

Compilation of sermons by Dr. H. L. Hoeh

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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ADMINISTRATION AND DOCTRINE

Dr. Hoeh—February 4, 1989

It was suggested that we take a look at this time of the year at—as we're entering a new administration, and going into the 1990's very shortly, faster than you may realize because we're already in February. . . . where we have been in the Church in this last more than half a century, or sixty years, and where the Church has come and gone in each one of these decades in terms of administration and doctrine and how we ought to be prepared for future matters.

So we want to take a look at how decisions are made and the nature of decisions, and to consider why sometimes some people have more difficulty than others in, shall we say, keeping pace with society, keeping a clear understanding of decisions that are made in the Church and how to cope with society around, and how to assess decisions that must be made within the Church; or for that matter within the family; because we are essentially families of various sorts within the Church.

There is in general a failure, in my judgment, to distinguish the difference between administration and doctrine. Now this failure may be assigned to the fact that sometimes our material was presented without a clear distinction. But I think it is important to make a distinction. When we say "please enter the backdoors," and "do not enter this door" you should know that is not a doctrine. That is an administrative decision. And when it is reversed it doesn't mean the Church has changed its doctrine. Now if your thinking doesn't understand that clearly then you need to evaluate how you would make decisions. So we must learn from such a simple illustration the importance of discerning the difference between making an administrative decision and a doctrinal statement.

Now of course, doctrine may be on a great scale, that is a definition, clarification of what God is, or doctrine may involve something very small. Administrative decisions may be inconsequential or they may be of great consequence, so merely because something is a doctrine doesn't mean it's important, and administrative decision it's unimportant. These will vary because essentially doctrine is the broad explanation or teaching, and administration is simply the application of principles that are laid out in doctrine or instruction.

The Bible is full of such illustrations. It might be of interest to go through a few points in the Bible that you're familiar with, or should be. . . . (discussion of marked bible) It's important perhaps to understand where you would find certain material on the basis of the story flow in the scripture.

Let's start with a matter that clearly illustrates the kind of problems people have. If you were to go back to the law as it was given in the days of Moses, you would be impressed, of course, by the role of sacrifice within the administration of the nation's religious customs and

practices. Yet you would read, for instance, in Psalm 51, and I happen to have the NKJ version here. In Psalm 51 you would read the statement here that David refers to, he said that You don't require sacrifice and offering. What you require is something quite different. In this case what we are dealing with is something significant in the development of David. In verse 16: "For you do not desire sacrifice else I would give it; you do not delight in burnt offering; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart," as we move into verse 17 of the numbering here.

Now, what we should do is think about the implication of this. Here was the king, a king who understood that for practical purposes when you repent toward God of a sin of this nature what was required was not sacrifice. What was required was a complete change of attitude; that which had been let's say stiff and unbroke, taking a stick of wood as an illustration, needed to be so changed that his resistance to God's law at this critical point where Nathan had brought to his attention—he tried to get one of his leading men drunk, finally had him killed and he had already committed adultery with his wife—these were some very serious mistakes. David simply had gotten so far removed that he didn't realize what he had done or didn't let himself realize it.

But how did David know the decision that should be made in a case like this; that he did not have to go to the priesthood and have offerings made? He said, "Else would I give it to you," which means he didn't do it because it wasn't required, and he so made that plain to us and to others by having written it here in the 51st Psalm. Well the answer to that question of course is important. In the days of Moses even to the days of Jesus, the sacrificial customs remained until the temple of course was destroyed in A.D. 70. Yet David had an understanding. That is, the sacrifices were really something that people offered when they wanted to acknowledge their sin in order that they could be forgiven by—let's say by the nation as expressed through the priesthood, or the sons of Aaron, and that they might continue to live in the community rather than they should suffer some kind of death penalty or other additional penalty that might have been imposed. In the case of David he was certainly guilty of blood, therefore the death penalty would have come on him. It would not have come on everyone because there's some crimes that were simply regarded as of smaller worth administratively. But David made an interesting decision. He realized that repentance was what was required.

Now for people who might have been living in that day there could have been a controversy. That's why I'm choosing this. Some people would say that David should have offered sacrifices. Others might have said

No, David said he didn't need to because repentance is toward God and the sacrifice is—as we learned, Paul would later say— simply a reminder of sin. So that what is interesting, even when the law required this to be done, David did not administer it with respect to someone—in this case himself—who had to repent of sin rather than merely acknowledge the sin. We are face-to-face, therefore, with the fact that there can be illustrations in which we may say exceptions occur.

Now we'll come to a New Testament illustration of this. For the nation as a whole there was an administrative policy, and that is that you had to bring those sacrifices but the nation as a whole was not asked to repent toward God to receive the Holy Spirit, which is defined in verse 10 of Psalm 51. The people were not promised the Holy Spirit so David in a sense was living according to the terms of the principles that Jesus would lay out in the New Covenant proposal, which New Covenant had not yet been defined anywhere in the Bible until YHVH said—or the LORD had said to Jeremiah that there would come a time there would be a New Covenant; that instead of writing it on stones and requiring sacrifice, I will write the law by the Spirit of God in the hearts of the people.

So there could be controversy in how you would administer such a law, or whether it should be administered.

Now in the Book of Acts Chapter 15 you're also familiar with the fact that there came to be a problem that didn't affect Israel all of the time but it was one that had to do with sacrifices. This law that was laid out was one of a certain number of points, and the requirement was that the nation that God had given—let's say the nation of ancient Israel to whom the law had been given—must not involve itself with idols and have nothing to do with the sacrifices of the heathen. But the New Testament times introduced a problem because there were people called into the Church of God who were Greeks living in the Greek world, and living in that world they were living in an environment in which idols were present, statues, in which sacrifices were made to such statues or idols, and that meat was also in part used by the priests of the various gods and goddesses, but also was made available on the market place. So the question is: If the meat had been properly bled, that is when the animal was butchered, should you eat meat that is offered to idols? Or to use another analogy, should you sprinkle holy water in some ceremony?

The decision in Acts Chapter 15 you are generally familiar with, and that is that they were told not to eat meat that was offered to idols. Not to do so. Yet it was some years later, very few, that it was expounded with further information that was not recorded. In the Book of Acts Chapter 15, there was the broad statement in which no exception was given; no exception was given.

Now look at I Corinthians Chapter 8: “Now concerning things offered to idols,” Paul didn't go back and say Well, let's look at what, in this case what was written here in Chapter 15, which says very plainly,

beginning with the 23rd verse in the Jerusalem Decree: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit,” verse 28, “to lay no burden greater on you than these that you abstain from things offered to idols.” Verse 29, the first point: “Abstain from things offered to idols”; point two: “from blood”; point three: “from things that were strangled”; and point four: “from sexual immorality” in the religious context. It's not arguing about adultery and fornication or other—homosexuality in general, it's talking about staying away from all of those things which are involved or were then involved in some of the religious customs; because you had the dogs that you read of in the Old Testament were the male prostitutes, and then you had the harlots, many of whom were simply the religious priestesses. So that's why those things were involved, not addressing all the other moral questions.

Paul didn't say Now concerning things offered to idols you should not eat any meat offered to idols. Yet there was the decision. But he said We know that we all have knowledge. Now he's here talking to the Corinthians. He is addressing the bulk of whom were non-Jewish, because he doesn't really make an issue there whereas he does in Romans make a distinction significantly between the Jewish and non-Jewish brethren. In the city of Corinth, however, the bulk of the people who were called overwhelmingly were Greeks, and they seemed to have been what we might call more broad-minded, which can mean two different things; really broad-minded in a sensible way or in a permissive way. But he said, “We know that we all have knowledge, but knowledge puffs up.” That is, if you think you know, then there's a tendency to be proud of the information that you have at hand that somebody else is not privileged to understand. “But love edifies.” Therefore Paul said it is very important to recognize that you administer such a question by way of love.

“If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he needs to recognize that he really knows nothing yet as he ought to know,” in the sense that there is so much more to be learned about any field of study or for that matter any, shall we say, spiritual doctrine where administration is involved. There is so much more that we need yet to know as to how to handle a matter.

Jesus set an example about the sabbath. The sabbath says “You shall not do any work.” From a scientific, physical point of view that means exactly that: “You shall not do any work.” Yet Jesus did work. So he illustrated that you have to know more than which day is the sabbath and know more than the broadest principle “You shall not do any work.” He illustrated a matter there administratively on more than one occasion.

But back to this: we don't all know best how to handle administratively decisions, but we must recognize that love should be the motivating concern. That is, what is best for your neighbor not merely for yourself. “If anyone loves God this one is known of God,” so the first thing is we ought to have the love that God expresses in us and learn to love him, as well as our neighbor; in turn God then has contact with us in a

unique way, that he knows us and reveals his knowledge to us.

‘Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, now we know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no other God but one.’ We know that. But even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, as there are many gods and many lords indeed in the heavenly realm of people’s thinking and in the earthly realm of human behavior. We have people who exist in the state in which some people are essentially addressed as my lord to this day; in the judicial system, Britain, much of Asia, we have different levels of thinking in people’s minds, so we must recognize that the world then had the same variations as we have today.

Now there is only one supreme God. And even if there are so-called gods, yet for us there is only one divine, creative family, the Father of whom are all things and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and through whom we also live.” So he’s addressing the fact that in the Church in a sense we recognize one God and Father, and one Jesus Christ who—that’s Jesus who is the Messiah and who is Lord over the Church.

But not in every one is this kind of knowledge or understanding. “For some with consciousness of the idol until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled.” So Paul is saying, Yes, I know I instructed you that an idol is nothing and that you therefore, if an idol is nothing to you, you can eat meat that is offered to an idol so long as the meat was not strangled and that you do not eat the blood with it. That’s not an argument here. But what is the argument is that some people went beyond the call of love—brotherly love—and did so before those who thought in terms of the idol, and in thinking in terms of the idol they made some mistakes. And that is that the person who would see someone eating meat in an idol’s temple would be emboldened also to do the same thing when in fact he wanted to withdraw from it and he therefore got involved once again in idolatry in the way the other person did not.

‘Who does not commend us to God, for neither if we eat meat offered to an idol are we the better or if we don’t are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours becomes a stumbling block to those who are weak. If anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, is it not possible, Paul says, that the conscience of someone else who is weak might be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols; as if it were something offered to an idol, and therefore he has a relationship with the god or some being of another plane represented by that statue.

Now because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against a brother and wound your weak conscience you sin against Christ, for if food makes your brother stumble, I will never eat meat again, he said, lest I make my brother stumble. That doesn’t mean that Paul

didn’t, he said if that is the case I certainly wouldn’t eat meat in the presence of such a person.

So this whole chapter is dealing with a very important issue quite different perhaps from the issue that Paul addresses, but it’s an issue nevertheless that is important in how we make decisions. David made a decision. He understood what was meant by the sacrifice and that, in fact, that was not really what was required but the sacrifice pointed to what was required. Here there was a hard and firm administrative decision initially made in Acts Chapter 15, that the Church should not be divided between the Gentile and the Jew, so to speak, or the Greek and the Jew, but should seek to have a solution to a problem; and therefore, simply to keep away from the idolatrous practices of the world at large in the Hellenistic Roman area. Yet once the Church grew in that area Paul expounded the fact that it was a non-issue, if for you it was a non-issue.

Now we have something similar, I have said before, I would not ask every one to go to Thailand and I would not ask every one to go to WaiThai (sp) of Los Angeles. I would not ask even every minister to go because not in every minister is the same kind of understanding that some of you have or that I would have, and certainly not in every layman. Because there is, of course, the image of the Buddha—who is not a god, by the way, he’s a teacher—but nevertheless there is an image there. And one case I know of a parent of one of the young people being sent to teach in the refuge camp in Thailand—we did invite her along—and she simply was uncomfortable.

Now the monks normally are lined up on the side wall and the statue is on the other wall, in front of it, but the fact remains that some people would find it difficult emotionally, especially since

So we have to realize even in the Church there are people who would be upset emotionally, and so we simply don’t ask everybody. Now, I’ve been to more than one Thai funeral but the dead in Thai custom, the hands are up above, they are not folded in front over the body, they are up above and raised up above enough so that when the dead person is reclining.....there is a bowl that can be set beneath the hands and water is actually poured over the hands into the bowl from a pitcher. Now it is an interesting custom that does not trouble me so I feel free that I can explain, but I wouldn’t ask all of you to participate.....

Now for some people their minds would have been on the statue that was at that end. This meant nothing to me. It’s beautiful as an artwork, but it doesn’t trouble me. I didn’t grow up in a world in which that was a problem. So I have learned that there are things that I can do that not everybody else should do but some others would, and it doesn’t matter for me, but it would matter for them.

And so I say to you we should learn the distinction, and you need to learn to cope with differences that may trouble you that wouldn’t trouble somebody else.

We live in a world in which “If anyone thinks that he knows anything,” verse 2—it’s a very good verse--“he

Mark 16:7 or 16:8

knows nothing yet as he ought to know." That is, there are always things we can learn about how we do what we do as Christians. And we need to be concerned that knowledge alone is not enough but love and concern for others must be involved.

So David had that knowledge, Paul had that knowledge, and David had that concern and so did Paul, and they were both careful. In fact David ends Psalm 51 with an illustration that in the millennium there are going to be sacrifices to represent or to symbolize when people come to Messiah, or the Christ, it will be done to symbolize that in fact he gave his life, whereas the sacrifices from the days of Moses looked forward to it. So there will be some. David didn't say there wouldn't be. He wasn't changing certain things that he knew were going to be carried out. But in the case of the act of individual repentance that was not necessary on that occasion.

Now in the Church today we have, of course, had wonderful people in times past, and I'm sure today, who are vegetarians—I had some man come in the office yesterday who's a vegetarian. Now in the period of time in which this Church has grown up since the 1920's, I think it important for us to take a quick view of what changes have taken place in our society, in order for us better to understand what we do. There are different ways of looking at it. We could go back—I could go back perhaps further than most, but some of you could go back even further in terms of conscious awareness. But in the end of the last century, as the 19th Century was closing, we heard about of the Gay 90's—that had nothing to do with the word 'gay.' Today—it meant that the 90's were a happy period of time and there was relative prosperity. It was a kind of climax of the Victorian Era in which people, if they went swimming at all, would be swimming in things that we might more often call sweat-suits than swimsuits. It was a time in which divorce was looked upon very negatively and considered a tragedy.

Then came the impact on the United States of World War I in 1917 when the—shall we call it plainly—many of the liberal libertine ideas, as Americans then looked at it, that had been characteristic of society, especially French society, came to be talked about and were introduced into this country when the American soldiers came back in 1918 and '19. That is, the morality of the United States significantly changed from a very conservative country to one that had far more aspects of society than we would ever have allowed ourselves before. But this went hand-in-hand with something that was remarkable because many of the young men were not, when they came back from Europe, able to vote. But not only were some of these ideas of Europe being brought here but at the same time there was the next step forward by the still conservative element in this country to create a constitutional amendment to prohibit the use of drinking except essentially for medical purposes, or if you prepared your own there were certain stipulations. That is, we had prohibition, we had prohibition, and that prohibition, in a sense, would have regulated the policies

of the churches of God at that time. But going along with it as a consequence of the impact of Europe on the morality of the United States was the speakeasy, that is where you spoke lightly and quietly and if you did you might be able to go through the doorway and you would discover that you could drink after all. But you had to be careful not let others know on the street why you were speaking so easy, I mean, you know, and quiet.

That kind of thing led to a strange conflict. We had a very conservative element in the United States in the 1920's, at the same time Mr. Armstrong could define the flapper age where dress styles were exotic, maybe bizarre, quite different from the styles of the 1890's. This led, of course, to the crisis that exploded in 1929 with the crash of the stock market and economic misery and so an interesting turn of events happened. Under the Roosevelt administration prohibition was removed and you could now begin to drink again in the more public way; the speak easies were no longer essential, you had the bars in which mostly men, though sometimes women would frequent; and at the same time there was a far greater conservative direction of dress. You went from the conservative 1890's to what we might consider the wilder dress styles—and I'll call it for what it is—just wilder styles. You look at the pictures of the time and you can see how different it was in the 1920's when drink was in a sense publicly prohibited. Then in the later 1930's when alcohol came to be accepted again in society in the broad public spectrum of buildings where you could go to a bar, even though many people didn't drink privately, there was a much more conservative dress in the 1930's as a result of the Depression. So we went to a more conservative era in terms of dress and more liberal in terms of drink again.

Then came the 1940's and the beginning of a conflict in morals as a result of the soldiers going off. It was a time of very conservative dress styles because cloth was in short supply and so dress fabrics that were used in making dresses were very simple and the designs were very simple. It was a time also during this period in which hair styles essentially fell into two forms, the more traditional one in which there is a part—for men I'm talking about—and it was closely cut, and then that which was more military, or they called a crew cut—hence the word boat crew you see, or the airplane crew—it was simply cut flat on the top and close. And anybody who wore hair long enough that it would be regarded as the typical zoot suiter or the Mexican-American gangs that formed but many of the young people in the Mexican-American community formed gangs. Not the kind of gangs you and I know today but it was in a sense protecting their part of the community, their way of expressing a certain feeling of manliness. And that's where the gangs started in the 30's and 40's with the unemployed. But they often wore fuller hair, and that was looked upon, of course, as way out..... (talks about school days).....that was the standard.

Now you need to know some of this in order to grasp what has happened in this century, because many things have taken place that illustrate how we should think

about matters. I remember the first woman I ever saw wearing slacks, and though it was beginning to be acceptable, having never seen it, it looked scandalous. She was also a divorcee. Those things often went hand-in-hand. She also wore makeup. Now I grew up in a home where that simply wasn't done, it was never an issue in the home, it just simply wasn't done.

But you could see things taking place in society. The impact of the movies, rigid hair styles, very simple dress styles, conservative again, and at the same time alcohol was available—normally in an appropriate manner. Then there were, after the war, changes that began to take place slowly. There was a liberalization in morality without a question, but we would have to go through much of the Eisenhower era until a great change took place around 1960. In other words, you have events around 1917-18, events culminating around 1930, the period of the war time, but by 1960 there was a significant explosion in new ideas. Men's hair style varied significantly, women's hair styles began to change widely during this period in terms of having the hair regularly cut. The Church has never made an issue of having hair that was or was not cut, but in the world there was quite a change because in the age of our grandparents it was not uncommon for women not to cut their hair. It was simply put up just like Mrs. Loma D. Armstrong put her hair up in a roll if you remember. Some of you were then alive and still alive here, as distinct from our children who might not know.

The changes in men's style came to be fuller and it was another decade and it came to be long, and women were moving in all sorts of directions in terms of hair style as well. Makeup was moving in the direction of using something for the eye as distinct from merely the lips, the toenails or the fingernails. And they used to have beauty spots they put on their faces too, today we would call it blemish. But that's society, you should know that. And that was done in the 1930's, the beauty spots. So there are things we accept in the world and things that are set aside.

In any case, there was also, beginning in the 1960's, a larger group of young people who dropped away from society and these got into the habit of smoking marijuana, where society as a whole had accepted smoking tobacco, whereas the Church had not, and had come to make that a basic decision.

Interestingly, as I have said before, at the same time that alcohol was being prohibited in the 1920's, women were generally encouraged not to nurse their babies any more. This was looked upon as an unsanitary way and so bottles were being introduced instead of having children breast-fed. Then in the 1960's the new trend of having natural childbirth, which the Church had never abandoned and had taught all along, and breast-feeding which the Church had never abandoned and taught all along, was re-introduced in much of our Western society. In Africa, of course....

And at the same time these people were doing this they were also smoking marijuana, maybe tobacco, and beginning to experiment with other drugs. So often you

have the movement going in all sorts of directions. There is a time that society is much more rigid in terms of dress style and in terms of what you do.

In the late 1930's and 40's and into the 50's it was a very rigid society, and it has exploded all over today so that the standards are extremely variable. So much so that homosexuality and lesbianism among women is now an accepted alternative lifestyle in much of the United States and parts of Europe. I didn't say it is a right one but it's one of the accepted lifestyles legally in many areas today in terms of civil decisions. And at the same time we have of course the introduction of drugs of all sorts. We have today in society an unusual thing. At the same time that there is makeup there's also that made-up natural look, and there are many people in the world who do not wear makeup at all. It simply isn't done. You go to the bank and if a woman is a teller instead of a man, I would say that more than half of the women I meet do not use makeup on their fingernails. In the 1940's this was almost universally the practice. That is, you did it, so that there are strange things taking place in our society. We move in all sorts of directions around us, and it is important that we note these things; and they're not always good and they're not always bad. Some things that God would have approved the world has disapproved and then changes its mind. Some things the world would have approved God has never changed his mind on and has always disapproved it.

And don't let anybody think that smoking tobacco or putting that kind of thing in your lungs is even physically good for you. We did not know why, let's say there were consequences, but Mr. Armstrong analyzed and knew there were some fundamental problems with tobacco, both in terms of the purpose and in terms of the impact it had on others. And he made a decision well in advance of many people who now realize indeed that even tobacco in the work place is a problem for the non-smoker. On the other hand, I do not find that my lungs are affected by somebody who wears makeup. That's a physical matter. My sensitivities might be, but it doesn't affect me in the same way as if I had to work side-by-side with a smoker.

So, one has to recognize that the Church has made certain decisions along the way in connection with these things in terms of what the Church should represent and in terms of what these things meant to the world at the time. There was a time when longer hair meant rebellion, longer hair meant rebellion. That's why it was worn. It was worn to symbolize the gang you were in. Then it became part ultimately of society. There was a time women's hair was cut in a fashion to be mannish and any woman who had the haircut that now many in the Church right here would not find objectionable, whether men or women, and the ministry does not, that would have been considered mannish in the 1930's. That is you were no longer behaving womanly to have such a haircut. But that's in a sense how people look at it and why they do. And strangely why some people do at a certain time is not the reason others do it later because it simply becomes a style. It is no longer an

issue. It's no longer representing something that you are trying to introduce in the sense of a revolt against other customs in society.

There's a drift away today from accepting the extreme liberal direction that had developed in the 1970's in the mor-ality in the world, the era of President Reagan has certainly changed things to an extent that will have an affect into the 1990's. But as the mid-1990's come almost certainly there's going to be a drift in another direction, perhaps economically and perhaps morally; without a question there will be movements in new directions. That's simply the way our society is because we don't tend to hand down from generation to generation old traditions. We're a very mobile society, speaking of the world around us.

Now in dealing with this, Mr. Armstrong, you have to understand, came from an era growing up as a child in the 1890's. That's the early—the end of the 19th Century and and the early 20th Century. And he went—he grew up seeing all these differences. He grew up in a time when essentially blacks in much of the United States were uneducated by any modern standard. He grew up in a time in which there was revolt in the 1950's and 60's against the consequences of society that the blacks had to live through. And I can remember to what extent we had to make decisions in those days because our primary site for the Feast of Tabernacles was in Texas, and in east Texas for that matter..... (Story about bus ride, black lady with arms full)

.....Here in the United States.....no man (black or white) rose on that bus to give that woman a seat. Now if this had not been a racial matter I knew what I would have done. I would have gotten up, and I still do, for a woman who should not be asked to stand. Although I've seen women on buses here in this country wonder why you do. They're the kind carrying the briefcase going to work and are not about to sit down in the chair you make available because they are going to cut out a new niche for themselves. But I did not want a needless racial incident to occur.

But this illustrates to what extent our societies are affected with problems and we don't always know, sometimes we have to ask and sometimes we would change our mind. Knowing what I do today I might have asked her to sit down anyway, just as a man, but I did not know and I was never in the South.....

But we are face-to-face with the significant thing that the Church today has grown up in one of the most remarkable periods of human history. And there was a time that decisions needed to be made with respect to makeup because of what that symbolized in the world. Decisions were made in Imperial Schools with respect to the width of the belt because of what that symbolized among young people. You know, I went to school when I was in the first grade I went to school in overalls. I did not go to school in slacks. It was semi-rural country. Yet today when I look at it, when I see young people—it's the funniest thing, they will wear overalls as a kind of symbol of rebellion rather than a symbol of what society was like.

Mr. Armstrong objected and prohibited slacks on the campus in early days. They were permitted essentially only in other situations such as when you went to the mountains to hike. Mr. Armstrong had not yet been in Asia. He thought of slacks as simply some kind of alien culture that had been introduced into this country. He had never yet really seen and lived with the Arab garb that men wear which are gowns. I could have worn mine but I think it might have surprised you. And I should not offend the weak.....

One has to realize what these differences are. And we grew up in a sense in which the Church was not going to be the cutting edge of various revolutionary concepts to alter society, and Mr. Armstrong did not intend it to be. He said that when clearly roughly half the people feel free and comfortable with it—and most things don't go beyond a certain point anyway—but when it is clear that society has accepted some of these customs that have nothing to do with right or wrong, but may have to do with right or wrong if they are symbols of rebellion and hostility— but when they cease to be symbols of rebellion and hostility they may become in many of these instances non-issues.

Drinking could be a symbol of rebellion in a speakeasy, therefore it should not have been done. Drinking was not prohibited—alcohol I'm referring to—but it is always something that should never overcome the individual. Hair styles can vary, dress styles can vary. Now in some societies Mr. Armstrong knew what the Bible said, so noses with rings were not prohibited. That is, you know, a woman could have a nose ring, that was not prohibited. He never did like pierced ears for women but he did not find any direct statement indicating that women should not do that so he—he wanted women to behave appropriately and he wanted men to. Today nose rings have not yet become an American fashion, earrings certainly are variable, and although the Church today does not yet, formally, publicly encourage the presence of an earring for men

So the Church today has moved from the point in time in which we say that when a woman sits down the dress must go over the knees. When you look at television and the prayer line you'll find that most of those women on the prayer line don't have that. That's now in the Christian world accepted, it's a non-issue. For Mr. Armstrong it was an issue because to his wife it was an issue and she grew up in the 1890's and in a sense reflected a more conservative standard. Because the Church doesn't have particular rules any more there, that is administratively certain things have been altered in terms of what's essential in your appearance, what we say today is simply that society indeed has changed so much that you will find people in the world who on the one hand will wear short dresses at the same time others will wear the equivalent of a granny gown.

When we grew up there was essentially the same standard. You didn't have these extremes. Most everybody did this, today we do this and this and this. And so now in the world we must learn to distinguish what we would call "be temperate in all things" and apply that

not merely to food and drink but in terms of general appearance; to be properly groomed. That is basically left to the individual, and I think we today can be reasonably sure that there will be no problem if we follow those fundamental principles that are laid out in scripture about being concerned for one's neighbor.

I draw attention now to certain things elsewhere in the Bible beside I Corinthians 8. In I Corinthians 6:1-11 we have another important relationship here. We go through a world in which the law plays a significant role. There was a time no one was permitted in the Church of God to take anything to court until this had—it had been decided at Headquarters that it was a permissible thing, because taking another person to law was a new trend to represent the essential hostility that was beginning to develop as greed grew. The United States is known now as a litigiousness society, that is we try to settle things by going to court instead of settling them out of court. So the Bible tells us in this important chapter to be careful, in verses 6 - 11; to be willing to accept wrong or even to be defrauded rather than get involved. Today the Church has not required people whose sabbath—whose jobs may be challenged by work on the sabbath, and many cases do exist in the court systems in which brethren have been involved without having to have it decided, because it has been so common place and as the church gets bigger those things cannot be handled in the same manner. So administratively we recognize the wisdom of making query at the local level and bringing it also to Headquarters if there is doubt, but the Church doesn't administer in this area.

But in any case we know that we don't take legal matters to court against one another. That does not change. Paul made that very clear: "Does brother go to court against brother and that before unbelievers?" Verse 6. So that's an utter failure on your part that you go to law against one another. So we don't do that. But on the other hand, there is today a general permission that if you have to in a litigiousness society do so that you do.

With respect to race relations: in those earlier critical years when conflict was arising in our society, there were certain rigid rules as to who might or might not attend Imperial Schools. Those have all disappeared. You might have been interested, of course, the fact that one of the funders for the theatrical presentation on television called—the video on television was "Raisins in the Sun, or—yes, "A Raisin in the Sun" I guess it was singular. I'd never seen that before. As I said many a time before coming to Ambassador College I'd seen one movie in my life when I was aged three. So it's not a part of experience—seen a few more since. But that illustrates some of the problems that existed in 1956 which was the setting of the occasion, and in that time there were significant problems in the world in terms of how to get along. Today those things are non-issues and brethren happily are not required to face up to a society because throughout the United States many of those barriers have broken down so that they are simply non-issues today; although in some places there are still problems.

Our daughter who lives on the East Coast, the youngest, had a young black couple into her apartment when she was renting with somebody else and they were preparing music, and the apartment proprietor came back and they were still there. Next week she got a letter asking her to leave after that month was up. That still happens in 1987 in parts of this country. Now the reason was not given, the implication of course was obvious. So we still have to live with some of those things, but it no longer is a fundamental factor that addresses how we conduct ourselves.

So brethren, it is important that we face facts today and recognize that we are in a world in which many things are no longer symbols that they once were, no longer symbols they once were. Makeup is no longer a symbol of prostitution. It would still be in India and our brethren there do not do so. The absence of makeup can be just as much a symbol to the world of one's religious conviction, or if you look on the prayer line on television the presence in great abundance of makeup could be a symbol of religion. It's one of those paradoxes. You can seem to be religious by wearing too much or nothing. And in the world you can wear too much, little, or nothing, and if you're worldly enough anyway it won't matter. But these other extremes are also seen interestingly in the world as characterizing religious circumstances.

But I hope you will, in teaching children, explain what is happening in society, and the important points of vanity, self-centeredness remain unchanged. And we should always ask ourselves and be able to explain why we do what we do, and that's expressed also in love toward God and love toward neighbor, and carefully examining the scripture and see how the scripture applies to us.

WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE CHURCH?

Dr. Hoeh—June 16, 1984

The picture, of course, of the Church today is quite different from what it was even when this college was founded. We're a world-wide work. And from time to time we're asked a fundamental question. I think I would like to refer to a time about two years ago when Mr. Carl McNair asked me, in the area of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to address a Plain Truth lecture; and I was to be given two lectures, so the first one essentially was to be focusing on where we are now in world events, and the second one, where we are going; what it's going to be like. That question, of course, is fundamental, and I was rather surprised two years ago to discover that sometimes the brethren have heard so many separate sermons that they never put together that what they really needed to know is: Can you say in a sermon what this work is all about? That is, how would you answer the question if someone would say what is the function? what is the work of the Church? what do you teach?

Now, so many people would think that in teaching you should define all the little doctrines—maybe there are 10 or 20—that other people have in which they differ with one another and they want to know your stand on it—that's not the approach at all. We need to learn what the work of the Church is. In fact it is what the purpose of man is. So I would like to address to you today, in the time remaining, a way of answering some of the biggest questions that the world is faced with, that in fact we face every time we have an editorial meeting and we decide on the kinds of topics that need to be addressed from issue to issue. Necessarily there are those topics which we use to catch interest that might be momentary, but then there are the more permanent ones. We understand where humanity has been, where we are now, and what is going to happen. We understand why man is here and what the purpose of life is. We also understand the way to peace.

Now the way to peace, of course, is heard commonly in this work, but in the world we generally hear only the word peace. Because the world is told that what we really have to do is to sit down and talk with one another and try to come to an understanding of one another's views in order to facilitate peace. But that has not done it because we've had conference after conference and people walk out and people go to war afterward. The way to peace is something more significant. But the way to peace alone is not the answer to the whole question, because if we practice the way to peace and the rest of the world did not we wouldn't have peace. What we have to establish is how all the world is going to find the way to peace, and that is not merely by studying the Bible, because people have been studying the Bible for centuries. Christian leaders, Christian countries, they have propagated it, and it has not brought peace. Be-

cause the written record of God is not enough left just in man's presence to study or we should have had peace because we've had the Bible since the 15th Century B.C. in part, from the days of Moses. But the Bible does tell us not only the way to peace but how it is going to be enforced over all, and that of course leads to the question of the government of God which is announced in this book. But that's what people don't want, and that's why from time to time we must forcibly address the question of the one thing the governments of this world do not want; and that's God's intervention in world affairs to tell them what to do.

The way to peace can only be possible—I should say can be brought to the whole world's attention and offered to the whole world only if God should send a messenger with power and authority to displace all human authority today or to bring it into subjection to his government; because God's way is the way to peace and his government alone can bring it about.

There was a meeting—kind of a friendly business meeting in part, and social meeting—that my wife and I had with a woman of north German nobility, Frau Von-(hollenwolen) (sp)—a man, her cousin of Russian nobility whose grandfather owned much of Red Square, and who fled the country like all the smart Russians then did—I don't know if that's how Mr. Tkach got here, but surely his ancestors must have been smart enough to realize something even if they weren't nobles at Red Square. This noble of course turned his money into diamonds and was going to go across the border, and of course you don't want to show your diamonds; you want to seem to be a peasant crossing the borders. So he had put his hands into water and into dirt and got them nicely cracked, and at the border they asked not are you this person, are you that person, they simply asked "let me see your hands." And if I'd raised mine they would have shot me; of course when he raised his they looked like little cracked peasant's hands, and he walked away with his diamonds.

Anyway, we had an interesting meeting with a man who was a college teacher at the time, and we were all for dinner, and I was explaining what the college stood for; the way of life that brings the kind of results, I described the way of life that we have here that Mr. McNair is setting an example for—I'll use his as an illustration because there was a time that example wasn't being set and this was no longer God's college—but at the time that we had this occasion we were looking at the results that we were getting and the teaching. And he said "You know" —this man teaching at one of the other schools here is a guest of our business acquaintances—he said "You know, you have the way to solve the problem. It's the way that all the young people on our campuses," in

the late 1960's and early '70's, "are seeking." He admitted that we had the answer to what young people were seeking across the campuses, but he said one sage observation. He said, "You know, if they were to see it they wouldn't believe it's the answer."

That's right. If they were to see it they simply wouldn't believe it's the answer even when they see the cause-effect relationship. And so it is in the world today that we have to recognize that what's in the Bible has been given but it is not perceived to be the answer. Now some things in the Bible are acceptable, that is, as long as the world by hard experience has learned that certain fundamental aspects of the Ten Commandments seem to bring results, that which they are willing to accept in order to make a society work, that they will give God credit for, or at least take it for themselves and put their approval on the same ideas: "You shall not kill" you know we don't like murderers running around; we don't like liars; we don't like thieves. Of course these things are written into law but we don't follow them too well it seems in Western society, and in many other areas. But when it comes to the other aspect of the big message of the Bible, that is it's not enough to look at God's law, it's not enough to keep the commandments. Now we had an article which said it's not enough to have "Faith in Jesus." Faith is one thing, keeping the commandments is another.

Now of course when I use the term I'm just using it in the general sense, I'm not assuming that we're differentiating the spirit of the law from the letter of the law. But we have people, not in this fellowship of course, who say they keep the commandments but there's something missing. And that something missing is they have not brought themselves under the government of God. They have not subjected themselves to his government. That's why they often stop with just the Ten Commandments, and condemn the rest of the story, that is the amplification of those commandments. There are some people who understand you shall not steal, they understand you should tithe, but they only want to tithe once, that is the first tithe. They want nothing to do with the Holy Days that God hallowed, therefore they don't save a second tithe, and they simply—and most of the world simply would rebel against the idea of saving what we recognize as a tithe for those who have no visible means of support. That's a special tithe once in three years. Yet they go along with all the welfare programs in this world that are far more costly.

So what we have, of course, is to recognize that we have a way of life that leads to peace reflected in the Ten Commandments, but more than the Ten Commandments, amplified in the biblical record, amplified in the Book of the Law, amplified in the Book of the Covenant, amplified if you please in the law, the prophets and the writings, and in the Greek revelation—in Greek that is—of the New Testament, the message of Jesus Christ, amplified in the examples recorded in the Bible of all who contributed to the Bible.

But all of that is only what we should be doing. And what is still needed if there's going to be peace in the

world, and indeed unity in the Church, which the Church of God Seventh Day ultimately failed in, there has to be, without any question, a recognition of the government of God. Now it's not enough just to have the government of God if you don't do the commandments and you have no faith. You have to put it all together. There has to be a recognition of the government of God, the laws of God, and faith in God, trust in him, to enable you to fulfill those laws.

In the world this is not the situation. In the world people do talk over their differences, and some people are rather harmonious in their nature and they tend to compromise; and then there are other people who are their neighbors who are not so harmonious and do not compromise and never think to do so. Europe is the story of nations who would be willing to compromise and nations unwilling to. Asia has a story a little different, but still there have been problems in Asia too. Not perhaps like it was at the time of the Second World War. Usually Asia's problems were limited to that region, but there were two great periods, the time of Mongol power, the time of modern Japanese power, when Asia became a focal point for major world catastrophe. But Europe has been the center of it for centuries. The Arabic world today of course is a new caldron of it with uncompromising people. But you know in this world even if nations were willing to compromise it wouldn't solve the problems within.

So what we need to learn and try to put together so that we're able to explain to other people, is a kind of thread or story where you can take it much as Mr. Armstrong has but amplify it here or there or cut out sections depending on what the interest of the people might be. But I would like to start the thought out today with a basic definition of where we all ought to begin and that is "What is God?" Where did it all begin?

The best definition in the broadest sense that I know of that best answers a child's question is found in the prayer given by Moses, which is of course Psalm 90. And in verse 2 of Psalm 90: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you have formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God."

Here we have a definition of God as a being who existed before the creation whose nature differs from that of man. The nature of God here is everlasting in either direction, if we can use the word direction here. In other words, thinking backward, rolling time up and getting back to the beginning, God was there all along, and he was there as long as you can imagine before, and he was there before your imagination runs out. He's been there all the time.

"From everlasting to everlasting you are God."

Now I would like to let you know, of course, that we have a very fine relationship with a religious community outside the Christian world, and I want to explain something here. We have a fine relationship with the secular community in Israel but we have to stay away from the *religious community*. We have a fine relationship with the religious community in Thailand, the like of which

exists no where else in the world, but you perhaps would better understand it if you realize that a Buddhist is a religious atheist. Buddhists do not worship a supreme God. They do not believe there is a supreme God. There's only principles, eternal principles, and the teacher who came to enunciate them having discovered them. Perhaps it is the fact that they are religious atheists, and said in an appropriate manner, that it makes it possible for us to communicate with them in the same way we have a way of communicating with the secular people in Israel but couldn't possibly have the same relationship with the religious community. That's not generally understood in the West.

But in contrast to the God who was there before creation, where we can expound on the fact that matter in itself is not eternal, here is a God, now he defines—or Moses defines for us through revelation, of the nature of this God. And here we see the nature of man, the children of men are defined in such things as “in the morning they are like grass which grows up” end of verse 5. “In the morning it flourishes and grows up, then in the evening it is cut down and withers.” That's man. Man, in other words, is temporary, man is mortal, you don't have to get on the subject of an immortal soul, you merely have to define man as mortal. And in defining man as mortal we can just simply say—and we ought clearly to understand that by nature when man dies he's dead and his thoughts perish, irrespective of twilight experiences as one may be dying and what might be recalled—man is dead when he's dead, but God is ever living.

God, before the creation of the world, we learn by revelation, created an angelic world which was present when this universe and the earth was made. That's of course familiar to you all in Job 38:4-7. Now the nature of these angels was not yet determined, and a certain number decided no longer to remain subject to the government of God but to question it, and finally to challenge it, and ultimately to openly rebel against it in order to overthrow the government of God. There arose therefore a leader that happened to be the one who was over *this earth and over one-third of spirit beings that were created*. He turned out to be a liar. That is, he lied about the way to peace, he lied about God's law, and sooner or later he would have to lie about God in the sense that God isn't one who always tells the truth. He challenged the ideas of God which are based on love. Love turns out to be—Mr. Armstrong defines it as the way of give because love came to be defined as sexual intercourse in the 1960's, at the time of the Viet Nam War. And so a whole new word had to be defined or people would misunderstand. But in the traditional Christian world, love, that is the fulfilling of the law, outgoing concern, the way of give, is the way God thinks; but the devil came up with the idea that competition pushes you on to achieve even something greater, and so the devil thought with competition stirring him up, this idea stirring up angels, that they could do more than if they merely were concerned with other people.

So the one word that Mr. Armstrong used from the beginning of the founding of the college, competition, is

the best way to define this world's nature. It's the way the angels went who went astray, and once you start to lie about God's way and define competition and the way of greed as the better way rather than the way of love and give and concern for one's neighbor, that competition breeds murder as an attitude. That is, you want to get even, you want to avenge yourself. Competition involves this. That's why when you hear an ad on radio or on television and they speak about the business world out there, they define it very appropriately, they say “it's a jungle out there.” You know what's in the jungle? Creatures who want to devour other creatures. Board meetings in great businesses are devoted to the spirit of competition, to the spirit of the destruction of your competition, and don't think that's not the case. If it were otherwise they would invite the other corporation to meet with you, but that would be collusion. It's the spirit of competition that leads to the spirit of hate, and it's reflected in other areas beside business. Certainly in the sports field, in competitive sports at the level of the great games of this world, they call it perfect hate. We could scrub out the word perfect because human beings aren't, so they can't hate perfectly, they just hate; and that's another form of competition.

The being whom we know as Satan is the one who created this idea that made him a murderer at heart. He became a murderer at heart because he adopted the spirit of competition. John 8:44 defines his nature, and so the world has ultimately come to accept that same nature, but that's getting ahead of the one thought defined in the Book of Jude, in which we find the devil ultimately leading angels, and this is further defined in Revelation 12 as leading one third of them, in a competitive attempt to displace God, remove his government and remove his law from over us so that we could be regulated by the spirit of competition and getting ahead and taking advantage of an opportunity at the expense of another. That's what was happening. God won that battle hands down. Of course you know the various verses of the Bible in Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 that make a contribution to it. Then the world came on the scene with the present order of things as we generally know it. And humanity decided, as has been explained many times, to adopt this same spirit of competition, but whereas the angels had immense knowledge and didn't have to go through experimentation, man had to add something to competition, because human knowledge is so limited and so man added what we call experimentation. That is the way by which knowledge has been acquired in the human family. Now there is nothing wrong with experimenting if you remain under the government of God and subject to the laws of God. But experimentation becomes a great threat both to the health of the individual and to society and to survival of the world if we experiment without having that experimentation controlled by the law of God.

What we see today is a science that experiments. It's a science that essentially is amoral. Science lives in an immoral world and it takes an amoral view of the world,

meaning it is non-judgmental. If we can think to invent the bomb then we simply invent the bomb. Being amoral we don't define how it should be used. We leave that to the immoral—or that is the politicians. They are to make the decision, and the religious leaders are to give them guidance, the religious leaders that have led one nation and another to war over the centuries by influencing the politicians.

So we are today at this present crisis, and it goes back to the fact that man rejected the government of God, rejected the law of God, and having been cut off from the proper limits within which knowledge could have and must be added, because we're born short of it, every one of us is born without knowledge, that's the way God started us, we have to then either as a body or as individuals add an understanding of our relationship to the world around us. And in so doing, experimentation has been adopted.

Now most people don't really understand the nature of experimentation. There is an area that is far less serious, in fact, and that is the normal experimentation that we—when we examine the physical nature of things. Now it has gotten out of hand with the bomb that's for sure, but we've learned a great deal about the world and a great deal has been acquired that has been useful, especially in areas that enable us to communicate by radio, television, you know, the telegram, the telephone, all of these means that we have found.

But the one area which has determined our use or abuse of this area in science is another area of experimentation that we can philosophy. Sometimes you can link it to psychology or psychiatry, but in the end it's this whole realm of philosophy. That is, trying to understand why man is here and the purpose of life. And as I have said so long ago, you should all remember, a chemist can be more easily tested to be a truthsayer or a liar because his experiment has to be repeated, and if you can't repeat it you can be sure he altered the facts when he presented his first documentation. A chemist is much more limited to that which proves to be true or proves to be false. But how are you going to evaluate the philosopher? Karl Marx was a philosopher of economics. There have been the philosophers of capitalism, Adam Smith, there have been the religious philosophers, the religious teachers, there have been those that have dealt with the human psyche, especially the man who made psychiatry famous out of Austria. You need to realize that in this area man has no way to prove the right and the wrong left to himself.

There are whole nations today that are subject to ideas that anybody living in this part of the world would regard as questionable or in error. And yet on the other side of the iron curtain children grow up believing the philosophy of atheism, which teaches of course that if you follow the general principles of Karl Marx, of Engels, of Lenin, and of his successors we create in humanity the new man, the new man that is not motivated by competitiveness and competition, but is concerned for his fellows. Communism is an attempt to supplant the truth of God by the way of communism instead of the way of peace.

And it is assumed that if you teach the ideology of Marx that we don't emphasize greed, we don't emphasize capital, that we share everything except our underclothes and toothbrushes, that that creates the new man.

Well, what it has created is soldiers going into Afghanistan who have gotten on drugs—that doesn't seem to be very new—we have the same thing here—after almost seventy years now—at least after sixty years—the new Soviet man is still on alcohol, and he doesn't even use good alcohol which he used to. So philosophy as an area of experimentation hasn't really solved anything. Religious philosophy we call theology, that is where people study the area of religion, and that has produced of course Islam, that has produced all of the religions of Asia, it has produced the Christianity of the western world, and you look at the countries that have adopted these—you don't have to say Well, compare Europe to the Arab world—just look at the Arab world within itself, just look at Europe within itself. People with the same religious philosophy went to war with each other. It did not teach Lutheran and Lutheran, Catholic and Catholic, Protestant and Protestant, whatever the group, orthodox and orthodox, it taught none of those people the real way to peace.

In the Islamic world today we have Iran and Iraq—now of course Iran is not an Aramaic country—it's an Indo-Iranian—but within the Arabic world you have a conflict of course between Iraq and Syria, different views between Jordan and Syria, and in the Islamic world the religion of Islam has not solved the problem of peace between the nations that have adopted that philosophical view of religion.

You see, man has no way to know and to be sure that he's arriving at the right answer. Once he has cut himself off from a revelation of God or a recognition of God, or a recognition of his government, then of course he has no way. And there's no way that you can reason other people into this. You can't reason other people into understanding what we do because the truth of God is not arrived at alone by reason. But experimentation is based on reasoning, whether it be in the physical world or whether it be in the world of the mind, philosophy, ideas. In the end it is a question of faith.

I had a person whom I've never met, he had written once and then he called. He said the minister hasn't wanted to consider me qualified to become a member of the Church. He said, "I would like you to prove to me why all of these things are as they are, and why the Bible is the revelation of God; why I should believe this revelation." He said, "I believe much of what you stand for is right, because I have no argument with most of the commandments, but," he said, "why should I believe this as distinct from some other revelation, that is called a revelation?" And indeed, of course, the Koran is a revelation—if you ever read it it is a revelation—other books are revelations too when you read them—and they were revealed. The sources of course are the question.

Well, I said to him, "You know, you're assuming that we are convinced that we have to convince every body that we're right in this life." And I said, "That's not

the case." I said "It's not the teaching of the Church of God, it's not the teaching of the Plain Truth, that I have to convince you that the Bible is a revelation of God because the probability is I will not convince you, and especially in the way you're approaching it I would find it a waste of time. You see, God has not"—I told him—"he has not chosen to call every one to reveal his will to every one. He simply has chosen to reveal his will to a certain limited number"—which we of course commemorated this last Pentecost—"a certain limited number."

This person, this one who is simply going to have to prove to himself whether the Bible means what it says. Now many of you, of course, have come to understand this on faith. Faith is a gift of God, a recognition that man in some way got off the track, that the Bible makes sense in a way that no other book makes sense in terms of how the world got off the track, and how it is possible to become subject to the government of God, to come under his authority, and to do his will. And you put it to the test by repentance, that's the first test you do. I think it's the best test. Now most people of course don't want to repent. That's the first stumbling block. The first test of whether this book is true, is do you repent of what you had done and begin to do what it says? Do you begin to get different results? The next step is, of course, to believe there is a purpose to life and a meaning to your repentance that goes beyond this life. You must repent and then believe. Isn't that logical? Because if all you do is just try to do God's law and nothing happens beyond, Paul said of course then "we are of all men most miserable." We don't even reap the worldly benefits that are around, we deny ourselves those. We have to repent and then we believe. We must believe the message that is conveyed in this book, and we discover in that message that there's someone who paid a penalty for our transgressions. And we ask to be forgiven. Then if we ask to be forgiven and ask in confidence, we discover something that doesn't happen otherwise. We discover that we have been forgiven and our consciences are free of the past, and it is possible to communicate with God.

And so repentance and belief go hand in hand not just in the question of conversion but of understanding that this book works, because there are a lot of things in this book you can't prove. You can't prove to me that Isaiah wrote the book of Isaiah. There isn't any one of you can other than out of the book. And that's reasoning in a circle. So reasoning isn't enough. Jesus implies he did, Jesus says he did. But who's Jesus? except I go to this book. There is no other external evidence. That's just an illustration. It ultimately gets back to the fact that it rests on faith; that those who were in God's church before us received a message in that day from Isaiah and preserved it, gave their lives if need be, as Isaiah did, to convey it to succeeding generations. And it is much better to have the concept of our native Fijians whom I have discussed this with but for another reason, and they said—in defining the traditions of the past—they said "Our fathers have told us," and for them

that was enough. They did not expect their fathers to lie to them. They said "Our fathers have told us."

Well, indeed, in the Bible the ancestors of the faithful have told us in each succeeding generation, by copying this book for us, what it is they received from the beginning, and I begin to know it because if I repent I get certain results from not doing certain evils anymore, and if I believe the message I not only see a goal in life I also see that it's possible to have as a result of a messenger who died for sin, Jesus the Messiah, the Christ, I see it's possible simply to have the guilty past wiped away. And I take a whole new look at life. I don't have to carry sins around, which is what happens for eleven months and twenty-nine days from one Day of Atonement to the next with the Jewish community. As one lady said "I no sooner get through with one Day of Atonement that I start to look at the collection of sins that accumulate from day to day until the next Day of Atonement." Of course she doesn't understand what that day is all about.

The forgiveness of sin involves simply the removal entirely from the conscience of the weight of sin, and you suddenly discover then that other things in this book open up that you couldn't understand before, and you begin to see where we are headed. Now the next step in terms of the individual is repent, believe, and then be baptized. That is I have to be willing to publicly acknowledge in baptism that I died to the past, I died to my past, and I am buried, not merely dry cleaned by sprinkling. I am buried. Then I come up to live a new kind of life, and this new kind of life is something so different because God at the same time promises that we receive God's nature.

