Well, he has sway. Things he says have sway. And it shows an attitude that's over here, and a thinking that's over here, and so, this worries them even more. So, here's what he said, or here's what the article says.

“US-based tech billionaire Elon Musk has called for the dissolution of the European Union after the bloc fined his social media platform X. Musk, who often accuses Brussels of imposing excessive regulations, argued that *‘EU bureaucracy is slowly smothering Europe to death.’*”

Europe knows they have problems, and they're trying to deal with them. That's their viewpoint. And they don't like meddling by others, and they want to hold on to something that they have, and they want to become stronger, which we should be able to understand. But because of this kind of thing, it causes a great rift.

“*‘The EU should be abolished, and sovereignty returned to individual countries, so that governments can better represent their people,’* Musk wrote, calling the bloc a *‘bureaucratic Monster.’*” How do you think that makes them feel? “Musk, who also owns Tesla and SpaceX, has previously described the EU as a *‘giant cathedral to bureaucracy,’* arguing that over-regulation suppresses innovation.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio criticized the ruling as *‘an attack on all American tech platforms and the American people by foreign governments.’* US Vice President J.D. Vance said the EU had targeted X for *‘not engaging in censorship.’* US Ambassador to the EU Andrew Puzder also condemned the move, saying Washington *‘opposes censorship and will challenge burdensome regulations that target US companies abroad.’*”

So again, this rift between X and Europe and Musk and others. Again, it shows an attitude and how people think, how Europe thinks.

Another article: **China would destroy US military in fight over Taiwan, top secret document warns.**¹¹

Well, that's a great, wonderful top, not so top secret, huh? Wonderful for the Chinese to think that they're way ahead of us and know that they're way ahead of us and then to have that boldness to feel that way.

¹⁰ “Musk Calls for Abolition of EU.” *RT International*, <https://www.rt.com/news/629127-musk-calls-for-eu-abolished/>.

¹¹ “China Would Destroy US Military in Fight over Taiwan, Top Secret Document Warns.” *The Telegraph*, 10 Dec. 2025, www.telegraph.co.uk/us/news/2025/12/10/china-will-destroy-us-military-fight-over-taiwan/?msocid=19bfd27f880d6aa01fdec73189626ba3.

Anyway, another one here: **WAR GENERATION We must prepare for scale of war our grandparents endured, Nato chief chillingly warns...as he reveals Putin's next target.**¹² This is pretty incredible, what he had to say. It shows how Europe thinks, European leaders think, the EU leaders think.

“NATO chief Mark Rutte has urged the West to prepare for war ‘like our grandparents endured.’ He warned the UK and other allies are next in Russia’s sights – and said member states must rapidly boost defense spending.”

“Speaking at a security conference event in Berlin, Rutte said: ‘We are Russia’s next target. I fear that too many are quietly complacent. Too many don’t feel the urgency. And too many believe that time is on our side. It is not. The time for action is now. Conflict is at our door. Russia has brought war back to Europe. And we must be prepared.’ Coming from the chief of Nato, this is no scaremongering – but a genuine warning to be heeded.”

That’s pretty powerful stuff, and it's showing how they think and how close some of this stuff is getting. Because this doesn't happen without a timeline that's involved here of what is being stirred up.

Anyway, another one here: **Fed Preps Massive Bond Buying as Japan Dumps US Debt.**¹³ I'm not even going to go into that, but what it's basically saying is they're dumping a lot of bonds, it's shaking the markets, or not even. The markets aren't even being shaken by anything anymore. It's like it's a Ponzi scheme getting bigger. But what they are saying is a lot of printing is coming behind this, a lot of printing and more money.

I'm going to stop there, I think. Just a moment. No, two more.

Another headline: **NATO Chief Rutte: China Key to Moscow's War Machine.**¹⁴ So, they're beginning to understand an alliance here that's even more threatening, which they've known, but now they're saying it more publicly. They realize that Russia and China are together in what's going to come to take place when Europe enters into a war with them. Because they fully believe Europe's about to enter into a war with Russia.

One more here. **Leaked files ‘show US wants to persuade four nations to leave EU.’**¹⁵ If you're in a government over there and you're trying to stabilize the EU to be strong, to be unified, and you have

¹² 161385360554578. *We Must Prepare for Scale of War Our Grandparents Endured, Nato Chief Chillingly Warns...as He Reveals Putin's next Target.* 11 Dec. 2025, <https://www.the-sun.com/news/15624853/nato-chief-warns-putins-next-target-war-grandparents>.

¹³ “Fed Preps Massive Bond Buying as Japan Dumps US Debt.” *ZeroHedge*, <https://www.zerohedge.com/news/2025-12-11/fed-preps-massive-bond-buying-japan-dumps-us-debt>.

¹⁴ “NATO Chief Rutte: China Key to Moscow’s War Machine.” *Newsmax*, 11 Dec. 2025, www.newsmax.com/newsfront/mark-rutte-nato-russia/2025/12/11/id/1237942.

¹⁵ *The Brussels Times*. <https://www.brusselstimes.com/eu-affairs/1878031/us-aims-to-persuade-four-countries-to-leave-eu-leaked-files-suggest>.

stuff like this taking place, and they see it coming from the United States, what do you think that makes them feel like?

It says, "The countries seen as targets to follow Brexit are Austria, Hungary, Italy and Poland, according to leaked details of the US national security strategy. The Trump administration wants to persuade four more countries to leave the European Union to 'Make Europe Great Again,' according to reports of a longer, still-classified version of the US national security strategy released last week. The US should 'work more with' the four countries with traditions of dissent against the EU 'with the goal of pulling them away from the [European Union]', the document is believed to say."

These aren't small things in the news. They are very powerful, very strong, and should be a warning to all of us to really help us, a sobering thing to realize how close we're getting to things taking place. Anyway, we'll stop there today.