And so, what we now come upon is linking back with that where we started in Psalms 90. That is, we go back to the very beginning that man, by nature, is mortal, God is immortal. We are to become the children of God, and we differ from every other group that I know of in understanding what it means to be born of God into the kingdom of God to be imbued with his nature. Jesus addressed this question, Peter addressed the question in I Peter 1:23: We are begotten not by corruptible but by incorruptible seed." That is spirit not flesh, not matter. Matter decays. Jesus defined it as being born not again into this world but being born in a world in which you can see God. Jesus made a promise in Matthew Chapter 5. These are the various promises of those who listen to him, to the way of peace. They can inherit God's realm, the kingdom of heaven. And interestingly and the most remarkable of all, they are to be called, if they're peacemakers and follow the way of peace, they're to be called the children of God, which means they can have his nature, and in fact that nature makes for peace.

But above verse 9, in verse 8, is the most remarkable of all; that in the end we can live in a realm in which we can see God. We cannot see God today because we live in the world of matter, and if matter were not closed off in terms of eye and brain from the actual, visible light of God we would perish. You know what it's like when

you're in a dark room, close your eyes, flick on the light, and you know how bright it is even when your eyes are closed. Well now imagine something as powerful as the sun and then imagine God, because God differs from the sun probably so much more than we can realize as the sun differs from a light bulb. So it's not possible to live in God's presence and to be as we are.

The purpose of life then centers on the transformation of the person through the process called conversion, which process the modern theologians generally know nothing of because when Rudolph Boteman (sp) described Paul's description of conversion he said "This must be a myth because I don't know any theologian who's ever gone through this experience." Now he was right, he doesn't know any theologian who's been converted. That he's right in but that didn't mean it was a myth.

We have to transform the individual by acquiring the way to peace, that's God's law, by coming under the government of God which means to be subject to Jesus Christ who has been placed as leader and captain, the one in charge, and who is given responsibility to judge the world, and we will share in that judgment of course. Then when we have that law of God in a sense written in our hearts and minds, and when we have come under God's government, we have a responsibility; and that responsibility is to do the work here and now, which is to announce to others by our example, to announce to others by our deeds, by our written words, what we stand for, what this way of life is, and what the results are. But it isn't enough, we still recognize that if we were to publish the Plain Truth and give it to everybody, if we could produce four and three quarter billion copies of the Plain Truth, you know, we still wouldn't change the world's view of the way to peace. If everybody could tune in to Mr. Armstrong on radio or television it wouldn't change this world. It would change more people, but it wouldn't change this world.

Because what is needed is the recognition that ultimately God's government, his authority, absolute and in control, has to be here to do that. But God is not going to do it so long as man has chosen the way of competition and the way of experimentation and thinks it's the way we ought to go. He has to let one more thing happen. The whole world has to be put through the wringer. You know the old washing machine wringer. Well, the world is going to be put through a wringer this time at the hands of man, by religious persecution, economic strangulation, if you please, and ultimately the bomb and radiation that would not only threaten but be bringing about the annihilation of man in such a way that radio and television, magazines and newspapers would all be saying there is now enough radiation in the world that it's only a matter of time and we'll all be dead. As scientists we know no way out, as politicians it's too late, as religious leaders we can only say "We didn't know how to stop it." And not until man realizes that it's already too late to turn time back and to change anything, it's all over; the way of experimentation, the way of competition, has led ultimately to catastrophe.

Not until that penetrates the human mind will people be willing to listen, and even then there will be those who will have to be destroyed because they will still be unwilling. But the overwhelming majority, and that means then undoubtedly a tiny percent—we presume that it's more reasonable that it's 10 percent of the present world's population at most, and in some areas it won't even be one percent, in other areas it may be appreciably more, and I think God is doing things today so that in some areas he's saving more people and rescuing some for a future purpose and others are going to have to reap the consequences of their stubborn hearts. Europe is going to reap some terrible consequences. There may be areas of Latin American, Asia, and Africa where it will not be as severe because the war isn't going to start in Africa, it isn't going to start in Southeast Asia.

While I'm mentioning the question here in conclusion, of the survivability of some people and the punishment of others, I would like to just conclude so it's in your mind—you know of course, we have for many years now, for roughly twelve years, through AICF and individual help, contributed to the

WHY WE SHOULDN'T ADOPT THE RELIGIOUS APPROACH OF THE PROTESTANTS

Dr. Hoeh—July 30, 1977

I would like to, today, pose a question What can I do? I tithe so others can witness, I pray in my closet but feel I'm not doing what I ought to; I'm not winning souls or witnessing for Christ; we don't pray together as groups when people come over; there's no prophesying in the church; no speaking in tongues. So the person would like to know what—in this case I'll pose it for each of you—what can I do?

Of necessity we ought to take a look at some of the questions that she has asked, also to examine some of the background that might underlie the assumption or assumptions in her mind.

First of all, we recently had a series of bible studies on the book of Acts. What I want to point up here is that very often when we read the Bible we read with very little understanding, for whatever reason; either the Spirit of God has not opened our minds, and there may be several reasons, which I may go into next week, but in any case, we're not really carefully reading what is in front of us. I would draw attention first of all that a number of the things referred to in the book of Acts, such as praying together, as an illustration, preaching Jesus in the synagogue, and his death and resurrection, tell only a part of the story and are very important in understanding what it is that is in the book of Acts. I explained to her that there are a number of parallels in our generation with Mr. Armstrong's work while yet in Eugene, Oregon, before coming down to Southern California, with respect to his preaching in the Church of God Seventh Day, with which he began to have fellowship somewhere in the very late 1920's, and the relationship essentially terminated in 1938.

I draw to your attention that much of the story of the book of Acts and what the disciples were doing is not an account of the apostles of that day being transferred into our day and going out in the United States, or Canada, or Britain, or the Philippines, or Japan, or the Soviet Union, or Brazil. Much of what was spoken in the book of Acts, even including Paul's ministry, was as if ministers arose in the Church of God and brought a message that had not heretofore been brought to the church; because, you see, the nation of Judah became commonly known as Israel, ruled by this time politically from Rome through a local king who was allowed to stay on the throne, the family of Herod, the leaders in the synagogue or the community, not to mention the tax collectors, were Pharisees who were basically of the family of Judah, though they did include some of the family of Levi, sadducees who were very much more commonly the family of Levi, and the wealthy, sects of the Herodians; but Jesus pointed up that the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat. The scribes were those who were used to multiply copies of the text of the Bible and to explain what that reading

is. When Jesus spoke and bore witness in his day, he was speaking in the equivalent of the Church of God. Very rarely did he ever go to the Gentiles east of Jordan, once on an occasion he spoke to a Phoenician woman from Syria, who in fact he would not have addressed had she not made an issue of the fact that even dogs get crumbs, if you remember the rest of the story.

Now the point that we have been overlooking, when Paul, and earlier than that, when the twelve apostles speak, they are not speaking to a nation that had no knowledge of the Bible, they are not even speaking to a nation that had some knowledge of the Bible, they were speaking to the one and only church that God then had on earth; and therefore no small number of things that were done there ought to be seen in the light that when they spoke in Jerusalem and the cities of Judah they were speaking to the Churches of God; and that's a term that could literally be used because the term is at least once used in the Old Testament, but more often the churches or congregations of Israel, and we refer to them in the New Testament not so much in terms of the nation as a church or congregation, whether God's or descended from the patriarch Israel, but we speak of the buildings in which they assembled as synagogues. The synagogues represented the various places of worship of the people who constituted God's only people on earth, because he had not called any other by his name. I think this is very important....(Recog. of someone in audience.)

When the time came for Jesus Christ to be a prophet, which he was, and to speak to the church that he had raised up, and to whom he had spoken in Sinai, in this case to speak directly to the people in flesh, not indirectly through the flesh of Moses and later on judges, or priests. He spoke certain things in the synagogue, and he was not addressing the Romans, he never went to Rome to our knowledge, he was not addressing the Egyptians, he was certainly not addressing the Tibetans in Tibet, even though there are people who believe that's where he got the wisdom from. Let them have their wisdom. He was speaking to the congregation and the only one that acknowledged the presence of God in, in this case the central building, the temple, that had been refurbished in the days of Herod the Great. He explains certain things that should have been clear if they had read the prophets. He speaks fundamentally, as also did John, of the kingdom of God, and the one thing he spoke almost nothing about, except to his disciples, was himself. And Jesus asks the church to convey the message he brought to that church to convey it to the rest of the world as well as in Judah and Samaria and Judea. In the book of Acts Chapter 1 he says: Now convey this message to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of

the world, as he also defined it in the last chapter of the gospel account in Matthew.

We have here a very significant point that Jesus' message is what the church is to convey, in this case we are asked to convey it not in parables so that people cannot understand, but plainly so that those who have ears to hear may hear. He spoke so that those who had ears could not, except for a few. Now later, after the death and resurrection of this prophet, who was also the Son of God and who paid for the sins of the world, the disciples conveyed to the church that met in synagogues, as recorded in the book of Acts, that there had been a fulfillment of the Passover, and that the fulfillment of the Passover made it possible for Christ to pass us over in terms of paying for our sins; that he paid for our sins instead.

The church now needed to have understanding of various aspects of the law of Moses, this aspect of the holy days, and later on when the day of Pentecost arose, they also conveyed information about the Spirit of God that was not known before. So a knowledge and an additional understanding of the Spirit of God, the Messiah, was made known to the synagogues or the Churches of God in that day. Synagogues of Israel, whatever term we want to use. Sometimes the people who believed were forced to be separate. In Judea it does appear very often that although initially this was the case, that later on the large number of people who had responsibility in the Jewish community and in the church at that time, were so many that there was general assembling at the temple itself of both, shall I say Israelites of the flesh and Israelites of the Spirit, in the sense that they were made up of those who did not and who did have the Holy Spirit, those who kept the sabbath with their own strength and those who kept the sabbath with the power of the Spirit of God to give them insight; Christians who were priests and Christians who were not priests, as well as priests who were not Christians. There's no way to read much of the later story of Paul going to the temple, of James, as Josephus says, being so highly honored in his community before the Jews blew their emotional stack around 62, and of course it wasn't more than four years later that the war with Rome broke out. But through the 50's and the 40's and the later 30's A.D. there is no question but what there was a significant relationship when so many Jews came to be responsive to added knowledge.

This was a church that had kept holy days, this was a church that in fact believed that there was going to be a kingdom of God on earth described by Isaiah, by Micah, described in its establishment everywhere, this was the nation, if you please, the church, that was looking for the kingdom of God. And they constantly, whether Jesus' disciples or others, were asking the question that may be summarized as the apostles did: "Will you at this time establish the kingdom?" They were sure that when Messiah comes, and then they were quoting all of these passages in the Old Testament, there was no need to preach to them the knowledge that a government, a kingdom, was going to be established that would replace

Rome and bring peace to the world to which the Gentiles would seek.

What Jesus said was how they were going to get there. There was no question they knew there was going to be a resurrection in the later days. They wanted to be there, but Jesus pointed up the way to get there. That's why he said "I am the way." I represent not only in terms of what I say and who I am, but how I live. I represent the only way you're ever going to get in the kingdom that you all believe already. But you're not going to get there because you're immortal souls like the Greeks have in mind, you're not going to get there because the men are circumcised and the women are married to the men and you all descend from Abraham. At most that would happen to you is that you'd be buried in the promised land if that's the case. What is necessary is that you receive the Spirit of God. That is, eternal life through being begotten by God himself; that you quit looking for loopholes in the law, that you repent of your sins instead of constructing ways to get around the law, and that when you have sinned you acknowledge your guilt and recognize that the one who pays for it is your own Savior, in this case his Hebrew name was One, and we call him in English Jesus from the Greek Jezus, the Hebrew Joshua to give an English form to the expression. He became the leader. Now he was called Jesus or Joshua because his purpose is to lead his people into the promised land like Joshua did. He was not called a second Moses because his purpose was not to give the law a second time. He was called a second Joshua, if you please, because he is going to lead the people into the Promised Land and into eternal life. Joshua only was a forerunner.

Now with this in mind, it became important to the church to know that the one who paid for their sins was one who had been in their midst; that the prophets spoke of him. What would you think if Paul were to go to Gentiles making no contact with the synagogue, making no contact with the Greeks in the synagogue, but to stand on Mars Hill and announce that Jesus is the Messiah who paid for your sins, brethren? Now if you want to know what he did on Mars Hill we're going to look at it and see how Paul dealt with the question when you're not speaking to the churches of God, and then I think we'll understand much more of what our role in this work shall be. Because when Paul spoke to the synagogue and to the Greeks in the synagogue he didn't say the same thing as when addressing the Gentiles on Mars Hill, which is much more like Mr. Armstrong addressing the Japanese in Tokyo, except I think the Greeks were every bit as carnal or more so than most people at that time, those who at least assembled on Mars Hill. They were the intellectual, the fashionable, young intellectuals of that day.

When the apostles spoke and when Paul spoke, they and he were both addressing initially the Churches of God where people of God were assembling, some converted, some not. And Paul was not having to bring the gospel of the kingdom of God because these people already had it in terms of the government and where it is

to be established, because it was foretold by the prophets from the time, if you please, of Abraham on. That's what we have when we quote what God is going to do when the kingdom is established, we go back to Isaiah, we go back to Malachi, we go back to Zechariah, we go back to Micah, we go back to Jeremiah. When we want to understand how the law is to be enforced we go to Jeremiah 31, it's going to be written in our hearts and minds and not on tables of stone, or in the pages of a book with ink. All these things hearken back to Old Testament scriptures.

It was also a church that had developed a custom of praying together. The synagogue, even to this day, if I am not mistaken, normally has a rule that you don't pray unless there are ten. Now does this vary from country to country or is this not a normal minimum? All right, thank you. We have a young man from Persia ultimately, of Hebraic background, and to my knowledge that's true, but I do not speak with that kind of knowledge of an experience.

Jesus came to say, in a congregation that was used to praying in groups, he said, "Now when you enter into your closet." I think we have completely overlooked this. We have assumed that the Church of God, the congregation of Israel, had always prayed in private, and now what people want to do is to do something different, they want to pray as groups. Let me just briefly explain. There has never been a law in the Church of God forbidding any of you to get together to pray if someone's sick. Mr. Berg and I prayed yesterday for someone who assembles in another congregation, or Mr. Tkach and I commonly go out together, we generally try to do this, unless it is a man then we might just go out alone, but even there it doesn't hurt to go out together. The church does not forbid, but it appears that some people feel that unless you pray in groups before others with others, that you're not doing your part. Now Jesus did not forbid nor did he even address the question as to whether you should or shouldn't, he is assuming that is being done. What he does ask you is to bear in mind that it is very easy when you pray together to be heard and seen of others, and he asks you rather that what you do you do in private because it is not as important whether others hear and see you as whether God hears and sees you.

So it isn't that Christians suddenly introduced something new, but people who read the book of Acts without a background and without an understanding of the synagogue are not aware the fact that when the disciples prayed together this was the common practice, and therefore there is no law against it. But what Jesus asks you to do is also pray in private, as Mr. Phillipello (sp) was mentioning this morning in the sermonette. Therefore we are not here concerned with introducing prayer groups, as many Pentecostal people do, and I know that it will tend in various directions depending on what people want because the questioner in this case joined it with the question of speaking in tongues, so I know what is in the mind of this individual. If there are people who are sick, if there are difficulties, some of you who are of, let's say Latin background are concerned, where English

is your primary language, you are concerned for the work of God, I see no reason why you shouldn't get together in terms of let's say reaching some of the areas of Latin America that haven't been reached. The church has never forbidden such a thing, anymore than our German brethren have ever been forbidden to get together and pray if they want to about the work with respect to German speaking areas of Europe. So what we are discovering is that indeed when we read the book of Acts sometimes the things that are found there are related directly to the custom of the churches, the synagogues, where God's message had already been known and preached.

Now when we come to something altogether different, let's turn to the book of Acts when Paul addresses the people who did not know the same things that we have already mentioned that were made known in the synagogues. I would draw attention here, Paul was in Thessalonica, this is northern Greece, the region of Salonica today. Now there were certain people who were philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics who encountered him when Paul had come to Athens, in chapter 17. And some heard Paul speaking. He had been "disputing in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons," verse 17, "and in the market daily with those that met with him."

Now notice Paul was first addressing Jews in the synagogue and devout people, which may have included some Greeks who attended, and having heard what he had said to them he was thought of as a babbler.

"What will this babbler say, and some said he seems to be a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached ... Jesus and the resurrection," in the synagogue with the Jews and to the devout persons and others who had met with him in the market place who had some basic background of what the Bible says, but had not heard this.

"And they took him, and brought him to the Areopagus," or the high area that you would see in Athens. "Now we would like to know what this new doctrine is that you are talking about, for you are setting forth some strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean."

Now what they really said is we're not interested, we would like to hear anyway.

(21) "For all the Athenians and strangers that were there spent their time in nothing else, but to tell, or to hear some new thing," which is Luke's evaluation of their mentality.

(22) So "Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill and said, You men of Athens, I perceive in all things that you are too superstitious." So he clobbered them with the first thought. So what he was doing was unidentifying himself with superstition. He put the onus of superstition on them in an age when they thought they were above it. Because they were trying to say he's superstitious, he's the setter forth of strange gods. He said that "I perceive that in all these things" that surround me here on Mars' Hill "you are all too superstitious. (23) For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD."

Now Paul didn't say here that what he was going to introduce was the story of Jesus. He picked out something that he could use of their own practice and custom that would condemn them to their own ignorance.

"I passed by and I saw that you had a custom here of even worshipping an unknown god." Now they had just accused him of setting forth strange gods they didn't know, right? So he found that altar and took advantage of it. He didn't say, Well, now, I find here you have an altar to Mars, or Aries, as the Greek would have been, and to Zeus, or Jupiter and, you know, to Mercurious. He picked out what would be to his advantage. He said I find here an altar to an unknown god, now the one that you're worshipping in ignorance—well, that's another slam—I'm declaring to you because I know him. That's what Paul is saying. He is declaring to these superstitious Greeks who this unknown god is whom they were worshipping and didn't know. Now that's real superstitious, to "worship you know not what."

(24) "God that made the world" now he didn't talk about Jesus and the resurrection and the forgiveness of sin, did he yet? He's not in the synagogue. He's not meeting with the devout Greeks who met with the Jews in the synagogue. He's dealing with the world for the first time exclusively here, in terms of any record that we're reading for our own benefit.

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands"; Mr. Armstrong speaks to the Ethiopians of the God who made the Ethiopians and all people. He speaks to the Japanese of the God of the Japanese who made them and all other people, who is going to set all nations aright. Paul spoke to the Greeks of the "unknown god" because that was the best way to reach them at this point, and he introduces this God as the one who made the world and all things therein, as distinct from the Greeks who were committing adultery in the world and sickling one another.

"...Seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth," which the Greeks were not, most of their gods were only lords of the underworld, this one "dwells not in temples made with hands" but the Areopagus was full of temples devoted to the gods. (25) "He's not worshipped with men's hands, as through idols, as though he needed anything like that to please him," because after all, he's the one who "gives to all life, and breath, and all things." He's a God who is above all this trivia, the burning of candles and incense, and the offering of sacrifices, and the building of altars and temples and the painting of temples and the carving of temples, and the reproductions of the gods. He's above all that because he's given life to everything, breath and all.

(26) "And he has made of one," that is of Adam, not one blood of one, "all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." He's made of one human being, ultimately, all nations to dwell on the earth. You see, not merely Greeks from Zeus; and the barbarians and all the rest from somewhere else who sprang autochthonously from the earth. He is here defining the whole human family as one to get the Greeks to think about the folly of

thinking of Greeks versus barbarians, you see. No introduction of Jesus, the resurrection, the cross, the forgiveness of sin. Now I want you to notice it. Yet people can read over this and they have no understanding because what good would it be to tell them to repent of sin when they didn't even know what the law is? Jesus is not even introduced.

So he has made of one human being "all men to dwell on the face of the earth, and he has determined the times previously appointed, and the bounds of their habitations." He is here advancing the point, of course, that some nations grow big and then they grow small. The Greeks exploded into an empire and then they collapsed before Rome. Now the purpose for all these human experiences, where you dwell, your national catastrophes, the greatness of your power, it's all that men through these experiences "should ultimately seek the kurios," translated "lord," which means the ruler. It's a common word, it doesn't mean what we commonly in the Christian world term the "Lord," meaning Jesus. The lord means one who is in the old English sense a master, kurios, the one who runs things.

(27) "That we should seek the master of the universe, if by chance they might feel after him and find him." That is, you know, the purpose is that men should learn through some of these experiences that they can, you know, grope after God, if it's possible, learning from the lessons; the burning of your fingers, figuratively. He doesn't imply here that they might find him by reading the Bible. He implies here that if by chance they might feel after him in some way through their senses, which were the only things available to these poor Greeks who thought they were so smart, and find him, "though he be not far from every one of us." He's a lot nearer than we think. But our superstition, our ignorance, keeps us from grasping God in the figurative, mental sense, spiritual sense.

(28) "For in him," that is through him "we live, and move, and have our being." That is the reality of God ought to be so clear that instead of trying to grope for God you should have perceived that we wouldn't even be alive if there weren't a Creator, of whom I am speaking. "...in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." And here he uses it in the created sense.

Now he didn't say here "as also the Hebrew prophets said that Jesus would come and pay for your sins, brethren." And then go on and on like many Protestant people who reach the pagan nations. I think that they have never read this and understood how Paul approached the problem. I doubt that most of you have given serious thought to the distinction between this and the way he speaks to church members in Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians, Philippians, you know, Colossians. Those are written to brethren. They're—shall I call them—co-worker letters with a little different thrust. I think this is important. Here is what he's saying to the world, and he's quoting one of their

own poets to show that ultimately we're not only created of God, we're also meant to be his born offspring.

(29) "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God we ought not to think of the Godhead like as gold, or silver, or stone, or graven art, or man's device." In other words, human beings represent in themselves God's created family, and ultimately, if we surrender to him, his born again family, because you have to be born twice, once in the flesh and then in the Spirit.

(30) "Now the times of this ignorance God winked at; but he is now commanding all men every where to amend their ways," that's why I'm here, he's saying. Now look at all the lead-in, and this doesn't mean this is everything he said. He might have said even more to fill it out—Paul seemed to enjoy speaking. "He is now commanding all men every where to repent," and the first thing he speaks of is repentance of sin. Now he doesn't even define sin, but he's talking about repentance in the sense that the Greeks could get it, that means that people would turn around and begin to do the right thing, without defining yet what altogether is right, but the attitude of real remorse.

(31) Now, "Because he has appointed a day," this is the gospel, he has appointed a time in the future, the judgment, "in which he will judge the world in righteousness." It's going to be judged by good conduct. Now he doesn't introduce the word sin, or law. He introduces repentance and righteousness. The Greeks could understand what righteousness meant in its broad sense without defining it. He didn't say "Now remember, this includes the sabbath, you Greeks." That's not even introduced. The issue is generality to people who could only understand it that way.

And there is going to be a "judging of the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has ordained." Now he speaks of the leader and his appointment, not the Messiahship, the death, and the resurrection. Am I coming plain as to how Paul introduced the gospel? And having introduced the world tomorrow, the day of judgment, a time when the world will be repenting and be governed by a law, and judged by a law of righteousness—in this case he didn't even introduce law, I'm only filling in for you here—it's all going to be handled by someone who has already been ordained to the task. Some of them might have thought it was a Greek. No.

"Whereof he has given assurance unto all men" that this is the man, "in that he has raised him from the dead." Because all the other great leaders who might have wanted to do this are dead. All the Romans who were made gods by the Senate were actually dead. But this man—and his name isn't even introduced—did you notice that?

(32) "Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; and others said, We will hear of this again tomorrow," and he never introduced either the word grace or Jesus or Christ. Now did he? Whether he did is not important. Luke is writing it in such a way that we are to understand the manner in which you go about reaching carnal minded people who have no biblical background. Now whereas all other human beings

have died, if someone has proved himself and qualified for this, he would ultimately have to be alive to do it, wouldn't he? That's why he said there has been a resurrection, a standing up out of the dead.

(33) "So Paul departed from among them." Now this is very interesting from the point of view of what we have written, he didn't even introduce the name. All we know is that they had heard him speak about Jesus to those who understood, in verse 18, but at this point he doesn't even make an issue of the man. He makes an issue of the government, the kingdom of God, the resurrection, who's going to run it, and how he knows, because he's alive and not dead.

This is quite different from the way Paul addressed the synagogue. "Men and brethren," is how Stephen addressed the Jews. He talks about Abraham in Mesopotamia, then about Isaac and Jacob and Moses, and then about David, and from him, David, there is this Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead. And the whole approach of Stephen to the Jews in the synagogue, that is the church, was a reference to the Bible. The approach to the pagans was a reference to the pagan poets, to the idols on the Areopagus, to their philosophies and superstitions, and to an awareness of the government of the kingdom of God.

And if you have problems sometimes, which I think would be indeed what Mr. Armstrong is addressing, brethren who have not seen the difference, I think people ought to go again through this book of Acts. I wasn't there when this chapter was gone through, but I think it very important to take note of this matter.

When we read through the New Testament we have to bear this in mind. We're not all called to be preachers, speakers, we all have a part whether we can tithe or whether we have no income, whether we pray with others to help others or pray alone, we have some other fundamental things we ought to do, and it is not witnessing for Jesus and talking to your neighbors everywhere about the grace of Christ, about Jesus. It may involve it, but let me give you some verses that make rather clear what we ought to see.

In I Peter we are told here about wives and husbands, some of whom are not converted, and addressing women who more often were called than their unconverted husbands.

(3:1) "Let the wives be in subjection to their own husbands, that if any obey not the word they may also with your much talking be won. No, it doesn't say that, does it. It said "they may also without the word," that is without arguing about what this book says to your unconverted husband who has never read it, "be won by the" and the word "conversation" should properly be here "conduct" that is a much better rendering, it's not merely talking. Peter is talking about one's conduct, "while they behold your chaste conduct coupled with fear." That is you have respect to them, your conduct is proper, and it is of a manner that cannot be commented against.

(3) "Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of" and then he goes through all the things that the Greeks held dear to their beauty, "..."

(4) "... But let it be of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God is of great price," not an argumentative, talkative one. Let it be meek, let it be quiet, let's not argue about the words of the Bible, but let it be seen in your conduct and your chaste behavior with proper respect.

(5) "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands," and not in competition.

(6) "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters you are become, as long as you do well," and then the other rendering is an awkward expression here.

(7) "Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge...." You're converted, the wife is not, you have the knowledge of the Bible, you dwell according to the knowledge of the Bible, "giving honor to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being joint heirs together of the grace of life"; because men and women, and this is of course addressed to men whether their wives are converted or not, they're ultimately all to be heirs of life, and not as many of the Muslims who view only men will ultimately be there, and the only reason for women is that men need them--"that your prayers be not hindered."

I want to go down to another section here.

(8) "Be of one mind, have compassion one for another, love as brethren," he's addressing the brethren as a whole,

(10) "He that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.

(11) "Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it or pursue it earnestly," as one of our Psalms says it.

So here we have an indication of the importance of seeing that what you say is proper and what you speak is without guile, so the conversation should be properly governed, and the emphasis is on conduct and attitude toward the other.

Now, James has something to say about the same thing. He speaks there about being "swift to hear and slow to speak," and in introducing this topic in verse 19 of chapter 1, he has a reference to Ecclesiastes 5, 1 and 2, which you can turn to, that in a sense amplify the thought. Now if we're swift to hear and slow to speak, we will not be doing what unfortunately too many do, who are trying to introduce Jesus to people who are not yet ready to listen. If you want to introduce Jesus to somebody, you want to be sure that they have seen Jesus live his life in you before you start talking about it. That is very important.

We have another verse in Colossians that I think would be good to read in this connection. Col. chapter 4:5 you're told to "Walk in wisdom toward those that are without, redeeming" or making good use

of "the time." That is, there is a time to conduct—the word walk means to conduct yourself in wisdom toward those that are not converted, making good use of the time and not wasting it with unconverted people. "Let your speech," and inevitably you are going to be talking with the unconverted in some such situation you have. "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt..." Now that grace in this sense means with propriety, someone who walks with certain grace as distinct from slovenly. Your speech should be proper and not a reproach either to yourself or the church. You should therefore when you write learn how to spell, and when you speak know how to speak correctly.

"... seasoned with salt..." The reference there is to make it interesting—when you put salt on something that is somewhat lacking in flavor, it makes it more interesting. What you have to say should be interesting. "...that you may know how you ought to answer every man." You're the one who gives the answer, he's the one who's introducing the arguments. But many Protestants have gone the other way around it. You're giving the argument and he's doing the answering. When, you see, you're asked to explain, Why do you do this? you give an explanation. Well, that may or may not satisfy him but at least it's the explanation.

Too often we overlook these things.

Proverbs 11:30 speaks of the fruit of the righteous like a tree of life, and one who has wisdom wins souls. Now there are others who claim to win souls and are not because they lack wisdom. The reference to winning souls by one who is wise is parallel with the one that just precedes—that is the first half of verse 30, the fruit of the tree. In other words, it's not what you say, it's what you do. Your deeds speak louder than your words. And when people make big issues of words I'm afraid it's very probable that their deeds are short.

What then are the various things that could be done? There are aspects of our labors that we can do in the church, there are aspects that we can do outside. Let's take some of the outside for the moment, because this was part of what was brought up in our early morning conversation.

The Church of God goes to the world where the Bible generally has been known of in some manner. The more the common people have the Bible, the more likely we go directly through advertising, published literature, radio broadcast, to the common people. When there is a nation that doesn't have the Bible to any great extent we go to their leaders. And you may frown on Mr. Armstrong's socializing, speaking at social occasions, but nevertheless that is the way to reach some of those people, because there is no other. Now the Bible has been circulated in English Burma, therefore we have not had to reach the Burmese leadership at the present. We have brethren in and around Rangoon, Karen speaking and Chin speaking brethren in the hills

We have no such thing in Thailand. The Bible has never been circulated in this manner nor has God apparently yet acted in the case of Thailand. But in Burma it is different. In Malaysia, God is calling Chinese people who

have broken from their traditions, and people who are non-Muslim. The Malay Muslims are not being called. They may yet have a witness at a high level.

Mr. Armstrong speaks at a high level in Japan because Japan is a Buddhist country, or a secular country, depending on how one looks at an individual's experience. So this brings up the fact that there's nothing objectionable.....

There is a significant need, undoubtedly, in the church and outside, to comfort those who are sick, whether in hospitals or at home, or mentally sick in institutions; prisoners and alcoholics. I think we have individuals in the church who really have the need of the company of others when they're not just by themselves, which makes for a greater problem. And it isn't always easy to work with people who have problems of alcoholism or severe handicaps, and wrestling with the smoking habit. There are things we can do..... both within ourselves as a group, and aspects of this we can do in society. Maybe you live so far away from other brethren that there may be social services in the world you can do. I have no objection. I think it's perfectly acceptable in your area. Maybe your service is to drive. If our brethren—let's just put it this way, any of the services that our brethren use publicly would be perfectly acceptable areas of your own service.

But it illustrates how important it is to think about the statement of James that "pure religion and undefiled is to visit those who have needs.".....to bring to our attention how much time we probably spend socializing, or before the television, that might—didn't say always will—but might better be spent to take care of the needs of others. And there are many ways of finding out either through other brethren, or through our own office.....

TRADITIONS OF FALSE CHURCH

Dr. Hoeh—August 6, 1983

CHURCH HISTORY

- MASS ANALYZED
- WHAT CHURCH KNOWS AND BELIEVES THEY KNOW IT
- HOW RCC WILL DOMINATE EUROPEAN TRADITION

I still do not understand some of the fundamental differences that do exist in what we call Christianity. People who read the Bible, and this morning the Catholic—we might call it an ordinary or low mass, not to be specific, it was not a high mass, it was a very simple one and in the vernacular which means it no longer is in Latin, which is the old tradition in Europe and around the world, but it is in the modern language of the people who speak, whatever language that congregation may be, whether it's Spanish or English or whatever.

But it would be interesting to ask ourselves some fundamental questions of what people believe who read in the Bible who do not understand. And my wife drew attention to an interesting verse in Isaiah 45:20, I believe. I'll turn to it here, she just showed it to me, had flipped open to it, as I was getting up, so I made no note, but I think it illustrates a point.

"They have no knowledge who set up the wood of their graven images, and pray to a god that cannot say." That is, what is represented by this image. Or those who carry about some wooden or some other form of human manufacture, some wooden statue. Because fundamentally knowledge, spiritual understanding, comes from obeying God's law; or to put it another way, there is no question that there isn't a single person who observes the sabbath, not among ourselves, not converted people, but Seventh Day Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, true orthodox Jews, I don't mean those who went to synagogue Friday night so they could keep the shop open Saturday for business. But I mean truly orthodox Jews and those who observe the sabbath, none of them fully could ever accept evolution as an explanation of creation. Now there are Jews who do, but I'm not talking about those who don't observe the sabbath. I'm saying that you don't have to be converted, you see. You don't have to be converted. But if you observe the sabbath as much as you have understanding about it you simply won't be fooled by the doctrine of evolution. In the same way, you don't have to be converted and you can avoid committing adultery, and you will know fundamentally how to make marriage a success. But you break that law and you have no knowledge about how to keep a marriage successful, and that's why we have our skyrocketing divorce rates today.

In other words, the question of conversion is not an issue that I'm addressing at this point. I'm showing you just from this verse itself that when you break the law you lose the knowledge that automatically comes to you by keeping that part of the law even in the letter. You don't have to understand it fully in the spirit or the intent. But if you break the law which says you shall not have some graven representation, whether you conceive of it to be a deity or whether you conceive of it to represent a deity, those are the two commandments on that subject, either way there is no knowledge in anyone who

sets such a statue up and carries it about when it comes to spiritual knowledge about God and his way. These first two commandments are very fundamental. The third one I won't go into at this moment, the fourth one I have. Anyone knows the crassness of people who use God's name in vain, or the character of people who take his name in vain in the legal sense in court, who promise to tell the truth and do everything else. But we're dwelling at this moment on those first two, because one cannot be in the environment in which we briefly were this morning without realizing that there are various stations of the cross, statues of the various individuals who are assumed to have played a role in the last hours of Jesus' life leading to his crucifixion, and many others, although it was a very limited one in terms of the great cathedrals of Europe, much less excessive.

Nevertheless, to break those first two commandments is to cut yourself off from God, and therefore from the knowledge of his basic truth, so that when someone reads an extract, let us say, about Jesus at a wedding turning water into wine, this is called by the people in this world the gospel. They have come to substitute the good news as not just about Jesus but about anything about Jesus, rather than the good news that he brought. When you read the account of the gospel in Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John, you actually do not have in every verse the gospel. You have a description in some cases of Herod, and in some cases of magi, in some cases of wine and drunkenness and adultery. In some cases of dear Pilate and his wife and his washing of his hands. Now that's not the gospel. Jesus didn't preach about Pilate and washing his hands. Those are accounts found in Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John who report the message of Jesus, and where and when he said it, and before whom, and what other people thought of it. But it is interesting that in this world they do not understand the distinction between the rest of the story that these four writers have given us, and the express statements of Jesus about the good news of the kingdom of God, the family of God, our role in it ultimately, if we do his will.

Now let us say, just for our edification here, that I would like to mention something. You may never have attended, you may have of course attended many masses, you may have had various backgrounds, some of you were reared in this church, you're young enough and these congregations of the Worldwide Church or Radio Church of God as before, might have been in your area such that you grew up. But I thought there was one thing that was of interest. You know the traditional statement "Do you take this man or this woman to be your wife, through sickness and health, and prosperity and poverty, until death do you part," and these things, I'm impressed by one thing. I may have said what I did

about carrying statues and not understanding a spiritual message, but when people are willing to stay with one another whether the man or woman has a job, whether the man or woman is in sickness, in health, climbs a social ladder or falls off, I can guarantee you a marriage like that will be more successful than those who are ready to switch at a moment's notice when things go wrong. And if you want to know why the Latin world represented in American by the Roman Catholic Church has a far lower divorce rate, why certain of the staid churches that still make this a requirement as a part of their ceremony that the man and the woman have to read. Do you want to know why their divorce rate is so much lower? Well, it's because they're willing to do that part of the commandments, and I grant you break one and you've of course broken them all because any one sin brings the penalty of death, but do not assume that keeping those points of the law at the same time will not enlighten you in those areas in which you are willing to obey God. Do not assume therefore that if you sin that you therefore can go ahead and sin everywhere since it doesn't make any difference. The more you sin the greater the penalty, or Jesus would not have said to the man who did not know his master's will, he will be in the judgment punished by few stripes, but he who knew his master's will, when he comes up in the second resurrection and the judgment, will be punished by many. And many a poor person who didn't know will prosper in that day, and many who are on top of the social ladder and faultless, who spent their wealth on themselves, will discover that they may have to till the poor man's soil.

In any case, there are a number of things I should like to mention in this connection. One must understand that essentially there's a fundamental thing here that we have never focused on. The New Testament Passover, our Passover service, we observe once a year, on the 14th day of the first month of God's calendar. Jesus said that "we do this as often as we do"—he says that through Paul—"in remembrance of him." That is so we do not forget, hence we must not forget the government of God to be restored to this earth for a thousand years, we must not forget the second resurrection when all who've lived and died in ignorance, many of our own relatives, are going to come up and learn what we now know. That's the Last Great Day. We must not forget the devil, Satan, and his demons are going to be put away, that's Atonement. We must not forget that Christ is coming back, the Day of the Lord is a time when God will finally intervene in world affairs, that's the Feast of Trumpets. We must not forget that there is going to be a transformation from mortality to immortality at that resurrection, and a marriage to Jesus Christ, and that's the story symbolized by Pentecost. And then we must not forget to put out sin. I'm going backward, you see, because for certain reasons I want to get to the first one where I will now tell the rest of the story.

We keep all of those annually to memorialize, like the 4th of July, like Thanksgiving, like the two national holidays of Mexico where the different countries remember, or the foundation of the modern state of Israel. That

is, every nation has certain things that draw its people to an understand of what that people as a nation and as a culture have experienced together.

And then we come to the Passover, the very first of these, and that's to bring our attention to what Christ did for us when he died. It is to keep us in remembrance of what he did so that through faith we can have contact with God and know that if we ask the forgiveness of sin throughout the year that we have it. But what we have in the mass, as many of you may, and some of you may not know, is a repetition in an entirely different form of the Passover. It is a derivative of the New Testament Passover, the Old Testament Passover, a derivative in such a way that instead of seeing it as annually a memorial, it becomes an act of sacrifice by the priest at the altar and a means of forgiveness by the participants.

We do not take the unleavened bread and the wine as a ceremonial means of forgiveness. You get the distinction? That's why they have it every day, and in many cases, of course, on Sunday, sometimes on Saturday, and throughout the week it will be hourly. And so you have the confession where you acknowledge your sin, and you cannot properly take the wafer in the mass unless you have first confessed your sins. And then you take this, and this is in a sense what completes the sacrificial act that has occurred on this altar, and as it is generally pictured the priest is given this remarkable gift to be able to transform barley or wheat into the flesh of Christ, and to transform wine into his blood. And by taking this, the act of forgiveness that God grants is complete, and so it is very important for people who have this concept to not ~~not to~~ neglect it.

This all comes from a misunderstanding that arose in the Council of Nicaea in 325. You remember the council which Con-stantine called in order to get everybody together on a number of things, and the one thing they agreed on is Easter Sunday as distinct from the Passover. But Easter Sunday merely had the most remarkable form of the mass, but every Sunday, and every day of the week, there are masses going on. Masses for funerals, masses for ordination, masses for weddings.

So what we do want to take note of in this case is that there was a time very early in the history of the church, when a transformation occurred in understanding of the holy days, and the tendency was to drop all of the autumn festivals out. The next step was to retain Pentecost because it was the birth date of the New Testament church, and then the substitution of some form of Lent or self denial in place of the days of Unleavened Bread, and the transformation of an annual occasion of bread and wine into something that is a sacrifice, not a memorial of it, but an actual sacrificing on the altar symbolically, invisibly; because the wafer that is held up is still a wafer and it looks just like the wheat or barley it may have been made from, whatever the grain and whatever the country, and surely you would not have seen that the wine in the cup which was clearly visible was any different when poured in, or when drunk later, than the wine that was there. But you have to have an act of faith in this remarkable event that you cannot see. The action

you see, but the transformation you do not. You must believe it. And of course it was on that basis that the whole Protestant world finally stumbled and decided not to go along with such conclusions and they've derived their own conclusions. But it was the Passover, that was the very basis for originally seeing what should be understood, that was altered. And when people decided that they wanted some more secure sense of forgiveness, and they wanted to concentrate on Jesus as a person, instead of merely memorializing a Passover they felt that they should do it whenever they wanted to, and they would quote what Paul said: "As often as you do it," which according to the law should have been once a year, and they decided that in this case the law did not speak to them but their own ideas; that instead of awaiting the kingdom of God they decided they wanted to go to heaven where Mary and the apostles, and Joseph and Jesus were. And instead of waiting for the kingdom of God, they began to think of the church as the kingdom of God, and the ultimate destination is through the church to heaven, and the assurance of that forgiveness meant that you should focus on Christ and his sacrifice, not his coming and restoring the kingdom of God and the resurrection in the future; but since you are an immortal soul, which was another part of the story, you could in fact even be in some relationship to God though your body would later be restored at the resurrection. We won't go off into some ideas of that nature.

And to bring this to the people's attention, to focus on Jesus as a person, to focus on things about him, and to call this the gospel required that people should focus on his death. They don't focus on his resurrection. The Passover focuses on the death of Christ, and they focus on his death by the mass. Now strangely, of course, they tend to focus mostly on that day of the week that they have taken for granted as the day when Jesus was made alive again, and so they have a very fundamental emphasis on Easter Sunday morning. Certainly the time of day when Jesus did not arise from the tomb.

All of this goes back to some things that we have mentioned now recently in the Plain Truth. And in a way that I think has not offended our readership, which is very important. We judge that on the basis of the letters which do not seem to have been critical of that, and that is, that no doubt the Apostle Paul, and Peter earlier, though not necessarily later, anticipated the coming of Jesus Christ and the restoration of the kingdom of God in that generation, and so they posed the question in Acts chapter 1: "Will you at this time restore the kingdom?" A question which if any minister today were to ask we would have to call ministerial services and have a council with him, because every minister now should know that the kingdom was not restored in that 1st Century. But the apostles didn't get the big picture yet, and Paul writes to the Thessalonians and he says "We which are alive and remain," not "they who will be alive and remain" but "we which are." Now it's an ever-present truth but it is only going to happen in the future, and clearly indicates that Paul anticipated it much earlier by 19 centuries and more. And what happened,

of course, is that when Jesus said when the city of Jerusalem is surrounded by armies then you'll know that the time is near. Now he didn't say how often it would be surrounded before that one time which would do the trick, so-to-speak. And they thought in that day that when the armies of Sestius (sp), as a revolt was breaking out in the late summer of 66, they thought that this was it. They had announced the gospel, they had gone to many areas of the world, certainly had gone as far as east as India, Iran and Mesopotamia, they had gone to Britain and Spain and Italy, the isles of the Mediterranean and north Africa, down south in Africa, that is up the Nile, in the Greek world and the Black Sea, and the land of Cythia, as far as the civilized world, it had extended over the Roman world and some of the neighboring areas, not to exclude Ireland, which was outside of the Roman world.

But in a few years it became apparent that this was not the time, and things were not working out. They had not read what Jesus also said, that at the time when Jerusalem is surrounded with armies, the time that counts, that if the crisis at that point shall not have been cut short no flesh would be saved alive, and it never dawned on them, anymore than a lot of things have dawned on us until later, it never dawned on us, in 1944, if we were to speak of those who were then in the church, never dawned on Mr. Armstrong until 1945, that there was no instrumentality of man to fulfill that prophecy. He was thinking, in 1944 and into—well, let's say it stopped then—he wondered if indeed, Hitler could be the seventh revival as Mussolini was the sixth, and that it would all be over. And it was not until the bomb was dropped as of this day in Tokyo, which means yesterday their time, which happens to be an interesting day, the 6th of August, that we realized—I'm speaking collectively, I was not a member of the church though I had already heard the broadcast, that we realized that here was an instrument now in the hand of man that had never been there before to fulfill it, and it had come too late to have it fall in the hands of those who will ultimately fulfill it. It was now in the hands of people who would not fulfill that prophecy, the United States and Britain and France and the Soviet Union, and finally China, presumably India, though India does not have the bomb it has the capacity. We won't dwell on how many other nations can reassemble the assembled parts. There's little doubt that the state of Israel has put together some in an emergency. There's little doubt that South Africa has that capacity in an emergency. But suddenly we began to realize what was impossible in that 1st Century to realize, and you can understand that if we have had in this enlightened 20th Century, with WW I as a kind of warning, with WW II as a kind of warning, and the crises all over the world, you can imagine what happened in the 1st Century when you think how many among us went out from us in 1973-'74-'75-'76-'77-'78-'79 and '80. And about that time most things were cleaned up. You would have thought that with the knowledge that was available to the world, as well as to ourselves, that people would not

be jumping ship. And if they can jump ship in this past decade, how many more decided to in the 1st Century, in 67 and 68 and 69 and 70, when it didn't turn out like they thought it would. Now maybe you should reread what we said so it does become very clear because we couldn't draw that analogy in the Plain Truth. But when we see it I think you can understand.

Outside of the fellowship of the church there was a man named Simon the Magician, who did not succeed in his lifetime in a great organization, as Mr. Armstrong has pointed out. But he sowed the seeds among those outside, whom we call gnostics, who never amounted to anything either, but he also sowed the seeds of his idea like certain ministers did inside the church, and it was those inside the church who went out from us, who were not of us, the world hears them, it hears us not, John said later. And that is why the world has been unable to distinguish the true church from the false. Because it was out of the fellowship, visible fellowship, that a major group didn't listen to what Jesus said. Jesus said "Many shall follow their teachings." The implication is that the church that remained loyal was a minority.

In the 1970's, 1973 to 1980, the church that remained loyal was a majority, and the others have come to nothing. In that day those who remained loyal turned out to be a minority. And the majority went out into the world and began to drop off ideas about the gospel, and thought they should commemorate the Christ's death more often, and especially on a Sunday. And so all of these traditions gradually arose. And the seeds were sown because the man who put many of these ideas was a Samaritan, and the Samaritans before this man, were actually a group of people who had been part, if not in entirety, fellowshipped with the Jews, and it was in the 2nd Century B.C. that a crisis broke out and there was a split and the Samaritans were separated. Their temple was then built and finally demolished, and I'm just summarizing because much more could be said.

There were many critical periods. There was a time, of course, in Nehemiah's day, when the Samaritans were on the outside trying to come in. And then there was a later reconciliation. And then there was a separation and a war and a later period of the Hasmonaeans, or the Maccabees, before the rise of Herod. Yet those people had rituals, they had bells, they had many of the traditions of the Babylonian mysteries, and they were very aware of the traditions of the Levitical priesthood. Because their priests, indeed, in my judgment on the basis of Nehemiah, their priestly family had in fact descended in part from the family of Aaron, and there was an intermarriage. You look in the story of Ezra and Nehemiah you'll see such an intermarriage, and that there was a need for separation because the priests were not to marry out.

So in that religion, as Simon Magus had seen it, there was a tradition of ceremony that would remind you of the rituals of the family of Levi, the rituals of ancient Babylon. And that is why you have these rituals today, you have statues, you have candles, you have bells. When the wafer is lifted the bells ring. When the wine

is lifted the bells ring. Now of course for many this would be a part of the ceremony that you're used to, and for others you may never have seen it, and there are certain garments that are worn, there are certain genuflections. I had never seen before crossing here, crossing here, and crossing here. I've seen the major methods, but this is the first time I'd seen a priest do it in three places, but I've never been at a wedding ceremony before. And all of these traditions arose because people wanted to do nice things for Jesus, say nice things about him, and have confidence in what he has done for us. And they forgot his message, and they began to speak about him.

There were ministers in 1974 who had forgotten about prophecy and they would say that the church ought to speak more about Jesus. Well, look, if you have announced the gospel, how could you ever overlook Jesus? How could you, if you're talking about the restoration of the government of God? It is through him that it will be done, and to him that all power is given to do it. But I know what they were saying. They had made the common mistake that we never realized people were making.

I want to tell you a little story. All these people made the same mistake that this young man did. I said to a young fellow who came to my office several years ago—he said to me: "I would like you to tell me how I can prove that God exists." I said to him, "I'm certainly willing to do that but obviously you need different kinds of proof for different people. If you're talking about a child you explain it in one way. If you're talking to a mathematician you explain it in another. I said "Whom do you wish to explain it to?" He said "To myself." As a student I said, "Let me ask you one question. What is your relationship to the church as a student here?" Well, he said I'm a member, I was baptized. And at this point I must have had some horseradish, I said "You were what? You, a baptized member, and you ask me how to prove to you that God exists?" I didn't say who baptized you, I said what you need to do is to go back to the man who baptized you and tell him the problem." I said "before you were baptized, who were you praying to? And after you were, who were you praying to?" Well, you know, he didn't know. And it made me realize that people can use the word "GOD" and they can talk about Jesus, and not have contact with God, not understand the Holy Spirit, not have it, and finally want to have some kind of consolation about their problem.

There were many who left in 1974 who wrote letters to a minister who left in '73, and I thought those letters were very interesting. They said "You know, since we departed from the Worldwide Church of God, we no longer have the stress of having to try to do everything that Herbert Armstrong expected of us." I began to realize what these people were doing. They saw that those who were converted, doing what the Bible says, doing what we teach, were getting results that they lacked. They wanted the same result, they were not in contact with God, but they saw that we talked to God, they saw

that we asked for forgiveness, so they went about praying to one whom they did not know, trying to do these things in their own strength; being condemned in their own mind when they sinned and they wanted to be forgiven, and it troubled them. And it troubled some so much that they took out their frustrations on their wives or husbands, sometimes on their children, maybe children on parents, but usually it was the other way around. And supposed members the ministers would sometimes be called upon to visit at 2:00 A.M. in the morning after the husband and wife had been not asleep, not loving one another, but arguing and hitting each other, and finally decided they had no choice but to call the minister. Earlier in the day they may have thrown pots and pans at each other. That was going on. And we didn't really tumble to the problem. There were many in our midst who were not of us, who had never come to understand God and surrender to his will, to find it in here and to talk to him and to be willing to do it and to ask God for his Spirit to enable it to be done. And finally they got emotional relief by not having to do God's will anymore.

As one man said to me about that time on the phone, I would like you to explain to me why we should keep the sabbath. Now that's the kind of person you don't explain it to. I said, "Look, let's put it this way. Some years down the road after you have for some time not kept it, when you find out why things have gone wrong and you want to know how you can straighten yourself out and why you should observe it, then I'll talk to you, but not until then." Now that's quite different from a person who suddenly has come to learn about the sabbath. This man already knew, he wanted an argument. And my argument is find out what it's like to break it, since that's what you want to do, and when you've broken it enough that you're willing to repent and you're sorry for it, then I'll help you. You can't argue people back into the truth, and I think many people were argued into the truth.

In the first place, Mr. Armstrong presents quite a persuasive argument, and I think many of the ministers did. I think our literature does. But you have to repent. And probably the reason that none of this really was true, is that these people had never actually repented. They felt sorry for what they had done. They regretted what they had done, but they had not decided not to do it again. They just simply didn't want the consequences.

Well, that's like many undoubtedly in that 1st Century. They saw that here was someone who had died for sin, and it solved the problem that the pagan religions didn't have. And they saw that there was coming a time when they would have a chance to do big things in the world tomorrow, but suddenly they realized the world tomorrow wasn't coming as they thought, when they thought, and they thought in some cases the ministers had misguided them, and certainly Paul had not guided them into all truth in this area, nor did any of the other apostles, because Jesus said "It is not given to you to know." So they were unable, and not until about 95 or 96 A.D. did God the Father give to Jesus Christ a

picture to reveal to us sufficient details that Daniel did not have, that were sealed even among those Jews in that day when they read Daniel. We call it the Revelation. There are people who read it today who consider it the work of some madman if they're typical of the letter we recently received. Somebody who'd never read Revelation before and he heard us quote it and he read it through, and he said "How could you imagine that anybody could write that in his right mind?" "It makes," he said, "no sense to me." And that's true. Made no sense to him. So it was not given to him. And I suppose we would be surprised how many brilliant theologians—even Martin Luther found it didn't make sense when he found himself in there. That is when he understood Revelation 17, and after that it really didn't make that much sense because what he was bringing about were the daughters of a woman whom he had read described with clarity.

Now there is a church that has much better understanding of that than you would give them credit for, whose parish I was in this morning. They say correctly that we are described in the book of Revelation and they know it. They say Either we are described in Revelation 12, or Revelation 17. No other church can make this claim. Because all the other churches arose afterward. Now they say—I've read it in the Knights of Columbus correspondence course, I've taken two of them, the general one and the one on the mass, "You must choose as to whether or not this remarkable institution called the church is the one inspired by the devil in Revelation 17 or by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit and God the Father in Revelation 12. You must choose. Now they have a better understanding. They did not even decide for you. They make you choose. I thought that was very interesting. Long ago.

So it was that in the late 60's and early 70's in that 1st Century there was this remarkable breakup, and that group of people divided, and in themselves were quite confused, and some did this and some did that and some did something else, and yet they generally had fellowship. You'd be surprised how many people in the 1970's went out in this direction, that direction and another, and they were confused and divided, and yet often they meet and talk to one another. But they've gotten nowhere. But they did get somewhere in that day. Because there were so many, and at least they were willing to give their lives not to go back to the rituals of Rome. In fact they were originally non-Roman, they were Samaritan in their background. The bulk of those who were responsible for the direction that things went. And peoples in Greece and Armenia, certainly some among the Jews, the Italians, the Egyptians, the Ethiopians, the Persians, the Arameans, all of them went in different directions. And not until the 4th Century did the emperor try to get them together so that Christianity would have some semblance of union and belief in doctrine.

And so the church publishes in a piece of literature that we have in our car that my wife picked up this morning, that the first ecumenical council, that is the first

council of all the elders, the bishops, the leaders in the church, was the Council of Nicaea in 325. You see, the bible tells us of the first council, it was in Acts chapter 15, of the apostles and elders who were all gathered together to discuss the question of circumcision among the Gentiles, not among the Jews. Please note that. And there it was decided that the Gentiles did not have to have contact with God through the temple at Jerusalem. They did not have to go through the rituals of Moses and should have no access to the temple to which the Jewish brethren had access.

However, since many of the brethren in the church around 49, 50 A.D. were still attending synagogue, that is where the Christians and Jews met together not uncommonly, a very unusual thing because there had been a problem earlier in the end of the 30's, or earlier in the 30's and into the 40's when there was a separation, but finally Christians became so many in the Jewish community and so many who were responsible and priests, Levites, laymen, that they simply met together to a great extent in the scattered world. And so the apostles said since our brethren hear every sabbath day read to them the laws of Moses, we want it understood that if they don't circumcise that does not mean that all the laws about the rituals are not required. But because there are certain laws associated with the rituals that are required, no ritual of the Levitical priesthood should take place in such a manner that the animal is sacrificed by being strangled, or by having the blood retained with the flesh. No such ritual was ever permitted to be offered to an idol, no such ritual was ever to be offered in connection with prostitution where there were sacred men and sacred women with whom there was sexual communion that put you in contact with the god they represented. So all of those things were not now to be neglected.

There were these four fundamental areas that the brethren were required to remember even out of the laws of Moses pertaining to the rituals. This has nothing to do with the Ten Commandments, this has nothing to do with those laws that generally define sin, but even those, shall we say spiritual or moral or physical principles associated with the rituals, needed to be clarified. The others remained clear altogether. There was no doubt about the commandments, no doubt about tithing and stealing, no doubt about the holy days, no doubt about all the laws of other forms of sexual uncleanness, no doubt about the sabbatical year, etc., etc. But there might have been doubt of a Gentile wondering, if he lived in Athens and his neighbor asked him to come to the temple of Mars, would it be all right to partake of the meat that was offered there from an animal that was strangled, or to have the blood as well as the meat. And, of course, in German tradition it's not uncommon, not only in Germany, you find it in Poland too, not only to have the meat and the blood but the fat and the intestine as well. I mean I've made this stuff. But those were in days gone by. Then God grants repentance even to the Gentiles. I'm sure Mr. Kaplan can appreciate this.

My unconverted brother never could like the stuff, but God called me because I did, and he thought that I was going too far. See, I hadn't read Acts chapter 15 and gotten that straight, but now I know.

And so I read there in Acts chapter 15 that we should not eat the flesh and the blood. And so when I took the correspondence course of the Knights of Columbus, I was told that when you do eat the wafer—you don't have to drink the wine anymore because in fact the blood is in the flesh, and that wafer has in fact become the body of Christ and with it is the blood, so you are actually taking the body and blood of Christ, and I quoted Acts chapter 15, that I would be forbidden to do any such thing. And of course, in such a correspondence course you were always getting a proper answer from the various priests who administered it, and I got the answer back: "This is the only council in the history of the church that we are not bound by; that the first council by which we live is the Council of Nicaea."

Well, let me tell you, brethren, the only council we're bound by is the one in Acts chapter 15. You and I and our ancestors in the church have never been associated with the others. They have had an authority over another institution. And so we're going to be judged, not by the laws of the Council of Nicaea or the laws of the Council of Laodicea, those were the two councils, one set aside the Passover and the other set aside the sabbath. We're going to be bound by Acts chapter 15. I just point that up. I think that is one of those unusual things to remember.

So we did have in those days a drift into another direction. And gradually, of course, the different Christians were recognized as so different. One group did not go along with Constantine, and other groups did, and all who did not go along with Emperor Constantine were simply expelled from the formal confines of the empire and had to flee to the mountains, or the wilderness, as Revelation 12 says in the first section.

Now what is significant, of course, is that when Constantine thought of Christianity when he first granted freedom of worship and freedom of religion, he thought it was an organized religion of essentially one body of belief and understanding, and he was appalled and he called it a scandal, a scandal that such division should exist in a religion, that he had come to see as the hope of the empire in converting it into the kingdom of God. Today, of course, there is a very important world figure who says that the divisions of Christianity are a scandal and he's right. If you were living in the pagan world and Catholics came to you, and Lutherans came to you, and Episcopalians came to you, and Presbyterians came to you, and Methodists came to you, wouldn't you wonder what is wrong? The name of Christ divided among all these people, what a scandal! But there is nothing that can be done about it so long as the churches have no instrumentality to enforce their will of unity, to get people to all agree on what the majority conceive to be the teachings of Christ. So long as one of the churches, for instance, has as its head the king or queen of a Protestant country that church remains separate,

because the head of the church is deemed to be a bishop at Rome, but here is a person on the throne who is the head of another church, that regards itself also as a Catholic church, the Episcopal, or the Church of England. Then there is another country which recognizes no establishment of religion but guarantees freedom of religion to everybody, not only those I named but Christian Scientists, Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Adventists, the Church of God, the Moonies, the Buddhists, and Islam, Hindus; and as long as that nation is the most powerful in the world, the scandal of the division of Christianity must remain! And yet that scandal must not, which means the only alternative is that either this government must be changed in terms of the Constitution, or the nation must be removed from its position of power. And every nation that chances to lose its position of power does so only at the threat of war, and that's why Isaiah says of this nation that they will blow the trumpet but none will go out to battle because of internal crises, that we won't go into now, but it might be good to think about what the political and religious state will be in the future because presumably with this year, there will be a final establishment of a policy that for a long time had not existed, and that is tax credits for parents who send their children to private, which may mean secular or religious schools; a recognition of this right is just the first one. And of course that goes hand-in-hand with the opposite, the recognition of the right of a woman to determine her sexual future as to whether she should be pregnant or not, we call it abortion. So you have at one time agnosticism and atheism in opposition, of course, to religious teaching espousing abortion and individual rights, and at the same time they're beginning to recognize religious rights in the form of such a tax credit.

Our purpose is not to get involved in politics, but I'm merely showing you that both sides are here. And ultimately the secular will never allow the religious to get full control, and that's why there will ultimately be a World War III phase one. Because if this country should have become wholly a state entirely different, then of course there would not have to be what is clearly prophesied.

In any case, what we find is the need, and downstream in the near future, is most certainly coming a time in which a religious power is going to make use of an opportunity; that opportunity to enforce a unity in Christianity that has not been now for centuries.

Let me say one thing that most of you may now know more about than you would have before Otto Von Habsburg visited our campus. You know of course that Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the door of the Grutenberg Castle Church, I guess it was, on what we would call Halloween. Now it was not of course any other than the normal time when people would have come to church, because it was All Hallows Eve, and on All Hallows Eve they came to church and they would now read these Theses as to things that should be discussed and considered in the church. This led to a division within the church as it then existed in the world. And

princes opted for this kind of change and others opted for that kind of change, and between that time and 1583, all through the time in fact of one of the councils of the church that was then occurring in the middle of the 50's, all through that time Protestants—they weren't called that yet—that is Christians of different persuasions were arguing and debating as to what changes would be allowed. And finally in 1583, when the church spoke formally as to what would be accepted and what would not, then some who had been meeting with them finally walked out, and protested the decision; and thereafter separated themselves, and the scandal between the Protestants and Catholics formally occurred in 1583, 400 years ago this year.

I thought that was interesting that we should have such a visit from an heir of the Holy Roman Emperor on our campus at the 400th anniversary, and that he should be speaking, as a whole, to members of the Church of God. I think this is of more historic important than we realize.

Now of course there were other scandals as to which archbishop or patriarch should be dominant, and certain doctrinal divisions that separated the Greek and the Roman world, and there were others that were just through the force of language and circumstances that separated the Armenian, and of course with Henry, the Church of England; and then there were many others who didn't consider themselves protesting individuals. You had many other groups in the Protestant world, for instance the baptists, who never came out of the Protestant world. I think most baptists think of themselves today as Protestants, but they came from a group of people out of the Middle Ages that were already separate from the people who were protesting against Rome whom we think of in general as the German princes, or the Lutheran Evangelical Church; that all these others began to come out of the woodwork, for the Middle Ages was not one unified area, but it was not a scandal because those people were generally called heretics and they were always on the outside.

It is when they all have official recognition as the Protestants do today, and add to that certain of the sects, of which we would be classed as one. We would still be linked with those that are sects, whereas the Adventists are drifting more and more into the Protestant world. But there's no question that to solve this problem we should anticipate, after four centuries now, that some event will transpire in Europe, and I would like to suggest as I draw our subject here to a close, that you consider what Mr. Hogberg is saying. I have to say "is saying" because he already said it, but you haven't read it. And so it's like saying this is what we are mentioning in the Plain Truth. And that is, the Church is trying a new experiment. It has decided, as you know, for now quite sometime we've pointed out, the church has terminated its relationship with the State of Italy. That which was established in 1929, the concordat, with Mussolini and with the king of Italy, no longer is in force. The church does not have an exclusive relationship with the State of Italy. The church is now looking to broader horizons and

✓ wishes a relationship with the new Europe, made up of numerous states, east and west, and it is experimenting as to the nature of that relationship for the first time in Poland. That is, it allowed an experiment in which the people belonging to the church would form a union on their own, and it was quite apparent that the union knew no limits in terms of its conflict with the state. And this led to the suppression of Solidarity, because its leadership did not have the power to constrain more zealous members of the union.

The church has now proposed a new union under the supervision of the hierarchy of the church, and this union shall in a sense cooperate with the state in the manner which leaders in the church cooperate with the state. The state has recognized as a viable institution and the church as another institution, both managing the affairs of the country. The state managing the army, the sword, the church managing the spiritual, the educational and in the tradition that something new, the union, guaranteeing that monies from businesses will be available to the state in exchange for which the church will manage the union or your right to work, and therefore to have money to buy and sell. And I would like to suggest that although this had nothing to do with the mass this morning, it does have something to do with it. Because there is a new experiment now being worked. Is it possible for the church to solve the problem of unemployment, which is higher than in the United States, to solve the problem of unemployment as it is now expressed in Europe? And that is, that somewhere between 6 and 7 and 10 per cent of people in the potential work force will never again have a job in their life because their work isn't needed. Do you realize that's what's happening? That in the industrial world it is now possible that anywhere from 6 to 7 to 10 per cent of the people will never again have a job in this life. Can the church solve that by proposing a relationship of establishing a union over which it has control, working with the state to guarantee jobs, and the state using this manpower to create a great new industrial, military power to counterbalance agnosticism on the one hand, and secular democratic ideas on the other; or we can call it atheism on the one hand—but don't assume that everybody in the Soviet Union is an outright atheist? Is there the possibility, you see, of this church creating such a situation to counter the concepts of the weaknesses of Western democracy and the dangers of atheistic Communism? And the answer of course is yes, and in this institution it will finally be possible by linking church and state through union, the unions, putting businessmen's money, making jobs available so that everyone at least has a job who wants to work. Therefore since this union, as in Poland, belongs exclusively to the church, you have to belong to that religion to have a job in the union, and finally if the state only recognizes that union and you cannot have another job, it would be possible that no one would be able to buy or sell because he has no access to money. He cannot trade unless he enters into such a relationship. You read Revelation 13 and you see how the final events could begin to take shape, and this scandal disappear,

and finally the dominance of a religion that grew out of ✓ people who had lost faith in God and who had rejected the gospel and who have substituted the various religious ideas they had picked up from their ancestors in Babylon, and in Judea. That's the religion that will be finally called Christianity; that will believe that it has established the government of God on earth, and that the kingdom of God is in two parts in that sense. A holy empire where secular things are managed by the leader of it, and the religious part where the church manages the educational and the spiritual, and if you please, ✓ ultimately the monetary.

FEAST OF TRUMPETS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Dr. Hoeh—September 27, 1984

I would like to begin this morning with a question that has been commonly asked: Why do we keep the Feast of Trumpets, because the Feast of Trumpets is not mentioned in the New Testament? Well, we might pose the question in a little different fashion. Why do others keep Christmas if Christmas isn't mentioned in the New Testament? Why keep January 1, New Years, if January 1, New Years, is not mentioned in the New Testament?

Then what about the school children's Valentine's Day, or Lent, or recognizing, of course, that there is a mistranslation in the King James or the Authorized Version with respect to the word Passover where we find Easter? But in recognizing that we would have to conclude that Easter as a festival, and certainly the Easter bunny, the Easter eggs, these are not mentioned as commanded customs of the Christian church in the New Testament. So why do we do them?

Then there comes Halloween, which of course is the evening before All Souls' Day, and that is followed immediately on the 1st of November with All Saints' Day. Now none of these is mentioned in the New Testament, yet it is most likely that the person who'll say to you "But if the Feast of Trumpets is not mentioned in the New Testament, why do you keep it?" They would never give a thought to the fact that these are not there, and yet they do.

It is much safer of course to do what is mentioned there than what is not. This however overlooks one important fact right off. We don't keep the Passover, or the Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, the fast, that is Atonement, or the Feast of Tabernacles merely because there's a passing reference to them in the New Testament. For there's also a reference to Herod's birthday. So that's not the real reason we do. Now there may be further explanation that would tell us why we ought to in the New Testament, but merely the reference to these festivals in the N.T. is not alone and certainly not basic to the question. What we do discover, of course, is that God has set aside a certain time once a week for assembly, and beginning at the foundation of the church that he called out of Egypt, the congregation of Israel, or the congregation of God in that day, we discover that there were certain annual occasions also set aside. Those annual occasions were set aside beginning in Egypt where two annual festivals, that is the Passover and the Days of U.B., and one hallowed annual day, the first day of U.B., was celebrated in Egypt, because the implication is that the final day was at the border of Egypt in the time of the crossing of the Red Sea into the Sinai Peninsula. Well, we see therefore that there were annual occasions that God already began to reveal to the people whom he had chosen.

Now it's important to realize that God didn't reveal these festive seasons to any other but a group of people to whom he had committed himself in first of all delivering them from Egypt, and now taking them through the Sinai Peninsula to a Promised Land where they should become an example to the nations around, an exemplary nation for all others. Also they were to be a church. It was a church/state relationship, not church versus state, though from time to time sadly that developed in Israel.

To keep God's people, who were being called out of this servitude they endured in Egypt, God revealed these days in order to have them be memorials of events. Now first of all, we notice that they are memorials of events. They also foreshadow prophetic events to come. No one should misunderstand this duality of the festivals. First of all, the Passover is a memorial of an event. The first and the last holy days of U.B., the whole festival, is a memorial of an event. These events were types of events to come that would be part of the developing plan of God. So it is commonly and falsely argued that because the day was fulfilled when the first Passover, you see, was offered, the week or the seven days of U.B. were being fulfilled when they first put out unleavened bread, Christians have tried to argue—those with quotes around them—the Christians of this world, have tried to argue that because the festival was fulfilled that we don't have to fulfill it today. Well now, in the first place, if you recognize it the festival was fulfilled for the first time in Egypt, but that didn't mean that a year later they were not to fulfill it again. You see, their argument is that if Jesus Christ died that fulfilled it. Well, the fact remains when the Passover lamb was offered the first time that didn't fulfill it, that only became the beginning of a cycle, and it was meant to be fulfilled for every year thereafter till the lamb should come, and the sacrifice of the Lamb of God does not have to be made again. But Jesus set examples, as recorded in the four Gospels, of what we should do that very same day, the 14th of the 1st month of the spring, and that has to do with foot washing, the use of bread broken to represent the broken body of Christ, which was beaten before he died, and the wine to represent the shedding of his blood, all of which occurred on that day over an extended period of time. And we were told again in a letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians that he received as the apostles did a command of Jesus that we should continue to repeat a certain ceremony on that day. "Do this in remembrance of me." So, it is not true that merely because Christ died we can forget it. When the first lamb was slain that didn't mean you can forget the day in succeeding years. It meant that you repeated that ceremony with the shedding of literal blood as a type of the ultimate Lamb

of God, who would pay the penalty of sin with his own blood for all the world.

And when that happened, we no longer needed to deal with the lamb through the Levitical assistance at the temple, but now we are commanded as a spiritual church to commemorate the death of Christ with new symbols that do not involve the actual shedding of blood but to commemorate the shedding of blood and what happened before the breaking of the bread, of which there was no actual symbol because the lamb that was set aside was never beaten before it was slain. So that was a new symbol introduced into the ceremony of Passover. And so we do it every year to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ, so that in the plan of God we do not forget what that day means. It started out as a symbol of what the children of Israel went through by having the blood on the door posts and the lentil, that is above the door, having the blood there so they would be delivered as the world can be delivered now and in the future—we're only the beginning of that delivery—through the Lamb's shed blood; that is, Jesus Christ the Messiah. But we repeat this again and again each year as a memorial of what has happened, looking forward, of course, even in the Passover, to the time of the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover which means the application of the forgiveness by Christ and God the Father to the whole world, which hasn't yet happened. So in that sense, though the Lamb has been slain, not everybody has gone into the house, which is the Church, to be protected by the blood of the Lamb who founded that house.

Now in the same way, the days of U.B. were events pertaining to Israel in Egypt. When in Egypt and as they were leaving, crossing the Red Sea, they were doing certain things. They were not eating leavened bread. That is a type of sin. They were told to do that which tells them to put away sin. And it was understood then to mean that they were being delivered in haste from the Egyptians who had held them in bondage. Now sin holds you in bondage. The unleavened bread represented the bread that you couldn't do anymore with because you didn't have time as God so quickly delivered you from the bondage of sin. Now that has been fulfilled over the years. There is no new symbol there for the N.T. church because unleavened bread is still a type of sin and we are asked by Jesus Christ to put away sin, to repent, to believe, then to be baptized.

So there's no reason why we should not continue to commemorate the putting out of sin which God's people have done through the centuries, which we are to do every day or every year, and in the same way we also look forward to the time when sin will be erased as a part of this civilization, because it will perish with this civilization, and sin will not be the new standard in the World Tomorrow, and finally sin will not exist on earth because all who do finally live forever as immortal spirit beings, the children of God, will not sin. They cannot sin because a new nature has been not only first grafted or begotten in them, but they are finally composed of that spirit that does not sin because it is the nature of God who has willed not to sin. So, much of the festival looks

into the past, much of the festival looks into the future.

Pentecost in similar fashion. The tradition of the Jews is of course that the law was given on this day of Pentecost, to which we refer. That was an event at Sinai. It was commemorated. It was also a festival of the first harvest at the end or near the end of spring, never in summer. There came a time when the Holy Spirit, in A.D. 31, entered into the membership that constituted the assembly there and that was the beginning of the N.T. Church in Jerusalem that year. We had therefore the beginning of the giving of the Spirit of God to a body of people who will represent the first harvest. But the harvest, even this first harvest, hasn't been completed because all who have been begotten have died and been buried and are asleep. If they have died, and some of course, the church living today, is still not reaped, so we look forward every Pentecost to the reaping of this harvest, and in fact to a far greater harvest to come later. The giving of the Holy Spirit, which came on that day of Pentecost in A.D. 31, is a kind of type of giving of the Holy Spirit which will harvest all the rest of mankind and indeed that won't even be finished until after the millennium.

Then we will skip the Feast of Trumpets for the moment and look at the fact that in the N.T. is an account of the fast day, which you will find of course in the book of Acts, chapter 27, verse 9. This was where Paul on board boat was quite concerned about the fact that the fast was already passed and here they were setting out which was not the safe thing to do. Paul had had enough experience on the Mediterranean Sea to regard that the means of transportation by water would not be safe at that time of the year. There is interestingly, you see, a reference to a fast with the implication that on that fast day they had fasted, that's why it was still called that. It was not merely called the Atonement, which is the word we commonly use, the Day of Atonement, but it was called the fast because that's what they did long after Pentecost, because there we are dealing with a year significantly later. It was, in fact, 28 years later than the Day of Pentecost, and a few—two months or so, three—and the church was still recognizing that day as fundamental to the movement of time through the year.

Jesus is found on the Feast of Tabernacles in John's account. There is also the passing reference, without any doubt, to the Feast of Tabernacles in Acts 18:21, which you will not find in the Revised Version, the Revised Standard Version, which you will only find in the Authorized or Revised Authorized Versions, sadly, because it has been struck out without justification for it exists in the tradition Greek text preserved in the Greek world. Paul speaks there to the Ephesians in the month of September that he wanted to, if by all means he could, to be there in time for the observation of the festival that was coming, which is the Feast of Tabernacles; and he was there—would have been because it wasn't that much of a distance, and so he makes a statement that he wanted to be there at that autumn festival. That was the festival that in tradition was observed at Jerusalem in a very

special way, and that's why the reference in Acts 18:21 to Jerusalem.

Let's turn to that so that we recognize and make a note, if you have one of the modern translations, that it is missing, and in the Revised Standard Version it is not even mentioned in the footnote.

Acts 18:21—we'll go back a moment in verse 19: He came to Ephesus in route, he entered into the synagogue, reasoned there with the Jews, and they desired that he would stay a little longer and he bade them farewell saying "I must by all means keep this feast that comes in Jerusalem, but I will return again to you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus." So here we are dealing with a very important event that was about to occur. And this was, of course, 21 years or so after the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts chapter 2.

So we have the festivals laid out. We have no question about that. We therefore can see that the festivals not only were given before the law at Sinai, before the covenant at Sinai which we now call the Old Covenant, it was included in the covenant at Sinai because these are God's laws. And when that covenant or marriage agreement was in a sense set aside because God gave Israel a divorce, sent them away, he didn't divorce Judah, he merely sent away Judah without divorcing Judah. I think most people don't realize that. He divorced Israel and sent them in exile and didn't allow them to return. But when it came to Judah there was a separation, and God left this separation go for a certain number of decades and brought them back and gave them a chance to see whether a reconciliation was possible under the terms of the covenant at Sinai. And that nation finally acted in such a manner that the nation was responsible for killing the very husband to which they had been married. There was murder. I don't think we've ever seen that clearly. That's how serious it came. The kind of spiritual relation had deteriorated so much that the God who petitioned this nation, Judah, to listen to him, and offered himself, was in fact killed in the city from which he will finally rule.

Jeremiah, years before, chapter 31, said God would ultimately make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah, the two of course being gathered together as one nation according to Ezekiel. God would make a New Covenant and write his laws in their hearts and minds, not erase them, not nail them to the cross or a tree, not get rid of those laws, but write them in our hearts and minds. Now let's look at the implication. When God gave certain knowledge to the patriarchs he gave it verbally. Abraham was one who learned of God's laws, his judgments, his commandments, and a specific charge. Isaac was told by God that Abraham understood these. God revealed certain things through Moses and Aaron to Israel, and finally God began to speak the Ten Commandments, and the children of Israel said we don't want to hear it beyond this point, let Moses talk to us, and so Moses became the lawgiver in the sense that the rest of the law of God that expounds the Ten Commandments were spoken to the children of Israel, read from a book, and Moses faithfully transcribed into that book God's

laws. They're first of all summarized in Exodus, chapters 21-23, and then of course in the books of the Old Testament; the first five are additional comments along the way historically that Moses wrote, and after the tabernacle was erected the next year at the beginning of the spring, the year after the giving of the law, God speaks out of the tabernacle and addresses the Levites as a whole and tells them many things that as teachers they should know, so the book of Leviticus became an amplification of many things that the Levites needed to know, some of which pertained to ceremony, some of which strictly to the priesthood, much of which had to do with serving the nation. And of course then there are spiritual laws in greater detail that never were given in the covenant in Sinai, which covenant, of course, is the section of the Bible we call Exodus 21 and 22 and 23 that was ratified in the 24th chapter, that's the covenant, and added to that covenant because—let's understand it—not a part of the covenant, but added later to that covenant with, let's say having in mind, the fact YHWH was a husband who gave decisions, who made decisions, as a man makes decisions and passes them to his wife after marriage, he has agreed to certain things in marriage, that covenant is not altered within it, but part of the covenant is that the husband is the head of the wife, as indeed YHWH, or the LORD of the O.T. was the head of Israel; so that, after that covenant was made and there was no doubt in the minds of the nation that they had accepted YHWH as a husband and he would provide, and they promised to obey, that is the function of the wife in that relationship, then God speaks to the Levites—he also spoke to Moses—more of his laws and his wisdom. And that was written down in the rest of Exodus and in Leviticus and in Numbers, and all through those 38 extra years of wandering, after the Old Covenant was complete. God gave other laws, he explained other details, he made other decisions, and put them in the setting that we have now in the book of Numbers, Leviticus. Then at the end of that extra 38 years—near the end of 40 years—the children of Israel while Moses was living, when they were east of Jordan, were assembled and they listened to the exposition of the law; and that generation made an agreement in which much of the laws were summarized and new aspects of the law were given and it's what we call the book of Deuteronomy, or the book of the Law, and all of this followed the Old Covenant. And interestingly it's in the book of Deut., it's in the book of Lev., it's in the book of Num., and it's in Ex. within the covenant at Sinai itself, in all of these agreements God repeated his annual holy days. You will find them repeated 40 years later and all along the way. You will find, of course, the prophets referring to them. You see, because it is God's law, whenever he expounds his law, they are stated again. They are stated again. So that after the covenant was made at Sinai, God made other agreements, other comments on the law that we would call judgments, that's based on a law, a decision based on the law.

There came a time when the children of Israel only saw these laws as written on paper and on those two

tables of stone. Now there were prophets who saw the bigger vision. David who saw the bigger vision, judges who saw the bigger vision, and undoubtedly many of the leaders in the priesthood over the centuries did. Ezekiel was a priest, Jeremiah was a priest, Elijah was a priest, Samuel was a priest. All of these people saw the bigger vision.

But in the days of Jesus there was a very narrow view, and it was seen as something in a book, something on tables of stone; and they missed the whole point of Jeremiah 31 that the God who first wrote these things or had them written in a book, and who personally wrote it at the beginning on tables of stone, that God was going to write it in the heart of his people. And Jesus came, and in Matthew chapter 5 he announces what the New Covenant should be. He defines the blessings of the New Covenant. He doesn't involve himself in all the curses, by the way. He is showing what he wants to do for his people. There we find the various promises that YHVH, now Jesus the Messiah, the anointed One, makes. Blessed are those who do this, blessed are those who do that. The people have a responsibility to seek after righteousness, to be forgiving, to want to know the will of God, all the things that go with repentance are required of the people. All the things that go with obedience are required of the people. And God then offers through Jesus Christ his kingdom, his nature, his righteousness, his blessings, his joy, and that's the foundation, if you please, the platform. That is the basis of the government and the kingdom that he announced would come many centuries later.

So now we have a general picture of the law that once was written so you read it here, now to be in the hearts and minds of people. How? By means of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit begets us so that we can begin to have in our minds the mind and understanding of God. We have a new spiritual dimension—grasp of things that the natural mind with which we were born would not be able to come to grips. The natural mind can read it but doesn't have a grasp of it spiritually as to intent. If it could, why then the nation of the Pharisees would all have been converted. But they simply saw the letter of the law. They simply did not grasp the spirit or intent of the law, and hence they made so many little barriers around the law to try to keep you from sinning. They did not know how to promise the Holy Spirit that would enable you to avoid sin, or to seek forgiveness and to be in the attitude of repentance should you have sinned. The Pharisees could only build fences around so you wouldn't transgress the sabbath, you wouldn't transgress the other laws. They did not promise the Holy Spirit.

So the coming of the Holy Spirit is important in Acts chapter 2, because for the first time it made available to the whole of the church that God was calling, those who repent, believe, and are baptized, the Holy Spirit, so that we could be begotten and begin to have the laws of God written in our hearts and minds. And a part of those laws are the annual holy days. That is, it now should become natural for us as we rejoice at the end of the sixth day of the week we call Friday, that the sabbath is

coming, we don't see it as a burden, so we should rejoice this week as Wednesday was disappearing, that there is the first annual occasion this autumn celebrating this day now we are; and that this day separates us now from the past year and we look forward in this civil year that begins this day to new events, how we will handle our second tithe, what we will do if this is the year in which we save our third tithe, all of these things that were regularly measured from the autumn of the year as distinct from the—shall we say the spring of the year where you were dealing with the religious calendar, or the sacred calendar, here we deal with civil matters. God wants us to begin to rejoice in planning for these things, as also for the meaning of this day itself.

Now I've gone through this kind of background because there are many students who haven't necessarily thought of the background of the festivals. But if we look at it it's very important to realize that when God said he'd put in our hearts and minds his law, II Cor. chapter 3, that what he was saying without any doubt is that he would put his law by his Spirit in our minds, which this would have to do with an attitude toward these days. Anyone who is hostile to God's festivals is unconverted, because if you are converted you will not be hostile to God's law. The natural mind is hostile to the law of God. The spiritual mind seeks to obey God, rejoices in that which is good, rejoices in what God commands, and God commanded certain annual days be set aside to commemorate past events, to teach us present events, and to look forward to future events.

And so now we focus on the Feast of Trumpets. And as I said the person typically might ask why do you keep the Feast of Trumpets if it is not mentioned in the New Testament? Well, the answer, of course, is that the Feast of Trumpets is referred to in the New Testament. God did not leave it out. We know that when the N. T. writers refer to the Passover they refer to the Passover. When they refer to the Days of U.B. they refer to the Days of U.B., when they refer to Pentecost, it's called Pentecost, which means fiftieth because it was the fiftieth day. When it came to Atonement they don't call it Atonement, they call it the fast. That's just the custom of the time, it was called the fast. When it came to the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day it is spoken of as the time of the Feast of Tabernacles.

But no, there is no reference to the Festival of Trumpets, the 1st day of the 7th month, in terms of the Feast of Trumpets, but there is a clear reference without any question to it in the book of John, chapter 5, where we are dealing with that festival which was regarded, and you will understand its importance then as now when you realize that to the Jew, this day, the Feast of Trumpets, in a sense begins the festive season, and it is the singularly most significant day because it opens the whole autumn festive season. The greatest festival to which the Jews assembled was Tabernacles. The most sacred, if you want to use that term, or somber, or sober of days, was Atonement. But the feast of the Jews which had no other definition meant the Feast of Trumpets.

And in the Greek, unfortunately in the King James, it isn't made clear, or in most other modern translations.

Chapter 5 of the book of John: "And after this was the feast of the Jews," not "a" feast. The Greek is "the feast." Now some didn't know what it meant and so later it was not uncommon to neglect the word "the" that appears in the Greek, the definite article, but the Greeks themselves as distinct from the manuscripts that were tampered with, by those who had departed from the faith, and those who went off into other languages and forgot their Greek manuscripts, began to speak Latin or Coptic in Egypt, they thought of it as just "a" passing feast. But the Greeks themselves remembered as custodians of the Greek New Testament, as the Jews are of the Hebrew Bible, the Greeks noted that this was "the feast of the Jews." And when the Feast of Tabernacles is not mentioned there is only one possible festival that ever was called "the feast of the Jews." The world recognizes this day as the most typically festive day among the Jews. Rosh Hashanah, the head of the year.

Let's look at what this means historically. In the tradition of the synagogue the first sabbath in the week of recreation was the 1st day of the 7th month. In Jewish tradition therefore, this 1st day of the 7th month was the first honeymoon, if you please, because man and woman were created the day before. This is the day that begins the calendar on which the holy days are based in the year 3,760 B.C. The basis of all calculation of the Hebrew calendar goes back to this time in the days of Adam and Seth, Enoch, Enos, and that calendar has been preserved—this was long before the Hebrew people—it is a solar-lunar calendar. You don't determine the spring festivals, or any festival, or the year, on the basis of any month but this one. The determination of the new moon for this day determines the character of the whole calendar, not the new moon for Nisan or Aviv in the spring. It is the 1st day of the 7th month that determines the character of a year, and the beginning of God's calendar has always been this day with respect to calculation, determining the nature of the year. God, in the days of the Exodus, made Nisan 1 the beginning of the year. Nisan 1 was never the day calculated. Nisan 1 is simply 7 months earlier from this day.

So this day is extremely important. This is a day referred to in the book of Psalms. Let's look at it, a very interesting story here, Psalm 81:

'Sing aloud to our God, the God of our strength: make a joyful sound to the God of Jacob.' "Noise" is hardly the way to render it in modern English.

'Take a psalm, bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery,' that is, we should have music. Now, in what connection? Well, we're told also,

'Blow up the trumpet in the new moon.'

Now there were trumpet sounds which were regularly blown throughout the year over—and you know they had other trumpets, not the shofar. They had various trumpets, but the shofar, the ram's horn, is unique. I'll come to that. But on this day they were to "Blow the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, in our solemn feast day." Now the only new moon that is an appointed

time in association with trumpets that is a feast day now, is the 1st day of the 7th month. Every other one falls later in the month. When did this custom arise of having the blowing of trumpets?

It says "It is a statute for Israel, a law of the God of Jacob." That we should recognize this day as a day, let's say, of memorial, a day of remembering the importance of the sound of a trumpet which is the sound of warning, the sound of concern, the sound of the need of assembling and learning something you would never otherwise know.

'This was a statute for Israel, a law for the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony when he went out through the land of Egypt, when I heard a language that I understood not.'

This began before Sinai. This began long before Sinai. He was told that there were blessings of seven years, he was told that there were tragedies to come, and in a nation whose language he was not that aware of when he came and came to learn it, Joseph was charged with a responsibility; to announce to the people that Pharaoh would buy up their excess and he would not have the market depressed; that we need to reserve the grain from the years of blessing. It was Pharaoh's desire that we would not have over production, but since we're going to have it we will not let it clog the market. And Joseph gathered it up and stored it. And then the nation was warned seven years would come and there wouldn't be any harvest, or such a poor harvest that it was not worth the effort. So in a sense the blowing of trumpets to announce the national blessings and the national crisis, represents a time at the beginning of the autumn, when the nation was being prepared after the Nile would go down, because it would rise you see essentially in the summer months because there would be the spring rains in Ethiopia, it rises in the summer, and then goes down, and then in the autumn you begin to plant the harvest, you must make preparation, and the next spring you would have the harvest. They were warned.

A part of the warning we must give is that we are today going through a period of unexpected national blessing. Since the Great Depression we have had more prosperous years than we could ever have imagined, and in fact, than most people have wanted if they're farmers. But what are we doing with all this? Well, I don't need to go into that, that's a whole subject by itself, what we're doing.

But there's coming a time of hunger in the world, and if and when this nation were ever to go down in military defeat, it would not just be the hunger of this people. Probably one quarter of the world not living in the United States is dependent on food from this country and Canada and Australia. And if these nations went under in some kind of military debacle and there was a curse on the land, there would be no way to rescue a large portion of the world. But that's why God has called this church. That's why the World Tomorrow broadcast has been mentioning these problems, prophesied events, for now 50 years.

But let's go on to the story. Let's go back to the book of John and let's look at what Jesus said on this remarkable day, because if Jesus gave a Feast of Tabernacles message at the Feast of Tabernacles, if his message was in his actions on that last Passover in his life, if he sends the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, what has he told us about the time of the Feast of Trumpets?

"There was a feast of the Jews," says the Authorized Version. No, after this was "the feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." At this time there was a pool called Bethesda, and a number of sick people were in it—not in the pool—they often went in it, but in the porches around the pool—"A great multitude of handicapped people, and blind and withered, waiting for the moving of the waters, for an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, troubled" that is roiled the waters, whoever then first stepped in was made whole of whatever disease he had."

Now this, of course, has embarrassed the critics, and this, of course, embarrassed other people in times past, so some have tried to leave this out. The Greeks to whom the scriptures were given to preserve were not embarrassed. That's why we still read it as we do.

"Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity 38 years." Some sin was involved. Since it was not merely an accident, it implies a sin later, why this man was in all probability well on in years, probably by this time in his late 50's or more. Thirty-eight years he had suffered the consequences of some serious problem.

(6) "When Jesus saw him lie there, and knew that he had been now a long time, he said to him," because there was nobody caring for him, "Do you want to be made whole?"

And this impotent man answered him, "I have no one when the water is troubled to put me in the pool." He couldn't move. "And while I was coming" he couldn't move rapidly enough, I should say, "And while I would come" struggling to get in "another steps down before me." And in all these years he'd never gotten in first.

"Jesus said to him, Well, rise and take up your pallet" bed would not be quite the right term in terms of our modern beds. Kind of a roll-out blanket, shall we say. "Take up your pallet and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, took up his pallet and walked, and that day was the sabbath day."

Now this was not actually the Feast of Trumpets, which in the year A.D. 29 fell on a Tuesday. Passover in that year was the previous sabbath. This was the sabbath preceding Trumpets, because after the previous event, "the feast of the Jews" was occurring, and Jesus went up and Jesus was there on that sabbath preceding this first holy day. He didn't go between the sabbath and the holy day. The implication is he came up for the previous sabbath and the whole weekend, let's say, he was there.

Now the Jews said, when they saw that he had cured someone, "It's the sabbath day and it isn't lawful for you to carry your bed." Now there was nothing in the law that said it. And here is a man who had been healed, and Jesus was now setting an example as to how the sabbath should be handled.

"He answered them," the man who had been healed, "Well, he who made me whole the same said to me Take up your bed and walk," and after all if he did the one why shouldn't I do the other? Now what man told you this; to take up your bed and walk? He that was healed didn't know Jesus' name. For Jesus had conveyed himself away, the multitude was there, and he couldn't point him out, so he simply didn't know.

Afterward Jesus finds him in the temple and says to him "Behold you are whole." Now let's not forget, this man had brought it on himself. "Sin no more lest a worse thing come on you."

Jesus had not had time to tell him "Don't do this again, or the next time it will be worse." The man departed and logically, since he had been asked the question, told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. And so they persecuted Jesus, and they decided they wanted to kill him.

"They sought to slay him because he had done these things on the sabbath day."

Later on of course, in Jewish tradition it became the custom to deny that they had ever said you couldn't heal on the sabbath day. That's because, of course, the charge had become so obviously fraudulent that you shouldn't do it, that they finally denied that they once taught that.

But when Jesus found out that they were out to kill him, he says the following. Now I want you to notice what is remarkable here is that the first big act, around the time of this festive season, has to do with healing, and if there is one thing that needs to be done in this world it is that people need to be healed of their diseases, need to be forgiven of their sins.

Jesus also says: "My Father works hitherto, and I work." That is, My Father and I have been working. Well, now, I can say that as long as my father lived he worked, and I work, and many of you who have fathers or mothers, you could say Well, my father has been working, and I work. Now that's nothing unusual. But the Jews had another idea. They knew both Jesus' understanding of himself, and they also knew it to be true, for Nicodemus had said "We know that you come from God. No man could do what you do unless God sent you." And when Jesus said "My Father works hitherto, and I work," he was merely saying I copy the things that my Father has taught me.

Now if the Jews really believed that Jesus' father was Moses or some Samaritan who had fornication with Mary, this would never have troubled them. They would have said nothing about it. That was just his personal claim about somebody he didn't even know about, or some human. But this upset them because they knew who his Father was.

(18) "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father." Now he didn't say God was his Father. He said My Father! but they knew he meant God! That means that they knew when they denied Jesus that they denied the one who was the Son of God. This is why the nation has had such a problem

ever coming to see spiritually what it needs to see. And in so doing, they recognized that he had made himself equal with God, because if God is his Father, he has his Father's nature, and therefore is equal in terms of nature, not equal in terms of authority as Jesus elsewhere explains.

(19) But Jesus said, "I say to you, the Son," meaning myself, "can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do"—he didn't say God, he says "the Father"—they of course began to apply the word Father to the Creator, just as they would use that for their natural father.

"For what things soever he does, these also the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all things that he himself does, and he will show him greater works than these that you may marvel."

Now if they thought he was referring to a mortal human being this would not have troubled them! But it was because they knew what his claim was and they knew it to be true that upset them so much.

(21) "For as the Father raises the dead, and quickens them; even so the Son quickens whom he will."

Here, with respect to the Feast of Trumpets time of the year, and we're not told that all this happened on the sabbath day, the healing happened on the sabbath day, but this is this time of the Feast of Trumpets. And on this long weekend, Jesus addresses the question of the raising of the dead, the healing of the sick. What is going to happen? Well, we know from I Cor. 15 that Christ is coming at the last trump, and when that trumpet sounds the dead are raised. So Jesus is here addressing the question of the raising of the dead at the right time of the year. He also says "The Father judges no man. He has committed all judgment to the Son."

Christ is the one who will judge the world for a thousand years. It is not the Father who is going to come to sit in judgment of the world. But since Christ himself has been judged, and proved that he knew how to conquer sin in the flesh, he also knew what it meant to resist sin, he is capable of being a just judge.

The purpose is that "All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who honors not the Son doesn't honor the Father." That's a thought. He who does not honor the Son dishonors the Father. And the very nation to which Jesus came has dishonored the Son all this time, which means they dishonor the Father. That's a very great tragedy. But it's going to be mended. And I think you will see that once it is mended, probably the most stable of all nations will be that tribe, that people, that resisted all this time, and they're going to know without any question.

"Verily I say to you, he that hears my word and believes on Him who sent me, that person has everlasting life." That is in a sense both a promise and if begotten of the Holy Spirit, the presence of it. "And shall not come into condemnation," the second death, "but is passed from death to life." That's both figurative because we still are mortal, but we can have the beginning of eternal life and at the resurrection we pass into life and the second death has no power whatsoever.

"Verily I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God...." Now Paul spoke about the resurrection in connection with the 7th Trumpet, and this day is the Feast of Trumpets, and at this feast, the feast of the Jews, Jesus is speaking about the things that happen at the time, the 7th time the trumpet would be blown prophetically, because it was tradition that it was blown seven times on this day.

"They will hear the voice of the Son of God, and as the Father has life in himself, he has given to the Son to have life in himself, and given him authority to execute judgment...." because he is the Son of Man, that is because he went through life as a human being.

"Then don't marvel at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice." Not merely those when the 7th trumpet prophetically sounds before the millennium, but even at the end of the millennium, after the millennium is over, and after Satan and his angels are judged.

The book of Revelation: there will be a trumpet sounding, and for all we know, the second resurrection is most likely going to occur on this day of the year, because this is the day that the trumpets were to be blown. And after the millennium all who were not resurrected in the first resurrection "that are in the graves will hear his voice, and shall come forth."

Some will come forth to do good, and ultimately to inherit the resurrection of life. That's of course a reference to the first resurrection and it can be symbolically of those who do good in the second, but I think the emphasis is in a sense linking them all together. Jesus is here not defining the millennium. He's not defining the time period. He's saying the time is coming, later on you will learn it's going to be separated by at least a thousand years.

There are those who have done good, so that's the past, I should note that, that means therefore clearly the first resurrection, and there are those who will be doing good as a part of the second resurrection, as well as those who had been doing evil and will continue to do evil and don't want to do good, they're all coming, because they've all done evil in the past, to the resurrection of judgment. Condemnation is a bad translation. It is a resurrection of judgment, a time—and here the modern translations in general are far more correct. That is not because the Greek is badly transcribed historically, but it's simply badly translated in earlier days when they thought of the resurrection to judgment as a condemnation to burning hell.

So Jesus on this day refers to the first resurrection, those who have done good to life, and those who have done evil at a resurrection associated with this very day, after the millennium, to a resurrection to judgment, and he is going to do the judging for one hundred more years.

"I can of mine own self do nothing. As I hear I judge." That is, he doesn't make these decisions on the basis, as he said, of his own natural inclination. He bases it on what he heard the Father said shall be the

standard, and what is clearly the evidence presented by the works of individuals.

'But my judgment is just,' and as I hear and discern the facts I will judge accordingly. "I don't seek my own will," as most judges of that world did, "but the will of the Father which sent me." I don't try to bend the law to serve somebody's private need. "And if I bear witness of myself," my own natural strength, my own judgment, that witness would have no basis. Jesus lets the Father witness.

It's also probable, since that period of time in Isaiah 65 is defined at a hundred years "and all that are dead will hear this trumpet and the voice...." It's very possible that on the Feast of Trumpets, therefore, one hundred years after the second resurrection, there will be the sound of another trumpet to raise the dead in the third resurrection; those who lived and died in sin knowingly, intentionally, who have only judgment and condemnation to look forward to.

Then Jesus speaks about John, "a burning and a shining light," verse 35, but whose testimony alone is not adequate. Jesus said My Father is the One who does the works that prove beyond any question what man cannot do in all his science was then being done, which indicated clearly that Jesus was the Messiah, so he was showing all the evidence of his power that would indicate he was more than an ordinary mortal.

'Now I have a greater witness,' he said, verse 36, "than John. The works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me." They bear witness of the fact that "the Father has sent me."

(37) "And the Father himself, who has sent me, has borne this witness.... You," of course, "have never heard his voice," said Jesus, "like I have." You've never seen his shape. I've seen it for such periods of time that mathematically you have no perception. Because we've been together, he said, all this time from before the beginning of the physical universe.

Now, beside the fact you've never heard his voice at any time, "You have not his word abiding in you, for whom he has sent, him you believe not." The one who has God's word you don't believe, and that's proof you don't have his word abiding in you.

Now you search the scripture. Here Jesus at this same time of the year says it's time you look into the Bible. This is the time to begin to examine the scripture, those who are Christians, and who think that when Jesus comes again he's the antichrist, those who had heard that Jesus was coming again and didn't believe he was the Messiah, search the scriptures. Both Christian and Jew have thought "in them to be found eternal life, but they are those which testify of me."

The Jews will find that indeed Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, and the Christians are going to discover that the Messiah who comes back is not the one that they think he is because they have another Jesus in mind, who doesn't look like the pictures. Or as one Jew recently said in an interesting comment, if the Messiah is coming

we're going to have a look at him and see whether he looks like they say he does.

Well, the answer is he's going to look like "one of us" not like they say he does, because he was of the house of Judah, and they will recognize him, and the Gentiles who have had Christianity as a religion—I don't mean the Gentiles who haven't—they have been fooled by a false picture.

'You won't come to me now that you may have eternal life.' He says "I don't receive honor from men." When Christ is given the office to judge the world he does not do so on the basis of becoming the head of some political party and being voted into power.

'I know you, that you don't have the love of God.' The world had no love of God when Christ came then, the world will have none now, or they wouldn't be betraying one another when you see these prophecies finally fulfilled.

Jesus said "I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not. If another will come in my name him you will receive," and indeed the false Jesus is being preached and he's the one that the world in general has received. The next time, however, when he comes the world is going to have to accept him whether they like it or not.

'How can you believe which receive honor from one another and don't seek the honor that comes from God alone? Don't think I will accuse you to the Father.' The time of judgment, I don't have to accuse you, I am simply going to judge according to what God has said, and your works, and offer forgiveness. "There is one however, in the meantime who accuses, even Moses, in whom you trust." He's speaking to the Jews.

Today the Christians don't even trust in Moses, at least the Jews trusted in Moses. Today Moses is anathema in the Christian world, or they would do what he says.

'For had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me.' Moses very clearly spoke of the one who gave the law. Moses defined who it was who was speaking to him the law. Moses makes clear that YHVH is going to bring about all the promises that we associate with the millennium, and the blessings to come.

'But if you didn't believe Moses, how will you believe my words?' If the Jews then didn't believe Moses they didn't believe Jesus. And in this case we could say today, if the Christian world doesn't believe Moses, they're not going to be prepared to believe Jesus when he returns the second time.

So this 5th chapter of John is really quite interesting, because, at this season of the year that we call the Feast of Trumpets, Jesus addressed the very fundamental issues that will have to be faced at the beginning of the millennium, both prophetically and in terms of attitude, the raising of the dead, the changing of the human heart, the recognition that the law of God has been revealed all along by Moses, and those who have rejected Jesus are finally going to realize they had erred, whether they be Christians or Jews.

And finally the world will of course be converted, but that we must wait for the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles message.

ROLE OF CHRIST AS GOD

PSA 110 - 40

Dr. Hoeh—September 2, 1983

.... I wanted to cover a subject we already have a piece of literature on but no one piece of literature covers every single aspect of it. I would like to have you consider that we're approaching not only the Feast of Trumpets, and of course Tabernacles, but the Day of Atonement. And the Day of Atonement had a number of remarkable characteristics that automatically come to our attention, and as a background for that I think you should read not only the material that is in the booklet *God's Holy Days and Pagan Holidays* that Mr. Armstrong has written, the one that he has written *Who is the God of the Old Testament?* who was Jesus. And we recognize in a sense generally, but I don't think consistently, that the one who spoke in the Old Testament who sometimes is Adoni or Lord, with lower case letters in English, Adoni in Hebrew, or who was YHWH, which means the Eternal, the Everliving, translated LORD in many translations, Jehovah in some others, YHWH in one or two, that one with capital letters for LORD. We generally recognize that the God who dealt with ancient Israel was the one who became Jesus Christ, but we haven't always thought every area through, and I would like to go through certain scriptures as time permits....

I would like us to start in a place in the New Testament, if I might, to give us a little idea of how New Testament writers understood the situation. First let's turn to the book of Acts. Here we have the New Testament church dealing with the fundamental question of that day. The Jews did not doubt that the kingdom of God was going to be restored, Jesus announced the good news of the restoration, the Jews did not question that there was going to be such a restoration. They were rather concerned as to who would run it, and they discovered that the one who is to run it, who is in fact to carry out God's government on earth, was then there, and he stood for things they did not stand for, and that created a problem, because if they were representatives of the people, and they were teaching the people the way—that is if that is true—then there was a conflict which the people began to see—and either they had to amend their ways to conform to the one to whom this assignment is given, or they would have to, in their reasoning, dispose of him, have him out of the way, if they decided not to change their attitudes.

So I would like us here to glance at what we have in Acts 6 and 7 as an introductory area. The Day of Atonement of course is remarkable because it shows the role of the devil and also the role of God in the way this world has been, what Christ the Messiah is to do, what is going to happen to Satan; and it also indicates something about who the one is whom we know as YHWH, the goat that was representing YHWH. That goat died. Who then is this YHWH? this Eternal One? Is that the God of Israel? Did the God of Israel die for the nation?

In the book of Acts, chapter 6, we have an introduction here: "In those days the number of the disciples was multiplied," and there were some problems where Greek speaking Jews in the Grecian world were somewhat neglected in terms of service because they simply had no organization pattern in Judea here following the interest of so many of them, whereas the Aramaic speaking people who are contrasted here as the Hebrews vs. the Greeks—we're not talking about Greeks and Jews, we're talking about the Greek speaking Jews and the Aramaic or Hebrew speaking Jews—though Aramaic was normally spoken many of them did understand Hebrew.

There was a certain neglect which was resolved by the choice of a number of prominent men, deacons. Now in those days deacons had a great deal of responsibility, and they had to be men of significant ability. In the first place, the whole nation was a nation of significant ability.

These men were set before the apostles who prayed for them, laid hands on them, verse 6, and as a result of their physical service to take care of the widows, they were also imbued with God's spirit and came to the attention of other peoples.

The word of God increased, verse 7, and very greatly it increased. And verse 7 says: "... a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

Now this is one of the more important verses in the New Testament actually, in terms of understanding the state of affairs at the time.

"A great company of priests were obedient to the faith." Verse 7 would clearly indicate, since in a sense the priests, as a whole, in the earlier part of this period were Sadducees. Without any question many people who denied the resurrection before, who denied angels, who denied there was any life and therefore clearly denied the kingdom of God, which the Pharisees did not, many of them were priests. The Pharisees tended to be among the Jewish laymen rather than the Levitical priests who were Sadducees. Many of them came to realize their error. That also must have been a problem that so many came to amend their ways of thinking who had each as a priest the responsibility of instructing.

The book of Malachi says of course the people go to the priests for knowledge. He is the one who should have information that generally isn't that accessible or clearly understood by ordinary people who have devoted most of their life to their occupations.

(8) "So Stephen was full of faith and power, and did wonders and miracles."

He didn't just wait on tables. And a problem arose. Certain of the people of various synagogue areas of Asia, North Africa, Asia Minor, could not resist the wisdom and the spirit by which Stephen spoke and explained the Bible. And so they decided to accuse him before the

council. He was dragged before the council; verse 15 he speaks. His message is summarized then in the next chapter.

The high priest said, Now what about these things that have been said of you? Are they so?

Now, instead of denying them, which would only have led to their accusing him the more, he simply chose to ignore their accusations and to take the opportunity to explain the reality of things. This, therefore, was his message, and he explains. I think it would be very interesting if you were to read this, how they looked at scripture in those days before it was divided into chapter and verse. They looked at it in terms of the story.

And it picks up the story with "The God of glory, who appeared to our father Abraham." This is a God who dwells in glory, and this God appeared to our father Abraham.

Now in the church we learn that the word in Hebrew "Elohim" has a plural form, the "im." Sometimes it clearly indicates plurality, but the same word may be applied to a single individual in the God plane, when a single pronoun or a single verb is used with that plural form. So we discover that the Greeks did not have this quality in their language that the Hebrews did. The Greeks, however, were able to identify other things in their language that Hebrew does not.

In any case, "The God of glory who appeared to Abraham," is one who manifests himself. In many cases later we read this same God appeared and it is said The Word of the Lord, that is the Word of the Eternal, the Word of God, came, and that Word we will discover more clearly identified in the Greek as an actual being, not merely a message heard in the ear.

Now this God also spoke, verse 6. So the God of glory both speaks and appears, verse 2 and 6. We know therefore that we have to ask, when we read the rest of the Bible, which individual, which person this is. The nation to whom they shall be in bondage, the Egyptians, this God of glory said "I will judge," and I'm going to deliver the people and bring them out, which he did. He gave them Moses after, of course, they had been in the land, and I'm skipping all of that as not relevant for the comment this evening.

And when Moses had had experience at the court and was forty years old he was forced to flee to the Sinai, where he had another forty years of training, to unlearn some of the things that he had learned, and to learn new things that he never could have done if he had sat in the court of Pharaoh. And there it was that God also now appears to Moses.

Moses fled, verse 29, was forty years there, verse 30, "And there appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai"—and it is a wilderness—"a messenger." And this messenger of the Lord—and here of course we have the Greek word. This word is translated in the King James "angel." Now an angel may be a created spirit, but interestingly the same Hebrew word may simply refer to a mortal man when that man is a messenger, because one of the primary functions of an angel is to carry a message. So sometimes you will find this word

identifying a level of being, sometime you will find it not identifying a level of being. This word is used sometimes to identify the God of glory; sometimes to identify John the Baptist, because each was a messenger at a certain time, so we must learn that as you compare scripture with scripture. And you also need to realize that our English word angel has a limited sense which the original word did not so convey.

He came to the wilderness of Mount Sinai and looked on the mountain and there saw a bush that burned; and there was the voice of the Lord.

Now here the YHWH, as it turns out, who speaks to Moses, the YHWH who spoke in verse 6, and who speaks again, who appeared to Abraham, is the one who we in the church have all come to learn to identify as the one who became Jesus Christ. The world does not really understand that. The world assumes that the God of the Old Testament was some kind of legalistic—and sometimes they even think he was a little monstrous—legalistic individual who imposed a law that now has been removed; that we don't have to obey the law. We can now rather please ourselves with our own definition of love.

This being, YHWH, who appeared to Moses at more than one occasion, who appeared to Abraham. Here the voice of YHWH says: "I AM the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob," and Moses was sacred. I mean he had never really encountered deity before, or as the modern theologian would say, this was Moses' confrontation with the holy other, a very brilliant statement that clarifies nothing. God was making himself clearer. He said I'm the God the Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

(33) And the Lord said to him, "Put off your shoes from your feet, for the place whereon you stand is holy."

I will give a little aside. I've said it before, but we don't always realize it. If you've never been there you wouldn't know the following. Where Mount Sinai is if you were a nomad you would have to wear shoes. The soil, the rocky soil is sharp. In the northern Sinai where some people—modern speculators—have assumed the mountain might be, the sand is round and soft and pleasant and nobody wears shoes. Mount Sinai was not in the northern part of the peninsula because Moses wore shoes, and nobody wears shoes there who has any sense the sand is so pleasant in the north. But where Moses was it isn't pleasant.

But Moses walked up into the Mount to the point where he found this bush, and God says, "Take your shoes off here in my presence," which was of course the custom.

Now I've had the chance to climb Mount Sinai and it is very interesting. At a certain point on the mountain, from the bottom to this point, you will want to wear shoes like Moses did, and from a certain level up the rock becomes smooth and you can take your shoes off and there is no problem, and when we climbed to the top I noticed that because I kept my shoes off when I came down a little further than I should.

‘Put off your shoes! Where you stand is holy ground!’ This was a Holy God, and God speaks. We’re going to learn, of course, that there is One who has never directly spoken to the world, One who has never been seen by the world, whom we call the Father.

So the rest of the story you can read here, but we haven’t finished it. Moses is described, and all the things that happened to Aaron too, and then of course we have the deliverance of the children of Israel, the time of the judges. Then we come to the time of David in verse 45.

(45) David “Who found favor before God,” and desired to find the tabernacle for the God of Jacob. Now the God of Jacob is the one with whom David normally communed, the God of Glory, the One who speaks and the One who appears.

Verse 46: But David was not allowed to build a house, Solomon was. Our story isn’t over.

Then in verse 51 Stephen addresses his hearers. Now he says:

‘You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart,’ that’s where the real issue is, ‘You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did,’ as he gave the record “so you do now.”

‘Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?’ This is the record of the nation. ‘They have slain them which revealed before the coming of the Just One,’ that’s the Messiah, one who is just, one who deals absolutely with equity, “of whom you have now been the betrayers and murderers.”

Stephen was a little wrought-up. I couldn’t resist this topic today when I think much of the Western world is wrought-up over the kind of misdeed that has been done. (Shooting down of Korean airliner.) We don’t get wrought-up enough over the kind of misdeed that is done everyday recorded in almost every news-paper of this world.

‘You who received the law,’ and angels assisted in its mediation or disposition, “and have not kept it.”

So we are introduced here to One who is just. But the story isn’t over.

‘When they heard these things, they were exceedingly angry,’ that they had been accused, you see, of being heirs of murderers and themselves guilty of the same thing.

It reminds me of a dear friend—many Jews are dear friends who are not converted—this man who is a Hebrew scholar, an Israeli scholar, when I explained to him what we stood for, out of the blue he said, “Well, you must be heirs of the Jerusalem church.” I didn’t even mention it. I just mentioned what we do. And this man, who has written more than one book, immediately identified who we are. His next sentence after a little pause he said, “Come to think of it, I’m not sure I like that idea,” because he discovered we then were heirs as well as his people. And that also has in a sense troubled him, because the Jerusalem church did not require circumcision of those who were born of the Gentiles. I mentioned—of course I told this story before, but many of you now are

new whether he liked it or not, he knew we kept the law and he was not

‘Now Stephen, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the Glory of God.’ Now the God of Glory is the God who appeared to Abraham. That God who appeared to Abraham dwells in glory. He has glory and he dwells in glory, and he saw the God of Glory here, and this is the God whose glory Jesus dwells in, because it says very clearly here “I saw the God of Glory.” He looked up above and he simply had—to his mind and to his sight the heavens opened, and there was the One whom we know as the Father, and Jesus standing on the right hand of that divinity.

This so shocked the Jews that of course the rest of the story you will read in a hurry.

But there is another thought:

“...and said” Stephen saw that, and then he said, “I see”—he’s explaining what he saw--“the heavens open, and the Son of Man,” a mortal human being now made immortal, “standing on the right hand of God.”

Now either this was true or it was not. And if this is true, and the Jews thought it was blasphemy, if this is true, then there is no question what set of verses in the Bible we ought to look to. Many people today who are Christian or call themselves by that term, don’t know what verses really make plain the relationship between God the Father and the Son of Man, Jesus Christ.

So they stoned him.

Now, where are some of these verses mentioned in the Bible? It says that the Son of Man is standing on the right hand of God. So let’s look at where we may have scriptures where this fulfillment was foretold.

Let’s turn first of all to Psalm 110.

(Ps. 110:1) “The LORD,” YHWH—normally the Lord, as I say, and others have said too, but as I have mentioned this evening, is the one who appears and who speaks among mortals in times past and through the prophets to the nation. On other and rare occasions, however, it is referring to the Father.

Why? Well, because deity, Elohim, the God Kingdom, is defined in Psalm 90, written by Moses, a very important Psalm. You want to have a definition of God, the simplest definition in all the Bible:

‘Before the mountains,’ verse 2, “were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting”—in one direction--“to everlasting”—in another--“you are God.”

So here is a picture of God; YHWH, the Eternal, the Everliving, is a characteristic of deity. God has existed, does exist, and will continue to exist. He has never had a beginning of days.

(Ps. 110:1) Now one says to the other—now what is very interesting here is YHWH said—this is a Psalm of David--“YHWH said unto my Lord,”—the one to whom David normally communed with “My Lord,” Adoni, is here the one spoken to. One says “Sit thou at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”

It was foretold that there would be a being who is David’s Lord, who would sit at the right hand of YHWH. Now that’s a remarkable statement.

In Matt. 22:41—let's turn to that before we go on. Jesus addressed this very question near the end of his ministry:

'While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus said to them, 'What do you think of the Messiah?' " He didn't say like a lot of people "I'm the Messiah. How come you don't believe it?" He said, "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?"

The typical Jewish question. As I have said before—so you'll all remember it, those of you who are new—one Jew asked the other, "Why do you always answer a question with a question?" And he responded, "Why not?" This is just the way it's done.

'What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?"

'They said to him, the son of David.'" Because it is very clear that the Messiah is to sit on David's throne. "The son of David."

Jesus therefore says to them Well, now, how—can you explain this: How come David, if he's his son in spirit, calls him Lord? even then, because the Psalm said "YHWH said unto my Lord." He was even David's Lord in that day. And yet as far as the Jews were concerned the Son had not yet appeared. And here's the quote: Jesus now quotes the verse, "The Eternal, YHWH, the LORD," and of course the Greek doesn't convey the distinction here, "said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Now if David said Jesus *then*, at that time—underline *then*--"if David then call him Lord,"—if that be the case that he was even David's Lord then, "How would he be his son?"

You know the Jews had no answer. You, if you have no answer, admit you don't know the scripture and have no way of identifying the Messiah. The only way is that the one who then lived as David's Lord became later David's son, and that takes a divine act, which of course is elsewhere recorded.

But going back here to Psalms 110. The story isn't over. Not only does he say here: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. (2) The Lord shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion."

And here I would like to read the NKJ version, which the British call the Revised Authorized Version, RAV. It's a little bit smoother and it doesn't have the archaic "thy" and "thine" in it, and so I'll read that here.

'Sit at my right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool. The LORD" that is YHWH "shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!"

We read about those enemies in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

'Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power"; that's beautifully written, verse 3. It says "your people shall be willing" in the KJ. That's nice but "volunteers" is clearer in terms of modern usage. Not merely being willing, our sense of volunteering and being volunteers is a very interesting expression.

(3) "... In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth." This Being is ever young, will never grow old.

(4) "YHWH," the Eternal, "The LORD has sworn and will not relent," never, never change his mind. "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Now we haven't turned to Melchizedek but that's an interesting reference. This being, David's Lord, is going to have, this scripture prophesies, the rank of Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God, not the function of Aaron offering at a material altar.

(5) "The Lord is at Your right hand;..." That's just a statement "the Lord is at your right hand." This was David's Lord. He is "at your right hand," speaking of YHWH.

Now this Lord, "He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath." (repeat) I don't think we get the full impact of that verse 5.

'He shall strike through." That's the old KJ reading. To execute means to pass the death penalty and to bring about the execution of rulers of this world who have stood in the way. It's very interesting. Many world rulers today are hearing the message. The question is: what will their state of mind be or the state of mind of their successors? We have to see.

(6) "...He will execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies..." The enemies of the Lord, those who are attempting to destroy the earth, who have taken upon themselves to rely on themselves and their weapons, he shall execute.

It says in the rest of verse 6, "He will execute the heads," kings or not, "of many countries." Not all but many. And there will be some who will not be, because there will be kings who will bring God's people back, and there are others who will be executed.

(7) "He will drink of the brook by the wayside;..." No fighter ever drinks of the brook and kneels down to a brook to get some water in battle but only when it's over and his enemies are vanished then he is free to lay aside his armor and drink of the brook. That's the symbol here. "Therefore He shall lift up the head," of all those who have been oppressed up to this time, because the oppressors are gone.

What a remarkable picture of a being whom the Jews themselves recognized here as the anointed or the Messiah, the one who was to be born of David to sit on David's throne.

But we will now turn to another verse. In fact, there are two. I would like to pick up Psalm 2 at this point, which tells the same story in other terms.

(Ps. 2:1) "Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together," most probably in some continuity of the United Nations where the nations' representatives get together.

They do it: "Against YHWH" the Eternal, "and against His Anointed..." Now in this particular case, YHWH, the Eternal, the Everliving, is clearly a reference to the one who is seated on the throne at whose right hand stands the Anointed. The "Anointed" means in Hebrew the Messiah, or the Greek the Christ. So some-

times it is a reference specifically to the person whom we know as the Father, but in this case whenever as in Ps. 110 it is an event that takes place in heaven that is described, I don't know of any case where the word YHWH, or LORD in capital letters, when referring to the Father in the Old Testament, actually occurs in any other setting but at the throne in heaven itself where God exercises his government over the universe. But wherever the being YHWH appears on earth and does speaking and talking and is seen among men, it is the one who is here the Anointed, because both may bear this name because both have been Everliving, from eternity.

(3) The kings say, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." Let's not have God's law saddled on us.

(4) Now "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; YHWH shall hold them in derision.

(5) And He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure."

He manifests that through the Anointed One.

(6) He says, "Yet have I set My King on My holy hill of Zion."

The King who is set on Zion now speaks:

(7) "I will declare the decree."

First YHWH says, "I have set My King on My holy mountain," that's the Anointed One, that is the Messiah.

Now the Messiah speaks, "I will declare the decree; YHWH has said to Me, 'You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.'"

That was at one time a prophetic statement. More than 19 centuries ago, in the end of B.C. 5 the statement was made "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." And he was born in B.C. 4.

(8) "Ask of me," when you become a mature man, "and I will give you the nations for your inheritance..."

Not merely the land of Israel that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob or Israel but:

'Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.'

Now to get this he would have to confront the being to whom the nations had sold themselves, the devil. And so Jesus was to meet the devil. He could not have gotten the nations until he first brought into subjection and could give orders to the one who had the nations as his possession, and the ends of the earth; once he qualified to do God's will, and prove that he could keep God's law and carry out God's work on earth, then he could petition the one whom we know as the Father here, and the whole earth could be His.

(9) "You will break them" and that's speaking of the nations "with a rod of iron."

That's quoted again in Revelation in the prophecy given by Jesus to John in reference in one case, but not the only case, to the church at Thyatira.

'You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'

The Messiah says this was the decree, this is the authority I have.

(10) "Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve YHWH with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

(11) Kiss the Son, lest He be angry...."

Now YHWH here would be in the same context the Father and the Son are referred to here, and there is no question but what the Messiah is here not just a son of David. The Messiah here is actually the Son of YHWH, the Son of the Creator who rules over all, the One who created through and by Jesus Christ.

The rest of course, is a reference here to court procedure.

Now in Acts chapter 13 there was another interesting discussion.

Stephen is dead, Paul is in Cyprus, then Paul goes to Antioch in Pisidia; another problem arises, and in the discussion we read:

(26) "Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God," meaning the Greeks who had attended synagogue services, "to you the word of this salvation has been sent.

(27) For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled those very prophets in condemning Him.

(28) And though they found no cause for death in Him" though they accused him, "they asked Pilate that He should be put to death." And even Pilate said, "I find nothing worthy of death in this man."

(29) "Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb.

(30) But God raised Him from the dead.

(31) He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people.

(32) Now we declare to you glad tidings," that's the gospel, good news, "that promise which was made to the fathers.

(33) God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus."

One of the points of the good news is that the king who was slain, who had been destined to rule the world, is alive again. There are people who say, "But we were preaching the gospel but we weren't preaching Jesus." They were saying that in '74. Nonsense. The King, the Son of God who was slain, who had been destined to fulfill these prophecies, is now alive.

(33) "God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:

'You are My Son, Today have I begotten You.'

Now he here points up that this Jesus is the Son of God, and he became the Son when he was begotten in the womb of Mary.

(34) "And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has thus spoken:

'I will give you the sure mercies of David.'

Now what we have here is that God would never have allowed His Son to remain dead, nor would He have allowed His Son to return to corruption. The "sure mercies of David" are salvation, eternal life. The Son was raised as an immortal Spirit Being having the same mercies, in a sense, given to Him who had been condemned unjustly that will in the future be given to David, who was a man with sin but who asked God's mercy to wipe it all away.

(35) "Therefore He also says in another Psalm:

'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'

So Paul jumps from one to the other of these verses. Now we'll look at them.

'I will give you the sure mercies of David.' We'll turn here to Isaiah chapter 55. This is the time when salvation is being opened to the broad majority for the first time in the millennium.

(1) "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." These are all analogies to the spiritual.

(2) "Why do you spend money" today "for that which is not bread," false salvation "and your wages for that which doesn't satisfy?"

The religions of this world do not really satisfy.

'Listen diligently to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.

(3) Incline your ear and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live." This is God's message. "And I will make an everlasting covenant with you—the sure mercies of David."

Now, what is interesting here is that Isaiah does not record YHWH as saying, "I will make a new covenant with you." He says "I will make an everlasting covenant."

Why didn't he say I'll make a new covenant? Because he's addressing everybody. This is for the millennium. And for most people God never made an "old covenant." The Gentiles never had a covenant. Therefore when Isaiah speaks addressing all people, that is quoting YHWH who is saying this, it is an everlasting covenant.

When the house of Israel and Judah are mentioned in the book of Jeremiah, God says of that nation: "I'm going to make a new covenant," because with them he had previously made one. And by calling another one, which is an everlasting covenant, a new one, the first one becomes old, and it was not called an old covenant at Sinai. So when Israel and Judah are referred to that's the old or the new covenant, you know when both are referred to. But here that new covenant is not called new because for the Gentiles there never had been an old one. God had never called them before. But now he opens to them an everlasting covenant, "the sure mercies of David." Now that means that David understood the law in terms of the new covenant. He understood the law in terms of the new covenant, therefore David said "You did not demand sacrifice." The old covenant required sacrifice, the death penalty, stoning, and you had

to offer certain things if you did things in ignorance. And David said "Well, I know God you don't really require those animal sacrifices in accordance with your new covenant; that is, with your everlasting covenant."

So, here Jesus himself is pictured as sharing in this relationship as David is. Well, because Christ is going to be part of the covenant. He's going to play the role of the husband as the church plays the role of the wife. And just as Christ, the Messiah, came to be mortal, as David was mortal, as you are mortal and as I am mortal, so he was raised from mortality to immortality. He was changed from mortal to spirit, but he was not allowed, while dead, to see corruption. That's the other one: "You will not allow your Holy One to see corruption."

Now we haven't finished Isaiah 55 yet.

(4) "Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, a leader and commander for the people." That's speaking of David in times past, and in the future.

(5) "Surely you shall call a nation you do not know, and nations who do not know you shall run to you....Because of the LORD your God, and the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you."

Now here we are introduced to the LORD, in this case YHWH is clearly a reference to the One who is distinct from the Holy One of Israel, so there's no question that the Father was known, not as the Father, not as the Son, but they were known as individuals within the God Family. The Father/Son relationship had not yet been established until 5 B.C. It was foretold, but it was not enacted, and it was only later, of course, that the Jews got into the habit of using the word "Father" when they saw these verses, but it never occurred to them when that actually happened.

The Christian community, or communities, that are so divided, believing in the Trinity, would have Jesus Christ as the Eternal Son of God, which of course is a great mystery; because if he's always been a Son, then how do you explain how he could be a son, because a son has a certain beginning relationship with respect to a father. So that's simply untrue.

Here we have the Holy One of Israel. Now the Holy One, that's Jesus Christ. The scripture says here "You will not allow your Holy One to see corruption." We'll come to that in a moment, but I wanted to point up that the Holy One is introduced here in Isaiah 55. David is introduced and David's son is here introduced as the Holy One of Israel, the only one in the entire family of Israel who is, and was, without sin. Without sin. He was holy, never had erred, never will, because God does not sin. He has decided that he will not go any other way than the way that we define as love and concern for others.

Now this Holy One of Israel in Psalm 16:10 is again referred to. Now we know what family he came from, it was the family of Jacob. In Psalm 16 we are again introduced here:

(9) "My heart is glad and my glory rejoices, my flesh will also rest in hope." Whatever glory David had as a king he rejoiced with. His flesh, he saw, in the grave would rest in hope.

(10) "For you will not leave my soul in sheol," that's the world of the dead, the grave. It doesn't necessarily mean a single tomb. The Hebrew word can give the thought of simply the world of the dead like a vast cemetery that this world has become. "You will not leave my soul in a grave, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption."

Now "Your Holy One" here is very interesting because if the analogy is to be carried through this implies if the Holy One is not to see corruption, the Holy One would therefore be in sheol, in a grave, but would not be corrupted like David's soul would be.

"You will not leave my soul in sheol," you'll raise me from the dead; but in contrast to that, and also in parallel, "You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption." That's the way Hebrew poetry is.

Now that would make no sense if he were living. It makes sense only if he were dead. The miracle here is that the Holy One of Israel, the One who was without sin, will never see while in the grave corruption. That's a prophecy of the death of the Messiah. So we know he was to die, but he was not to see corruption. The analogy with Sheol makes that clear. And we know what his role shall be, he is the Son of God. He is the son of David because he sits on David's throne, and the Jews themselves acknowledged that.

"The scepter of promise." I won't take time for that now because our study is nearly over. The scepter of promise went through Judah, and it went through in the family of Judah the house of David, and therefore we draw the conclusion as all of the Jews correctly did, that in giving the scepter promise there was no doubt that it was to go through Judah. And when David came there was no doubt that it was to go through David's line. So the Messiah was to come from David. No one would have known that of course until David was anointed.

So we have here, both in Acts 13 and in Acts 6 and 7, some very interesting passages that give us the feeling of the background and the relationship.

Now, in closing I would like you to read sections of the book of Hebrews. Mr. Armstrong, over the years, because the series has been replayed, has gone through the book of Hebrews verse by verse. It would be good for you sometime to read the section in the book of Hebrews about the covenant and the tabernacle and the characteristics of the tabernacle. Most people have never understood the role in that day.

So let's just note that we can quickly glance at the book of Hebrews, and there are many references in Chapter 1.

"You are my Son, today I have begotten you," is again quoted in verse 5 from Psalms 2:7.

"I will be to him a Father, he shall be to be a Son." This is quoted again from II Samuel 7:14.

(6) "Let all the angels of God worship Him," when this being was brought into the world, so the angels were required to bow down and to worship him when he was made mortal. He was still worthy of worship, verse 6. And that is of course derived from more than one passage in the Old Testament.

Now, in verse 8: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever." And in verse 8 and verse 9 we have a quotation from Psalms 45:6-7. So, if you were to go through these you would discover the characteristics seen in the New Testament.

Now, we don't say that you just read the New Testament, that's a quick way of getting at the prophecies in the Old. Find out where these are quoted in the Old, look at what it says in the Hebrew, and you have to ask yourself: Who else fulfilled them? No one else has ever fulfilled them.

Then when you see the story developed here about many sons being brought into glory—we'll pass that over; Christ is the High Priest—we don't have the consciousness problems that afflicted people in the Old Testament. When the Jews go through the Day of Atonement, for instance, they're constantly reminded of their past sins. We can be freed from them.

But then we are introduced to the role of Christ in the order of Melchizedek, Chapter 7, and the new priestly service; the description of the New Covenant in contrast to this in Chapter 8; we find in Chapter 9 the Old Covenant, the earthly sanctuary and the limitations of the service of Aaron. What we must understand is that in the Old Testament when God was certainly not dealing with the Gentiles, and had only selected Israel.

HOW ARE WE DIFFERENT FROM THIS WORLD'S RELIGIONS?

Dr. Hoeh—July 25, 1992

I inquired of two of the elders—whatever responsibility, we're all elders in that sense with ordination—we don't have to concern ourselves with other rank—but I inquired what topic might be of interest, and one of the men came up with a very, I would say, affective subject, which was beautifully introduced today. He said, "Why do you not address the question of whether we are Protestant; what it means to be a Protestant." I said I certainly would be willing to consider that. We haven't really looked at the broader perspectives. I say also I might pose the question: Are we Protestant? Are we Jewish? Are we Catholic? Are we Orthodox? And if not, in what sense are we not? In what sense do others share perspectives that we do? Or do not share such perspectives? Or why is it that with all our Buddhist friends we are not Buddhists?....Why is it possible to discuss with a Muslim, as I did many years ago, all the subjects from the second coming of the Christ to abortion, and I found nothing I disagreed with him on? Or he with me. In this sense are we Muslim? Do we submit to God; which is the sense of the meaning of Islam?

It would be good for us to take a look both at the world in which we live today and ask ourselves: what makes the difference? What is the nature of the religions of the world around us? In a sense, what is ultimately the distinguishing characteristic? I should thank Mr. Burke for posing this question. Now you know who thought of it. I don't think he planned, however, that the first beautiful hymn was a Lutheran hymn today. So I ask you also, are we Lutheran?

Well, we'll take a look at this because the Bible does have quite a bit to say on subjects such as this no matter what our comparisons may be. I thought it appropriate to bring two volumes of the Catholic Encyclopedia in order that I could quote certain things. In one particular subject area there is a lengthy quote from the Protestant world in fact by a Lutheran scholar. The subject was Protestantism. This will give, in a certain sense, the highlights of Protestants' perspectives of themselves, as well as the Catholic perspective.

We do, as you may know, have some of our students in the summer go abroad. We had three young men this year participate in the excavation in Syria, the site of Tel Mozon (sp), the probable capital, almost certainly so, of Orkish (?) or the ancient Haranian (?) kingdom that ruled in the area where Abraham's family came from in the northern regions of Syria, the upper Habor (Khabur) River basin. After Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees he went to this area before proceeding after his father's death to the land of Canaan.

And we had an interesting opportunity on this occasion, a Catholic, a practicing Catholic asked if he might address our group, in addition to our study. Prof. Bucha-

lotte (sp) of the University of California at Los Angeles gave a very remarkable presentation. He introduced himself and his wife, who was not there, as practicing Catholics, and the subject would have been enlightening, I am sure, to all of you.

But there are also those who are not practicing Catholics. There are Protestants and those who say they are Protestants, and certainly are not practicing Protestants. There are Jews who are not practicing Jews. They may be culturally so, they may be agnostics or atheists, the same as there are some who are bordering on agnosticism or even bordering on atheism in the broader Protestant world.

So how do you, in a sense, look at ourselves and think of ourselves and think of others?

There was a time—well, time goes by, I think this was somewhere around 1975. I had lunch with a minister who shortly thereafter left the fellowship of the Worldwide Church of God, and he pointed up that the church—well, at least he pointed up what he thought the church taught; that we have a narrow view, and he simply could not accept that narrow view; that we in a sense are intolerant of others, we cut ourselves off, we do not have friends who are peoples of other religious convictions. I said, "Where did you get that idea?" "Well," he said, "the church teaches it." "Well," I said, "You know I've been here a lot longer" as it turned out, of course, than he was. I've been here since 1947 in Southern California, and I have never heard a sermon requiring such a relationship. I have heard sermons saying that you may have to leave friends who curse, who drink, who commit adultery, who live in sin if that kind of behavior is going to pull you down into sin again. You simply have to come out of the world. But there's nothing said that in coming out of the world that we cease to live in the world, or that we are not to reach the world, or that we may not in fact discover friends in the world whom God has not yet called.

I said I have people whom I would call friends. One man said to me long, long ago that "If I have to give up shrimp I simply can't join your church." And of course he's been a life-long friend ever since I've known him in 1949, as both a personal friend—something developed in the sense it was unusual. You meet some people, you bid them adieu, and you never see them again in life. We first learned of each other by correspondence. He was for sometime the chief distributor of the *Journal of Biblical Literature on behalf of the Society of Biblical Literature*. We—in fact I don't know what his religious background is. He is Christian, he has a name that implies that there was another ethnic and religious background historically. I don't think he ever attends church. But when it came to a crisis in 1979, people

referred to Ambassador College as "your college" when talking to him. I thought that was remarkable.

I personally know as a friend a man who risked his life hundreds of times to rescue Jews and others from the Nazi regime across the Vichy French border, Switzerland, and the Vichy French border to Spain. We have certain Buddhist friends, my wife and I correspond, I usually do the corresponding in this case....

I said to this young minister, when Mr. Armstrong at that time mentioned Leopold of Belgium, and had become acquainted with King Boumepon (sp) of Thailand, "Do you assume when he calls them his friends, and they in turn, as Leopold did, spoke of Mr. Armstrong in an assembly as his friend, that in fact they are not?" Well, he really had no answer. But he said of me, he said "All you do, of course, is simply pull rank." Well, I don't pull rank when it comes to this. I don't happen to be a Muslim, I don't happen to be a Hindu, I was not reared as a Catholic, and I was converted from Protestantism.

We discover, in other words, that it is still possible in this world to discover that you have friends, as well as enemies. When Herbert W. Armstrong died in January, there were people who were Catholic and Protestant, Buddhists—I don't know of other groups who were there. In his illness, young Federicko Buchalotte (sp) prayed for Mr. Armstrong as a Catholic child would pray. He learned to pray essentially when he was in Syria, so when he would pray he would bow down with his forehead to the floor as he saw the Muslims pray. I presume that he takes a different stance today as he has spent more and more time in this country in his environment. His father told me that. Our Buddhist friends every year have remembered Herbert W. Armstrong. It is the flowers of the Buddhist community that are at the grave side of Mr. Armstrong at all times. The supreme patriarch of Theravada Buddhism was prayed for by Mr. Armstrong who sent a message wishing him speedy recovery, which he did have at the time of an earlier illness. He died in his early 90s later.

So we have, as an illustration in the church, leaders in times past who had friends and who prayed for leaders of other religious communities. We are told to pray for the leaders in the countries in which we live. We're not told to pray for them only if they are converted and members of the Church of God. That should be obvious from Paul's statement in the New Testament when the emperors were most certainly pagan. So it does behoove us to take a broader perspective and to analyze the story a little better than we commonly do.

If we were to go back to the time of the New Testament church, we would clearly discover that some people thought that the church of Jesus Christ, the church of God that Jesus Christ founded, was in some way simply a sect of the Jews. And in fact Paul addresses the Christian world as simply viewed as a sect. On the other hand, the Jews came to think of Christians as Nazarenes in the general sense of the term that they were followers of Jesus of Nazareth. And later Gentiles thought of this group of people as Christians because they talked about a Messiah, which the Greeks knew by the name of Christ

or Christos, because the Hebrew word that we translate Messiah was equivalent to the Greek word that we translate Christ. That is, someone who was anointed for a particular task, and we were named after the office that Jesus of Nazareth had, and ultimately the whole of the religious world that gives credence to Jesus Christ at one level or another came to be known as the followers of the one who was anointed for a particular job; that is, the Christ, or Christians. And so the religion is that of Christianity, although I doubt that most people in the world would really know the relationship of that name. We just think it is a name that Jesus had without really understanding its background.

So in a certain sense, when Paul, writing to the Greek speaking people who were being called of God, defined the nature of Christianity, he spoke in terms of being inwardly a Jew, because there was something that the Jew possessed. In other words, the Jew had possession of the oracles of God. At that time there were not books of the New Testament completed as we now have them, though certainly gospel accounts came to be written early on, probably in the 4th decade of that century, toward it's close. That's around 38-39 A.D., in that period of time, and written, of course, sometimes decades later. But when Paul refers to the people of God, he spoke of them as being Jews inwardly, not merely outwardly in terms of circumcision or attending synagogue or claiming to be heirs of Abraham, but Jews inwardly, in whom the law of God was being perfected; who understood the intent and purpose of the law. Before there were Jews who went about making quite clear that the Gentiles were sinners, whether or not they had the law, because they certainly violated the principles that the Jews understood from the law.

But Paul addressed them in Romans 1 and 2 and 3, in that area. He addressed them in terms of the fact that the Jews who broke the law were no different than the Gentiles who committed all sorts of atrocities in their societies one to another and people to people. The one didn't have the law, the other had it, understood it, and didn't practice it. So that in fact they were both guilty. Those who sinned without the law perished without that law. They were simply being punished as a result of going contrary to the perspectives and views of men in whatever their consciences may have guided them to do. Then there were those who perished according to the law, the Jew who knew and did not. There were those Jews who sought to live by the law, one of whom Jesus said "You are not far from the kingdom of God." That was before the day of Pentecost. Paul, writing some times afterward, spoke of Gentiles who do the things written in the law, their conscience, in a sense, being witness to those things, even though they did not know the law, because, as you know, many human laws are based on the principles of the Ten Commandments, though not all. And so it is possible for Paul to write about people who had not received an understanding of the law in addressing the Romans, as if, in fact, in many cases there were those who did what was right in accordance with how they sought to be obedient to what the

society or the laws of that society construed to be right. For basically, in society, adultery, murder, lying, which certainly is what the men in prison did who claimed they were all innocent, most of them are guilty. The fact remains that these are fundamental laws, stealing, coveting, which lead to lying and stealing, the last commandment in a sense is one of the broadest and most oriented toward intent and purpose. But all societies in one way or another have had—even the Communist society in the former U.S.S.R., required its people—not necessarily party members—but required the people to tell the truth to one another as comrades. Now that's very honorable. The problem with communism, of course, is those who ran the system didn't tell the truth to the people.

But nevertheless, societies do have certain basic principles. Buddhism has five, essentially the last five, of the teachings of the Ten Commandments, as the relationship of human being to human being. Islam is based on submission, the two, the revelation, the instruction that comes from the Koran, which is based on the teachings of the prophet Mohammed, much of which come from the Old Testament and New Testament as well as spirits who revealed, in a cave to Mohammed, the things that he understood to be the message of God.

And so it's possible to have a remarkable communication with numerous people, and to find that there are people who respect us, as well as people who would argue. We have had the respect of kings who were Catholic, we have had the respect and still do—Leopold, of course, is deceased, that's why I use the past tense. Otto von Hapsburg who most certainly is a practicing Catholic and a politician, has admired the kind of work we have been able to do, respects what we have accomplished, and appreciates our recognition of his concern for the future welfare of Europe, and he has concern for that. What it may come to is a separate and a distinct issue.

Franz Josef Straus, now deceased, was a guest of Herbert Armstrong in his home, a Bavarian Catholic, a man who said as a Catholic he had never spent such a happy day in his life as a day in Mr. Armstrong's home, being able to talk with him. Certainly we would find it difficult not to say the same thing of many of our Jewish and Muslim friends, the relationship we have with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's royal family, those who were secular Jews, as distinct from the religious Jews in Hebrew University, some of our Muslim friends whom I know in Syria—let's take the case of Ishmael Hejara(sp), who is an Iraqi, since Iraqis don't have a very good reputation in this country today, which is unfortunate, because there are varied people in the country. Ishmael Hejara is a teacher in Saudi Arabia. He has worked on the excavation from time to time, and when Mr. Carl McNair, a minister, was with the students at the excavation in Syria that the Ambassador Foundation supports, the earlier one was at Terako (sp) on the Euphrates, and Tel Mozon (sp) is near the Turkish border today. Mr. Carl McNair was in the northern one. Ishmael Hejara was trying to understand what made our students different. And he analyzed all the things about zeal for learning, cooperation, understanding, everything

that you would associate with scholarly mindedness, academic pursuits, ability to get along with others, and he concluded that all of the others, and I would have had to say the same thing, all the others who were also there, whether from the University of Paris or Rome, the University of Arizona, whether from U.C.L.A., Cal-State L.A., or others, whether they were Catholic, whether they were Protestant, whether they were Jews or Muslim, they all shared these things. But he said, "If that's the case how do you explain why Ambassador students are still different?" And he simply left not knowing how to account for the fact that there was a difference, as a Muslim perceives it. And he came back shortly thereafter and said to Carl McNair, he said "Now I know! The difference is in the spirit. There is something that has taken place in the spirit that makes the difference."

I cite to you that it was a Muslim who identified that which is so fundamental—you know, it may have been somebody else who did it for you, but in terms of this story it was a Muslim who perceived that the ultimate difference between members of the Church of God and any other group he was with, has to do with something that transforms the spirit in man, which is, as you should know, Holy Spirit from God. That's what makes the difference. Either that is why you are different now from what you were, from what you were five, or ten, or even two or three years ago, as you look back in your life, or something has happened to you that you have not grown spiritually to be different, to be able to think different, to act different. It isn't just a change of personality.

Ishmael Hejara was correct. It wasn't personality, it wasn't intellect, because there are other good personalities. We have remarkable personalities on television, and some not so remarkable, but that was not it. Now, your personalities undoubtedly have been helped. Your health undoubtedly should be helped, but the center of it was correctly defined as that which transforms the spirit in man. It is in the spirit that this change is wrought that distinguishes the Gentile who is a Jew within, the Israelite who ceases to want to be a Gentile but becomes a Jew within, the Jew who becomes a Jew within as distinct from merely without through circumcision. That was a remarkable insight. Because in the end Paul says those who have the Spirit of God are those who are going to participate in the first resurrection. Without the Spirit of God having joined with the spirit in man it will be impossible to participate in the first resurrection. That spirit will enable all people ultimately to be resurrected to judgment.

There are two fundamental kinds of resurrection occurring, broadly speaking, at three times.

1: The resurrection to life over which the second death has no power; 2: Then the resurrection to judgment of the overwhelming majority of human beings who have never truly, adequately understood the spiritual truth of Jesus Christ; 3: Then, of course, the resurrection to judgment after the resurrection to judgment of the vast majority, for those who have known better, who chose not to go along with the government of God through Jesus Christ, whether in the church of the New

Testament or whether in the church or congregation of Israel in the Old. These are the people who have made shipwreck, as Paul said. These are not people of whom John spoke when he said "They went out from us because they were not of us. If they had been of us they would have remained with us." There are some who make shipwreck, whom Paul very greatly regretted had chosen another route to go, and had spurned the Spirit of God and all the truth and the fruits that come from contact with God.

So in a sense, in the New Testament times, there was a large group of people who were known as Nazarenes, and they later had other terms, and came to be known, as the work spread among Greek speaking Gentiles as well as Greek speaking Jews, as Christians. They were as different from the Jews of New Testament times as David, for example, was among people in his day; as Joshua, Aaron, Miriam, Moses were in their day from the rest of the nation in the family. See, Joshua tells us, he said as Moses did earlier, Moses said Now you remember, I have told you that when you get in the land you're going to do all these things that will bring catastrophe on you, because you do not have the spirit that will enable you to obey God, to do his will, to think his thoughts, to live the kind of life he intends you to be. That is you don't have, as he said, any promise of the Holy Spirit that would make you like your Creator.

The children of Israel couldn't imagine that would be true. They didn't understand. In the days of Joshua, after his work was over—it's worth reading both the story at the close of Deuteronomy, Moses speech, and Joshua's speech, where you will discover that he said that "You do not have the spirit to keep—to be obedient to the law." The Spirit of God was not promised to the nation as a whole. It doesn't abide in them. So in that sense, judges, priests, kings, prophets, people whom we commonly refer to as lay people, there were some that God called all during the period that we define as the Old Testament. In other words, from the founding, from before the founding of the nation to the time that the Messiah appeared in the 1st Century of the present era, God called individuals from among those people. They were part of the congregation of Israel, or the family of Israel before, but they differed by means of the Spirit of God that was made available.

Jesus spoke of it clearly in the New Testament. In the Old Testament David identified the same thing when he said when he made a very serious blunder, a blunder of public proportion that needed to be written in the Bible, he said "Take not your Holy Spirit from me. Create in me a clean heart." How God does that, of course, is by means of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God.

So, David understood that if the Spirit of God were to leave because he would continue to be in an unrepentant attitude, he would ultimately perish. The Spirit of God is ultimately what distinguishes God's people even among those who may have the general revelation of God. Now, no one disputes the fact that the Jews have the Old Testament revelation, the Christians have the Old and the New, though they pay attention to the one far

more than to the information in the other, that's speaking broadly. Nevertheless, within the vast Judaeo-Christian culture, the spread that has affected also Islam, in this vast culture, God's people differ because having the Spirit of God, something occurs that would not occur otherwise. Paul addresses this when he writes the Corinthians, and says that it is the result of the Spirit of God that enables us to perceive the things of God. That is, if we didn't have the Spirit of God we would look at the Bible in general as the Jews looked at it if they came from the Jewish culture. They looked at it in the letter of the law. They were looking in general for loopholes, or since there were so many loopholes that God purposely left, then they try to solve the problem by building fences and then walls around to keep people from sinning in some way with many other traditions that they added.

Jesus addressed this question in the sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 5 in particular. If you were to look there, Jesus said that in times past God's law had been given in such a simple expression as "You shall not kill." Anyone who sought to understand the intent of that law would immediately have grasped that that's where you start from. Then you look at other examples in the scripture and you see how you were to treat your neighbor, and you learn from the Old Testament the scripture says "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Now, Jesus said that you should not look at the commandment as simply prohibiting killing or murder, you should see it as also addressing the question of hate. You should see it as addressing the question of animosity and jealousy, because all these things ultimately lead to the spirit of murder. That is, is what precipitates murder. So Jesus said he who hates his brother has in fact committed murder in his heart. Just as it says you shall not commit adultery, that he who lusts after someone who is not his wife has committed adultery in his heart. That is, we are to examine the attitude, what motivates.

Now we are able to do that because God has given his Spirit to his church. We're able to look at the Bible in a unique way. There was a young lady of Chinese background, a Thai citizen named Fong who is married to our one Thai graduate from Ambassador College. Fong was an educated person of the Buddhist world, the Chinese community in Chang Mai (sp) in the North. And she first became acquainted with our student because there was one thing he didn't do and that is, he wasn't involved with women as most young men are at university age, all around the world for that matter. And she wanted to know something about his religion, and he was very careful not to push it, and she ultimately became acquainted with the book that was his religious book called the Bible, in English. And she did what most people who don't know about the Bible would do. She looked at the beginning, and being Chinese, the Chinese are prone to think in terms of history, she discovered that the early parts of the Bible certainly could not be called history because they were so incomplete. That is, the record was by no means adequate to be properly defined as history. But she said what she found, and she could

speak good English, what she found were stories. Now I'm not using this in the theological sense like the Joseph story, the this or that story. It was in fact, however, an account or a story. And she saw immediately that each one of these stories in those early parts of the Bible were there because there was a specific purpose in them. It was either instructive in the intellectual sense, the spiritual sense, or it was moral in the sense of conduct, and if you read it and did not understand why it was there, she knew right away you didn't understand what was meant by that story. Rather a remarkable insight for someone who did not come from the Christian world. She came to be converted, was baptized, married, and is now a responsible member. That is an interesting point. Her mind came to see that what was written in the Bible has a purpose for us to understand, that we should grasp what it says.

Now what is unique about the Bible is, what Paul himself said, and that is that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The Jews could read the law, they could offer the passover sacrifice every year, but when it came to Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, was in fact slain on the day of the Passover. The nation did not recognize him as the Lamb of God, as the fulfillment. And in fact fulfilled their part in it, both the Jews and the Romans. Having read all about the slaying of the lamb, the shedding of the blood, they did not grasp that someone would have to die, and they did not recognize him when he, in a sense, made clear that he was the one who would. Quite a remarkable thing.

The Days of Unleavened Bread were to picture a nation that should be free from the practice of sin. And yet when Paul looks at the people, when Jesus looked at the people, what did Jesus say? What did Paul say? Jesus said, "You generation of adulterers. You go about seeking to kill me, something that Abraham never sought to do, and yet you claim to be his children when in fact you are the children of the devil." That is, they had in them not as a whole, they had in them not the Spirit of God that had not been promised, they had, in fact, unconsciously absorbed the ideas of the devil, and if we may use the term, the spirit of the devil motivated them. Hence lying and stealing and adultery, plotting, those were characteristics not just of that society but of the world at large. What was missing was the Spirit of God. What had entered them was something else, that is the spirit of the devil.

Jesus addressed this question very importantly. Let me turn to it in John 14:30 because it's the opposite. It's what characterizes other than the Church of God.

(30) "Hereafter, Jesus said, I will not talk much with you" this is the Authorized Version—my little Bible—"for the prince of this world comes," that was Satan, "and has nothing in me."

The spirit of the devil had not influenced the mind and the Spirit of Jesus Christ. But all of us grew up in a world that was different, because we simply were a part of the world, and so a part of nature that we now define as human nature is in fact the thought pattern, the moods, the attitudes of the devil. Jesus said he had no

need that any man should tell him what was in man. John makes this clear in his gospel account.

Jesus knew what was in man. The Holy Spirit enabling us to read scripture enables us to know how much of the influence of the devil has been in us as individuals. And we gradually put that out and put it aside, this attitude of hostility toward God's teaching and his law; a spiritual law, not merely the law in the letter but the real spiritual intent.

Now, we live in a world today in which we are confronted with different perspectives. We are not directly a part of the social community of the Jewish world. We have grown up in what we would generally identify as the Christian world. Some of you have come from a non-Christian background, some might be Jewish, a few of our brethren are Hindu, usually reformed Hindu, but I'm not trying to identify all of that. We're posed with a more specific question.

So let's look at what has come to be characteristic of Christianity and ask ourselves how it is that the Christian world came to perceive the Bible in a way quite distinct from certain fundamental points of understanding that we have and share.

For example, there is a fundamental concept called the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Man is an immortal soul dwelling in a material body is the normal catechetical definition. I learned that initially as a part of the German catechism of the German Methodist Church, which does not now exist anymore in the United States, though I seldom went to church. Yes, I was familiar with the Methodist catechism in German, I became familiar with the Catholic, my Sunday missal, in what was taught, all these things before I ever heard Herbert W. Armstrong or the World Tomorrow program. But the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is fundamental.

Now if the Church of God were to be defined in terms of this subject, we would often be called "soul-sleepers" because those who believe in the immortality of the soul believe in a non-sleeping, conscious soul after death, or at death, however you want to define it. So one needs to ask, what is it that distinguishes this difference between the mind that accepts the immortality of the soul and the mind that accepts the revelation of Jesus Christ through the prophets and the apostles? For the Bible plainly tells us in Psalms, Ecclesiastes, scattered through the Bible, the "living know that they shall die, the dead know nothing." "In the grave they do not praise God."

Jesus spoke of death as a sleep. "We shall not all sleep," said Paul. So there is not a conscious immortal soul in man. Whatever is of spiritual nature or of spirit is not in itself conscious once the body ceases to function. This is very fundamental. How could this remarkable difference occur if the same spirit motivated the minds of the writers of the Bible and the Church and Christianity as a whole, and the Jewish world as a whole; where at least they have access to the Old Testament? You see, it isn't a question of importance as to where the doctrine of the immortality of the soul came from, whether from

Egypt, whether from the Greek mind that had gone to Egypt to learn about it. What is important to ask is why the human mind can read such a doctrine into scripture, or out of it, however you want to define it? There must be something different in the mind of man and woman, since we like to distinguish men and women—there was a time when we thought of ourselves all as brethren but in our very anti-masculine women's movement today, we must distinguish the two and accommodate their thoughts—what is important is to ask what makes the mind of a member of the Worldwide Church of God, or the historic Church of God through time, recognize that the teaching of the Bible is not the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, when in fact that is the fundamental teaching of the church, the mother church, the established churches of the Protestant world, and in some cases also of the sects that did not come out of the Roman Catholic Church, or the Catholic Church?

It ultimately is the question of what the Spirit of God is, that is the Spirit of God, not some counterfeit spirit. Now there are churches that don't believe in the immortality of the soul. Certainly the Seventh Day Adventists do not, certainly the Jehovah's Witnesses do not. But they differ on other things, for the Seventh Day Adventists do not have the knowledge of the gospel of the kingdom of God as described in the Bible and especially the Book of Revelation and the prophets. But that's not an issue for the moment. The issue will be how come?

We have, of course, the doctrine of Sunday, which has come to be a day of assembly for the overwhelming number of Christian communities. What is it that enables people in the Church of God to understand when we should assemble, whereas others reading the scripture conclude that they should assemble on another day and not rest on the Sabbath Day? It isn't necessarily a question of who taught it, how it arose. The question that I pose to you which ultimately answers all of these is: What is it in our minds that enables us to understand, and what is missing or what is different in the minds of those who don't?

Now I grant that everyone of these points can be an argument that some one person sees clearly, but it just is an argument. There are those who can argue the subject of the Saturday Sabbath, tithing, that there is no immortal soul, but they see it only as an argument against someone else. My wife's father was a marvelous arguer on that point. He understood almost every basic truth of the Bible and he used it against those who practiced the general religious views, if you please, of those who had the beautiful song, first of the two today. But when it came to actually putting these things to practice, he simply couldn't. He just saw it as an argument much like the Jews saw it as the law, as an argument against the Gentiles. They would criticize the Gentiles for adultery, murder, lying and stealing, and yet allowed it in their own community. They just couldn't see it in themselves. They saw it only as an argument. Well, what is missing, of course, is the Spirit of God which enables us to see what the Bible says. To see not only what it means in Genesis Chapter 2, the beginning verses,

to see it in terms of the law, to see it in terms of Ezekiel's warning to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, to see it in terms of the example of Jesus, and to see it in terms of the practice of the New Testament church. And to see clearly all those verses that people think says something else in either perspective, on the immortality of the soul or the doctrine of Sunday.

Then you have essentially the doctrine of heaven in which, in the end, the ultimate goal of man is a particular place where God's throne is with no clear understanding at all of the gospel message, that is the gospel of the kingdom of God; what that kingdom is, what it shall do, where it shall govern, and where God's throne will ultimately be established.

The doctrine of heaven is clearly linked with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. However this was derived is of no real consequence for the moment. What I ask is how you can read the scripture and come up with a conclusion different from the Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish worlds, or for that matter the other religious communities around the world?

Then of course we have the doctrine of law. Now here the world is very divided, because religion in many cases is a part of the world. Some religion tends to be withdrawing from the world, but where religion is clearly a function of the world as a part of society, there is the need of law. And hence you will have in the Protestant world such arguments as law verses grace, or law and grace. You will have the law was nailed to the cross but nine were revived again, and so we have nine commandments, and the tenth one is the Sabbath we don't have. You have all sorts of arguments within the Christian world. There are those, perhaps more so in the established churches, who would say the law is holy, just, and good, as Paul did, but revised by the church councils, which is why the church no longer observes the Sabbath but has Sunday as a day of assembly. But it is not a sabbath according to most.

How is it that we are enabled to read the law and see certain things in it, for instance, that the Jew does not, that the Christian does not? Now of course the Jews, as a part of their cultural heritage, have the Holy Days as well as the Sabbath, for as a nation they learned a lesson that the house of Israel did not, and the Gentiles never had at all. There were also those of the house of Judah who perished because of their sins and never learned that lesson. But that's a cultural matter, so they do have it. But the Christian world that once started out in the New Testament clearly observing the festivals, as now most Catholics and Protestant and certainly Jewish scholars would recognize, because in the scholarly world of the intellect, more and more people realize that we do represent the characteristics of the Jerusalem church and Jewish Christians at the beginning of Christianity. I explained what our practice was, and was not, to an English writer, he is a Singhalese—I spent nearly an hour with him—who is the writer on what is Buddhism. There is a paperback which is used in American and other universities where the English language is, Professor Rauhoula (sp) asked me about our—he hadn't heard—he

asked me about our religious perspectives. And we went down the line, we went through the fundamentalist group, the evangelical group, certainly we weren't an established religion, were we like SDAs, Jehovah's Witnesses, what did we practice? And his conclusion was that we represent the original Jewish Christianity. The Jew, of course, saw us in another term, as the heirs of the Jerusalem church.

What, may we ask, led the Christian world to become something so different from the original church established with which the Greek Christians had fellowship who followed the example of the Jewish Christians in Judea? What made the Christian world come to be essentially, historically anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic for centuries? Though now there are significant apologies. What made the Christian world drive the Jews out of Spain 500 years ago? In fact, in this month the Jews celebrate the destruction of the first temple, the destruction of the second temple on the same day, and the expulsion of the Jews from Granada in Spain on the same day of the Hebrew calendar, not necessarily of the Roman. What came to be, if I may say so, missing in the mind of more and more people who thought of themselves as Christians? What was missing in the mind of the Jew that finally required even every Jew who attended synagogue by the end of the 1st century A.D. to curse the name of Jesus of Nazareth in order to participate in the synagogue service? Long denied by the Jews, now archaeologically confirmed as a reality. What led to this antagonism to Jesus by the Jewish community and the antagonism that separated Christianity from Judaism? and at the same time what was going on in the world of the Gentile as a whole that there developed this antagonism to God's Holy Days, the Sabbath, that led to the development of the immortality of the soul, the substitution of Sunday, and you can go name all the rest?

In the end there is only one fundamental answer. The Spirit of God was not in those who could not see the truth, for the truth is spiritually discerned. The revelation of God is discerned through the Holy Spirit. Now that Spirit that comes to the church is said to come to all the others. The question then is just very simple. There is the true Jesus, and, Paul says, another Jesus. Paul also warned of those who had come to accept another spirit. You can go to other groups of people and there will be another spirit, a different kind of spirit, and they aren't all the same either. There is the spirit of argument, the spirit of the intellect, there is the spirit of service, the spirit of emotion. Certainly one cannot deny the spirit of service in groups like the Salvation Army, one cannot deny what I saw in Al Quamishli in Syria, the Armenian Catholic Church, not Orthodox, publicly having to serve Christian refugees, Assyrian, and Chaldean Christians who have fled Syria—fled Iraq, and now live as refugees in Syria who cannot go back to their homeland. These are the city dwelling people who have been in those cities all this time who recognize their identify.

Yes, there is the spirit of service. There is also the spirit of following human tradition, the spirit of reason, the spirit of emotion, all sorts of variations. I think we

have to get back to a recognition that ultimately what differentiates the Church of God from any group, whether it be Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Orthodox, or any other non-Judaeo-Christian group, is ultimately whether the Spirit of God is in you. That's what it amounts to. If indeed God should choose to call someone, as he called the Catholic Peter Waldo, or Waldese or Voldeau (sp) nine centuries ago, or if he should call someone out of the Methodist church, one of the Protestant groups, as William Miller was called out, or if he should have called out a John the Baptist from the Jews, if he should have called different people from different backgrounds—you'll note that in each case there was at least contact with the Bible culturally, religiously, because that's how they could get a start. That is, they had a knowledge that was a part of their background. God has never called anyone to lead a group of people out that sought to do the will of God who came from another religious group, because they never had access. Now he may call people. We have people who've come from Islam, people who've come from Confucianism, Buddhism, Judaism, other forms of Christianity, who've come out of the world of agnosticism and atheism. We could name all the backgrounds. What is remarkable, of course, is how many in the Church of God are actually converted from the outside. By that I mean they are converted to the teachings of Jesus Christ as the Church of God has taught it, as distinct from merely being an heir of a family in one, two, or three generations who have been part of the Church of God.

I had here—not knowing how much time—I just wanted to be sure I had it for reference if need be, the Catholic Encyclopedia. I wanted to draw attention to one interesting thing that it says near the close of one of the points of issue, and that is to what extent what we call conversion is very rare. Most people are in fact a part of their own religious background. What you have is a recognition that by nature most people are born into Islam, born into Catholicism, born into each of these groups. Now there can always be a time when mature adults take on a different perspective, the need to reform an organization, and hence we have what is called the Reformation. These started out as, in a sense, people who were interested in reconsidering the teachings of the church in the beginning of the 16th century of the 1500s, 1517 is when we mark the specific time. But the group of people who challenged some of the things, after listening to, but not solely to, Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, were interested in protesting, if we may use that specific term, protesting imperial decrees. And so the word Pro-testants, or Protestants came to be applicable to those who did not follow the decrees of the government of the Holy Roman Empire. In a sense the highest level of government remained Catholic in the empire at all times, and within the empire you had certain rulers over the various states.

For example, in the story of the rise of Protestantism we really pick it up in one of the Diets, the Diet at Worms in Germany in April, 1529, in Speyer, where the elector Frederick of Saxony, the landgrave of Hesse, the

margrave Albert of Branden-berg, the dukes of Luneburg, the prince of Aunhalt (sp), all those who were electors of the emperor, the deputies of 14 of the free imperial cities, entered into solemn protest not to extend further toleration in their areas to Catholicism. They entered into a protest and the intent was not to extend toleration now to Catholics in their area. So that's how Protestantism arose.

Essentially Western churches today differ significantly because many have arisen as later reform movements of Protestant groups, independent movements such as a whole the Baptists, Adventists who arose quite separately, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, the International Bible Students or Jehov-ah's Witnesses, et cetera. So you have, in fact, in Protestantism essentially the continuity of a group that arose out of Catholicism, and Protestants today speak of themselves in terms of that, or they may simply refer to their non-religious background. Because there are many people who class themselves as Protestants when they merely mean they are indifferent to religion and certainly therefore not Catholic.

The fact that most Muslims think of themselves as Muslim by birth, that you are Protestant by birth, Catholic by birth, and that you have a situation where conversion is so rare, this is indeed indicative of what is characteristic of the Church of God, and that is that the vast majority of families in the church have all come as a result of conversion to Jesus Christ and assembly with the fellowship of the Church of God. And those families that arise from it, we think of them as often second or third generation Christians, but the overwhelming majority—I don't think I need to raise—or have you raise hands, but I think most of you would recognize that the change that has taken place in your case is something that happened to your mind, things that you would never have understood as a child, or as a teenager, or as a young adult, or even an older adult depending on what age you were being called. See, the gifts are all the calling of God. If God decides to reveal it to you, you will learn of it whether or not you want to at the start. Herbert Armstrong did not want to at the start. Mr. Joseph Tkach was a young man and in that sense represents a relationship that is different, because his father, and mother too, came to understand certain things in the Bible that they didn't understand before. So in a certain sense Mr. Joseph Tkach Sr. was a participant of what we might call that first generation of conversion, but there was no doubt that in fact he has experienced something that begins another story, and that is that each generation has to make its own decision also. Our children are not automatically spiritual members of the Church of God merely because they are born in the family. There has to be that point of belief and repentance, not necessarily in any specific order here because children may believe some things or they may repent of some things at different stages, but belief almost certainly must precede repentance in the sense that if you repent of something it's something that you believe that you haven't done right, so belief and repentance and ultimately baptism opens up the opportunity to you to receive the Spirit of God, at

which point—that is you are not a member of the church because you were baptized, you are a member of the church because the Holy Spirit baptized you into the church. But that's a whole subject of itself and we have reached 12:30.

To answer, in simply terms, Mr. Burke: no, Jesus Christ and his church are not to be named after any one particular group of people. Of course he knows that, that's why he wanted me to talk to you about it. We are in one sense Jews inwardly, we are in the sense a church with a hierarchial government, and so there are aspects that we associate with Catholicism. We do recognize the Bible as the ultimate revelation of God to man, the foundation of all knowledge. It's the foundation. A very much Protestant perspective. To us the Bible is a living book not a dead book. But we also have a living government, Jesus Christ being the head of the church, so a Seventh Day Adventist put it plainly when I explained and explained and explained to him the nature of the government. He said "Well, then you don't have a democratic government where you vote to decide, you have a government based on faith." And that ultimately is very traditional in terms of Jewish understanding of the ancient priesthood, and of the Catholic perspective that there is indeed a responsibility of government; but in no sense of the word do we have the full perspectives of any of these groups. We are Jews inwardly, and we are Christians. We recognize that Mary is the mother of Jesus, that Mary was blessed, and we don't have to run away from some of those verses that Catholics regularly cite that Protestants somehow have had needless aversion to, but we recognize the ultimate authority and practice is in the Bible. Even though Protestants often say so, they themselves don't always understand and practice, for that matter. But in the end what differentiates us is that the Holy Spirit of God has come to this group of people to enable us to understand the Bible and to prepare for the first resurrection and the kingdom of God. And it's all done through what Christ did, as we heard in the sermonette, and what God the Father has done in the sense of sending us the Holy Spirit, which gives us the spirit of understanding of these spiritual things that are not in the pages of a dead but of a really living book, because they are, those pages, what's printed on them, the Word of God.

HUMAN DOGMA CANCELLED BY CHRIST ON THE CROSS

Dr. Hoeh—November 17, 1979

Eph 2:15
Col 2:9
Gen 17JEWISH
AND
BIBLICAL
THOUGHT AT
TIME OF APOSTLES
ACTS 15:1-5

I would like to mention what might be a clue to help you grasp differences of explanation on a subject. One normally recognizes that when it comes to practice, that is what we do, there are two things that we want to keep in mind. One is the doctrine or the specific teaching, and the other is the administration. And probably many of you did not discern that in giving some administrative comments this appeared to you as doctrine, when in fact it was administration.

Let me illustrate a point. We are told, of course, of a jubilee, we're told of a sabbatical year, and we're told of the tithe set aside for the indigent, the poor, the widow, the fatherless, the handicapped in some special way who cannot normally make a living. So you have a pattern of saving in the third year and in the sixth, and then comes the sabbatical year in the seventh, and then the cycle repeats seven times seven, and then you come to a fifty.

Now in this connection, in those days it was much easier, and understandably, to base a pattern on the decimal system, that is to choose one out of ten, and so the assistance was placed in such a way that one out of ten poor people in this capacity should represent a small part, not a tenth of every year, but a small part. But it would equal about a tenth in three years. And so God says I'm not asking you to do something in the first year or the second, but it's easier in the whole community, the whole nation, to store up these things and they will thereafter be available. I think that is very simple in understanding the way God structured it in the law.

But Paul points up a matter, which Mr. Armstrong has known all along, and it has nothing to do with watering down the law—I think some might have thought that *what had been taught in this matter was a watering down*, since Mr. Hegvold was describing the original institution. Paul says that if some of you have widows who normally would be included in the biblical statements about third tithe, or the tithe for the poor and the indigent, that in such cases you should take care of them yourselves rather than that they should be enrolled, the assumption being very simple; that in so doing you would not be making the contribution to the general fund, you would be making contribution to the widow so that she would not be on the general fund. And since you would not let her starve the first two years before you got around to saving the tenth, you would be taking care of her from week to week and month to month and year to year, which is not a question of doctrine. It's strictly a question of administration.

It is not a question of watering down, it is a question of noting that Paul himself touches administratively on the subject without defining it as third tithe, but implying very clearly that we're dealing with the problem that is

resolved by a third tithe in the law. So I think that you should take note that when we deal with a topic of that nature there is the need to distinguish between administration, which may vary according to the necessity, and the question of doctrine. It is an administrative matter as to whether certain individuals would normally be expected to pay. It is not a question of watering down one way or another. That is an administrative decision. Whether individuals, let's say today, in any capacity in the work are similar to the role of the Levites who in ancient Israel were not expected to set that sum aside, that is an administrative matter. What you do about it is your decision, and we should leave it at that rather than be too concerned. I think the matter of meeting the needs, whether we might be expected to save or not, since many of you are employees, is something that should never be forgotten because we do have our own to care for, and we should do there what we can.

Now to get to the subject at hand. I received a phone call from a minister in the state north of us. Sometimes men there ask not for administrative matters which go to Mr. Tkach, but would you explain whether there is some new understanding on a particular verse because a certain individual says this is the reason why they want to leave the church; that the church teaches one thing on a verse but they believe it's something else. It had to do with Galatians 4: 9 and 10, that famous verse. I said "Do you mean really to tell me that these people are leaving because of what we say about that verse?" Well, the answer was no. They're leaving for other reasons that are personal, personal grievances, personal hurts, but they're trying to find some external justification so that before the rest of the brethren they have an argument. *I told him what I would say as an answer. I would tell them very clearly simply what the Bible states.* I'm not there to try to convince them because there are other problems that are really the cause, but when they decide to go do what they do, and have burnt their fingers and want to come back and have some help, the door is open. Otherwise go ahead and burn your fingers, if that's what you really want to do.

I mentioned the case of a person who wanted to argue about whether the Sabbath was to be observed by the Churches of God today because he was following a minister who says all this vanished with the cross. This was a few years ago now, and this man I know was wanting to have an argument, and in so doing I said, "I'm not here to argue." We were on the phone. I said, "Look, if you decide that the Sabbath is not for you, let me tell you, I'm not going to argue you into some conviction when you're of the same opinion still. You go do what you want to, and when you've learned your lesson, cut off in darkness apart from Sabbath observance and what we say on this day, when you're prepared then to

come back and learn what you have lost in the interim, then I will talk with you, and not otherwise. There is no use to continue this kind of discussion." And I knew the person clearly wanted an argument. The person was not interested in the truth, and sometimes the best argument is not to enter into an argument, but to do what Peter said to Simon Magus, you know, "Your money perish with you." He didn't try to persuade him why the apostleship should not be purchased. You know, this was Eve's mistake. She thought she could persuade the serpent with a little reasoning, a little discussion, and that's why we are here today, how and where we are.

But this brings us now to the need, in my judgment, since we are beginning a new year, in an autumn since, that we're now preparing ourselves in what we read and study in the Bible for a year that climaxed with the Feast of Tabernacles, you've had an introduction to the subject of tithing, you've had an introduction to the nature of faith. What we would like to look at today, and the reason I chose the example from this phone call in Oregon is that there are individuals in our midst who have never really read these sections of the Bible that have become controversial, and they do not understand potentially what Paul is saying, and when they discover it suddenly some of them can be overthrown, if they are careless in how they read and study. And I think we should take a careful, thorough but specific look at some critical points in terms of our relationship to the law of God and to righteousness. We may summarize it in this way:

We should ask ourselves does the forgiveness of God mean that, in order to forgive us, Christ had to die to pay the penalty of the people who were under the law, but after he died to pay that penalty, that the law thereby is done away so that we don't have any penalty? Because this is the basic doctrine of some people. That is, that God somehow thought the children of Israel could earn salvation through the law. Now I grant there are all sorts of you, so I'm only giving you one—this is not a Protestant or a Catholic view, this is *a* view, but it's very common in the minds of people—that God thought the law would be sufficient to enable the Israelites to be saved. It proved a failure, so God had to send his son to pay for the penalty of the sins under the law. But not only did you have to pay for the penalty but you had to stop the problem, so you get rid of the law as well as the penalty, and now we can all come to Christ as we are and do whatever we think is right. And therefore everything that Paul says about these places, "Don't let any man judge you," "we're not under the law," that all these things are supposed suddenly to make sense. But do they really? Is this the right explanation?

Let's get back to ask ourselves is that the right original picture? First of all, it assumes one thing; that God all along has tried to save every generation. That's the assumption. Mr. Armstrong has pointed up that the biggest difference between ourselves and any other person, any other group, in terms of preaching, that we know of, is that we recognize that God has never from the beginning till now purposed to save each generation

in its own time. If so, he could never have allowed so many infants to die so young, and they've been dying from birth to age one, two, three, four, five, and they die all through life. At what point do you suddenly become accountable as distinct from dying before you're accountable so that you're a little angel?

Do you suddenly become accountable at twelve? What happens when you die at age eleven, eleven months, and twenty-nine days? No longer accountable because it was before age twelve? What happens if you die the day after age twelve and you didn't know any difference between that day and the day before, but suddenly you have become accountable? You see, the very picture of what life is about should tell us that there's something wrong with the view that suddenly you become accountable and before that you're not; you don't have to be, in a sense, forgiven because you're going to become a little angel.

And you know there are people who have that view, or people mostly, let's say, who never bother to think about it one way or another. That's the majority.

With death so prevalent throughout every year of life, and especially in countries that have no Bible, we should automatically have perceived that God was not proposing to save in each generation all those who should be alive at that time. Rather what we discover is, and it should be very obvious again to us, that in the days of Abraham, God chose one person. He didn't make Abraham a person who was to go about preaching to everybody. He chose Abraham and told him to leave his relatives, that he was not dealing with them but he was dealing with Abraham. He would deal with the relatives later. Now you leave the city of Ur, in Mesopotamia, and I want you to go to a land that I will show you. And that land turned out to be along the eastern Mediterranean coast that we call Canaan, later Palestine, the promised land, and Abraham was brought there.

Now let us get the picture clearly. The first thing we now note is that God is proposing to deal with Abraham as an individual. He was not asked to raise a tent in the city of Ur and to preach to everybody there to try to get them saved. That would have been the Pentecostal view. He rather said to Abraham, "I'm dealing specifically with you and here's what I want you to do. In fact if you do this I will so multiply your children that I can use them at some later time to bless the world, and in the meantime the world can go do what it wants to."

Or have you ever thought about what God was promising Abraham? God didn't promise Abraham in that day that he would use him then to bless all the world. He said that if you walk before me and be perfect that I will multiply your children as the stars of heaven, and they will be a blessing in the midst of the earth, if they obey him. And if they don't, it would be a tragedy.

So our picture here is very clearly that God was asking Abraham to become something special. Now that is stated, we've already quoted it, but let's turn to it in the Book of Genesis 17.

(1) The Lord appeared to Abraham and said I am God Almighty, walk before me and be blameless," or be

perfect, these are different translations of verse 1, "And I will confirm my covenant between me and you, and will greatly increase your numbers." So Abraham fell down and worshipped God.

Now in this sense we have the most important overview that should enable us to understand the rest. God chooses to bless Abraham and he says "I will establish my covenant between you and me and your descendants also after you, for the generations to come." I'll be to you a God, you see, you'll be my servant. "To be your God and the God of your descendants after you. And I will give this as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants, and I'll be their God."

Now when God chooses Abraham what is he saying? Does he say Well, now, look I'm really only calling you here but then I'm going to go right over to your neighbor here in Canaan and I'm going to call him and bless him, and then I'll be going to China and I'm going to call the ruler of China, and I'll bless them? God did nothing with any other people at that time. He said I want you to serve me and if you're willing to do that, as he has proved here, then I will be not only your God but I'll reveal myself to your children, which is the same as saying that I'm obviously not doing that to the children of other people. Do you get the picture? This is fundamentally important. You know why the Jew has thought he was a chosen person? Because he remembers that he descended from Abraham, and God chose Abraham. And therefore the revelation of God did not go initially to the Greeks or the Romans or the Egyptians or the Chinese or the Russians. It went to the family of Abraham. And God said I'll be a God to you and to your children in their generation.

Furthermore, now let us notice very carefully,

(9) Now as for you, Abraham, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you, for the generations to come. Now this is my covenant which is a token of the covenant that makes you my people.

(10) This is my covenant with you and your descendants that you're to keep, "every male among you shall be circumcised." That is a little bit of the skin was to be removed. You are to undergo circumcision,

(11) "and it will be a sign of the covenant" to which I have already agreed "between me and you." For the generations to come,

(12) "every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised." This is the covenant in your flesh, and it's to be an enduring one, and this is a token of the covenant that I am making with you in which I am your God and you are my servant, and your children become my people.

Now this is an unusual arrangement because it meant that not only was Abraham to obey but he was to do something in terms of the flesh that would separate him from other people around him. And now we proceed to the story. I'm just dropping quickly, to the story in Exodus 12: Do you want to be delivered? Do you want to go out from bondage in Egypt? How do you get out? Well, you must observe the passover. Now who may eat the passover? Answer: everyone who is circum-

cised. Oh, that's the same as saying that God passes over you if you eat the passover but you can't eat it unless you're circumcised or, in other terms, God holds everybody else accountable. In other words, circumcision, by the time you come to Moses, became the standard to determine whether you were to belong to the congregation of Israel or not. And anybody who was uncircumcised in Israel, or the Egyptians who were uncircumcised, could not eat the passover, and therefore had no right to be protected when the death angel passed over to slay the firstborn. God never intended to protect any other people in Egypt other than those who were circumcised, because that was the token in the flesh, and a covenant itself, but a token of the covenant that God made with Abraham that was to bind his children also; and that is, that if they would serve him he would bless them, and they would in turn be a blessing in the world.

So everywhere we look, and the reason I'm taking this view, is that instead of examining Paul as the starting point we should start where the problem arose. And it arose because the world was in sin, and God had to start somewhere. In the days of Noah the world didn't pay any attention to a preacher, so God decided not to go that route, if I may word it in that fashion. He decided now to choose a man and reveal himself strictly to a particular family organized as a church and a nation later. And when they were organized they were only allowed to participate in the ceremony if they were circumcised. And if you weren't you were out of it. And you had to wait till a resurrection after the millennium. Pharaoh and all. If you were willing to be circumcised then God would deliver you.

Now, in this nation that was delivered, God having chosen it out of Egypt, bringing them to Sinai, I want you to note that when the story at Sinai is given—this is Exodus 19, of course going into 20—a very significant point should be brought up. Here we have the promise that this people at the foot of Sinai could become God's people and his nation. Let us note carefully how he words it, see what the promises involve.

Moses went to God, verse 3, chapter 19. The Lord said to him This is what you're to say to the house of Jacob. That's the family of Jacob.

'You yourselves have seen what I did in Egypt, how I carried you out in a protected manner.'

Now verse 5: If you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is actually mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. That is if you obey. God promised that they would be a kingdom and a holy nation, in other words, a church if you please, or a congregation. And it has to do with one out of all the nations of the earth.

So the people said we will do everything the Lord has said, the end of verse 8.

There's no promise of heaven, no curse of hell or purgatory, no promise of the Holy Spirit, only the fact that they were to become a kingdom on this earth at that time, and if they obeyed him were also to become holy.

That is, set apart for a special purpose. There was no promise of the Holy Spirit, the Ten Commandments are given, then God goes through a whole series of judgments that he would make on the basis of how they handle problems in their state, in their church. Chapters 21, 22, and 23 of Exodus. And then the agreement is ratified in chapter 24.

Now you will notice that in reality there is no promise of eternal life, no promise of immortality, there is promise that they would be blessed from the sky above with good rain, and food below so they would live a long and happy and joyous life; that their enemies would be put to flight, they wouldn't have their embassies occupied by students. I hope you all realize what that means today, of course. Something has gone wrong in our malls (?).

These things are significant because we discover that the law didn't promise eternal life at all, but that if you kept them you would continue to live, and if you disobeyed you would be stoned or you would be fined or you would be expelled, cut off, excommunicated from the community. You don't fast on the day of Atonement you were to be excommunicated. You murdered somebody you were to be stoned, you stole from somebody you had to pay up. After the sacrifice, and you were forgiven, so you could continue to live on equal terms with others in the community. Forgiveness there had nothing to do with getting eternal life. Now is that clear? This, I think, is so fundamental that if you decide that's not what the Old Testament is saying then you, of course, have to start in kindergarten all over again. The law made no promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, no promise of eternal life. All it could do was assure that you would have the land of promise, that you would live in it, and that your children would inherit it after you, which is the same as saying you would ultimately die and they would live on your inheritance. Is that not clear?

Now every Jew realized that Abraham died, and that Moses was dead, and of course the prophets all died, and what they're waiting is the resurrection. Now with this picture in mind we begin to understand it a lot more clearly. I think that most of us approach the Old Covenant, whether we like it or not, without realizing what it was actually intended to convey. We approach it with the Protestant view that it was God's attempt to solve the problem that first went wrong in Eden, and he thought he had it made in Sinai and that went wrong too, and then he had to correct the whole thing on the cross. So it was really almost a third strike out if that had failed. This is the way it's viewed. Now of course the original view is incorrect, the second view is incorrect, and the third one is incorrect.

Christ did not die on the cross in order to resolve mistakes in his judgment when he tried it some other way at Sinai, or some other way with the two trees in the garden of Eden. God purposed that human beings should be on this earth and should learn to obey him, and we're not going back to the story of Eden, we're picking it up with Abraham and at Sinai. And he purposed to call Abraham and promised that Abraham would inherit all of

these things, and that was also a promise of a resurrection because Abraham died. It was a promise to Abraham of eternal life, but at Sinai it was not a promise to the children of Israel of eternal life but an arrangement whereby, as a people or a nation, they could serve God and have the blessings in this life.

Circumcision became very fundamental in the sense that it was the demarcation line between the other nations and the children of Israel. At this time did they not only have a covenant at Sinai, an agreement that would establish them a constitution, if you please, but they had instituted a priesthood. Now this priesthood was to serve at a physical altar or altars. This priesthood was to be carried out by a single family in Israel, that is Levi, and more specifically the family of Aaron among the Levites. Furthermore not only were they to be circumcised but all of the physical things they were asked to do could be participated in only by someone who was circumcised. And ultimately these ceremonies climaxed in and around a tabernacle that was to be erected, which tabernacle was the dwelling place where God could communicate with the people. You see, God appeared, in a sense, to Moses from this tent in which he met with the people of Israel—it's called a tent of meeting, it was the tabernacle, and there was a place in it called the holy of holies in an outer area, the holy place. God did not choose to meet in the temples of China, the temples of Baal, the temple of Tyre, or the temples of Babylon or Egypt or Ur. If he had chosen to reveal himself to everybody, each in his generation, he should have done it, but he didn't. He chose only to appear on one place in earth where that tabernacle was, and it was in the midst of the children of Israel.

He was not revealing himself on top of an ark carried about by the Greeks or the Romans or the Spaniards. He was revealing himself only to the children of Israel, first wandering in the Sinai, then east of Jordan, and finally in the land of Canaan. And each generation died. Some died because of their sins, some died just when they got old. In the sense that some died prematurely, and everybody of course died and has committed sin, but those who sought to obey God lived out a full life, and that was what the covenant promised.

Now I think the picture should become clearer. We know that the Israelites, as a whole, entered into grave sins so much so that God put out the children of Israel. Now I'm moving down in time very quickly. God expelled the Israelites. God wanted to use the ten tribes but they didn't want to be used. Now God was smarter than they were. He wanted all twelve tribes of Israel to use his revelation as an example for their lives and to bless the world with his message by conveying it first in example and then next by publishing it.

Elijah published it abroad when the king, Ahab, asked the nations' rulers, "I want under oath you to tell me whether Elijah's in your country or not." He searched throughout the world because Elijah realized that God wanted not only Israel to set an example but that the message of what that example means should be conveyed to others.

Now, to get back to the picture. When the children of Israel didn't want to do God's way, God sent them out into exile until they thought of themselves as like every other nation, and thought of themselves as unlike the Jews. And that's why today the Bible, the word of God, the Old Testament, if you please, is not today published throughout the nations in their languages by the Jewish Publication Society, it's published by the British and American and Dutch and German and Scandinavian Bible Societies, by people who think they're Gentiles, some of whom may well be. And they're publishing the Bible of the Jews, which book their own ancestors rejected, and God has used them despite themselves. Now they think they're doing it as Christians, see. They're not doing what the Bible says because they believe that the New Testament says you don't have to do all that stuff, but nevertheless they say it's good literature, you should read it, and so they publish the Old Testament along with the New, and they're doing what God wanted done in the first place but doing it not realizing that in fact they are the children of Israel.

I bring that to your attention. God has his way when it's all said and done.

So the Jews stayed faithful to what was written there and said "This is our book, we ought to inherit all this promised land. Be gone, you ten tribes." And so the house of Judah has wanted to have the whole promise. They've even wanted to have the birthright which came to Joseph. You read what Ezekiel says. They took the name Israel. The Israelites didn't care to be called that any longer. They kept the Sabbath as a nation having learned a lesson because some of them did not keep it in the days of Jeremiah, you know, in the last kings.

Now they got into sin again after Ezra and Nehemiah so that by the time the Persians were gone, and the Greeks were there, they had a very narrow view of what life should be like. So narrow, in fact, that when the Greek world burst, in the days of Alexander, upon the Jewish community, the Jews were shocked at the enlightenment of the Greeks. The Jews had become, shall we say, ghettoized in the Persian empire, and they were shocked by the learning of the Greeks and what the Greeks had accomplished, until the Jews wanted to copy the Hellenistic Greeks. And they did. And it led to a great conflict between those who wanted to have the learning of this world and those who wanted to observe the law on the assumption that there was some kind of conflict. Whereas, they should have seen that the law would have enabled them to have a right grasp of learning whereas the Greeks put learning to a wrong use. And you know the story of Antiochus Epiphanes, 167 to 164, the tragic three and a half years of persecution. The fact that we have the Maccabees that delivered the Jewish community—and I'm going in detail here because it's important—and they finally came to have a measure of internal independence even though they were dependent economically and politically on the Seleucid empire at the time.

They established rules step by step, and it's not my purpose here to read at length in Jewish tradition—that would be, in my estimation, a classroom subject—but there came to be a need so that, one: a need to separate from the Gentiles customs now developed which had the form of decrees based primarily on circumcision—there were Jews who wanted to become uncircumcised, and of course later on there were those who had to be circumcised in order to observe the law whether they were Gentiles or otherwise. You have rules and decrees that now were established which separated the Jewish community more firmly than ever before from the neighbors.

So we now turn at this moment to the Book of Acts as an illustration. Peter was asked to talk to Cornelius. Cornelius was a Roman soldier, a Centurion, a man over a hundred, shall we say, soldier policemen? Peter makes very clear the situation.

Cornelius waited for them, Acts 10:24: And as Peter was coming in Cornelius met him." Now Peter says—and as he talked with him he went in and found that there were many others there. Now he said to them—the first thing he said, let's look at it here, I'm reading from the KJ—"You realize," I hope, "how that it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation," that is uncircumcised, I'm adding that because that was the standard. "It is unlawful." Now remember, the Samaritans were circumcised even though they were an expelled part of the community and had to have their own temple on Mount Gerizim, Jesus surprised the disciples by talking to a Samaritan woman because the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. You traded with other Jews, you made money from other Jews. Now there were always the Jews who wanted to be more Roman than the Romans. There were Jews who wanted to be more Greek than the Greeks, but any responsible Jew who felt the sense of the Zionism of that day, and there was such, deliverance from the yoke of Rome, any Jew like that actually came, later, to have no dealings even with the Samaritans who were circumcised. How much more were they forbidden to drink wine that was stamped out by Greek feet, milk milked by Greek hands, leather from animals butchered by the Greeks? You know the Greeks, of course would include, in this case, anybody else who was in the Greek world, and it was a Greek culture in the eastern Roman world. It could be Romans, it could be Arameans, Syro-Phoenicians, you know. In any case, all these things were simply forbidden. There was to be no such contact. It was bad enough to have the Romans running the government, and you wanted to be sure you didn't even stand in the court of Pilate before you ate the passover lest you would be defiled by his presence. Now that's quite a state of affairs, isn't it?

The distinction was that one was circumcised, the other was not; and furthermore, the distinction carried out so far that there were many decrees, dogmas, shall we use the Greek term? A dogma or a decree, a decision. Caesar issued a dogma, a decree, that the world should be taxed. The Jews issued dogmas, or decrees—dogma is a Greek word—which determined what contact you should

have with the Gentiles and what was forbidden. Any responsible Jew was not allowed to enter into the house of an uncircumcised person like Cornelius. He would be defiling himself. And not only that, going contrary to dogma that had annulled the force of law, a law of commandments which forbade you to do such a thing. That was the only way to keep the Jewish community from ever again being overwhelmed by Hellenism.

Do you understand the picture? Do you understand why the disciples never asked Jesus should we go to the Greeks? What about the Chinese? Isn't it nice that we can take the gospel there? There are the Indians. There are a lot of people there. And then you've heard of these people, you know, in what we now call Siberia. And what about all the peoples of North Africa? And then you can go up the Nile—that's going south—there are the Ethiopians?

No, Jesus said "Now don't go into the way of the Gentiles," he said rather "I want you to go to the house of Israel." Now they'll be uncircumcised, but of course the disciples understood what Jesus meant there, they would still be God's people. Don't even, he said, go in the way of the Samaritans, because he never called the twelve for that purpose. He called them for another purpose. And so it never occurred to them, believe it or not, that they should baptize, and try to convert, uncircumcised Romans or Greeks, or Syro-Phoenicians, or Egyptians, or anybody. When the disciples were scattered abroad from Jerusalem they preached the word to none, n-o-n-e, but the Jews only, because whoever heard of the idea that the Gentiles should be saved? The promises were made to Abraham and to his descendants. They were not made to the Gentiles, so it seemed. That's the way they read the scripture. They forgot, of course, that God said that "in you will all nations be blessed." They'd overlooked that.

But Jesus even left the twelve to do that. And years afterward, years, Peter comes for the first time to Cornelius, acknowledges that this is an extraordinary thing, even for the Church of God, not to mention the congregation of Israel, to enter into the house of a Gentile who was uncircumcised. Now, if a Gentile wanted to come to the synagogue to listen, you know, there were steps they could take, and ultimately they could participate in the temple ceremonies through circumcision, but all that ever got them was now they were a part of the Jewish community and they had their temple and their rituals and they had a copy of the law and knew what they should be in terms of their own personal lives, or thought they did. And of course the information was quite a surprise.

Verse 11: "And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come to Jerusalem those that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying 'You went in to men who were uncircumcised.'"

Notice: "and you ate with them!" You fool! What are you doing? You're going to break down all the barriers and we'll go right back to Hellenism again, and all its wickedness and privation, which is why it started.

I don't know what words they used, those are mine, but I'm conveying what they really thought. 'And Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning and expounded by order,' he had to explain everything, lest they would misunderstand. Then he explains the whole story. You know, I've gone into this about the beginning of this year in an article, and that goes on for quite a while.

All right, then the whole thing seemed to be clear. "When they heard these things they held their peace," verse 18, "and glorified God saying 'Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance and life.'"

An incomprehensible thing before this day, a decade, roughly, let us say, after the death of Christ and his ascension. The Jewish community, the Churches of God made up of circumcised Jews, hadn't yet let it dawn on them that God should allow a Gentile to receive the Holy Spirit, which is what distinguished the Church of God from the Jews, who only had their washing and their temple ceremonies but no promise of the Holy Spirit. The Church of God that had forgiveness and conscience, not merely forgiveness by friends and neighbors in the community at the temple sacrifice and ceremony. And they began to realize for the first time that God could grant repentance to a Gentile while he was uncircumcised—remember Abraham was uncircumcised when God accepted his, right? That's very clear. That was Paul's big argument, that Abraham received the promise before he was circumcised. Circumcision was only the evidence thereafter that he had already received the promise, and this shows that repentance and eternal life was possible to someone who was not circumcised, which was an astounding thing in their reasoning.

Now it was about this time, as you will remember, that there was a Jew who was madder than many others, so much so that he wanted to drag the Christians, if at all possible, into prison and punish them for following a Galilean dreamer called Jesus, or Joshua. Joshua is our form of the Hebrew word, Jesus is our form of the Greek word that goes back to the name of the Messiah. This man had to be struck down and for upwards of three years he was being taught by Jesus Christ, and he comes back and preaches Jesus in Damascus and then goes up to the disciples, that is the apostles in Jerusalem, and then he spends quite a little time in Antioch in northwest Syria. Later he was called to reach the Gentiles, but he always went to the synagogue first and when the Jews in the synagogue tended to argue with him, the Greeks who attended the synagogue who were or were not circumcised, that would all vary, generally they were not circumcised, but they were allowed to attend the synagogue, but the Jew couldn't go into the Greek's home. The Greek could come among the Jew in this sense. They sat in their respective places. The women here and the men here and the Gentiles somewhere else. And the unusual thing is that in general these Greeks were open minded and the Jews were close minded when it came to this message; that eternal life was possible to anyone who repents. And Paul made it clear that Abraham received the promise of eternal life and the Spirit of God,

the promise of a resurrection, before he was circumcised and all the Gentiles thought "Well, that then includes us," and the Jews said "Why should we share it with anybody?" And this was the state of affairs.

* Now it was in this state of affairs, and I hope that for the first time many of you will see a picture that is clearer than ever before. You have to put yourself in a situation where you see what they were thinking. They were not members of bible societies trying to spread the word to any great extent. If a Greek was willing to come among them and be circumcised and accept the rituals and have the ritual bath and participate in the ceremonies, why, then fine, he could be among them. But apart from that they never went—the Jews never tried to convert the uncircumcised Gentiles because that represented sin. It represented all that was corrupt in the world. You see, the Jews' view of the Gentiles was Paul's description of the Gentiles in Romans 1. Romans 1 is the Jews view of the Gentile world. It's a circumcised view of the Gentile world. Now Romans 2 is the Gentile view of the circumcised world.

You who say you have the law, you are able to teach all of us, you who say all these things, you who teach us that this is wrong, that's wrong, it's wrong to steal, wrong to commit adultery, how come you're doing the same thing in secret or in private? And some of you are brazen to do it even in public.

Romans 1 and 2 is the picture of the state of both worlds. The Jews had a form of righteousness, the Gentiles didn't have it. And so the real controversy at this period in the church developed between those who still didn't go along with the decision that Peter clearly was used in making, in Acts chapter 10, so much so they had to have a council defined in the area of Acts 14, and rehearsed in particular in chapter 15, where it was discussed once and for all as to whether or not a Gentile had to be circumcised if he received the Spirit of God. Now remember Cornelius received the Spirit of God and Peter said he has to be baptized not he has to be circumcised. There were those who came down from Jerusalem who were of the circumcision party in a divided church, not a church in perfect harmony. It was the Church of God, you'll recognize it because it's like that today, or it has been. And it was clearly decided that since Abraham was given the gift and the promises before circumcision, since God called Cornelius and gave him his Spirit, there is therefore no need for the Gentile to be circumcised in order to be saved. There is no discussion, and it should be obvious, that would say he's forbidden to be circumcised. But he cannot be required to be.

Now furthermore, Acts chapter 15 goes one step further and it shows since we accept the Gentile, though uncircumcised, in our midst, it is now a requirement to take note of other laws pertaining to the ceremonies which only the circumcised may participate in. Acts 15 says the following:

Since you are no longer required, Gentiles, to be circumcised—some were telling you you should be—you never were really required so by the apostles—but since it is not required, therefore you cannot participate in the

temple service with the sacrifices. The temple is therefore off limits, brethren, to the Greek speaking people who were uncircumcised. Now if it's off limits then we obviously have made a major decision that all the laws in the covenant that God made with Abraham which say that you must be circumcised in the flesh to participate in, the temple ceremony, all those laws, point 1: must be respected. It means that no Christian, converted, spirit-filled member of the Church of God who speaks Greek and is uncircumcised can ever intrude into areas of the function of the temple which only you Aramaic or Hebrew or Greek speaking circumcised Jews are allowed in. This is just the opposite of what most people say. Paul was accused by the Jews in Acts 21 of bringing some Gentile into the midst of the temple and he denied it. He said he would never ever do such a thing. The first thing we note is that the laws pertaining to the Levitical priesthood of circumcision, that undergird who may participate in the ceremonies, all that was absolutely respected. But since the Gentile was excluded from such participation, he might draw the conclusion that therefore certain moral principles and precepts associated with Jewish (Gentile?) sacrifice was all right for him to indulge in.

A Jew never sacrificed by eating blood with the meat, never sacrificed by strangling an animal, never sacrificed and had all kinds of sexual orgies with the sacrifice. The Gentiles indulged in all these things, cut live meat off the animals, strangled it with the blood, and committed various sorts of abominations and offered meat to an idol.

So the decision in Acts 15 is very plain: 1) you do not have to be circumcised to receive the promise of the Spirit of God and eternal life; 2) though you cannot approach the temple that Herod built, you must remember that you are not allowed to indulge in porneia. You must not eat meat that is strangled in your area of the Greek speaking world. You must not eat blood. Just because you have no participation in the ceremonies of Israel does not mean that you can participate freely in the ceremonies of the Gentiles. That's what Acts 15 is telling us; that in our services, brethren, whether you're circumcised or uncircumcised, we can sit down together. This wall of partition—now we begin to understand Ephesians 2:15—I guess that's the verse—this wall of partition that separates us, that keeps the Jews, on the one hand, separated from the Gentiles, that requires circumcision, that says you can't go into the Gentile household without contaminating yourself, that makes it unlawful to have this kind of communion, all this that men have decreed, the dogmas of men, as well as the requirement of the law pertaining to circumcision, all of that which separates us no longer should divide us; that we acknowledge that Jews may participate in Herod's ceremonies, Gentiles must not participate publicly in the Gentile ceremonies, but we can sit together in the synagogue that accepts us, or in our own congregation when we're not accepted, Jew and Gentile, man and woman, side by side, circumcised and uncircumcised, because we're to be circumcised figuratively in that sense, you.

see, in the heart and we're to have the Spirit of God and we're all to be baptized.

And now we quickly will turn to two verses, one in Ephesians and one in Colossians that should help us best understand the story.

"To the Gentiles in Ephesus," the big city, the port city of the province of Asia—Western Asia Minor today or Turkey, now mostly Turkish people live in the area though some Greeks, but then was the Greek world, the Turks hadn't yet arrived.

"Now remember when you in times past were Gentiles in the flesh, you were called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision," it's in the flesh made by hands," at that time you were without Christ, you were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, and therefore you had no hope and you were literally without God in this world." What a state of affairs to be in. This was Greek culture now. You want to know what was wrong with it? They were aliens from everything that God could provide, and the Greeks typified it all.

"But now in Jesus Christ you who were sometimes far off are made nigh," you are brought near "to God by the blood of Christ who paid that penalty, "he is our peace," or peace offering in this sense. He's the one who makes peace. "Who has made both the Jew and the Greek," these people who were at enmity with each other "one people in Christ," not outside. The Greeks and the Jews were not one people outside of Christ. But in him they could meet together in the same congregation....(Aside)

"He has made both one and he has broken down this middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity" or the hatred that existed among Greeks and Jews for each other because they each—the Greek seemed to see in the Jew somebody who thought he was somebody, and the Jew clearly saw in the Greek somebody who was nobody, and this was the problem. It exists in America today between different groups.

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, this"—listen carefully—"law of commandments" in the form of dogmas—the Greek word *dogmacein* (?). Christ became a peace offering. It was possible to have the forgiveness of sin, and once sin is forgiven there is no reason for the Jew to point the finger at the Greek or the Greek to point the finger at the Jew. And therefore no further need in the Church of God to have a wall of partition to keep the Greek and the Jew apart.

And all of the law with its force of commandment—remember Peter said "it is unlawful for me to eat with a Gentile." That's not in the law of Moses, that was much later added by authority of those who were in the synagogue whose authority Jesus recognized. "Whatever the scribes and pharisees command you to do that do." Now when it begins to divide, then Christ, of course, came and he ultimately paid the penalty so that this particular aspect of the customs were no longer necessary and they had the force of law. This is not talking of the Ten Commandments which were not a wall of partition at all.

"And he has made in himself of these two diverse people a whole new converted man, and he has made

peace among them that he might reconcile both to God in one body, in himself on the cross, having slain the enmity" that existed between the two "by offering himself" so that each one could call on Christ and ask God to forgive him of that enmity and he would be forgiven. Christ paid the penalty. Now he can—Christ, having paid this penalty, God can forgive each one if each one calls on him.

In Colossians we have the same essential matter discussed. In chapter 2:

"Now beware lest any man (chapter 2, verse 8) make a spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of men, in these rudimentary" or basic ideas of the world that divide men, "rather than being governed by the principles of Christ," in verse 9. "For in him dwelled all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" when he was here on earth, "and we are made complete in him and he's the head now of every kind of government, whether spiritual or human, principality and power, in whom we are" or "ye are." Now this is very important, if I say we I'm addressing ourselves, but the principle there, Paul says to them, "in whom ye are" that is you formerly uncircumcised Greeks, you are circumcised now and therefore, having been circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands," not by some human rabbi, "but you have in fact put off this body of sin of the flesh," not a little piece of the body, but you've actually put off the whole body figuratively speaking by being buried with Jesus Christ in the symbol of baptism in which you acknowledge that not just a little part of the flesh is removed as the token of sin, and that part which was symbolic of sex sin, because it was taken from the male sex organ, but you now in the burial of baptism are pictured as putting off all your flesh, and all its sin, so that he's addressing the Gentile here.

You who formerly were called uncircumcised you are now circumcised by what Christ himself can do, and since he's alive in you, when you come out of the waters of baptism, it is in fact the life of the circumcised Jew, Jesus, who's living in you. And that meets all the requirements, you see, in terms of fellowship with one another.

So they were circumcised by God, in the sense that the pulls of the flesh were now being eroded by the presence of the Spirit of God, "And you who therefore buried with him in baptism, and are also risen with him, through faith of this operation of God, who raised him from the dead, "you who once were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh," this is not talking of Jews, this is talking of Gentiles, brethren. "You who once were," see "uncircumcised in your flesh, has he now made alive together with Christ, having forgiven us all the offenses," in this sense we are all forgiven. Now the Greek here has, in this sense, "you." There are some variations because later ultimately the Greeks often read "us" because they were reading it to themselves, whereas Paul originally read it as "you" he was addressing them. These variation in the text should be understood in terms like that, it's a very simple matter. When I say us I'm referring to ourselves, when Paul was

writing he said you were forgiven here of all these offenses. These were the Gentiles, brethren.

“And now what has been blotted out against us is this handwriting of dogmas.” Now this tragic rendering of this NIV, I deliberately brought it along so I could reject it. Though it may be good in other points here is what it says: “When you were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code with its regulations that was against us and that stood opposed to us.” The written code has a direct intent to imply the Old Covenant and the law of God. What is given here clearly is the term that what stood here that has been blotted out, all our offenses have been forgiven, and what has been blotted out is a handwriting of decrees that was in a sense—the word is dogmacein—that was adverse to us, having taken it out of the midst—ektomesoo (?), having taken it out of the midst, “having nailed it to the cross,” because the handwriting written by men’s hands that pronounced ✓decrees, dogmas, that kept the Jew and the Gentile apart, that nursed the enmity and the hatred of each other but that kept the Jew away from the sin of the Gentile, all of that has been blotted out and the enmity it generated, because when Christ died on the cross he made it possible for all to be forgiven; and no longer is the Church of God regulated, even though we may attend the synagogue when possible, says Paul in our day when the rabbi himself is a converted person, and some were, but where we have to meet separately, Paul says in our day we’re not regulated by this handwriting of dogmas, which was completely contrary to us. The law of God is for our good. These dogmas were not, because in the end they generated animosity and hatred, and all that, in a sense, was nailed to the cross in the body of Christ who ✓paid for sin.

It’s a very simple thing. This is what it’s talking about. It’s not talking about a written code. That is a tragic translation.

And in so doing Christ has in fact become the leader ✓of all principality and power. The disciples are themselves the apostles of God and govern the Church of God, and they are not subject to the principalities and powers that ✓govern the synagogue, nor are they subject to the princes and powers that govern the temples of the Greeks.

“Now therefore, brethren, Greeks and Jews, since we all partake of what we do together as one people, we don’t want anyone of you letting people now sit in judgment in matters of your eating and your drinking.”

I’m going to take enough time to explain this verse, you’ll forgive me for talking too long. Whereas the Jew has one shelf for meat and the other for milk, we’re not to be judged by the laws of kosher, and we’re not to be judged by the Greek customs of eating blood in animals ✓sacrificed. The Christian is neither kosher nor pagan. “Let no man” Jew or Gentile “judge you in any manner in the way we handle our eating and drinking.” And that’s regulated by Jesus Christ who does not forbid milk with meat, and who does forbid blood and pork sausage and all the rest.

“Furthermore, you are not to let any man judge you with respect to a festival, a new moon, or a sabbath.” The Greeks who might criticize you for doing Jewish things, the Jews who say you can’t do these things without being circumcised, “these things all foreshadow the message of the gospel, the things to come, and the body,” if you please, that has made all this possible, “is Jesus Christ.”

Now when you see this, and many of these other verses, I think for the first time anybody who assumes—I’m not even bothering with what this person said about Galatians 4:10, because it’s so obvious right there “when you were in darkness before and alienated without God, subject to idols, now you’re going back to those things.” I don’t even have to explain it. If you think that does away with the Ten Commandments and you throw out the Ten Commandments, go out with them!

I think it is time we took a look at the real spiritual state of affairs in the church in that day, and didn’t give heed to those who had come among us and said well, you shouldn’t do this, you shouldn’t do that, you shouldn’t do something else. The law of God defines right from wrong. Human dogmas, decrees, that divided the people should no longer divide us. We should be one spiritually today as they were then.

And Christ himself paid the penalty so that any who call on God in his name can be forgiven, and these things which stood against us in that community, in that society, are gone. They have no validity and authority whatsoever in the Church of God. That’s what Paul is talking about. He’s not talking about the Old Covenant, he’s not talking about a New Covenant per se, and I think it is time that we have this straight in our minds so that we can begin to read much more of the New Testament with some confidence and understanding of what the issues were, and are.

THE
ISSUE

PURPOSE OF LIFE

Dr. Hoeh—October 4, 1980

This afternoon, in our near an hour left, I would like to discuss, after we have heard the Festival of Tabernacles' sermons, an overview of the purpose of life as taught in the churches of God. There are many organizations that propose to explain the purpose of life, but none have come to grips with the purpose of life as it was ordained by God and our role in it today, which transcends every other issue, for there is no reason to discuss the smaller things of life if we have not really discovered the purpose in human life.

If we're going to understand the purpose in life, that is why you are here, we have to focus ultimately on one thing which is fundamental. We sometimes have gotten away from it in emphasizing it, and it is the simple word character. For when all is said and done, the ultimate issue of what we have achieved in this life will not be measured in money, property, in inheritance, or in institutions, but it will be measured in character. Which brings up the question, of course, why is character this important that it should be the ultimate way of summarizing the purpose of human life?

We have to back of course to the beginning to discover that the perfect character is God. Jesus said at the end of his exposition in the account in Matthew, chapter 5, that we should be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. We start out by a recognition of something which the human mind cannot fathom, it may discuss, but we really have to face the fact that we take it on faith, and faith of course is an aspect of character, and that is the beings who gave birth to the universe, by a creative series of acts, are perfect. God existed before all that in the universe is. He is also perfect. He is perfect in character. Now it would of course been an unfathomable problem if the Creator or beings who had power were not perfect.

We have to face the fundamental evidence of scripture from beginning to end, and that is before there was a universe there was a level of being that we define as God, or the creative level of being above matter, perfect in mind power and character. They set about, according to John 1, in the beginning you have the word, Logos, Verbum(?) in Latin, which is a more active sense of the word—authority is what is conveyed, spoken authority by the Greek word Logos, or the English word Word—and the one whom we know as God who is the Father. Here we have the level of being that is God, and who we discover, when we look in Genesis 1:1, that they created the universe. As Mr. Armstrong has pointed up, the beginning referred to in John 1:1 is even preceding the beginning which is in Genesis 1:1. One is the beginning of the natural universe, the other is the beginning in which God already is. You see in Genesis 1:1 we have a Creator acting in the beginning of matter. In John 1:1

we have the existence of divinity or deity already there if we were to measure in terms of the sense of the words beginning in time, a series of events to follow. God is already there.

We learn elsewhere in scripture, in particular Job 38:4 and 7, as well as some other parallels, that there were also spirit beings created as the sons of God, but not from birth, but from a creative act; spirit beings whom we may call spirits or angels, some of whom have such rank as archangel or a chief angel, and there are other terms in the Hebrew also used usually not translated into English but just left as the original Hebrew is, a seraph and a cherub. That is, spirits of immense power and rank. We discover then that God thought out and planned everything that we see, but before having thought out and planned and then created the universe, he first created spirit beings, not composed of matter, whose function it would be to carry out his purpose in a material world that we visibly see. So that, when God laid the foundation of the earth, Job 38:4 and 7, we read that the angels were already there and shouted for joy at what was to be created.

Angels therefore were created in the interim between the existence of God the Father, as we know him as the Father today, or God and the Word, because he was not the Father until Jesus was born of Mary. He was actually in the level of a non-family relationship until that particular relationship occurred. This God relationship is a kingdom. There is the God kingdom, then he created the angel realm or kingdom, and then in matter we have the kingdoms that we think of in terms of animal life, we think of in terms of botanical life, these terms are broadly defining levels of existence. The reason God created spirits was first to train them in his presence at his throne in heaven, which is not the physical heavens. We cannot see heaven at God's throne because if we did we would not live. God chose not to enable man to see the throne of God unless he has a special purpose in mind, which will come to light, of course, if you read Revelation where that throne does appear on one occasion, and the family of man is quite frightened at such an experience.

But at heaven the throne of God, where God's government is centered, the angels were trained in God's truth. God's word is truth. They were trained in his character, that is to think and to act like he does; but they had to make their own mind up as to whether they would continue to do so having had God's way explained. And up to that point that God created the physical universe the angels were obedient. They were perfect in all of their ways, and we learn, of course, that they were even overjoyed at the time of the creation of the earth itself.

Having been trained at the presence of God's throne, Hillel(?), the Lightbringer, whom the Latin translators call Lucifer, was given a responsibility away from the throne of God to carry out God's government on earth. This being was one of three great beings, two of whom were at the presence of God's throne.

Having been placed now over the earth to continue the government of God over this earth that the Creator had now brought into being, and to continue to govern it through whatever forms of life there should be on this earth, we have a most remarkable series of events. Spirit beings who had been aware of the goodness of God, who would have been aware of the magnitude of God's creative powers, now were face-to-face with executing God's will and his law on a planet all their own. And if they should prove themselves here, their responsibility would have been to extend the government of God over the rest of the universe step-by-step. And it didn't turn out that way, because the Lightbringer, this supreme angel or cherub, conceived—listen—he conceived that God's way was only one alternative; that there ought to be other possible alternatives. And over a period of time ultimately one third of the angels came to the same conclusion. They had heard that God was good, they had seen that he was good, but they ultimately came to believe that their ideas might be better; that God couldn't be that good.

The basic philosophy that was introduced by this Light-bringer who now was bringing darkness to the minds of angels, and came to be known as the devil or Satan, Satan the adversary, and we'll refer to him as that, he conceived fundamentally the idea of competition that leads to achievement. This was his reasoning. That instead of cooperation, instead of the way of give, love which fulfills the law of God, there should be the chance to compete and to get ahead by alternative methods, so instead of having to tell the truth you might get ahead by telling a lie. And the most remarkable thing we find is that when John, the apostle of Jesus, writes, he tells us in *John 8:44*—*Jesus is now being quoted, and it's important that we turn to this particular verse.*

John 8:44, I'm reading from the RSV, speaking of those Jews who had followed the way of the devil, Jesus speaking of the devil said, in the second sentence of verse 44:

"He was a murderer from the beginning." That is, that the spirit of competition as he conceived of it is manifested in the attitude of hate, or murder, and he ultimately ended up with nothing to do with the truth. There is no longer, you see, any truth in him. When he lies he speaks according to his own nature "For he is a liar and the father of lies."

Angels, including this being, were ultimately to determine the nature of the spirit composing them. Now, let us remember that human beings have a nature. Human nature is molded by our society, molded by parents, molded by others of our own generation in our school, molded by television, and in reality also significantly molded by ideas that enter into the human mind that the

devil puts there in the forms of moods and attitudes without human beings realizing it.

As human nature varies from person to person, and some human beings are developing natures that even go contrary to our own societies, so spirits ultimately had the responsibility of determining their own nature, whether the nature of spirits would be in conformity to the character of God or in conformity to something in opposition.

Now you will note that long before the Ten Commandments were given at Sinai, this being is called a murderer. He was a murderer from the beginning. These ideas came to mind after the spirits were given responsibility to execute God's government over the earth.

He was a liar. One of the Ten Commandments says "You shall not murder," another says "You shall not lie or bear false witness." So we discover that the commandments define already, just from the general picture we have here, the character of God; and the violation of the commandments define the nature that some of the angels ultimately introduced into themselves. Spirit was subject to being molded either into the character of God or some other direction, and this being conceived of the idea of competition; that you get ahead this way. You separate the less able from the more able, and while you are getting ahead you make more progress if you can lie and deceive somebody into believing something else so that you can replace him and get ahead of the other person, or angel. And so we find that the devil is a deceiver, he is a liar, he is a murderer. The truth doesn't exist in him.

We turn also to John's account in a letter he wrote.

I John, chapter 3:8: "He who commits sin" speaking of men, "is of the devil." "Sin is the transgression of law." "For the devil has sinned from the beginning."

Now, we learn in John's own letter here a little earlier that whoever disobeys the commandments and still says "I know him is a liar, and the truth is not in him." The devil may claim to know God. He's been in God's presence. But he didn't believe God was that good, he therefore really didn't know God for what he is, even though he could have, and in faith should have continued to believe that God is good as God told him he is before the earth was created.

"He who says I know him but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him." This is the description of the devil. The devil really doesn't believe that God is that good. He lies about God. He has lied to himself. In disobeying the commandments he had become a liar, and we know that he was a liar and a murderer from the beginning. This is all called sin. Sin is the transgression of the law, I John 3:4, same book. Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness. King James version says "sin is the transgression of law." Now here we are dealing with the nature. Satan speaks from his own nature, said John in the RSV translation, a very good translation of that verse, John 8:44.

Here we discover that the commandments therefore reflect the nature of God, the violation of the commandments the nature of the devil, and the issue is not only a matter of government, broadly speaking, over the universe it is also individually a matter of character; and we must not forget that because each one of us is also going to be found responsible.

Here we discover the picture that angels, in administering the government of God, conceived, if they followed the reasoning of the devil, that there were other and alternative ways; or as one might word it, when they heard what God revealed to them could be their destiny, some of them conceived that they were taking God's way for granted; that they had never seen an alternative, and why should not they conceive of an even more affective alternative. Sin, in a sense, is trying to find an alternative to God's character. It rises first from disrespect of the government of God, denial of God's goodness, and a decision that implies that the natural mind, whether the natural mind of angels or the natural mind of men, is capable of devising alternatives to the governments of the universe equal to or superior to anything that God has thought out. In so doing, one violates the very first commandment, that "You shall not have any god before YHWH" who is the everliving God. YHWH is the Hebrew word which means Everliving or the Eternal One, translated LORD usually in most English renderings.

Anyone who conceives of an alternative as better, puts himself in the position where he now is serving himself as God instead of the Creator. There came a time, having gone this wrong way for a great period of time not defined in scripture, that a final action took place in which the angels and Hillel, now become Satan, abandon the estate that they had been given. Jude, which follows John; James, Peter, John and Jude, Jude tells us that the angels which kept not their first estate were punished having, at a moment of time, conceived of the idea that if they could delude God into thinking they had other ideas in mind, that suddenly they could swarm to heaven itself and displace God from his throne, and would be able therefore to re-define the way the universe should be run to determine the results of how spirits should live.

In this ascent, assault, and war on heaven there was an immediate reaction. Jesus said that in the battle he beheld Satan fall from heaven as lightning, and he was booted back—whatever other means we might like to use to define it—to earth, and fell with such speed it was comparable to the movement of lightning, the speed of light in the heavens, and he was cast back to the earth, and the angels that followed him.

It was at this point that we pick up the story of Genesis, as you know. The issue now is, what God proposes to do with human beings. This has been defined, of course, in a much more extensive form in sermons and in Mr. Armstrong's book, *The Incredible Human Potential*, which is also now available, as you probably know in Dutch, French, and German. This great change that takes place where the focus is now no longer on what the angels shall do but on whether or not human beings

could qualify to execute God's government on the earth. The angels that followed Satan, having abandoned their estate, could now have been replaced, in the account given in Genesis 1, the rest of chapter 1, beside verses 1 and 2, and then in chapter 2 and in chapter 3, there is the story—you have heard it repeated a number of occasions. Could man follow God in such a way that human beings would continue to execute the government of God? That is, to keep the commandments, to do what God says is right, to come to have that kind of confidence in him that by doing only that which is right, no other alternative makes sense? That it makes sense to tell the truth, it makes sense to love your neighbor as yourself. It does not make sense to lie or to steal or to hate; that you see the benefits of living God's way so much that you wouldn't either do or plan or anticipate an alternative. In this case it did not work out that way.

God, who foresees everything, put Adam, the first human being, to the test, and of course the one we know as the devil or that serpent, Lucifer who had become Satan or an adversary, deceived the woman into thinking that there were other ways of acquiring all the things that God knew, instead of finding those things from God's mouth his way, to pursue it some other way.

There was a tree that was symbolic of the devil's way. God said that tree he reserves for himself. He did not allow the human family to eat of the fruit of that tree in the garden in which they then dwelt. The devil put it into the mind of Eve that she could take of it anyway; that in fact what God had said he would reveal to her, because God reveals truth and he reveals its opposite so you can know—the Bible contains the full story—but we should learn the difference between truth and error by doing what is right not by doing the alternative to the commandments, which is sin. The devil conceived of the idea that if the first human beings could be led to create their own ideas, to put themselves up as gods where they relied on themselves instead of God's word, why then of course he would not be replaced. And he and the angels would get back the rule, in part, of the estate which they abandoned, and that is in fact what happened. So that today men do not believe there is a world government, in fact there has been for nearly six thousand years, a world government continuing on earth but not visible to man, composed of spirits who had rebelled against the law of God. This government has influenced the human family ever since the events in the garden of Eden.

The human family went its own direction. God cut the family of man, of Adam, off from him. On occasion he chose to reveal himself to individuals, but otherwise God's plan called for the world to continue doing what Adam and Eve decided that they would do; to invent alternative explanations of God's way, alternatives to God's goodness, where human beings would define evil as good and good as evil, and light as dark and darkness as light. That is, since God defines what is good, God defines what is right, God defines what is light, human beings took upon themselves the idea of calling the opposite by these words. And so societies were born, nations developed, and we will not address the question for the

moment of the flood or any of the other events, but merely say that for more than two thousand years of human experience, human beings have simply gone their own way, God revealing himself on occasion just to singular individuals; Abel and Enoch and Noah. And it was not till we come to a man named Abram who lived in Mesopotamia that God chose to reveal himself to a man from whom he would raise up a nation among all the nations of the world.

This man Abram was tested. We know him also as Abraham after he proved himself. Having proved himself, we discover the uniqueness of what God expected of Abraham in contrast to the way everybody else had been living, in contrast to the way he had been living, if you will note carefully what it says.

'Abraham was 99 years old,' the translation says, 'when the Lord appeared to him and said, I am God Almighty.' This is the one appearing to him whom we know as Jesus the Christ. The Father had not appeared, the one we know as the Father, had not appeared. It was the one who became Jesus who talked to the patriarchs and came in the flesh and talked to his generation. He says: "Walk before me and be" and the KJ is more affective here, "perfect." Blameless is the RSV translation. I prefer the sense of perfect because that reflects the ultimate word that we know in English to define the character of God. Here the first duty of Abraham is to walk before God, to walk with him in his presence, and to do so that he should be called perfect. To be perfect is to be like God is. Adam could have been, he simply followed his wife, though he knew better, and she was deceived.

The human family has been allowed to write its own record, its own ideas, to have its own religions, its own political structures. Just as the angels thought they could invent—the third that rebelled—alternatives, God has allowed the human family to remain in spiritual darkness, has not dealt with the family, but chose rather up to this point just to deal with certain individuals. And now he asks one man in particular to be perfect. Jesus asked the disciples to be perfect. This has to do with character. We learn of course of the nature as how Abraham is to be seen in developing that perfection or character when we read of the Lord's or YHWH's statements to Isaac; that Isaac was to conduct himself in the same way that Abraham did, and Abraham kept God's commandments, his statutes, and his laws.

God revealed the way that we should go to Abraham. We are not told those laws, however, until later, but he did reveal them to Abraham, and that defines the character of God, defines what it means to be perfect.

We move down four centuries in time. We come now to the events when Abraham's descendants were in Egypt. There God chooses the descendants, leads them out of Egypt by Moses and miracles at the Red Sea, brings them to the foot of a mountain in the Sinai peninsula, proposes to them a covenant, a relationship that would be based on the following general premise:

That as mortal human beings, as we all are, they could be if they wished—it was voluntary—a particular

nation that God would choose, and he would provide them a land in which to live, he would protect them from their enemies, and he would constitute them not only a nation, in a masculine sense, where we tend to think of nations in the masculine sense, they should also be a church. That is the recipients of the religious truth that no other nation was in possession of. They could be a nation in this world, they were not promised eternal life, they were promised a good life, to enjoy their years on earth in the land that was ultimately to flow with milk and honey. So marvelous were the flowers in the pastures that the bees would simply produce more than enough good things to eat, and the cattle, the goats, and the sheep more than enough good things to drink, and the children of Israel accepted the proposal. And they agreed in principle. So God then defines for everybody to hear what he had been in detail expounding already through Moses. And atop Sinai, as the children of Israel were assembled on the opposite slopes to the east, and I had the privilege of being at Sinai and climbed the mountain.

Now God's presence was not there. I did enter into the little mosque that's on top and prayed, which was an interesting experience atop Sinai.

But God revealed ten commandments, the broad basic perspective of God's character. It covers a relationship to God himself on the one hand, and to our neighbor on the other. It involves those simple things that we ought to know of, that when we have a commitment to husband and wife we don't involve ourselves in adultery, we don't have the spirit of murder, the spirit of theft or lying, and we don't covet what is not ours. And with respect to God we recognize that he determines right and wrong, we have no other God before us. He is the one who defines the way we should go. Nor do we make any likeness of God or of anything else that we may conceive of. There are two commandments here. Now I know of course that there are those who have assumed that these were the same, but this is not the case at all. One is to have some God in place of the true God, the second commandment involves the question of making something that symbolizes God. God is a spirit and does not ask, in fact expressly forbids, that we make any replica of himself. Further we do not abuse or misuse or take his name in vain; and 4th, that we conduct ourselves in such a manner that we hallow any time he has hallowed, and God of course gave the Sabbath day not at Sinai, he gave it to Adam and Eve at the end of the week of recreation, when he rested and beheld what he had done; and asks man to rest on that day to consider, to contemplate, to study what God has done. And those who do not observe this day are made up of those who simply do not know either what God has done, or what he is doing. That's why the world has the doctrine of evolution which presupposes a creation without a Creator. And last, in my thought, but by no means least, and I'm picking it up from different points of view, not in the order in which they're given, he addresses children who become adults, that we should honor our father and our mother. That is, to pay respect to those

to whom we owe our existence. This is a very important thing. Sometimes young people fail to realize that if there had been no father and mother there would be no children. As our children have said on more than one occasion, it was nice to be wanted. Today we often abort in the world. It's the opposite of what God intended.

In any case, God is revealing now to a nation, which is also a church, the broad outlines of his commandments. These define God's character. We may not have seen it this way, but they define essentially how God lives, how he thinks, and how we should think. He also asked them, a little later, to build, since they were a physical nation, to build a temporary dwelling for him, and he asked the family of Aaron to serve him in that temporary dwelling. That was the tabernacle which later became a structure called the temple, and the people who served him, the family of Aaron, were called priests, and they had people to assist them. The rest of the family of Levi, because Aaron was of the family of Levi, but all those who didn't descend from Aaron served the priests who did descend from Aaron. And many other laws were given. We won't go into detail, but I want you to note that God defined human conduct as it should be in the Ten Commandments and in many of the other laws given.

He also gave the physical nation the opportunity to recognize that God was in their presence, in their midst, in a temporary dwelling called a tabernacle; and that they could come to him in physical service and they could offer from time to time animal sacrifices which involving the shedding of blood would look forward to someone who would shed his blood to pay the penalty for their sins.

Now, it is significant that in that church to whom God had revealed his truth as he revealed it to no other people, to no Indians in the new world, to no people in Europe or Africa, to no other people in Asia, and most certainly not to the Aborigines of Australia, but to these people in the southwest of Asia in the Sinai peninsula. He revealed to them the body of truth that defines properly what human character should be like. And he also told them that they were not now being offered eternal life, that is God was not coming to dwell in them but only among them, and so they had a physical priesthood with sacrifices from year to year to remind them of their sins, to look forward to an event yet to come which was the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover. And there was a temporary building showing that God did not permanently plan to be apart from the children of Israel in a building, but would ultimately be in them.

This nation was given God's government, but they got away from time to time and then returned back to that government. That's the story of the judges. We'll in fact look over the whole of what we call the Old Testament period and summarize it in such a simple way as this: that the nation that God called and the church that he formed to be the recipient of the truth, divided in an act of rebellion following the death of Solomon, and only the house of Judah but not the ten tribes living further north, retained the Bible; and among the Jews we

today look for that revelation of God that we now call the Old Testament. That's not the way it was called. Jesus called it the law and the prophets and the writings, or the holy scripture. They were the recipients of this revelation and have preserved it for us. This was the church that God used, to whom at a time in the days of Herod the king, Jesus came.

Jesus, who was the Word before, the YHWH of the Old Testament, was born from Mary by the Spirit of God overshadowing her and she conceived, and the being that was born from her whom we know as Jesus was the one who pre-existed as the Creator of the universe who executed the will of God, and so now his Father we call God the Father and Jesus we call his Son. This person was born of the house of Judah, not of the house of Levi associated with Judah and the nation. Jesus was not a priest among men. He was not a descendant of Aaron. He was in fact reared in the synagogue which represents the public buildings of God's own church. He came to define the character of God. He came as a rabbi, and I think few of us really realize that when Jesus was on earth, he was not addressed as priest, he was not addressed as father, he was addressed as rabbi. That was his role. He doesn't ask that we become either priests or rabbis. When of course he sacrificed himself and offered himself to pay for human sin, he entered into the role of a priest at a level unlike Aaron's, but we won't cover that for the moment. We'll go back to Jesus' teaching.

While on earth in his ministry, the best summary I will find in Matthew chapter 5, Jesus again stated the basic premise of God's character. He takes a look at the Ten Commandments and other parts of the law and he expounds them, and we call this the New Testament. The difference between the Old Testament and the New is very simple. Most people have conceived of the idea that everything was wrong with the Old and had to be corrected for the New, so that today we have substituted one thing for another. This is not the case at all. Jesus said the law as I revealed it on Sinai stands as it is. You read it as it is. I have not come to change a single letter or a single bit of wording of the law. I however ask you that when you look at the law you don't look at it as the nation of Israel did at Sinai, but you look at it as I intended it to be understood by people who have the Spirit of God not by people who don't. That is, I'm going to come and by my spirit dwell in you, or beget you, so that we may be called the begotten sons of God and we may be born into his family.

And if we have the Spirit of God in us, then when we read the commandment which says "you shall not kill" we also perceive it says that we shouldn't even hate. There are people who hate but think they have kept the law because they didn't kill the one whom they hated. Jesus says that everyone who is even angry with his brother without a cause is ultimately liable to the judgment. He asks us to examine the commandments not by changing them but by understanding them better than the physical nation Israel at Sinai ever could. So we not only learn not to kill one another, we learn in what Jesus said that we don't even share animosity as

people often do, or grudges. We learn all the way through here not only not to commit adultery but not even to lust or covet someone else. So Jesus went through all of the laws briefly, and he named six basic areas and then he comes to the seventh, and in the end, as the seventh one, he merely summarizes it and says in simple terms, "Be you therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Having defined human character for what it should be, Jesus died. He became a priest after the order of Melchizedek, who is described in the book of Genesis. That means that Christ, unlike Aaron and Aaron's descendants, offered himself up once to pay the penalty of sins for all. The family of Aaron had to offer sacrifices every day and every year and it was repeated year by year. Paul said in Hebrews that if those sacrifices could have actually forgiven people according to the conscience why they wouldn't have had to repeat them again, but they were only animals; goats and sheep and cattle and doves and pigeons, and there were even sparrows. They were just reminders and blood was shed. But here was a man who was falsely accused and Pilate turned him over to be executed even though he knew he was without guilt, and Jesus offered himself once for all, and having done so and given his life, he was buried and rose again after three days and three nights, ascended to heaven and was accepted of the Father in heaven as the offering of the wave sheaf described in Leviticus 23 was also offered. That's another story you should all know from the festival of Pentecost period. The Father accepted him as that perfect sacrifice. He has no need ever again of sacrificing himself either on the cross or in symbolic form on any altar.

Having offered himself once for all he now sits at the right hand of God the Father. And he now has raised up his church first by converting a significant number among the Jews to which he then added Greeks.

And as we turn we note in the book of Romans chapter 10, and especially verse 13, that whereas the children of Israel were meant to be God's nation they disobeyed, and like branches of an olive tree that didn't bear proper fruit were broken off, into which tree Gentiles like branches may be grafted in, so that the nation Israel that God will use in the world tomorrow to govern the world over human beings will be composed of all those to whom the Spirit of God has been given. They include men such as Abel and Enoch and Noah and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and Joseph, judges and kings and prophets. They also include many Jews who were converted in the apostles' day, and Greeks, and as time went on some peoples who were converted when the church migrated out of the Byzantine realm into Armenia, later moved from Armenia to the Balkans and into the alpine regions of Europe where God raised up Peter Waldo. And then the message was brought and people were added to the church in England following the introduction of the truth of God there in the period of the 12th century by Walter Lollard. The message was brought to the United States in the 1660s to the then colony of Rhode Island, and God's people were added to the church as they migrated

through West Virginia, through the Midwest to Oregon, where this work developed when God called Mr. Armstrong in the 1920s, and this work is the result of the efforts that God has used him to do. It is made up of people through all these 19 centuries, God's church is, and the centuries in the days of ancient Israel when a few were given God's spirit, made up of those who are seeking to fulfill the purpose of life.

One: by repenting, which is the opposite of what the devil did. Instead of inventing alternative ways, we repent of alternative ways. The world invents, we are asked to repent. That means we are now willing to go according to the law of God. We're willing to do what the commandments actually say. All during this time when God's church was small and persecuted, there were great religions around the world and even those which came to be known as Christian, so that the civilization of this world in the West as Christian as some portions of this world have civilizations called Islam, or called Buddhism, or now atheism, all of these are different ways men have gone. They label it after men, some even labeled it after the name Christ. They have been part and parcel to the wars of the Middle Ages, nations thought to be Christians go to war, that's the story of course in our life time of the First World War and the Second World War. There was Christian Germany, Christian Poland, Christian France, Christian Italy, Christian United States, and Christian England. And we had two world wars of all these people who not only did not keep the commandment which says "you shall not kill," but inculcated the idea of hating your enemy. That's the way the world view is.

The church is not made up of all those who may be called Christian in the world but the few who have been willing to repent of doing their own thing, of turning around and going according to the law of God which defines the character of God, after which they may, if they are baptized in water, receive the Holy Spirit. That baptism is a burial in water that symbolizes they want to bury their past, to come up with new life, in this case with the addition of the Spirit of God that makes man immortal ultimately, because man was born mortal. There is no immortal soul in man. Man is a soul. "And the soul that sins it shall die." What man needs, unlike angels who were made spirit, man needs the addition in this case of God's spirit, which imparts a bit of his character little by little, and also the beginning of potential eternal life.

And so we read in II Peter 1:4 that we have become, if we're converted and receive the Spirit of God, a part of the divine nature which enables us ultimately to inherit the kingdom of God, to be like God is, to have his character, and with Jesus Christ to share with him first the rule of the world for a thousand years, then the rule of the world after that for two jubilees, or two fifty year periods, or a hundred years, when we will deal with all human beings who have lived and died in ignorance. And the whole world will re-think its life, comparing six thousand years of man's way to a thousand years of God's.

And then we come to the end when this kingdom of this earth is delivered up to God and the Father, and he will reign over all. And it is at this point that we look upon eternity when the human experience is through, when angels who rebelled are judged, and when those who obeyed are our servants. And there will be a change in the earth which will be burned up, and the heavens will be transformed also; and we look forward to a new heaven and new earth wherein is no sin, wherein the government of God will be executed everywhere, and the universe will be placed under our feet. That is, as Paul said in Hebrews, not everything now has been subjected to man. But there is coming a time when the church collectively and all the human family that has been repentant, converted, and ultimately born again, functioning as the wife of Christ who is the husband, just as ancient Israel should have been the wife and YHWH the husband; that when we are all born into the kingdom of God we will have all things placed under our feet. But that would not be possible to extend the government of God throughout all the imaginable universe, then not composed of matter as we know it but transformed, if, in the first place, the character of God had not been formed in us; because God will not share the universe with anyone whom he cannot rule, and he will not share it with any who are unwilling voluntarily to take upon themselves the responsibility of exercising choice and self-control. We are not automatons. We're here to choose, and we must choose the character of God. And when that has been chosen and carried out through life, and when we stumble and fall we ask forgiveness which can be given us, then we shall be qualified for various responsibilities in the kingdom of God. The free gift of the Holy Spirit means that we can be born into the kingdom of God. That is a free gift. You don't qualify for eternal life. Christ did that for us. Having then made the Spirit of God available, we are asked to qualify for responsibility in that kingdom. And there is a big difference.

Here then, as most of you who will be leaving and for those who will be coming back to Pasadena, is a brief summary from a little different perspective, not so closely attached to the Feast of Tabernacles but another perspective, looking at the purpose of life from the point of view of the importance of human character; that it must ultimately be replaced by God's character in us through the Holy Spirit.

MILITARY SERVICE AND THE CHURCH

Dr. Hoeh—February 2, 1980

From ministerial services we have the following statement: "Many of you are probably aware, President Carter in a state of the union message called for the registration of men between the ages of 18 and 26 for the draft. We do not as yet know exactly what procedures will be instituted, however it appears that the President could call for registration as early as the first part of February, although that may be delayed to allow Congress to amend portions of the law....the biblical teachings on this subject, participating in war and service in the armed forces. Members who are of draft age or who have draft age children should be advised that written information regarding the doctrinal teachings of the church on this subject and the legal procedures for expressing one's religious convictions in this regard are available...."

I should like to address the question, less from the perspective of trying to explain every verse in the bible....what you ought to know in terms of instruction and in terms of your responsibility should a crisis arise, which I do not foresee at the moment, with respect to your jobs. There are a number of things that most people do not know about, and decisions that had to be made which may not have to be made in the future, which indeed may have to be altered so that the church policy is not necessarily a fixed policy because the bible is not the only standard in this case that determines what you do. Now that may sound strange, but indeed it was the circumstances, and I want you to note.

We live in a world, of course, where Rhodesia's policy, South Africa's policy, the United States' policy, or East Germany's or Czechoslovakia's policy, where we have brethren, are so different that we have to provide solutions administratively that would be unacceptable in one country but acceptable in another. Therefore there is more than the bible on this matter, and it is very important that you realize it in terms of your cooperation as people who are outside of the draft age area, because what you do can determine the legitimacy of the church's request in terms of conscientious objector status, and it can jeopardize the legitimate rights that an individual would have who is of draft age.

The teachings of the Worldwide Church of God were first brought to our attention as a result of the events of 1939-41 when the World War II began to bring this country into it as a result of the problems across the Atlantic, and then at the end, in December 7th, in 1941, with what happened at Pearl Harbor. There was an immediate decision that had to be made. Shall we be conscientious objectors or shall we not be? And in being a conscientious objector does one enter the military in non-combatative duty, or does one seek to have some solution in civilian service?

Now you will note immediately that we are already dealing with some things of human definition that are non-biblical. That is, the question of whether you have any conscientious rights in this matter of going to war, or not going to war, varies from country to country. Prior to the New Republic in Germany there was no such recognition. Since, there has been such recognition. Some governments allow non-combatative military duty as the only possibility, thus our brethren in Rhodesia had to serve in non-combatative military duty, that is to guard the villages as distinct from going out into the field. Now there are alternatives, and that is you can be jailed. One has to weigh the question, and Mr. Armstrong himself did, as to whether it is better to go to jail when your conscientious objector status is refused by some judge who simply would not listen, even though the church otherwise was recognized. Should he go to jail or should he take non-combatative duty essentially involving hospital service? These are all strangely decisions that in a sense pertain to the conscience of the state; how the state looks at matters, what the state expects of us. We're also going to look clearly at what the bible expects, and we will see areas of variation that we have to come to grips with.

When the Church of God made the decision, which was inevitable on the basis of the bible, that it is our role not to go into military service, to shoot and to kill and to maim other human beings, whether of your faith in another country or not, we were in a sense following the tradition of the Church of God as it had already been established 80 years before at the time of the American Civil War. I did not know of this, I was not reared in the Church of God, but I had an experience which I should now draw upon. Those who were reared in the Church of God could give much more information if they remembered what grandparents taught them.

When I was called to appear before a judge, and I will not tell the whole story of that appearance at this moment because it involves another matter which is voting, which is critically important in this subject, this man told me, after our discussion, he said it is interesting that from the beginning of the principle of conscientious objection, there have been two churches that have remained fundamental in their understanding, the Mennonites and the Churches of God. For the Churches of God, then with the headquarters in Stanbury, Missouri, did appeal and were granted conscientious objector status in the days of President Lincoln. I did not know this. I had not heard this. But when the judge himself told me, who had to be responsible for law, I thought it was a very fine historic record to know that this is the tradition of our people.

The Jehovah Witnesses came later. They obtained such status in the First World War, at that time through

the aid of Judge Rutherford, but their view and ours would not wholly coincide. The Seventh Day Adventists, though they would not go to war as a general rule, did not take the view of either the Mennonites or ourselves with respect to conscientious objection in this sense, that they readily entered into, as a result of the teachings of Ellen G. White, non-combative military service especially related to the area of medicine and drugs and hospitals and so forth.

In this sense we share a very close affinity with the view of the Mennonite churches within the United States, and in a sense the Worldwide Church of God obtained a great deal of favor before the government because of the previous efforts that had been made, both by the Churches of God for 80 years previous to this, and because of the powerful role of the Mennonite church in Washington and their recognition.

So much for the immediate background. Let me explain that any government may change its definitions as to 1-A being subject to immediate call, CO being a conscientious objector status or 1-O whatever you would call it—we use CO to define the name or of the expression—1-O is usually the government definition, 1-AO means you are subject to call but for non-combative duty. These are just letters that you will see and should come to recognize, which may or may not be changed.

Now, let me explain that the Jehovah Witnesses may take our view in terms of not going to war, but they do not take our view with respect to violence, nor do they understand Romans 13.... Their view is that the higher authority is the government of God in the group that we call Jehovah's Witnesses. It is our recognition of Romans 13 as indeed a reference to human government that God has allowed for the maintenance of safety, in general, and for the preservation of peace and calm in a community. We therefore do not find that our literature would in any way parallel much of the Jehovah Witnesses' material, and in the sense that Adventists have been very closely wed to medicine and to all of the principles that underlie the vast number of hospitals that they have built, we do not share an explanation with them in the same way that most often we share with the Mennonites. I am trying to define that because it will help you better to understand how the government looks at this subject, because it tends to note that there are different points of view in different groups. It is important that there be some kind of unanimity within the church. Therefore we had to make decisions in the last crisis following the Korean War, and in general up to but not really extending greatly through the war in Viet Nam, that you all had to cooperate if the church itself was to have recognition. We could not leave it to the individual to decide. It was not left to you to decide whether you did or did not want to kill your neighbor who may live in another country. It was not left to you to decide what your job should be, because if the government said that you cannot be at work in a job that produces military weapons, then simply we had to ask you not to have that job or the church would not receive recognition. If the government said you cannot work at

a factory that builds planes for both military and civilian purpose, we had to tell you you could not keep that job. It would jeopardize the right of the church to conscientious objector status. If you were a gardener and worked on the grounds, you were fifty years, or sixty years old, and you worked on the grounds and mowed the lawn and pruned the shrubbery around a hospital, which was a Veteran's Hospital, you would have to give up the job because the government would say, and this case was decided, that if your church takes part in that function which they regard as the support of the military, you cannot maintain conscientious objector status as a church. Now as far as Mr. Armstrong is concerned, as far as the bible is concerned, whether I clip that hedge or another, or mow that lawn or another, has nothing to do with the subject, but the conscience of the government made the decision that it did. And therefore we were not free to make the kind of biblical decision which says sure you can keep the job, I mean that's incidental. The government said you have that job for your older people, your young men have to go into the military or into jail. We do not recognize CO status for them if that's the view you take. So we had to say there are things that the bible would allow that we ourselves simply could not permit the brethren to do, and we therefore were regulated very clearly in our decision, both by the bible, which governed those things we should do, and by the conscience of government, in part, which did not tell us to do what was wrong—we do not allow the government to dictate—but where the government says that what the bible might say is perfectly all right to do, if the government says you can't, then even that we have to avoid.

This is the same principle that underlies the fact that I will not eat meat or drink wine in the presence of my vegetarian or Adventist friends so long as the world stands, though I am permitted by the bible to do so. It is the conscience of somebody else. I could eat meat, said Paul, in an idol's temple because to me an idol is nothing, but if somebody else who thinks an idol is something sees me and is himself embolden to do it, then I just should not be there, because he will use my example, which is perfectly permissible, as an excuse for sin.

To go on, Seventh Day Adventists' views do depend heavily on the teachings of Ellen G. White with respect to the major role of medicine in the church, and there we would greatly differ despite the fact that they observe the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, Mennonites do not. You simply see these remarkable variations.

The government does expect the church to have a fixed policy. The government does not expect of course that every individual should go along with it, because they recognize conscientious objectors among Catholics where it is permitted to go to war, they recognize it among Methodists where it's permitted to go to war, they recognize it among Quakers where normally it is not permitted to go to war but some do. Nevertheless, it is important for such a congregation or church as ourselves to have established policy. How we shall administer it is

not the subject of this sermon because we simply yet do not know what the government stand will be with respect either to men, to women, to young, or to old, and whether some of their rules on violence will hold; because the question, brethren, even of child rearing came up, as to whether or not spanking was an act of violence. And there were some judges who held that any parent, or any young man who believed that children should be spanked, was himself violating his conscientious if he claimed conscientious objector status. We did not change the teaching on this subject because the bible is clear. We rather changed the wording. We would define child rearing in terms of discipline rather than spanking. Because the government, in examining any letter or listening to an individual in any exposition if he had to appear before a judge, would take and interpret certain actions on the basis of how it was worded. We even had to discuss the question seriously of how far one could go to protect one's wife or children from a rapist who would try to break into a house. At what point, let us say, may we use leverage, distinct from force, because to use force for some judges was to do violence, at what point must we say we can go no further? This was the conscientious of the government. It had nothing to do with the teachings of the bible, as I will show you.

We have to be very careful, and these things will have to be examined again. But I am bringing these various and peculiar related subjects to your attention because if the church would say, why we have a right to knock the fellow out, the government would say, well, then how can you claim conscientious objector status? That is, one must not hurt the man but you must try to get his arms behind him see, then that might be permitted. This kind of reasoning by men who really didn't respect a conscientious objector status had to be wrestled with for more than fifteen years.

It was in the Korean War, during the last year of college, that I was asked to explain both the teaching of the church and myself before a judge. This was not in the traditional jury sense, this was strictly a hearing on my case because every case tended to have to have this at that time. I explained our general view in terms of the 5th commandment, or the 6th commandment. Now let me deviate again a moment. Normally when you spoke of the 6th commandment, this would only confuse the Catholic who was working for the FBI in gathering information, because to a Catholic "Thou shalt not kill" is the 5th commandment. Their numbering is different. And you can always note that it was usually a non-Catholic, a non-Lutheran, who would use the term 6th commandment. It was a Catholic or a Lutheran who was in the Federal Bureau of Investigation who went around and interviewed, and he would define it as the 5th commandment.

I was asked to explain what our basic teaching on the 6th commandment is. And I normally define not the commandment by number but by actual definition, "You shall not murder, You shall not kill." Now we will look at how that is to be explained later in terms of the Old Covenant, but for the moment we will examine it in

terms of what our role is. It has reference to the attitude of hate, and here we would go to Jesus' exposition in Matthew 5.

'You heard that it was said in times past 'You shall not kill.' " Jesus said it goes so far as to say you shall not hate, it goes so far as to say you should reconcile yourself to a brother, and to go to war cannot avoid hate. And therefore there is simply no way, and any judge would recognize that factor. There is simply no way to avoid the violation of that commandment as Jesus expounded it and to enter into the army which teaches that one hates one's enemies. Further, John the Baptist, when inquired of by soldiers who were then functioning as police, because the concept of a police system did not arise in the western world until 1828 when it was introduced in Britain. The idea of a police that is non-military is the mind of the children of Joseph, and it is hardly more than 158 years old. That's how recent the concept is. The Romans had a police system. It was the army, and when things got too far out of hand the army went through and brought peace. It was otherwise defined as solitude. Everybody was killed off.

Now, when I explained the matter of the commandment, when I explained the teachings of Jesus, the man himself said, "But you have to recognize that you do live in this world, and that there is the need of defending a country which grants you the right to be a citizen in that country." From his point of view he could understand conscientious objector status for those who entered in non-combatative duty. From our perspective, entering into any of those was to come under an authority that transcended and super-ceded the authority that is God's, because when you come into the military authority in general you are in a position where you simply do not have the rights of an ordinary citizen, as of that time. It looks like today, of course, being in the army gives you quite a number of rights but then it did not. That's because they want you to volunteer. This is all as a result of President Nixon's decision that have governed basically the 1970s.

But, there was one thing he simply couldn't understand: why we wouldn't defend a government that provided us the freedom to preach—that was one of our duties—provided us the opportunity to have free, peaceful assembling for religious services. Why would we at least not enter in as the Seventh Day Adventists? Then I said something without realizing—I knew I was going to explain it—but I said something that changed his whole view of the problem. I said "But we also, though we pay taxes, do not vote. We do not enter into politics." And suddenly he saw the whole picture. He said "Well, if that's the case, then you really don't look on the governments today as the governments, if your church members are scattered around the world," which they then were not, "but you don't look on the governments today as the ultimate government that you serve. You look on the government of God as a future government." That changed his whole perspective. If we had said it is the teaching of the church that we are conscientious objectors, that we do not enter into the military in

* non-combative roles, we even avoid that, we are subject to the penalty, in some cases we would even be willing to go to jail if that's required, if we pay taxes, and if we were to vote for one party or another, and consider the government over us as the government that God has established to represent his kingdom, because that's the way it would be viewed, that's the way people who are Catholics and Methodists and Episcopalians look at it, that these are the governments of God which church members are a part of in terms of their spiritual life. Physically we all recognize physical citizenship, but in terms of our experience spiritually, is this the government that we're a party of? Are we to be born, in a sense, into this government, this kingdom? And the answer is no. We are to be born into the government of God, the kingdom of God, the family of God, which does not make its appearance until the world tomorrow.

When Jesus said as he did, this of course is recorded in the account that John has given us of Jesus' statements before Pilate. Pilate asked him Well, is your government a government of today's world? Are you trying to be a king now? Are you trying to raise an issue of whether you're a king or Caesar is emperor? Are you raising an issue of whether you have a right to be a king within the Roman Empire without his approval as emperor?

Jesus said, "No my kingdom isn't of this age. My kingdom is of a time much further," far into history. As it turned out to be more than 19 centuries downstream. He said "If my kingdom were of this world then my servants would fight to have me delivered. But my kingdom is not of this world. You don't have to worry, Caesar doesn't have to worry."

The man himself was very aware that the drift, though we were separated by a decade more, the drift that began to take place in the church in the 1970s that the church members should vote, was a drift that indeed went contrary because if, contrary to all sense of reason, if the church itself takes the view that we should vote democratic, republican, independent, or you name whatever it is, if the church takes it that we all have a right, then he who determines who should rule over him also has the right to defend that right. Further, he has a responsibility to defend that right. If you have the right to determine whether President Carter should or should not be re-elected, and you exercise that right, and you demand to exercise that right, which is to vote, then you cannot deny that the government has the right to call upon you to defend the system that gives you this right. But when we decide that we pay taxes as citizens, because Jesus himself set the policy "render to Caesar that which is Caesar's, to God that which is God's," and God tells us that we should live at peace with our enemies as well as our friends; that we should not not only kill, but not even hate or not even allow an attitude of a grudge or something like that to separate one another. You remember Jesus' statement that if you have something against your brother or you know your brother has something against you, get that straightened out too before you continue with a gift at the altar. All of that laid out

in Matthew 5 under the subject of the commandment "You shall not kill." That is, if all those things are made clear as to what Jesus expects of us, and that we also pay taxes, which is what Jesus expects of us—Peter was questioned as to whether he had paid his taxes, and it did appear at that time he hadn't really done it, a little negligent, so they fished and they found a coin and that was sufficient to take care of it.

So Jesus wanted to be sure that we understood that we submit to the powers that be, Romans 13. To submit has reference to being subject to the penalty when indeed the government says you should do this but you have to obey God, then you're subject to a penalty. We have to be willing to be subject to a penalty. Jesus was willing to be subject to a penalty, even in that case one that was not properly imposed, because he was not guilty. But he did so to fulfill scripture.

Paul had to go through another route to pay, let's say, his way to appeal to Caesar, which he had a right to do as a Roman citizen. Jesus did not have that right. He was not a Roman citizen. Peter did not have that right, he was not a Roman citizen. Paul was. He was born free. We don't know that any of the other apostles out of Galilee were in that sense Roman citizens.

This is very important to take note that there is a time to appeal. In conscientious objector status we always appealed. I don't know how men got the idea in 1979 that one should not appeal because every church member knew that if a young man was given 1-A classification or 1-AO he had the right to request a 1-O, or conscientious objector status, and we appealed all the way up, if we needed to, to the president of the United States. Where these members were, were they members? Were they among us when we knew we had these rights, and suddenly that they should not be exercised in 1979, would seem rather strange because the bible gives clear illustrations. But we submit. If the government says no, I still won't grant it to you, even at the level of the president, then you submit to the penalty. If ultimately in our present case the government were to say no, and we couldn't exercise our role freely here, we'd have to go somewhere else. There's no other recourse. That's the penalty.

But we recognize a right to appeal, we recognize a responsibility to pay tax, we recognize that we are not to kill and hate whether enemy or friend. We recognize also that if our government is of this world, the one into which in a sense we are begotten, if it is of this world, we have a responsibility to defend it. Jesus said "If my government were of this world, this age, my servants would fight." We do not deny the right of the government to make the demand to be drafted. Jesus himself said if his were a worldly government he would have no alternative or some greedy neighbor would take it over. But we also recognize that since, though we are citizens in terms of passports and request the right to travel, and pay taxes for this reason, among other reasons, that since our government in terms of our spiritual life is from above, and of the world tomorrow, we simply do not vote to exercise our citizenship in that manner. And in so

doing, we may legitimately claim, in the United States, the right to be recognized as conscientious objectors without the need to do non-combative duty in the military. That's the usual expression for defining hospital and other services.

We do expect that there may be civilian work, and we would have to submit to that civilian work for one, two, or three years, whatever it would be. But that is a freer situation than to be under the military in the medical corps. Those are areas that we have to take a look at in terms of the subject at hand, and we should begin to familiarize ourselves with the different views that each judge could present, or each draft board could bring to bear. There were areas where our people had no problems, draft boards that looked at it clearly, in other cases draft boards who thought they never heard of such a thing as conscientious objector status. The government at the level of congress will cause different rules to apply at different periods of time.

So we will now move and take a look at a number of other things in connection with it that are laid out in the bible.

John himself mentioned that we should "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand." He therefore was announcing the kingdom of God and in so doing was giving instruction to men who were in the military, just as we would say men who are called by the broadcast Mr. Armstrong makes, who were called by the literature that is published, when they asked what they shall do, John said to them: "Do violence to no man, be satisfied with your wages" is not relevant in this case. This is why we expect young men and/or women today who are in the military when God begins to call them, to convey to their superiors subject to our advice in the means for proceeding, what their new convictions are, what the stand of the church is, and what the requirement is for someone who is baptized and converted. So we have to deal with those who are young people in the church and those who are already in the military. And for the latter there should be serious advice given in terms of knowing how best to proceed. You can bungle it and be thrown in the brig first day, or your can proceed quietly and without fanfare and perhaps get out easily. Not only is the issue of military service a factor, the question of unclean meats is a factor there. The question of the Sabbath and the holy days are all factors which we put together, because you cannot freely observe the Sabbath, you cannot freely reckon your diet in accordance with the biblical rules, you cannot freely observe the annual holy days, and be under the total submission of any military government. These are all reasons and they go hand-in-hand. We've never explained it only from the perspective of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." We have explained that the nature of military government affects all these other areas where we are required to obey God rather than men.

Now, however, there are rare cases, which Mr. Armstrong did decide, that in some instances in the nature of the penalty, a young man might find greater freedom working in a hospital not subject to the military govern-

ment than—that is, but being of some service in the medical area as long as he didn't enter into the army in a non-combative status. This was a civilian role outside of the army, but a penalty that he would pay. The statement Mr. Armstrong made in one case that the man, in this sense, was a free citizen, freer than he would have been if he took the only other alternative which was two years in the jail. In the jail he had less freedom in terms of diet, less freedom in terms of the holy days and the Sabbath, he had much more freedom, and in this case it was a choice of the lesser of two evils. In the one case there would be some problems in terms of conscience with respect to the administration of drugs, but that would be all, and in that sense it was a matter of the choice between the lesser of two evils. All these things can be factors we have to weigh.

Over the years, one of the very interesting gentlemen who would continue from the FBI to call on us, and since many of the young men were college students, and I was functioning academically at that time in an administrative capacity, I was often asked questions by this man quite apart from giving an evaluation of whether the person that we know was a conscientious objector or not. He would ask the question, from your perspective do you regard it as a legitimate right of a state to execute criminals? Now this was indeed one of the shockers that he could hardly understand. From his perspective it was perfectly legitimate for the government to ask its young men to go to war, but his conscience forbade him to execute a criminal for murder. And when I told him that we do not judge the matter with respect to whether the person is guilty or not, but we do recognize that a government has a right to execute its criminals, he was quite surprised.

And now we open up a whole new area of the bible that we should come to understand in this connection.

One: the Worldwide Church of God is a church governed by the principles that are laid down in the first presentation of the New Covenant that we have recorded in the gospels, Matthew chapter 5. This is a new covenant church. We are not asked to come into a relationship with God on the terms and conditions laid out at Sinai, which promised the land of Palestine, and all sorts of physical blessings, of the sky above, the earth beneath; where we enter into a relationship to God that ultimately involves a temple at Jerusalem or a Levitical priesthood, and the laws of Moses governing that; a law at Sinai which asked you to be responsible for keeping it in the letters you were able. Our relationship is different. Jesus said not one iota, not one even decorative addition to any of the letters describing the laws of God given at Sinai, would he alter. He did not propose a revision of the Old Testament. He did not say we must re-word the Old Testament, not even at the point of changing a single letter. We're to keep it as it is and read it as it is. But in reading it we are now to take a new look at commandment which says "You shall not kill" in a manner that would differ from the role of ancient Israel, or to put it in other words, we do not claim that we have to explain away every verse in the law of Moses, or the

law of the Lord, because we have some other view. When the statement in the law says, "And when you go to war," we'll turn to that in a moment in Deuteronomy, we don't have to explain away and say this doesn't mean war. When the statement said "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," we don't have to explain it away and say eye did not mean eye and tooth did not mean tooth. Because the congregation of Israel, the church of Israel, the congregation of God, made up of the family of Joseph and the Gentile converts who were repentant, baptized, or immersed, and male circumcised, and took upon themselves the 613 points of the law, all of those people who now were among Israel, and all of the Israelites, were a kingdom of this world, and for it to survive, since they were also sinful and carnal minded and not perfect, they had to defend themselves. God could have sent the hornets and the wasps and the spiders and the scorpions after the Gentile Canaanites and driven them out, and the Israelites could have walked in without the use of the sword, but the Israelites had disobeyed God, and they weren't doing what was right. And God therefore allowed them to acquire the land in part by their own efforts, but not altogether, because much of it was God's own doing. But not all of it.

David showed how much of it was not God's own doing. He could see that. But the Israelites had to do much themselves. We do not deny that. But we are not a nation in this world. We are made up of citizens of many nations who respect the authority of those nations, but who do not vote to overthrow or to change administrations, but who pay taxes that we may live peaceably, we may have passports, and we may do the work we are called upon to do.

As a New Covenant church therefore, we do not try to explain away the Old Covenant. We state the Old Covenant for what it is, but we see ourselves in terms of II Corinthians chapter 3. Let us note it clearly: II Corinthians chapter 3, we'll break into the thought:

(2) You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts," I'm reading from the common bible, which is the RSV, to which the Catholic scholars were allowed participation, "to be known and read of all men." That is we should represent what Paul himself would have us be.

(3) "And you show that you are a letter" in fact" from Christ delivered by us." In other words, Christ is found to be living in you. What he might have said human beings should be like is what you should find the Corinthians to be like.

This particular reference now passes into the question of the law in an interesting way.

You are like this letter from Christ but "not" the one "written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God," an illusion to the laws that were written in the book, all the rest after the Ten Commandments. And in fact you are "not" written either "on tables of stone," but Christ's letter," let's say to the world to define what Christians should be like, "is actually to be observed by looking at the tables of your heart.

(4) "Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God" that he is able to do this in you.

(5) "Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us"; because Paul couldn't have done it by himself among the Corinthians, "our competence is from God, (6) who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant." That is we propose to you not that you should come in to a relationship with God in terms of the Old Covenant, otherwise you might just as well become Jews, orthodox Jews, and join some synagogue.

We are ministers of a New Covenant, and in so doing, unlike Moses, what this covenant is is not written in the manner in which it once was,

'not in a written code but in the Spirit; for the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life.

(7) Now if the dispensation" or administration "of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such splendor that the Israelites could not look at Moses' face because of its brightness," which pertained to the material at Sinai and not the whole stones at the Jordan. Moses was already dead when the whole stones were written upon. This pertains to the Sinai covenant itself. "If that was glorious which glory is fading, how much more glorious is ours."

So we won't go into that for more, but to take note of the following which I have read. What was given before was a code that didn't provide eternal life, but in fact killed its violators, a code which said that the following is the death penalty if such-and-such an action happens. The whole of the Old Covenant in that sense may be viewed ultimately as an administration of death, because when violated it brought death. Now the New Covenant did bring death to the Messiah, and once we can be forgiven and the death penalty taken by him in our stead, we can now proceed to begin to live according to those rules that, in a sense, define the character of God; because the law is actually a way of describing the character of God. But as it was given in the Old Testament it was very limited.

Let us see how limited even the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" is. I illustrate. When it comes to this we could turn either into Deuteronomy or into the book of Exodus. I will quickly at this moment flip to the book of Exodus, and illustrate a point from chapter 22:2:

(2) "If a thief is found breaking in" this is the KJ of the RSV order, this happens to be verse 1 in the Hebrew, "if a thief is found breaking in and at that time is struck in the dark of night so that he dies there shall be no blood guilt for him."

Now here's a man breaking into your house whom, in protecting your house, you kill. It's so dark you couldn't see and you accidentally struck him either at the back of the neck, or on his temple, or somewhere, and he died. The commandment said "You shall not kill," yet in this case there shall be no blood guilt. You are not guilty of blood for him in this instance. But if the sun has risen and you see he has no weapon, you have no right, for the sake of the little stuff he's stealing from you, to kill him. If you do and he has no weapon, that's

the sense of this, there shall be blood guilt and you are guilty.

The Ten Commandments are very broad, very general, and alone do not explain all the details. In your interesting chapter, number 19 of Deuteronomy, where the cities of refuge are mentioned, if any man kills his neighbor unintentionally, this is into verse 4, without ever having this person as an enemy in times past, no premeditation, why, then you have the right to go to a city of refuge so that no revenger of blood could punish you. So you see it was possible not even to be guilty of breaking the Ten Commandments when you took somebody's life. And the whole thing, as God gave the law, was wrapped up in the question of letting the citizens survive or of punishing him.

If indeed you had him as an enemy, "If any man hates his neighbor and lies in wait for him," verse 11, "and attacks him and wounds him mortally," and this man flees to such a city, then the elders will fetch him out, hand him over to the avenger, and he's to be executed.

Now we could go on. There's some very interesting things in that chapter. Then in chapter 20, about going forth to war with respect to your enemies, offering terms of peace in verse 10—I introduced it in verse 1—and again in verse 10 of chapter 21, when you go to war. There are clear indications you see in the law. A man was to be whipped, in chapter 22 verse 18; a stubborn and rebellious son, 21:18, who would not obey the voice of his parents, simply was incorrigible, was to be put to death. They used physical force and they executed a penalty. That was the Old Covenant.

We do not deny that these were the penalties, but it is our role to state that God has given us something greater, something better. If there were no need to improve upon the Old Covenant, not only through the weakness of the flesh but through the fact that this was given in the letter and offered no promise of any Holy Spirit, no promise of eternal life but merely a good life here and now, why, then we might as well be a part of the Old Covenant and enter into the military of the nation that is our nation. But if we indeed come out of this world, an ecclesia or church is a called out group, though we are in the world Jesus said we are not of the world, and if we come out of the world, and if we therefore do not enter into the politics of the world, and it is our role to do good even to our enemies; to love those who despitefully use us, and not to hate, much less to go outright and kill in war, then it is clear that our relationship is a New Covenant relationship. And I have no fear that any of you, should you ever be asked any question, would recognize how properly to answer.

There are those cases, of course, where God did call out of Israel such men as David, whose nation was nevertheless the nation that God had made him responsible for, and he went far beyond what God would have asked, and God called him a bloody man for going beyond what should have been his role, especially in the case of killing more Philistines than he needed to to get Saul's daughter. Then there was the case of Daniel who entered into

a political role by appointment, because indeed his government at that time was subject to the government of Babylon; and God saw fit in those days to use men of the congregation of Israel in a capacity that he does not ask us now to serve, because our kingdom is not the congregation of Israel with Jerusalem as its headquarters. We have the Jerusalem which is above, not the Jerusalem which is on earth. Over and over again you can understand that what is expected of us was not asked even of those who were prophets, of those who were Levites or priests, or kings or judges, or magi, as Daniel was. He asked them to function in a capacity that was different because the only government over which, in a sense, he made them responsible was a government that was established at Sinai and God had not yet brought a messenger of the New Covenant. He had only sent a prophet, Jeremiah, to say that there will be in the future a New Covenant with these things written in our hearts and minds. That much they could know. But in terms of a governmental relationship where we are called out of the world, that did not happen until the days of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

I haven't begun to explain all the verses that you should look into, but as Mr. McNair said this is the kind of subject that I know he would like to, and others would, address to you from time to time, and as with the Sabbath, or as with any other major area, there are numerous aspects of this that we can dwell upon, I have chosen intentionally not to look at our past literature sent out for young men but to give you a perspective from an individual experience, and based on that, to draw on those verses of the bible that should help us understand how we can answer someone who has never grasped what our role and our place in this world is; because we're in the world, we're not of the world. We have a higher goal, and this is what men have to have explained to them. We have a government to come, a government from above that ultimately and happily is going to intervene to save man from himself and to bring peace, because he who takes the sword perishes by the sword. The nation that does this will never ever permanently last, and that is why the one government that will ultimately rule over all the world is not a single one now extant, but the kingdom of God.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF GOD?

Dr. Hoeh—January 19, 1980

Today I should like to introduce a theme that is somewhat related to what Mr. Armstrong has been going through in the book of Romans, related also to the bible studies on-going on the gospels, that would seem appropriate for this time of the year when we are in a sense thinking of the 1980s and a whole new decade opening up in front of us, the decade of the 80s. Technically we should start with January 1, 1981, on the basis of the way we count, but we still think of this as the 80s.

The subject I would like to pose to you is not merely what is a Christian? which is the normal way one thinks of the question, but what does it mean to become a member of the Church of God? The Worldwide Church of God?

If we are to understand this question in a sense, we also have to think of another question that was commonly asked, and should not be overlooked in this generation, but was commonly asked in the first century: what is a Jew? Because there is a great deal that has to do with the question of what is a Christian and what is a Jew? that is misunderstood today that both of these questions tell us a great deal about ourselves.

Perhaps, we might say, in response to the broad question what is a Christian? what does it mean to become a member of this church, the Church of God? that we would normally think of a statement in Acts 2:38 to repent and to be baptized, or of Matthew's statement recording Jesus' own account in the 28th chapter. These are broad, general comments. We need to ask ourselves why should we ask people to be baptized? why should we ask them to repent? what is it that one is asked to believe? What distinguishes our perception of baptism, repentance, and belief that makes the Church of God so distinctive? that in fact relates it, if you please, to the question of what is a Jew?

If you would turn, for the moment, to the book of Acts, chapter 2. In a sermon on a holy day, the Day of Pentecost, we have the following general statement made:

(37) (RSV) "Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' Brethren, that is fellow Jews, 'What are we to do?'"

Now imagine Jews asking this question. Jews who descended from Abraham, Jews who had been circumcised, what was left to do anyway? You were born of Abraham, you were a part of his family, you'd been appropriately circumcised which gave you access to the temple and its rituals, if you were men, or at least a related court if you were women. Peter said to them:

(38) "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

(39) For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him."

One of the big problems we have had in explaining Paul, in explaining the Bible, if you please, is that we have tended to see ourselves in the setting of the 20th century, a group of people who somehow discovered that Mr. Armstrong had put certain things together that made sense, but one of the problems is he seems to have picked here and chosen there and we are often left wondering well, why did he choose that we should do this? why didn't he say we should also do that? So one of the common questions is what is it in the Bible that we should be doing? That's not, of course, what he has done. It is how people sometimes think it is done. There have been ministers who have come and gone who thought that's what occurred; who assumed he must have had some kind of inspiration, because they couldn't figure out how he was able to pick and choose like that and create the doctrine of the Worldwide Church of God. I'm explaining the way people's minds work.

But let us notice something peculiar here. Peter says in particular, "Repent." John the Baptist you remember, before Jesus began his ministry, John began by saying, "Repent." Let us turn to it in the book of Matthew where we happen to have noted this in the study. Chapter 3:

(1) "In those days came John the Baptist" he was preaching in the wilderness of Judea, not in Jerusalem itself, he said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," RSV. Peter said "Repent."

All right, let us note further—I'm not expounding the kingdom of God here or the kingdom of heaven for the moment—let us note what Jesus did after he returned being tested of the devil, chapter 4, now verse 17 of Matthew.

'From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, 'repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' " The same message that John the Baptist was giving.

Now, the interesting thing to note here, and very important, is that in terms of the New Testament church, the Church of God, what was suddenly expected was not what was traditional. What was expected of the Jewish community, what was expected of the congregation of Israel, what was expected of the congregation of God, is that they should be, if they were men, circumcised, or if they were women, born of a Jewish mother; and that in any case they should keep the law. There was no sense that coming into a fellowship required repentance. Now being in the fellowship did require repentance if the law of Moses, the law of God, were to be followed, because the statement says—I won't have to turn to it, you can find it dozens of times in Leviticus, that if you should err

through ignorance there were certain things you could do to reconcile yourself to the community that was aware of the mistakes you had made. And if you did it deliberately then there was punishment of different forms, ultimate punishment of course would have been death by stoning. But to enter the congregation of Israel you did not have to repent. You were circumcised if you were a little boy when you were eight days old. Repentance is not at that point in life. So repentance was not the way you entered if you were born of the family of Abraham.

Suddenly now we encounter in the days of John the Baptist something new in the congregation of Israel. This something new is that Jews were asked, if they wanted to comprehend and to participate in the kingdom of God, to repent. The Jew automatically had assumed that being born of Abraham was sufficient. So John says—let us note—

(3:7) “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism,” that’s this translation—they were really coming to his baptism—“he said, ‘You brood of vipers! who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?’”

(8) Bear fruit that befits repentance,

(9) and do not presume to say to yourselves ‘We have Abraham to our father.’” They thought in reality, you see, that it was really enough, and the sense of this is that they were coming to his baptism without any sense of repentance. Now the analogy of course is to perhaps snakes who were fleeing from a fire to come, the wrath to come, and snakes flee away; and they were like this generation of snakes fleeing to escape. They were interested in what John had proposed here as the possibility of escaping that, but they had in their own minds no awareness that it was important to be other than to be born of Abraham; that it was enough to do that. They had not been told nor had John called them to repentance, and so he poses the question, who has even warned you? What should give me any idea that you have borne fruit for repentance?

Therefore John was coming preaching a message that I doubt we have fully comprehended. It was the first time that I can recall reading anywhere where a prophet came in the way John came. See other prophets said—Isaiah said that the children of Israel should repent, Jeremiah said the children of Judah should repent; but not one of them had ever introduced baptism. John was the first one who introduced baptism, meaning immersion. And what he was saying is that not only is repentance necessary, but the repentance that I require implies also that you must be immersed.

Whoever heard of a Jew having to be immersed? Except he was ritually unclean. A Jew who had made some mistake or who had sinned along the way, he was expected to repent also; but that was only while you were children of Abraham that you may need to be washed, or you may need to repent and have a sacrifice offered at the altar. But the idea was that that merely reconciles you to the community, that it is being a part of the community or the family of Abraham that gives you a right to inherit the kingdom. You were born into it.

Jesus addressed his parables and he said, “Now the children of the kingdom,” because the Jews understood that by nature the kingdom of God should come to the children of Abraham. There were promises that all sorts of powers and blessing would befall the children of Abraham, and they took for granted if they were circumcised or born of Jewish mothers—that takes care of the whole thing—that you just were an heir by the nature of your lineal descent.

John suddenly comes with a message and he says, “Repent if you’re going to inherit the kingdom of God,” that’s the sense of it, because that kingdom is at hand and if you want to be there you must be in a repentant state. He also says to be baptized. Now being immersed was not unknown, as I said, every woman had to be immersed under certain circumstances, and a man, throughout his relationship in the synagogue if he were unclean. But whoever heard of having to be immersed in order to inherit the kingdom of God?

Now who would have been immersed? Let’s note something important here. If you were born a Gentile, a goy, the Hebrew word—remember Abraham was born a goy. Before he was baptized he was one of the nations. Most Jews have not quite focused in on that. For every one who is born a Gentile, to enter into the commonwealth of Israel or the congregation of Israel, the congregation of God, if you please, the congregation Jesus attended when he was a child, if you were not born in the Jewish community but were outside you had to apply to convert, to be recognized as a member. You had to apply to the rabbi or the priest in that day. One of the requirements would have been after instruction that you would have to be, if you were a male, circumcised. Two: you would have to do two things which pertained to both men and women. You would have to be immersed, so baptism wasn’t unknown—anybody who thinks baptism was invented by John the Baptist is making a mistake. It was already done in the days of Moses. You had to be first, if you were a male circumcised, and second, you had to be immersed, and at the same time to accept the yoke of the law, to use the technical term, which is also used in the book of Acts. That yoke of the law had reference to the 613 points laid out in the laws, the Jewish community counted them, beginning in Genesis and ending in Deuteronomy—I’ll say a little more about that later. But did you note that every man or every woman, if you were a Gentile, had to be immersed in water—and men had to be circumcised as well—to be accepted in the congregation of Israel?

So when John came along and when he said, “You must repent and be baptized for the remission of sins so that you may inherit,” ultimately looking forward to the kingdom of God, he was asking every Jew to consider that his spiritual state was no different than a Gentile because he had to be baptized. He had to be immersed with respect to the kingdom of God not merely immersed because he was unclean, he had touched something that was ritually or physically unclean. For the first time a prophet came among the Jews who was telling them what they had never heard before. They had heard

repentance. Never before had any prophet ever been sent with the message which is simply this: that you must reckon yourself no different than a Gentile. You not only have to repent as they do, you even have to be immersed in water as they do to enter into the kingdom of God. Now that is, in a sense, a shocking development. In this sense then we may say that we are in the tradition of what John was teaching not the scribes and Pharisees. Doctrinally we might identify in many cases with the Pharisees and not the Sadducees, but in this other sense we identify with something new that John was introducing, and many of John's disciples became Jesus' disciples. So John says here very clearly, and you can go through the others as well, you know Mark, Luke, that we must have this repentance, a state of mind, which I won't have to define at length. It means an acknowledgment of guilt; that you want to turn around and go the other way which every Jew expected of himself and of his brethren, but no time had they ever been asked to be baptized or immersed for this specific thing: that they should consider themselves no different than the Gentiles who always had to be immersed, even if the males were circumcised in order to enter into the fellowship of the congregation of Israel. That is fundamental.

But John did not say anything about the Holy Spirit. He was only saying about what their state of mind should be. He was saying what their state of mind should be, a repentant state of mind. That's required, because the kingdom of God is coming. Jesus came along and preached, "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand," but he introduced baptism and a thought in connection with it that John was not asked to do. And so all who were baptized by John's baptism were expected to be baptized again in the name or by the authority of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins and—and—and this is what John was not asked to speak—go back to Acts chapter 2:

(38) "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of" or "by the authority" not of John the Baptist who was beheaded, but "of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins." No basic difference here except that this was done in Christ's name, John was dead, Christ is living. Now,

"...and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit," RSV. "Ghost" is the KJ, very unfortunate rendering because this is a much more appropriate terminology. "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Jesus, therefore, is saying here through Peter it is not enough to be born by descent from Abraham, it is not enough to have repented, it is not enough even to be immersed as a Gentile is. You must also receive the Holy Spirit. That is to say, and I will expound on this momentarily, without the Spirit of God you cannot even be a member of the New Testament Church of God, the Worldwide Church of God; and without the Holy Spirit you will not even inherit the kingdom of God. You will have to wait till you receive it. Jesus therefore was adding what John did not include, a question that Nicodemus must have had in his mind. "I know that I am

born of Abraham, but what will make me immortal?" That was a question that must have entered the minds of Jews. The Israelites, you see, long since wanted to be Gentiles and were forgotten, so if I address the question as Jew I'm not forgetting Israelites. They merely forgot their own identify. We'll let them go as they may.

To the Jew the question would arise: how can you inherit a spiritual kingdom to rule everything—if they had insight enough to know—when we're born of Abraham in the flesh? Wouldn't we have to have something added, that is spirit? That in this case they simply had no answer to the query. They never thought in terms of being born again, being begotten of God, because it was never promised at Sinai. Therefore, when John and Nicodemus taught—Nicodemus was a ruler among the Jews, a part of the Sanhedrin, one of the few who did not give assent to the death of Jesus—Jesus said, "Except you be born again," not only through the waters of baptism which have their symbolic meaning—also if you want to consider water in the word of God, but I think without any doubt it has to include the sense of baptism—but you also have to be begotten and ultimately born of the spirit. You have to go down in water and come out imbued with the Spirit of God, and have that spirit lead and guide you through life, which spirit is enabled, because it is the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, is enabled by its nature to make you immortal at a resurrection.

So Jesus came, through the disciples now because he had ascended to heaven, with an added message. Not enough to be born of Abraham, you must not only think of yourselves as no different from the Gentiles in terms of your spiritual state. Now I'll come to a difference that was very fundamental. But in terms of your spiritual state you think of yourselves no different. You are asked to be baptized as they would be if they were entering the commonwealth of Israel, or the congregation of Israel. For the first time then, here were people who were Jews asked to proceed in the same manner as the Gentiles had always been—but this was the same as John—but this one other step. They were told now that if they wanted to inherit eternal life they could receive the Holy Spirit which would raise them from the dead at the resurrection.

Now at this resurrection there is something very fundamental I would like to turn to here. In John chapter 11, in the family of Lazarus, a family that listened to what Jesus said, when Lazarus died a question arose. Jesus said in verse 23 of chapter 11:

(23) "Your brother will rise again.

(24) And Martha said, I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." That is, we know there's a resurrection in the end of time, at the last day. That last day is in connection of course with the close of human experience, and indeed that was true.

(25) But Jesus said "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,

(26) and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die," forever. That's the sense of it. "Do you believe this?"

Now she did.

(27) "I believe that you are the Christ."

So there was belief, I'm not dwelling on that at the moment because that's not fundamental at this stage to what I am saying. "You, Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world."

That's an interesting rendering because in that sense it conveys the thought that after he ascended Christ is also coming into the world by the Spirit of God into us, and dwells in us now. But the point is, Jesus implies from this that there is a resurrection that might be unique but he doesn't even explain it at this stage. We have to wait until later when the apostles explain it much further and mention that there is a resurrection first when Christ returns the second time, and then there is a resurrection later. But not even Paul when he explains this in I Corinthians 15 says that the difference is a thousand years in duration. He died before that was even revealed to John in Revelation chapter 20. He died before it was revealed.

Now, that may answer a question because there were many who thought of themselves Christians who left in the late 60s A.D. who had never heard of the millennium. To my knowledge Paul never preached about the thousand years. He preached what it would be like but he was never told what the time length would be. And that is why many, who made up the churches of this world that ultimately became the Christianity of the Roman Empire, simply didn't believe the book of Revelation because they became separated, had gone out before that revelation was given to the Church of God.

Then a remarkable thing, we should bear in mind, is the impact that this would have. It was like saying that within the commonwealth of Israel, or Judah in this particular case, we have now two groups, those who by nature are born of Abraham and those from among them who become now treated as a sect, because the early church was regarded as a sect of the Jews. The Romans legally gave the Christians, until the Jewish War was over, the same general permissions that it had given the Jews, the same rights and privileges and limitations. It does appear that Nero began to think otherwise and created a different policy. But for decades there is no doubt that within the congregation of Israel in Palestine it was possible for there to be Jews who descended from Abraham who attended in the temple all the rituals; it was possible for Jews who descended from Abraham who also attended services taught by the apostles every Sabbath rather than the rabbis; these same Jews who were circumcised from birth going to the temple, participating in the holy days, having their children circumcised as they were when they were little at eight days of age, because there was no statement in any of this that they should do other than repent and be better Jews than the Jews had ever been. "Your righteousness," says Jesus, "must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees." He didn't say you have to become uncircumcised. He says, "Your righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, or you will in no wise inherit the kingdom of God."

This sect, if you please, is even more strict when it comes to principle not to petty detail, I will add at this point. Jesus said our conduct in our fellowship in this fellowship which the rest of the Jews around us will consider us a sect, must be superior. We must aim at the character of God, last verse chapter 5 of Matthew. You remember that. Let's just turn to it so you get the picture clearly.

(48) "Be you therefore perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Not that you make no mistakes, but that having been forgiven your attitude must be perfect and your conduct must be aiming at the very character of God because his nature is now in you. This is really an astounding change. But I want you to notice this is not the view of the Protestant world which would say the first thing we have to do to really make Christians is to get rid of circumcision, to get rid of the Sabbath, to get rid of the holy days, and to eat unclean meats. This makes you a really good Jew. That's not what the New Testament is teaching. The very things, in a sense, that categorize us are those things which the Christian world around us hasn't wanted to do.

The New Testament church did not make an issue of unclean meats, and as long as the community was among the Jews there was no question of the Sabbath, no question of circumcision, no question of the holy days. It was unthinkable. This was not an issue. Yet this was the Church of God.

Now as time went on, of course, there were Greeks—not merely Greek speaking Jews but Greeks—who were being converted, and the question arose: what should they do? Should they be circumcised in order to be saved? This was the question. Let us note it in the book of Acts, chapter 15:

(1) "Some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses," if you please, according to the custom of all the converted Jews in the Church of God, "you cannot be saved."

Now this is not a question that normally entered the Jewish mind: to be saved. They just thought why do you need to be saved? You're already born of Abraham. For the first time at least we have people who realized clearly that to be saved from this untoward generation, which was the old expression in the English, or this crooked generation, to be saved from this criminal hell-bent generation, which is just as true of the 20th as it is of the 1st century, you have to be circumcised they said, beside doing everything else that Christians normally do; Jews normally do.

Now the Jew never in principle circumcised anybody to be saved. That was not an issue. We published a book, that is we indirectly, Everest House which is a kind of arm of the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, publishes a book done by a very interesting, observant Jew, it's entitled *Living Jewish*. You can look in the index, you can look in the table of contents, you can read every page. To this observant Jew saying what is it to live Jewish, the question of being saved doesn't

arise once. Because you're already born of Abraham, and it never really registered that to be made immortal—because they had begun to adopt the doctrine of the immortality of the soul in Josephus' day—that to be made immortal you had to be begotten of God to receive the Holy Spirit. So now the question was very simple. Not whether circumcision should be forbidden to Jews, but whether Gentiles would also have to be circumcised as the custom always had been, because every Gentile male had to be circumcised to enter the congregation of Israel, and he had to accept the yoke of the law. Every woman had to be baptized as also the man, and accept the yoke of the law.

And now we go back to the story of Abraham's circumcision. And there you note in Genesis 17, very clear, that Abraham received the promise before he was circumcised. Circumcision was a token of the fact he already had received it. It was not required of Abraham in order to receive it. In this sense circumcision has been viewed by the Jewish community as the individual signature on a contract, a kind of signing with your own blood when you're eight days old in a non-erasable ink, if you please, because it left its mark in the flesh through life; that you had agreed not only to your descent from Abraham but since Sinai agreed to a relationship with a covenant that was then established. But in so agreeing that you descend from Abraham, agreeing to be God's people at Sinai, you did not automatically agree to inheriting eternal life because God did not propose that at Sinai. He proposed that the children of Israel should inherit the land of Canaan, stretching from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt. That's all. And that they should beget children and they should inherit the land after them. There was no promise of eternal life. There was a promise of grain, of olive oil and of wine, of domination over other nations, but no promise of eternal life with the covenant at Sinai.

Therefore in the Jewish community circumcision was never seen before as a way to be saved, but when Christianity brought the knowledge of salvation and receiving the Holy Spirit, then there were those who accepted that understanding but thought also that one needed to be circumcised prior to salvation or salvation was impossible; and they overlooked the fact that Abraham received the promise of God without alteration, as an absolute promise, if he should repent and walk perfectly before him. And God said "My covenant will be with you, I know what your heart is like." And he was not yet circumcised. He was still a goy. He was a Gentile. He was of the nations. He hadn't yet been circumcised as a token.

Now Paul explains this further, very simply but very clearly. We turn to the book of Romans, in chapter 2. Mr. Armstrong has covered this in his study, I will read it not from the point of view of continuity so much and Paul's discussion in connection with other parts, but specifically in answer to our question. We remember, all have sinned. Verse 12, we'll pick it up there: (12) "All who have sinned without the law" that's the goy, the Gentile, "will also" each one "will also perish

without" ever having a knowledge of "the law, and all who have sinned, "having taken upon themselves the yoke of the law," will be judged by that law" which they have taken upon themselves. That is the point that we start with.

(14) (When Gentiles who have not the law) when they do by nature the thing the law requires" that in a sense becomes "a law to themselves." They become what we might call the righteous Gentile, or the righteous of the peoples of the world.

(15) "They show what the law requires and it's now written in their hearts, their conscience smiting them if they violate" what they now come to perceive as proper conduct.

(17) "Now if you call yourself a Jew and you rely on the law," you have taken upon yourself through the teaching of your rabbis, your priests, your parents, this law, this yoke of the law, all 613 commands from Genesis through Deuteronomy, the first command of which is to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, the last of which is to write the song of Moses, the lawgiver, which the Jews understand to mean to write the Torah, or to have the law written, if you now "rely upon that law and you boast of your relation to God," that is you happen to be an heir of Abraham and you have access by nature to this law,

(18) "and you know God's will and you publicly approve what is excellent, because you're instructed in this law,

(19) and if you are sure that you're a guide to the blind" goyan, the Gentiles, that you are "a light to those who are in darkness,"

(20) you were "a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment and knowledge of truth," I ask you then, says Paul,

(21) "you then who teach others, will you not" in fact "teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal?

(22) While you say that one must not commit adultery," do you do that? "You who abhor idols, do you rob" the Gentile's temple for God's own?

(23) "You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking" it?

(24) Because it is written in the scriptures "the name of God is blasphemed among the goyan because of you." Your own conduct. You say one thing then you do another. Now,

(25) "Circumcision, indeed, is of value," you give it meaning "if you obey the law. You give circumcision meaning if you obey the law, but if you break the law your circumcision is no different than that state of the Gentile who is uncircumcised.

That's true because if you break the law you're guilty of sin, and the "wages of sin is death."

(26) "So if a man who is uncircumcised," a goyan uncircumcised, "keeps the precepts of the law," is it not then a reality, says Paul, "that his uncircumcision is to be regarded as circumcision?" That in fact though he is not actually circumcised he's doing what Abraham is doing, he's keeping the law. And isn't that what circumcision

in fact means? That you were willing to keep the law. ✓ So in that sense, even though not circumcised, he falls in the category of the righteous Gentile who wasn't circumcised, who is promised, even by Jewish understanding, the possibility of the kingdom of God.

(27) So those "who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will" in fact sit in judgment of you "who have the written code and circumcision but break the law.

(28) For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly," this is what the congregation was teaching. They had come to believe that they could sin or they may have hidden their sins, but they had the law of Moses so they could go through the ritual, and they were a people whose heart was not changed, who talked about doing what was right, but often did not do what was right.

"So he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly." It's not enough to be born of a Jewish mother, not enough to be circumcised, "nor is true circumcision something external and physical." This is a very good translation right here, all of this. (29) "He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart," as Isaiah himself said. It is spiritual to put away sin not a fragment of skin, and it is not literal. This man's praise is not from his relatives when he's circumcised, but his circumcision brings praise from God.

That's Paul's basic argument. This is a fundamental area then that distinguishes the instruction of the New Testament church to the Gentiles from the instruction that the Jews heretofore had heard in the synagogue. Now there is no statement that someone who is born of Abraham's lineage who has a Jewish mother should be other than circumcised. I would say, I think it would be a mistake just as Paul regarded it very important that Timothy, whose father was a Gentile and whose mother was Jewish, should himself be circumcised. Titus, whose mother was not and whose father was not, was not permitted to be. That should be clear. The book of Acts chapter 15 did not deal with the question of circumcision in Israel, it dealt with the question of circumcision for the Gentiles.

Now when you see this picture, what you are seeing is not the traditional arguments, shall we have Easter? shall we have halloween? shall we have Christmas? shall we have January 1, New Year? shall we have Sunday morning Lord's supper with leavened bread and grape juice?

It reminds me of the old Jewish saying "Though Christianity arose from Judaism, scratch a Christian and you'll find a pagan." Because you don't find these customs I just mentioned, the argument. You will find that what Jesus himself said is very clear. "I have not come to destroy but to fulfill this law." So much so that the righteousness which I am setting as an example, these are my words, which is to be in my disciples, must exceed that, be far beyond that that scribes and Pharisees have ever exhibited.

But the issue is, do we inherit the kingdom of God by being born lineally from a single man Abraham? Do we inherit it because we were circumcised when we were

eight days old? No! We have as much the right to eternal life as Abraham did before he was circumcised, and we must have the Spirit of God which comes following repentance and belief. Now the belief I am minimizing here because that's a whole separate area. It's fundamentally a question, and it can be really reduced to this basically; that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Master and coming King and High Priest. That not the rituals pertaining to bulls, lambs and goats and pigeons and doves and sparrows, but that this man's sacrifice, this who is the Messiah, this one a son of David, a son of Abraham, he is the one who pays for sin. We don't have to try to have it in some way washed away by animal blood that has to be offered year after year and after every single sin, and left the conscience still uncleansed. A Christian, unlike the Jewish church, was one whose conscience is cleansed, who have no longer a sense of guilt, who can address God the Father in heaven.

But apart from that, what was expected of the church was to be more upright and more responsible than the congregation out of which these people were coming in terms of their sectarian fellowship as the other Jews might have looked at it. Now what upset the Jews was not so much the teaching of the apostles at the beginning, although that troubled them enough, but it was Paul's teaching. And the reason they went about to kill him over and over again, and left the other apostles alone for years, was that he was bringing uncircumcised Gentiles into this fellowship; and here were uncircumcised Gentiles now having access to the law, offered the kingdom of God. But it was the decision of all the apostles that these Gentiles are not asked to be circumcised, they were not asked to attend the festivals of God at Jerusalem in the temple, they were not asked to enter into the physical temple. They were asked instead, as Jewish Christians were, to pray to God in heaven because all of these customs were not actually necessary. So we turn to a prophecy that is better translated in the RSV than it is in the KJ version. We've read this for years. It's basic:

Jeremiah 7:21: "Thus says the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, You add your burnt offering to your sacrifices," now you didn't eat the burnt offering and your sacrifices were normally not for you. If they were for the forgiveness of sin they were for the altar. He says, "You add all these offerings that you have been customarily doing according to the law of Moses, you add one to the other, and you roast it and eat it yourself." It isn't going to do you any good. If your heart isn't right, if you're unrepentant, the wrath of God is going to come on you and all these sacrifices will not save you.

(22) "For in the day that I brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to your fathers from the top of Sinai" or when Moses later for forty days was there and gave the judgments, "I did not speak or command them at that time concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.

(23) But this command I gave them 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and

walk in all the way that I command you,' " not just ten points of the law, "that it may be well with you."

(24) "But they didn't obey or incline their ear, but walked in their own counsel, the stubbornness of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward" ever since.

So God gave them the rituals of Moses, he gave them a priesthood, he gave them a tabernacle, later a temple, and he saddled, if you please, all these points of the law on them. And they looked at it that way, as a yoke, like you yoke oxen together.

Paul addresses that question in the book of Acts in chapter 15. The apostles and elders assembled on this question of circumcision and the law of Moses.

(5) The question had arisen, some of the party of the Pharisees who believed said, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." That is to inherit eternal life you were not merely expected to fulfill what God asks you to be in terms of character, you were also to be circumcised and do all the rituals that pertain to the individual's responsibility at the altar and the temple.

(6) "The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter."

(8) And after a debate, Peter says, "God who knows the heart bore witness," he gave Gentiles the Holy Spirit without ever having had them circumcised—you know that story, chapter 11.

(9) "He made no distinction between us and them, but cleansed their hearts by faith," and not by circumcision.

(10) "Now therefore why do you make trial of God by putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers," who were Jews, "nor we" who are Jews, "have actually been able to bear?"

Which one of us has ever kept all 613 points correct, perfectly through life? Nobody. Nobody.

(11) "We believe we shall be saved through the grace" that is the forgiveness "of the Lord Jesus" who is Messiah "just as they will."

There was nothing wrong for a Jew to attend the festivals of God at Jerusalem, nothing wrong for him to be involved in the rituals. Look at it, Acts chapter 21, you look at the story there. This is where Paul was asked to participate, James he said, "Now here are so many brethren, 10,000s who are zealous for the law, perfectly all right, you were born in a Jewish community, it was proper that you should behave as good Jews, better than any other Jews in fact, and honor and respect the temple that God gave to our people, pay respect to him for the fact that through the central building if you please it was possible to preserve the law because the law of Moses was found in the temple by Josiah after it had been lost in the land. It was proper to honor, just as Americans today honor July 4, why we have freedom of religion in a very special way, why you don't pay taxes to the government to support somebody else's church as you do throughout Western Europe.

But the Gentiles were not asked to do this. The Gentiles were asked rather not to participate in that and

to inundate the Jewish community by all of them being circumcised until there would be no longer really Jews of the house of Judah, but would be a vast agglomeration of people. They were not asked to. They were said, Look you were Greeks, you be good Greeks, but you also get rid of those customs among the Greeks that you must repent of when you were in ignorance and in darkness without God, without hope in the world. And now you must begin to do what makes a Jew a good man when he obeys the law. You do the commandments of God and his law.

So, let us see then an expression in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. If we would turn to this section in chapter 2, we'll begin with verse 11:

'Now remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh with hands,

(12) remember that you were at time separated from Christ, you were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, you were strangers to the covenants of promise that God had made to our fathers, you had no hope and you were in fact without God while living in this world.

(13) But now in Jesus Christ you who once were far off have been brought near," that is your forgiveness has been made possible "in the blood of Christ.

(14) He is our peace, he who has made us now both one," that we share in the same fellowship, he "has broken down between Greek and Jew the dividing wall of hostility,

(15) by abolishing in his flesh," having forgiven the sins of everybody, "abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances."

Now I'm reading the RSV. It is not correctly translated. It is not "commandments and ordinances." It is the form of commandments written up as ordinances. That is the sense of it. Now this particular group of commandments, this is not the ten—I'll tell you why it's not later—but for the moment, we're talking, here of what kept the Jew and the Gentile apart, the Jew and the Greek. A series of commandments which said that you cannot do this, you cannot do that, you cannot do something else unless you're circumcised. They could not participate, they could not do all sorts of things. Not only the human things, but there were for practical purposes a whole series of laws that God gave through the priesthood that would separate the one from the other. The Gentile touched a rat, the Gentile touched a mouse, and they were unclean. He had never cleansed himself, yet he trod out the grapes and wanted you to drink his wine. There was a whole series of laws, if you please, that separated the two people.

All of that is no longer necessary for the simple reason that you can all be forgiven, and you Gentiles do not have to follow those customs for the simple reason they were given to separate the Jew from you initially, and that put animosity between the two of us.

Now Christ has broken it down so we can all have the same spirit, access to the same God, access to the same covenants of promise, not by being circumcised in the

flesh, but by being circumcised in the heart and having the Spirit of God and beginning to keep those laws that God had revealed to Jews that made it possible for them to be able to teach mankind; that kept them from being sinners of the Gentile.

Now every Jew had understood, of course, that there were seven basic things that any Gentile had to do if he wanted to have some kind of contact with a Jew, especially if he were living in the area then of Palestine. You see, the Jews had 613 points of the law. The Gentiles were only expected to keep seven. They had to avoid idolatry, they had to avoid incest, they have to avoid homicide, these are all a part of the ten, they had to avoid robbery. Those pertain to the Ten Commandments. They were not to eat the limbs of living animals, one of the delightful methods of butchery of the Gentiles. They were not to castrate either themselves or their animals, and they were not to allow their different breeds of animals to mix promiscuously. You may find that in the Talmud in the section on the Sanhedrin 56B. Those are the seven fundamental things. And you note to what extent they deal with a man's relationship to one's Creator, to his neighbor, and to his property.

This was not what was at enmity. What was at enmity was that which didn't allow the Jew and the Gentile to have fellowship, and I already have explained that a year ago in the *Good News*, and Peter explains that, you know, in the book of Acts how it is unlawful for a Jew and an uncircumcised Gentile to meet together. Peter came up, he explains this in chapter 11, he had previously explained it to Cornelius because, as he said, you know Cornelius, no Jew would ever come into a situation like this, but God has showed me for some reason I'm supposed to be here.

Those laws which distinguished them, which kept the unclean, the idolatrous Gentile completely separated, those laws were now no longer in the physical sense necessary within the church for salvation. It was perfectly all right for the Jew to follow them when he lived among the Jews, and it was a part of the congregation of Israel, no matter whether he was a Jew in a Jewish community in Persia or Iraq or Palestine. But what is important is that a Gentile is expected to do far more than when he was in darkness. Far more than the seven points. He is expected, as Jesus said in Matthew chapter 5, to look at the law and to comprehend it; to look at that law and to see that his righteousness exceeds that of scribes and Pharisees.

Now, as we draw to a close, I would point up that this yoke of the law was regarded as a yoke that linked all the laws together. The Jew didn't distinguish one from the other. In his own mind, as Paul himself said, if you were circumcised then you were a debtor to do every single point of the law. This is your custom, this is the way we were reared. But in Christ much of this law is a literal yoke. It had to do with physical not spiritual things. It had to do with what was in the flesh and what did not, and overlooked in many cases what pertained to the spirit.

Now, Paul, and I would like you to read a couple of chapters in Hebrews, 8, 9, and running into chapter 10. We have a major distinction there that you should note how we can now come to God through Christ, and what we are asked to do is have the law of God not on tables of stone, not written in a book, so he's talking more than Ten Commandments, he's talking also what was written with ink in a book. All the rest of the Old Testament. We're to have this inscribed not in the book, not on the stone tables, but in our hearts and minds.

Jeremiah 31:31 said that there should come a New Covenant in which God would send his Spirit and this law should be in us, not something you read externally and try to do yourselves, but something that you now can do with added power, the presence of God's Spirit, so that when you look at the law you no longer try to find loopholes and excuses. You try rather to understand the intent and purpose; that there is a whole set of laws, Jeremiah 7:21, that we do not have to do at all, that pertain to the flesh, pertain to the altar and the tabernacle. There are also other laws that pertain to administration of the death penalty, but if you're forgiven we don't need those either. Because we are not of the commonwealth of Jerusalem and Palestine, we are part of the commonwealth of Jerusalem which is above. We are not administering the death penalty, we are administering the Spirit of God. And so it is now possible to look at the Bible and to see it not in Protestant eyes, which has been the big problem. We've tried to explain every verse of Paul as if Paul were arguing with the Southern Baptists, whom he'd never heard about. What he is discussing is an entirely different issue pertaining to the congregation of Israel. What he is asking Christians to do is to see that our righteousness should exceed that of the congregation that he had come out of, and that we should now not have a separation between Gentile and Jew; but that we can sit together, eat together, talk together, pray together, work together as one in Christ.

And that we now have not the law as something you study externally, but something that lives within. And the more you examine the law the more you grasp it; the more you want to understand it, not to want to find loopholes. If we have this perspective, what we discover is that to be a Christian, to become a member of the Worldwide Church of God, means to become a Jew inwardly.

FEAST OF TABERNACLES 1993

Keystone, Colorado—Dr. Hoeh

Today we are addressing the questions that should arise regarding the meaning and the significance of the Feast of Tabernacles, that is this festival that is also called the Festival of Ingathering which occurs at the turn of the year. That is, the time of the autumnal equinox, the beginning of the new agricultural year for most crops, but not all, and the beginning of the year in terms of civil responsibility toward the land. The religious year began with the spring in the northern hemisphere.

Mr. Armstrong for many years asked the question that you have heard Mr. Tkach pose as to why we are here. That has a different answer on every occasion. But it is important that I should answer one question immediately because it makes the importance of your being here more significant than merely studying your bible at home. The reason you are here is that you should be able to understand and learn and share in information not accessible in any other way or experienced more effectively than with a collective group. So let's start out by saying there is a reason why God set aside the weekly sabbath in the local community so that everyone would be able to meet once a week, but annual occasions he set aside on a greater scale. That is, numerous congregations would gather together to celebrate certain annual occasions. What is unique about the celebration is that we involve ourselves socially with one another, and interact with the community around, and also have an opportunity to learn particular things about why we are here and what the meaning is of the occasion we celebrate; and we do it as a group because we are in fact picturing events that are going to be great group events not simply local events only.

When God chose a group of people in Old Testament times, we call it that in our Christian terminology, or let us say when he chose a group of people in the middle of the second millennium before the present era, in the days of the height of the Egyptian empire, in the days of the first great dynasty of China, in the days when Mesopotamia was the cultural center outside of Africa of all the Near East, there was a group of people descended from a family that originally had been from southern Mesopotamia, which family had been reduced to servitude because they had risen to prominence at a time when a foreign dynasty had ruled in Egypt. And once Egyptian independence had been regained, those who had been appointed responsibly in the administration of a foreign power, discovered that they were reduced to servitude. These were the children of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve sons of Jacob.

They were called out of Egypt, and the first thing they were given is significant. They were given understanding of a solar/lunar calendar. Moses addressed the nation of Israel by first telling them about a calendar in

which the month that they had then entered was to be called thereafter the first month of the religious year. Sometimes we forget how God starts things. He did not start by giving them an inheritance in the land. They were still slaves. He started them out by giving them a sense of time and what a year meant. He gave them also an understanding that in that first month there were to be two festivals, one called the Passover, and the other called the Days of Unleavened Bread, in biblical terminology—later on the Jews used the term Passover for the whole period, which is not an uncommon custom.

So the calendar was a basis, if you note, for the determination when certain festivals should occur. Life in a society is never complete without public occasions. No society exists which does not have them. We have weekly occasions, a sense of a change of pace every seven days, and then there are annual occasions. Annual occasions are important because it brings families together, it also brings people together who would not otherwise be able to meet one another. But when God gave certain annual occasions, and all this was at the beginning when the congregation of Israel was founded as a particular group selected out of all nations, the first thing that was symbolized was the death of an animal, a goat or a sheep. That is usually the kid or the lamb, the actual age of the little creature. It is unusual then to contemplate that the first thing the children of Israel were asked to do is to slay an animal, and to take note that the shedding of blood is fundamental to anything that follows throughout the year. The shedding of the blood of an animal became a symbol that there would be someone who would have to die.

Now, die in what sense? Well, to deliver others. The little goat or the little lamb was slain and the blood of that animal was put over the doorway, or on the sides of the doorway, and any who were in that house at the time when the death angel passed over that house, were spared. Those who were firstborn outside that house were not spared. In other words, the lamb's blood, the goat's blood, symbolized the fact that the shedding of blood protected the firstborn from death.

Now it had also greater symbolism. But we will focus at least on that part at the beginning of the events which led to the exodus. Then, as a result of the firstborn of the children of Israel having escaped, and the firstborn of Egypt having perished, the children of Israel were delivered out of the country; and for seven days they walked out with one time of rest at a place called Succoth, that is where temporary dwellings normally existed that you could retire in, in the longer route from the middle of the Nile valley where the different rivulets went out toward the Mediterranean, all the way down to the northern shores of the Red Sea. This was about a six

days' journey. And so midway they stopped there and then went all the way to the shores of the Red Sea.

And during this time they were pushed out so rapidly that they did not have time to prepare adequate food, as normally they would have, and so they had the dough unleavened, and they baked unleavened bread. And that was an intentional symbol. Leaven is something which spreads. A little leaven leavens a whole lump of dough, and so Egypt as a type of sin—the Bible describes Egypt as the land of sin. There was no known sinful act that the Egyptians had not practiced. Every sin you read about in every other country can be seen in the land of the Egypt, and things unique to Egypt were there. To come out of Egypt was to come out of a world that was filled with the violation of God's law, which is sin. And so the unleavened bread became a symbol not of sin but of the removal of sin. The leaven was the symbol of sin in that particular festive occasion in the spring of the year.

So we have a situation where the Israelites were given some understanding symbolically, in the beginning series of annual occasions, that someone ultimately would come and, on that very day of the year, much, much later, offer his life for the sins of the world. And that was to be followed, of course, by people who having understood the sacrifice of that Lamb, that God would send, the person whom we now know as Jesus the Messiah, or the Christ, we learn then to put sin out of our lives. That is, if Christ is forgiving us and not holding our past against us, then in the same way we have an obligation to turn our back on sin, on the violation of God's law, and seek to be obedient to him.

But this of course is only an attitude of repentance. It does not tell you of the power source that enables us to accomplish that, and that of course is commemorated by the festival that we call Pentecost today, from the Greeks. It is a word that refers to the number of weeks or days, 50 days, and seven weeks and a day, that were counted during the spring harvest.

Now it is interesting that I should mention the harvest because in fact human beings are pictured as a part of this harvest. The harvest was used in the Northern Hemisphere of grain, of the products of the trees, vegetables, vines, root crops, and necessarily of livestock, the harvest was a type of the harvest of human beings from this world, harvested for the kingdom of God. That symbolism is all the way through Old and New Testament. Now the point is, that there is a festival which follows the Days of Unleavened Bread, and that festival is a culmination of the harvest, but how that harvest is reaped and why that harvest is satisfactory, we only begin to learn when we follow the story through.

For example: the lambs were slain every year but they began to be slain on the Passover in Egypt in the first year that marked the exodus out of Egypt. Unleavened bread was used by the nation both that year circumstantially and every year thereafter in order to teach the nation the importance of removing sin out of one's own life, and collectively out of the life of the nation and the church. Now leaven is generally used with grain products, thus we have countries in the world

that simply have had no experience with leaven or unleavened products other than contact with the West. If you were to go to Thailand, for example, you would find that people eat rice, they do not eat bread. They do not use leaven. When you are asked to eat, the Thais would simply say let us eat rice. But rice doesn't have to have leaven. So they would never have had this experience. The brethren who are in Tonga, they lived in a world in which there were only root crops. The South Pacific potato, the yam, the sweet potato, the taro root, all of these are simply eaten as root crops as we do potatoes or parsnips or carrots. Now we don't use leaven when we prepare those. So the Tongans have to read the Bible to understand the symbol. They never would have had such a ceremony in their midst.

But God chose the Middle East, he chose an area where leaven would be used in order to highlight the importance of the intent to be obedient to God and to remove sin and to come out of a sinful world once we recognized that someone died to pay the penalty for our past sin.

It was some weeks later, in fact it was on the sixth day of the third month of the year, that the children of Israel were given the presentation of Ten Commandments that summarized and defined in broad terms the meaning of the words "to love God and to love one's neighbor." I'm shorting that. So the children of Israel, in a sense, were given a great code of law based on an unusual word. It is interesting, of course, if you hear national anthems, that national anthems never emphasize the word "love" as the Bible does. For instance, you hear among the French the sense of liberty, equality, fraternity. Or you would hear among the Germans unity, justice, and freedom. But God's law was not based either on the sense of freedom or on the sense of justice alone, or on unity alone. There's nothing wrong with unity, and justice, and freedom, and brotherhood, and fraternity in its broadest sense, but God's law began with the term love. To love God, to love one's fellow men, and then to note that that love is expressed by fundamental commandments, ten in number.

Now once you have love, you have the basis for unity, you have the basis for justice, you have the basis for brotherhood, and the basis for good judgment and indeed, mercy.

On the next day the children of Israel asked God to stop with that, that that was enough, they'd heard enough for that day. So the next day Moses delivered to them the words of the book of the covenant which is incorporated in Exodus 21 through 23, and that was given on the seventh day of that third month, which turns out to be the day that we call Pentecost. And so what you had was the completion of a covenant between the Creator God and the children of Israel by a marriage covenant, in which the Eternal God functions as husband, and the church or the congregation of Israel as a wife. That is, God would provide for them. In turn they would assist God in doing what he wanted done in the world. What he wanted done in the world is to have a nation that would live his laws and be such an example that

other people would be interested in inquiring about those laws, and that way of life.

So the children of Israel, having heard the Ten Commandments and the words of the covenant, agreed. And in this sense, as we say "I do" in a wedding, the children of Israel said "All that the Lord has said in this agreement we will do." And so blood was sprinkled on the book of that covenant, and that ratified it, and so the children of Israel became God's select nation or select people. This festival, which represents the culmination of the spring harvest, has a number of significant details in it.

(1) It represented a time in which only a select few would be chosen. The children of Israel was one nation, one congregation out of all people. No others were being selected for this duty. Now in the same way, the congregation of Israel later became to be known through conversion as the church of God in New Testament times, in which many Israelites by flesh birth were broken off and many were grafted in again, and Gentiles in the place of some who were broken off and not called during this life. When I speak of being broken off I am using an analogy of grafting in an olive tree that Paul refers to in the book of Romans. He compares the nation with an olive tree, and you break off the original branches and then you graft in. Sometimes the original were regrafted if they were called—they were all broken off because of sin, and sometimes the wild olive was grafted in contrary to the normal experience of agriculture. You see, in agriculture you take a wild olive root stock and you graft in a domestic variety that yields good fruit. God uses another illustration altogether here by taking the domestic variety which yields good fruit and he grafts in also those Israelites broken off—but not all of them at first—and then he grafts Gentiles that came from wild olive stock which had no access, let's say, to the biblical revelation.

Only this nation, Israel, the twelve tribes, had access to the revelation of God. God was in their midst. He was not in the midst of China, he was not in the midst of Egypt, he certainly wasn't in the midst of the Indians of the New World, or of the peoples of Eurasia otherwise. But in that country he was in their midst, and that people was beginning to celebrate in that first year the commemoration of some great personality who would live and die and pay for the sins of the world, who would lead the people out of sin individually and as a group, and who would, in fact, provide for the basis of fulfilling God's law, which is the basis of all good character.

Now I will stop for the moment and not go on with the sequence but tell you what happened later on these festive occasions. There was an interesting event that happened, as we all know, in the days of Tiberius Caesar when Pontius Pilate was, what we call in old English the governor, and Jesus of Nazareth was slain by crucifixion, and having his side speared, which you will read in the Moffatt translation, in Matthew 27:49, part B, that is missing in the Authorized and most versions. Jesus Christ died when the Passover lambs were slain, on the

afternoon of the 14th day of the 1st lunar month of the sacred year, or the religious year.

It was later that same year on the day of Pentecost that a remarkable event happened. The disciples were asked to gather together, and they were indeed gathered on the day of Pentecost, and the Spirit of God manifested the power of God in their lives, and the people suddenly heard the message that was spoken in the various languages of each of the groups of Jews, and undoubtedly some Gentiles who came out of interest to the city of Jerusalem. They were people from the east of Persia, from the west in Cyrenaica in North Africa, that we would call Libya, people from Rome speaking Latin, from the Greek world, from Scythia, that is southern Russia, from Egypt, from Arabia. And there was a miracle that occurred, and the Spirit of God came upon the New Testament church. Now, at the foot of Sinai the children of Israel received only the law, and they had a covenant relationship. They did not receive the Spirit of God. That was reserved for another time much later for the whole collective group. There were individuals such as David, who did, and Saul, who did—but didn't remain faithful—but there was no promise in the covenant that God made at Sinai for the nation of Israel to receive the Spirit of God that would transform that nation spiritually. In fact, God only asked them "Are you going to be willing to obey?" And they said, on the basis of their experience, that whatever God says "that we will do." They never said we will do it through your power; we will do it only because you give us the help to do it. They were going to do it on their own right.

So that festive occasion, to the children of Israel, was only partly understood. They didn't understand fully the meaning of Passover, or the Days of Unleavened Bread, or the festival of Pentecost. That came to be revealed step-by-step. In fact, even Jesus' disciples, on the eve of the 14th in the day that Jesus died, still did not anticipate that Jesus Christ was going to die that day. A little before Peter had said "Jesus, don't even let a thought like that enter your mind. We know you are come to be the king over Israel."

So it is interesting that that nation, not having received the Spirit of God, did not understand the significance of the festivals they were keeping. They got their mind focused on deliverance from Rome and giving power to the Jews, because the rest of the house of Israel had long since disappeared, so that they would no longer be subject to Rome. That was the state of affairs in the days of the apostles.

This is indeed a remarkable thing to contemplate; that the nation that God had called was not promised spiritual insight for everybody. Now there were some who had that insight. Moses did, Joshua did, and other elders did. Joshua told them, Moses had told them, that you won't even have the power to obey God, and oh they assured Moses, and later Joshua, that they certainly would. Well, the record of the wilderness wanderings for the near forty years shows how little they understood of their own nature.

But God, nevertheless, asked them as a nation, to set an example before the others, to obey his laws governing every imaginable aspect of society: agriculture, marriage, property of all sorts, the proper rearing of children. All of that is laid out in one way or another in the book of the covenant and later on repeated to the next generation east of the Jordan River in the month that Moses died. He repeated that in the book of Deuteronomy, and in between, in Leviticus, the remainder of Exodus, and Numbers, and also in the beginning of Deuteronomy are records of other information that was revealed to the children of Israel in the interim.

In any case, what you have is a nation that having entered the promised land under Joshua, were willing to be obedient in that generation because they had learned some hard lessons. Their parents had died not having learned those hard lessons, and the children that hadn't learned those lessons didn't remain obedient. So, whereas God was asking the nation to set an example so that other nations would see what the children of Israel had as a law, and as an administration, they would see a nation that had one day of rest a week, something that no other nation in those days had at all; laws in which there was justice and mercy mixed together; in which the two basic laws were defined as "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and might, and You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Now these were the two basic laws. And then the ten. And whenever there were infractions there was forgiveness, when you did not understand, and there was punishment when you did. It was the one nation that did not have a prison system, a most remarkable thing today when all nations have a prison system like ancient Egypt did. If you look at the laws of Moses you will discover there were fines, there was servitude, and there was a death penalty, but there was no imprisonment where you learn to be a criminal. That is most remarkable. And that tells us a lot about what is wrong with the method of justice in the world today.

Nevertheless we should take a new look at what Paul says, looking back over some fourteen and a half to fifteen centuries. He said that the letter of the law which had been given to ancient Israel did not transform the nation. In fact ten of the twelve tribes were exiled because of their stubborn attitudes. The children of Judah went into captivity and returned, and those who returned became conscious of their righteousness to the point that they couldn't see anything wrong about themselves. Then Jesus came among them and offered the terms and conditions of a New Covenant, a covenant in which it would be possible to obey God through the power of the Spirit of God and according to the intent and purpose of the law and not merely the letter.

In the 1930s, Herbert W. Armstrong, a Quaker, having come to be a member of the Church of God, and after he was asked to speak and be a minister, the one thing that crossed his mind was since so much of the Bible is law, he said, Well, I should think that then the lawyers would have the easiest way of understanding the Bible, somebody who's trained in the law. And he knew

one or more lawyers, because you know there's always incorporation and property, and he found that uniquely the lawyers had the least understanding, if he explained anything out of the Bible, because the lawyers were generally looking for the loophole. They were not trying to find the truth. They were trying to find whether your case is covered by law or not, and if it isn't exactly covered then you surely couldn't be guilty, and that's how they looked at the law. You just listen to the things that are said today in the various judicial procedures that are drawing national attention.

So that the children of Israel had no real understanding, even though they had the law, because there had been no promise of the Holy Spirit. So Jesus promised that his disciples would be filled with the Spirit of God, that they would have a new way of looking at the law. And he defines this in Matthew—that is Matthew defines it in those chapters, but quoting Jesus—chapters 5, 6, and 7, of which chapter 5 is the classic illustration.

'You have heard it said 'you shall not kill..' I tell you you shall not even hate.'" And Jesus goes on and looks at each one of the commandments. Jesus, as I have said before, earlier at the beginning of the festival, was the embodiment of the law being lived. Jesus did not come with a Talmud and a commentary on the Old Testament. He came to live the life of what the intent of the Old Testament was all about. And he asked that Christians thereafter should do the same. And just as the children of Israel would have drawn attention to their Arab and Egyptian and Syrian neighbors, and the Canaanites who were bordering them, until those nations would have taken note of the difference in justice and difference in the way things went for them, so the New Testament church should be made up of a people whose lives are such that others take note of them and wonder what does make the difference.

As one lady said some years ago, writing to the world headquarters in Pasadena, we very much find the life of the men, women, and children remarkable in your festive occasion, but in a private comment the statement was made but we don't understand why it has to be associated with such an unusual religion. She could not understand, this lady, that it was what was basic to religion that made that difference. And one of the examples of the church today is what you do on the job, what your children are like in character in school, what you as parents are toward your schools, teachers and administrators, and what you are like collectively on the Sabbath day every week, and what you are like collectively at a festival such as this. There is no doubt that some of the young men and women who were here, and many of them not more than two to three months have been working in this area, they're new employees, that they will certainly conclude that you as a group are different from any other group that they have had in any of their previous experience.

I will take a bit of time to tell you the importance of this in the case of three or four of our students that we have regularly sent to Northern Syria under the your

students are simply different. This is what the Canaanites or the Egyptians should have said when they had seen the Israelites. "Your students are different but I don't know how to explain it." It is a fact that you can be competent and not converted. And you can be competent and converted. And the unconverted people should be able to see the difference. You should all be able, if you have surrendered your mind, your life to Jesus Christ, to look back on your life and to say "How do I differ now from what I was one year ago, five years ago, ten years ago?" Or the lady whom I met last year who was baptized then 64 years ago. She was baptized the year I was born, a remarkable woman in the Eugene congregation. You should be able to look back

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The festival of Pentecost culminates the first harvest. This was to tell us that when God chose Israel he only began the harvest. When he chose to work with the Church of God after Jesus Christ came, he did not choose to work with all religions. He chose to reveal the truth of God that came to be known and then corrupted under the name of Christianity, so much so that today there are many areas of the world that are appalled that the one religion that teaches love is also the homeland of World War I and World War II. The one continent made up fundamentally of the religion of Christianity that teaches love, gave us the French Revolution and the guillotine. Not that everybody who did these things ever was called a Christian, but let me tell you it was a part of the Christian society, and this has always struck the people in the Islamic world as peculiar, and the world of East Asia as incomprehensible. Incomprehensible that it is the Western World, the world of Christianity, out of which arose such a mind as Adolph Hitler, who was never excommunicated from the church to which he belonged.

That ends the sequence of the spring festivals. We come next to the festival that opens the first day of the seventh month, the festival of Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah, the head of the civil year. That pictures a time of the blowing of trumpets. You remember, of course, there was a custom of blowing the trumpets recorded in Jewish tradition with the first of the month of each of the first seven months of the year, and on the seventh month they were blown seven times, as also the shofar was blown. That was the ram's horn. The blowing of trumpets on that day was unique in the sense that it drew attention to the fact that there would be great news created concerning tremendous events that would be symbolized in the sequence that now occurs in the autumn. This is the coming, if you please, of Messiah to announce the kingdom of God. He was a forerunner, Jesus the Christ, in time, and he returned to heaven, and through the church has announced to the world the good news of the kingdom of God; so that in the 52 years from 1934 to 1986 that message went around the world in one way or another, either by radio, personally, by television, or publication to every single nation on earth, though not always was every nation on the mailing list at one time. For instance there was North Viet Nam and North Korea,

Mongolia, and some areas of the world like that that only heard through publications that were not on the Plain Truth mailing list. But we have reached, in fact, every single nation with some warning, some message of the good news that is to follow. That day, the festival of Trumpets, in a sense is very important because it pictures the time when the announcement of Jesus Christ's return will be declared by an angelic host, and a great trumpet will be blown; and following events, that I will not discuss today, Jesus Christ will be sent back with power and authority with which he did not come 19 plus centuries ago when he came as a child, who had to be carted away to Egypt to protect him from Herod, and who was crucified by the Roman authorities with the approval of the Jewish high priests. This time he is coming, not as a Lamb to shed his blood, but he is coming as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, to use a symbol. He is coming to take upon himself the rule of nations.

And the next step that has to be done is to remove the devil from authority, influencing the nations. Anyone who remembers William Shirer's account of Adolph Hitler cannot forget what Shirer said of that man. He was an illustration of numerous leaders throughout the history of the world. The ancient kings of Assyria spoke—it was Shalmaneser III who spoke of himself as "Thus saith"—this is translated into English from the Assyrian records—"Thus saith the great snake." That was the one speaking through him: Of Adolph Hitler, Josef Goebbels said that the Fuehrer—I won't use the word Fuehrer there, I shouldn't, I say "That Adolph Hitler was his Fuehrer and his god." To the Germans he had become the leader and god, for those who were members of the Nazi party. William Shirer saw the Hitler who could be cordial at a tea, the Hitler whose eyes glazed over as he rode next to William Shirer to attend one of the great rallies, and Shirer said, "What do the Germans see in this man?" That was the second Hitler he noted, and the third Hitler was the one who went to the podium and spoke as no other German has ever spoken to the nation. And Shirer said, "Now I see. There is something beyond the human that explains the triumphant of this man's mind over a nation"; that set up the Third Reich, that nearly it destroyed light and civilization and freedom for the West.

The devil has been in the minds of numerous people in power, and people of lesser individual power most certainly. The devil is the prince of the power of the air and the ruler unseen over nations. There is a world of spirit which captivates nations, that can give China ten years of madness, from 1966 to 76, that can give Russia the madness and the whole of the U.S.S.R., as only Stalin was able to, and you can name numerous others.

Jesus Christ has to remove the Satanic realm that has kept the world in spiritual darkness, that even to this day makes people who think that the way to peace is by way of war. Look at the thinking of the leaders in former Yugoslavia, and you can also look in other areas of the world with similar information. And hence the day of Atonement is to contrast what Christ did and what

the devil has done, and how the devil must be put away, carried off symbolically in that goat into the wilderness, away from the people, never to influence and be a part of the nation again.

And then we come to the festival of Tabernacles, which we commemorate today. That is the celebration of the concluding harvest that began the many months before. That is a celebration of what we call, on the basis of Revelation 20, the millennium, a thousand years of peace, defined in Isaiah, especially chapter 2, 11, and probably—let's say chapters 27, 28, 29, 30, numerous places there, and then you pick it up in chapter 40. A time when the world will no longer be manufacturing the great weapons of war; will instead learn the ways of peace.

The sermons and the sermonettes and the conversation you will hear for the rest of this festive occasion will be devoted to analyzing what the millennium is going to be like, what the government of God will be like tomorrow, what your role in it will be, how you should live now in order to understand your responsibility in the world tomorrow.

My wife and I will be here for the entire festival except for one day, and I will be speaking in Vail, Colorado, and Mr. Weber, who is the guest pastor from Pasadena, at Vail, will be transferring here. We will probably cross each others' paths, hopefully not head on, but along the way, because he will be here Monday, and we will be in Vail on Monday. Otherwise we will be here. And I hope you will pay close attention to the various sermons and sermonettes, and the consequent beautiful thoughts expressed in our music that also tell us about what the world tomorrow is going to be like, because these festivals tell us of the plan of God that leads not to just the world tomorrow, but to the kingdom of God for all people throughout all time, which will of course be fully explained on that Last or the 8th Day, which follows the festival of Tabernacles. Have a wonderful afternoon, and see you, of course, tomorrow.

ARIANISM and TRINITARIANISM

Dr. Hoeh—November 24, 1989

I would like to address a question—I was not sure, in fact, what the topic would be because I was asked to define it prior to the session, but I've tried to choose one that would be both appropriate to the study here and related to the impact of a part of the world which has perhaps influenced other areas far more than one would realize.

We often think of the role of Rome historically and politically, but in terms of culture and education Rome's roots go back to Greece, for most of the learned Romans in New Testament and later times, as well as earlier, were trained and educated by Greek teachers. But the Greeks, in fact, learned much of their philosophical thought not only from peoples in the Middle East in general, but from Egypt more specifically. And we would be quite surprised to realize, of course, that in theology Rome assumed the role over a long period of time of making decisions and defining things after the city of Rome, within the Christian world, had come to be recognized as the first among equals.

But earlier than this the general theology was in the hands of other people, and one does not find that the Roman bishops took a fundamental lead. In fact, when we come to the Council of Nicea, apart from the matter of Jewish things, which I will not discuss this evening—that's the story of the Passover—and it's related to this question too of the role of Egypt—the primary area of discussion was the nature of God, the nature of Christ; how to define the purpose of life in terms of salvation, and hence there arose out of the counsel of Nicea the definition in ultimate form of the trinity, though that was later refined. And what is remarkable, of course, is that the concept of the trinity versus Arianism at the time, these two fundamental concepts that existed in the Christian world, of which the one that became Orthodox was Trinitarianism, both arose out of Egypt. They both arose out of Egypt.

Greeks, who had come to live in Egypt in the city of Alexandria, absorbed a great deal from their around. In fact, Egypt was one of the most fertile areas of the world for the Greek mind. The Greeks were in Bactria, the Greeks were throughout the realm of Persia, Babylon, Syria, Asia Minor, the Greeks were east and west and north and south, the Greek colonies that settled on the Black Sea in southern Cythia, now the Ukraine, they're still there. But the Greeks who did the fundamental thinking philosophically and religiously that influenced the Christian world to this day, were those who studied and spoke and exercised their ecclesiastical functions in Egypt, and most importantly in the city founded by that great Greek who gave his name, in fact, to the city, Alexander, in the city of Alexandria where one of the—probably the greatest library of its day was established, but it wasn't the only library of the time.

When in Anaheim at the meeting, I went through the different book stalls, we'll call them, where publishers convey information. There were a very few, but some representing the small groups like Adventism, to use an illustration. There were some who represented the Methodists, the Episcopalian, and sometimes the publishing house, of course, is what you associate with the church. Abbyington Press one associates with the Methodist Church, when you read of Fortress Publishers or Fortress Press one thinks of the Lutheran, when you read of the Paulist (?) Press one thinks of the Roman Catholic Church—maybe I should say church versus sects, depending on one's religious perspective. But in any case, one noted that certain groups tended to say things of far more significance than other groups. This is not to cite which ones conveyed the most significance. But one immediately spots that both certain publishers unconnected with religious groups, and some publishing houses connected with religious groups, had much more to say to the reader than some religious groups or publishing houses.

And I thought this evening, out of the number of paperback and some hardcover that were available, one of which was a remarkable Catholic study, let us say, on the question of population and birth control, another was a remarkable study by the Catholics on counselling of homosexuality, and I would say that in terms of that subject there's no question that the Catholic Church in one way or another, or Catholic leaders, whether from the United States or Cuba, are in the forefront of understanding that problem. There were various volumes on any number of interesting subjects pertaining to different parts of the world, Asia or Africa.

But I wanted to discuss this evening a matter that seemed appropriate for a study as distinct from a sermon. And so I chose a book published by Fortress Press, published by that press and written by Robert C. Gregg and Dennis E. Groh, called *Early Arianism, A View of Salvation*.

Now what I want to do is give us an understanding of an area in which this church, the Church of God, stands uniquely in what is called the Judeo-Christian world, and how we differ from Arianism and how we differ from Trinitarianism, and how each of these ideas, one of which is fundamentally extant today, the other of which shows its head from time to time in the history of the Churches of God or other groups, like the Jehovah's Witnesses. How it is that ideas of both Dr. Arius, who was born approximately 250 A.D., and died about 336. That is, he died about the time that Emperor Constantine. So one would say that he was approximately two generations older, but overlapped in his life time with Athanasius (sp), who was the fundamental spokesman of Arianism, who was a young man at the Council of Nicea,

and became the bishop of Alexandria around 338. Anyway, we have a situation in which the younger man, Athenasius of Alexandria, who died about 373, I think that's the figure, we would say that he was two generations removed, which means it was like many of us when the college was founded and Mr. Armstrong, being an older person, a generation and a half or two generations removed, but with a significant overlap in time. You're dealing with the 3rd and 4th centuries, something like two centuries and a half after the time of Jesus Christ on earth and the work of the church at its very beginning, to give you some time perspective.

Why I wish to bring it up is that Mr. Mike Snyder, who many of you know, who assists in a particular area of the work pertaining to communications with other groups, television, radio, religious writers, non-religious writers about us, a theologian told him, or someone at least interested in theology—he might not rank high among theologians—but someone who evaluates what theologians are saying, he said privately to Mr. Snyder, "It may sound strange, but I think that the Worldwide Church of God has the correct biblical explanation that neither Arianism nor Trinitarianism were able correctly to understand."

I think this is very important because one of the primary areas of criticism of the Worldwide Church of God is our view of what your purpose is, what it means to be a son of God, or a daughter of God, speaking of our status in the flesh, what it means to be an heir of God; what it means to be born again; what it means to be begotten of God, and all of those terms; what it means to see God; what it means to read a scripture that "We shall be like him for we shall see him as he is."

Now in the history of the Church of God within the last 125 years or so, we have a situation in which there were people—I think you should know this—there were people that I met in Eugene, Oregon, who attended the congregation that Mr. Armstrong was responsible for up to the time he came down here in Pasadena in the year 1946-47, it was a period of time in which preparation was made for the founding of the college. There were those whom I met—one man who was convinced that the basic concept of the trinity was correct. He did not dwell upon the question of what it meant to be the son of God, but his view was that the Holy Spirit was a person.

Then I know that historically such men as A. N. Dugger, who functioned as an apostle in the church earlier than Mr. Armstrong, and they overlapped, who died in the 1970s, who was in fact a deacon, but nevertheless he was the spokesman, the most educated person in the church and one who decided that Mr. Armstrong's material could be published in the Bible Advocate, beginning in the end of the 1920s. He had the view that Dr. Arius was brother Arius, and a significant number of people, including a certain person who Mr. Armstrong has named in the autobiography, Mr. Kiesz, generally take the Arian view. And that's even divided into two concepts; one, that Jesus Christ pre-existed before time but was a created

being; or that Jesus Christ came to exist uniquely at the conception of Mary by the Holy Spirit.

So the Churches of God did not have a unique understanding to which everyone agreed. When Mr. Armstrong came down here in 1947, it was possible for us to discuss the matter. And in that first year Mr. Armstrong clearly already saw that the fundamental doctrine of Arianism was incorrect with respect to the nature and background of Jesus Christ. He also saw that the fundamental aspect of the Trinitarian doctrine did not make sense with respect to the Holy Spirit, which, if a person, could not explain how each one of us could receive the Holy Spirit and be begotten of God by the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit were a person. And to conceive of the Son, Jesus Christ, as eternally a son. Dr. Arius said it is inconceivable that one can be a Son and the other a Father, and both co-eternally Father and Son. And so the old arguments, though they were generally settled for the Christian world in the name of orthodoxy in the Apostles Creed in Trinitarianism, nevertheless never resolved the problem which is why Trinitarians have to admit their doctrine is a mystery. A mystery is that there's no logic to it, but on the other hand, if Dr. Arius tried to be logical he also erred because he made a fundamental assumption.

Now, the end result of the Trinitarian concept is that ultimately God became a closed God, closed up in three persons and no more. Dr. Arius' view was that there was one God, and a Son was created before all time so that God became a Father, and that there would be many others who would become the sons of God following the example of Christ when he came in the flesh. These differing ideas are important for us to understand because it means that before the Council of Nicea in the 1st and 2nd and 3rd centuries, there were many ideas that were similar or the same as ours today derived from the Bible, there were ideas that were not derived from the Bible but human reasoning and philosophy, in the history of Christianity, and the Church of God went through a period of roughly 80 years, from the 1860s to the 1940s—in fact it was probably 85 or 90 years before it became fully clear in the Churches of God and most specifically in the Worldwide Church of God—as to the nature of Christ, the nature of Holy Spirit, the nature of God the Father, and what shall be our nature, and what constitutes God.

And this brings up an important summary that I would like to make before we go into any material, and that is simply this. We grow in understanding. We may at some points individually or collectively differ through time and from one another. Thus it is possible that the church may generally believe a certain matter and collectively correct the matter. That it is the Church of God is evidenced in part by the fact that it will correct an error; that it was the Church of God is not evidenced one way or another by whether there was an error. The church may or may not have an error. That is not proof or disproof as to whether it is the Church of God. It is the Church of God if the people are led by Jesus Christ, those in the church through conversion have the Holy

Spirit, and that they are willing to be led and to be corrected, and that we work with people who come in. Some of you are new, one year, six months, three months, three weeks, some of you are here for thirty years. Some of us for forty. Yes, forty years ago. It's hard to imagine.

We have learned over a period of time. Because some of you may not understand a particular doctrine doesn't mean that you are not converted. There was a time, maybe, that none of the church at the time understood. There may even be cases where individuals understand in advance of the church. But they let the church be led by Christ and do not make a schism over the matter. There maybe those who find it difficult to understand that Christ has indeed led the church in a certain area. Some do not make a schism over the matter. Those who have chosen to in the 1970s primarily, and a few in the 80s, who did make a schism no longer are used of Christ, and until they straighten out their attitude and recognize what it means—the Church of God—their idea of the church will get them no where. And in the judgment they will realize the tragic mistake they make, and that judgment will be after the millennium and not at the beginning.

So what I would like to do today is briefly introduce you to a work that will give you some understanding of ideas then in circulation. Now let me put it this way. Strangely, some concepts may have been more correctly defined, even though we would say the doctrine is in error, than another concept which we often comment on because a point may have been right in that doctrine though wrong in others. Thus the doctrine of the trinity was more nearly correct than Dr. Arius when it came to defining the nature of Christ but it was not a perfect explanation. Dr. Arius had an understanding of the *purpose of life and a concept of salvation that was far more correct*, though he woefully erred in the origin concept of Jesus. It might come as a surprise to some of you to realize of course that along with the Trinitarian idea which did not err when it came to saying that the One who became Jesus—didn't err in this area when it said that he is eternal. The Arians did. Yet the Trinitarians ultimately rejected the concept of the crucifixion on Wednesday and the resurrection from the dead on the Sabbath.

It may come as quite a surprise to most people that in fact Herbert Armstrong, or anybody else in the last of this century, did not invent the idea; but throughout the Arian world, that means in all the regions where Arianism spread, the teachings of Dr. Arius, it was understood that the crucifixion occurred on Wednesday and the resurrection on the Sabbath. Now the reason I have not chosen to cite this, it's a historic statement, the reason those who oppose it have not chosen to cite it, should be obvious.

One: I don't choose to cite it publicly because it goes hand-in-hand with Arianism which we reject.

Two: There are those who know it historically and choose not to so they can make it appear that Herbert Armstrong either got it from a crackpot or himself was

one, and invented it; when in fact it clearly preceded the Nicean Council and was known throughout the world outside of the Orthodox Christian world. When you hear of the Arian Christians—for instance, the Franks came to be converted to Orthodox Christianity—that's Catholicism—but the Heruli and the Vandals and the Ostrogoths, Visigoths, were all Arian. And it meant that the bulk of the people who settled in North Africa as Vandals, who settled as Visigoths in Spain, as Ostrogoths in Italy, and earlier the Heruli, and the other peoples who were in Southeastern Europe or the Balkans, but not in Egypt fundamentally, and not in Italy or Rome—more specifically Italy had both of them—those are the vast areas of the world. In other words, there were far more geographic regions that were Arian than were Orthodox, geographically; but it was in the hands of people who were what we call barbarians, who were living ultimately on the outside of the Roman Empire and came within.

So the concept, you see, of this truth, of the crucifixion and resurrection, was a very very wide-spread idea. But I have never felt it appropriate to cite the source, but I will tell you the historian Gregory of Tours is the one who makes it very clear what was believed on that point; but I do not think we should comment on it publicly until we are prepared also at the same time to write an appropriate critique of Arianism so that there can be no juxtaposition of an error as if we got the concept that we could be the sons of God from Dr. Arius. We got it from the Bible, and he happened to have had that right, and the crucifixion and the story of the resurrection correct but the idea of the background of the Messiah he did not have right.

Anyway, in this volume two men have chosen to explain a new way of looking at Arianism to better understand how it was possible that the Christian world in general could have such divergent views. Now, I'm not going to try to fill in everything that these men who study such things do, you can read it if you wish, but I want to focus on some particulars that will enable us better to understand the biblical account and why we believe what we do, and the fact that what we believe was known by this group, or that group, or the other group.

It's like saying we seem to have taken the doctrine of the church, here a little, there a little, there a little, from the different sects and churches. No, we took it here a little, there a little, and there a little, from the Bible. It happened to be that here there was a little left in this church, a little truth left in this church, and a little truth left in that sect, and that's all the truth they had left. Now it was in the Bible if they wanted to find it. So we will not focus on all the things that are not essential to us, but I'll focus on some fundamental things that would enable us better to understand why the church teaches that we shall be members of the God family, and what that really means, and where Dr. Arius and the Trinitarians both erred.

This volume is called *Early Arianism, A View of Salvation*, Gregg and Groh. I will give you some page numbers and I will comment here and there. The

purpose is to give you some understanding of what was going on in people's minds. Sometime it will be self apparent that it was an error, sometimes I may have to explain a little bit more about it. We'll start out, and I'll start out with a very fundamental statement which may come as a surprise.

On page 29: "Athenasius," who was ultimately—we'll call him an Alexandrian Episcopal in terms of his ideas, that is the Episcopacy or the bishopric of that city or others, tended to represent the more Orthodox view and later it was called Orthodoxy when the Nicean Council approved it, but before it was it was simply the general Episcopal view. That doesn't mean the Episcopalian Church, but the view of the primary bishops. Arius was a presbyter. And here is a very important statement:

'It is not a matter of God's free will, for Athenasius denies that God has free will.'

Let me state this again because it shows you that at almost every point neither group had any sound understanding in terms of the big picture. The Trinitarian view originally had and is based on those who taught that God does not have free will; that if he had free will he could by chance sin and then the whole plan of salvation would fall flat, because God would not be in full control of himself. That's the kind of thinking, you see.

All right, the Church of God today does not teach the Trinitarian doctrine as espoused by Athenasius. We do not teach that God does not have free will. We teach that God does have free will and he is perfectly in control of himself, and he cannot sin because he wills not to sin, because his nature is not a nature of sin but a nature of love; and being the personification of love, which is the highest attribute, he cannot sin because he is the ultimate personification. But it rests with the fact that his nature is such that he freely wills to love, not because he has no free will.

Now once these people got the idea that God does not have free will it tended to close off every point of view of understanding that even the heretics might have been clearer on. Dr. Arius is not defined here in this connection, and I'm not going to juxtapose, but I want you to know this remarkable thing. Mr. Armstrong was confronted by someone in the church who said well, when it says God cannot sin that means God does not have free will. Mr. Armstrong had the insight to recognize immediately the nature of why God cannot sin. So here it's important for you to understand some of the background of thinking of theologians, those who ultimately make the doctrine that people have come to believe.

Now we'll go back to page 1. I wanted to start with that because it gives you such a strange view from our perspective. 'The Arian Christ,' says our author, "was a creature or work of God, who had been promoted to the rank of divine Son and Redeemer."

That, of course, was not where Dr. Arius started in his thinking. It is where his thinking led him to. It was a conclusion. He didn't say I will discover what the

nature of the Son is in the Bible and the nature of the Father. He tried to understand what the nature of salvation is and then came to this conclusion as a consequence. This book is unique in the sense that it addresses the question from this perspective. It doesn't say that the controversy arose because people misunderstood the nature of Christ. The book says the controversy arose over the plan of salvation, and logically, logically Dr. Arius said, "If Jesus were the Son, he could not eternally have been the Son and the other the Father," though he presumed the Son pre-existed. He said that's a contradiction in terms, so the nature of Christ was a conclusion not a starting point.

I will discuss the question of how both of them erred in assuming the Father and the Son existed from before time. One group said they both existed as Father and Son eternally. Dr. Arius said that there was first God, then there was God as Father, and the Son created.

So we'll move along to another point on Pg. 6. Just so you know where it is here.

'The Son also, by participation of the Spirit and by improvement of conduct, came to be himself in the Father.'

That was the view of Dr. Arius.

The Trinitarians saw it that the Son was in the Father in terms of the nature of both. So Dr. Arius erred significantly in not understanding the nature of the One whom we know as Messiah.

We'll now move to page 30: "We are meant to ponder the marvelous fact that another beside Jesus could have been created and sent to do the job. Hence they apply the concept." Let me stop with that sentence and not lead to anything else.

There were those who debated the question of whether it was in fact unique that Christ succeeded or whether others could succeed. It was Dr. Arius' view that Christ did succeed by the nature of the fact that he was a created being before time. The Trinitarians took the view that if that were the case, then if one creature before time could have been sent to do the job then we might have reasoned that any other creature, whereas Trinitarians took the view that only the One who was eternally the Son could have done the job in terms of salvation.

So there were various ideas in which different sides would accuse the other side of certain thoughts. Arians were accused often of being Judaisers.

Page 46, a matter I don't want to go into.

But you will note that significantly Sunday displaced the Sabbath first in Alexandria, then in Rome. Alexandria was the area of both Arianism and Trinitarianism; and Arianism espoused a basic concept that the holy day of the crucifixion week was Wednesday, the first holy day, and the resurrection was a Sabbath. So there's every reason to perceive that the concept of Judaising, or obeying the law to a far greater extent than Christians traditionally did, was more nearly associated with Arians, those who followed Dr. Arius' idea.

And that goes hand in hand with the fact that Trinitarians came to look upon God as separable, in every

sense of the word, from sons of God; but the Arians took the view that sons of God could have a unique relationship with God as Father. Page 43: Arius spoke of Christ: "He was a being called into existence by the Divine will, a creature finite in knowledge and morally changeable."

Now the Trinitarians argued that if Christ were created he was morally changeable, and they therefore took the view, since God was not created, he was unchangeable. That is not untrue. God does not change and Christ does not change. Arius was wrong. On the other hand, the Trinitarians erred by assuming that his unchangeability had nothing to do with his will. That is he couldn't will to change even if he wanted to, whereas in fact his unchangeability, his perfect maintenance of love, was centered on the will. God is a being, not a creature, a being of free will, and he wills not to change from the concept of cooperation and love. The devil changed, he is a creature from the concept of cooperation and love to competition and murder and hate.

We'll move along to page 48:

"Arians can be seen arguing that creatures, or better, believers, can enjoy union with the Father in the same fashion which enables Christ to say, 'I and the Father are One', and 'I in the Father and the Father in me.'"

Now in this sense—let me read the next sentence—"In this connection Athenasius sees audacity and recklessness reminiscent of the Satanic presumption recorded in Isaiah 14."

Now, Trinitarians take the view that only Christ can say, "I and the Father are One, I in the Father and the Father in me." The Arians said that ultimately those who are converted and become sons of God, are therefore to be ultimately full members of the family of God can say, "I and the Father are One, I in the Father and the Father in me." Trinitarians said this view is audacious, this view is recklessly reminiscent of the devil's presumption.

The Church of God would hold that the Trinitarians did not understand what Jesus was praying when he defined this in John's account. Trinitarians said the Arians are so arrogant as to suppose that as the Son is in the Father and the Father in the Son, so will they be.

Now I think it very important for you to realize that Arians drew a conclusion that is a way that we also use of defining our relationship, and therefore what Mr. Armstrong came to recognize in 1948 and no earlier, because he taught this as the second semester was beginning after we had significant discussion. We pointed up a number of these verses, some one person who's not among us, and myself, and Mr. Armstrong, thought about them for sometime. He came to this conclusion, a conclusion that is obvious from the scripture. But he didn't rush into it and he examined it and finally realized what it meant. But before that he said that if one were to draw a conclusion that we should be higher than angels, he said people would say this is audacious. I'll quote this: "This is

arrogance, this is reckless reminiscence of Satanic presumption." But he realized the truth is truth nevertheless.

We'll move along. Pg. 50: "It must be seen that the sonship of our savior has no community with the sonship of the rest of men. There are no other natural sons beside himself."

Now here they mix up two things. The Trinitarians said, "Our savior has no community with the sonship of the rest of men." That means Jesus was not the "firstborn of many brethren." The scripture that Dr. Arius cited is correctly stated; that he is the "firstborn of many brethren." But you see, it is also true that the Trinitarians are correct that there was no other natural son beside himself, in the one sense only: That Jesus Christ, unlike other human beings, had no human father but God as his Father through the Holy Spirit; that is whose son is Messiah? Is he the son of David? Or is he the son of God? Or is he both? And in what sense? He was the son of David by way of his mother, and he was the son of God by way of his Father.

The Trinitarians did notice that Jesus is the only begotten, but they did not understand that if Jesus in the flesh was the only begotten, that did not preclude us from being also begotten of God in the resurrection and sharing in the community of sonship with Messiah.

So here on Pg. 50 we see to what extent the human mind was blinded in argument, and if they had looked at the scripture and had an open mind they would have seen that there was a measure of truth here and a measure of error, but they couldn't remove the error from the truth.

Let's move on. Let me just look back at one other page in case there is something—not everything is worth reading to you. Arian insistence that the Son once was not and was thus a creature of God is thoroughly attested in preserved fragments of Arius' teaching, and in the literature written to combat his doctrine. Now let me state the following so you'll understand. Dr. Arius said there was a time when the Son once was not. The Trinitarians would be correct in saying the one whom we know as the Son could never be spoken of as "once was not." The Church of God would say it is true that the One whom we know as the Son once was not the Son, but there never was a time when we could say "once he was not."

There was a time that there was neither Father nor Son. Dr. Arius was correct with that. The Trinitarians were not. Dr. Arius' conclusion from that was an error. He assumed therefore, if there was a time that there was neither one called the Father or one called the Son, that therefore there was only One, because his presumption was that the One who was God became a Father before all time and the One who was created by him as a Son, and therefore a creature, was the One through whom the Father created the universe. They both would have agreed that that One was the one through whom the universe was created. The problem is they both assumed—they both assumed that before

the universe was created, there was both a Father and a Son, that is personalities whose relationship was Father and Son before the universe. That was the fundamental error in their "Christology and Theology." That was the fundamental error.

Having argued from a false premise that there was both Father and Son before the universe was created, the Trinitarians invented a mystery that can never be resolved logically or rationally; that one is eternally the son of the other, which is a contradiction of terms.

Dr. Arius made the mistake of assuming that we should be rational instead of spiritual. And he drew the conclusion that the Messiah, whom we know as the Son, was a Son before creation—all creation—and that therefore he must have come into being as the first created creature.

The answer of course is that neither of them understood what it meant to be God. The God kingdom is distinct in terms from the God family. There was a time there was a God kingdom in which there were two personalities, God and the Word, Logos. You notice carefully John 1:1: John does not say, "In the beginning was the Father." And then he does not say, "and the Word was the Son."

John did not make the mistake of these men, yet within two centuries these men were so confused that they could not distinguish the fact that the scripture says—note it carefully—let me just turn to John 1:1, because the Bible is very careful in this terminology, and I hope that my usage has been equally careful this evening. I try to watch for a slip of the tongue, and therefore have tried to avoid carefully the use of the term "Father or Son" where it is easy to project those terms backward onto personalities before there was such a relationship.

(John 1:1) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

The Church of God teaches that God was composed of One who is known also as God, and One who is known as the Word, who is also God. John does not say, "In the beginning was the Word who was also the Son." He does not say that. He says, "The Word was with God," and he says also, "the Word was God," so that there is a relationship which Trinitarians correctly saw; that there was a fundamental relationship in the nature of the Word and God, but that did not mean that that relationship made either yet a Father and Son.

Now I want to break off a moment here before going further and tell you perhaps one of the most fundamental discoveries in addition to the one that Mr. Armstrong made by early 1948. The discovery I mentioned has been in the Bible. It is that we shall become members of the family of God, and when the scripture says "you shall be born again," and "you shall be begotten," and many other verses about "his seed remains in us," and we shall ultimately not sin, because we will have come to the place that we too will have that perfect love which, when perfected, means there is no more sin.

Now that was one aspect; that is, our relationship to the God family, or the God kingdom. So that was understood very clearly, and now just over 40 years ago in the Church of God, or the Churches of God, because some others also understand that as a result of Mr. Armstrong's teaching who don't have necessary fellowship with us, the Church of God Seventh Day, other groups that have broken off also.

But there was another very important contribution that Mr. Armstrong at some unknown time, but earlier, perceived. You see, when Mr. Armstrong came down here there were some things he had already learned, obviously, but when he came down here there were other things. And I can only tell you that prior to coming to Pasadena in 1947, planning for it in 46, prior to that time Mr. Armstrong understood what, to my knowledge, is almost unknown. I won't say it is absolutely unknown, but almost unknown, and that is the One who is normally defined in Hebrew as YHWH, the One who is normally spoken of in Hebrew as Adoni—because they do not choose when reading the text to use the personal name YHWH—the One who is translated as the Lord, or the Lord God, the One who spoke in all instances to the prophets, is the One whom we know as Messiah. It was not the One whom we now know as God the Father who spoke from atop Sinai. The law was not given by the Father or the Son, because neither term was then appropriate. The law was given by the One who became the Son.

Note my careful use of terminology, which you should be careful to use also, so you understand the doctrine clearly. This is very very important, and Mr. Armstrong saw this, and this of course is where all the people, without exception, all the people who believed we should use Hebrew names only, and not English or German or French or Spanish or Greek, they all conclude, all those people make a fundamental error. Their concept is that YHWH is the one who either was or became the Father, and Jehoshuah, that is Jesus, is the Son. You see, if YHWH is in fact the One who became the Son, then it is untrue that YHWH is the name of the Father and Jehoshuah the name of the Son.

It is true that YHWH could be a name for both. That is true because the word has the sense of eternal by nature, even though Messiah died. Messiah died only because he emptied himself, so the eternal nature did not die. There was an aspect of immortality that did not enter into the birth of Jesus. That aspect he emptied himself of, but his psyche, his will, his memory, the spirit in man, or in the spirit if you understand the term, all of that could become flesh, and soul and spirit. Because that's the totality of man, your body, your soul, your spirit. The so-ma, psuche, and ptoma in the Greek.

So when Mr. Armstrong discovered that the law was given by the one who came to be the Messiah, the one who created Adam and spoke to Adam, was the One who came to be the Messiah, the One of whom

David said that he was Adoni, when the scripture says, "And the LORD said to my Lord," that when it says there "YHWH" said to Adoni, "You are my Son," this was a prophecy of a relationship in which the word YHWH is applicable to the One who would become the Father; and the remarkable thing is that David said of the One who would become the Son, that he was Adoni, or his Lord. "My Lord, the one whom I know, the one whom I communicate with."

Now this is, of course, something to my knowledge understood neither by the Catholic Church nor any of the sects that have come out of the Catholic Church called Protestant churches, or denominations.

The Church of God, to my knowledge, is unique in understanding what Jesus said when he said, "I came to reveal the Father." He came to make the Father known and the One that everybody knew by reading the Hebrew scriptures is the One who became Messiah. But the One who was the Father, at that time, and who earlier was simply called YHWH, or God, or some other term like that but not the Father, that person does appear in such a conversation in which the Son says, the One whom we now know as the Son, "Let us make man in our image." In other words, the One who became the Son is speaking to the Father, not the Father to the Son. When YHWH says, "Let us make man in our image," this is the One who was the Messiah-to-be, speaking to the One whom we now know as the Father. He was the spokesman. He says then let's go ahead with your plan. Let's do this. He was the executor.

When it says, "Now let's go down and see what man is doing," the One who became the Father accompanied the Son. It doesn't mean that human beings necessarily saw them, that's not the point. But they came down to see what man was doing, and the one who was doing the speaking is the one who became the Son, because he was responsible for this creation. He wanted to see what man was doing, how far he would go. He was interested. We could go on and on.

But I think it is important therefore to recognize this fundamental aspect because therefore you can know where Dr. Arius erred, because the One who spoke to the prophets was not the One whom we now know as the Father, or God. If Dr. Arius had understood that he could not have drawn his conclusion, because this being who spoke to the prophets spoke as One who was eternal, who had no origin, and therefore was not eternally either the Son or the Father.

The Trinitarians missed a point because they attribute all those appearances to the Father, and of course the end result of assuming the Son was unknown prior to that time, and the Father was the One who was known, that's how they ultimately came to accept the premise that the law of God was horrible, terrible, some view that no Jew who understands the law would ever conclude; but somehow all of that's associated with the Father and the Son has corrected everything and made salvation possible. It was the

One who gave the law in the first place to guide us and direct us. He is the One who also came to make it possible for us to keep the law and to be forgiven by having died in our stead.

Let's go on with some interesting quotes here as time permits, and then we'll look at a few more scriptures.

Pg. 56: "Arius and his followers believe that God has and will have many sons, many in fact who might be called his words." Well, I wouldn't dispute that term "word" in the sense that we shall also be spokesmen, because we're going to speak the word of God in the world tomorrow. But Dr. Arius was absolutely correct at this point and the Trinitarians wholly erred. God has and will have many sons, and that's what the scripture stated. But that did not mean that therefore Jesus Christ was a created being, and that was where he erred in his reasoning. But I think it important for you to realize that this concept was understood from the Bible. There were—people understood this truth, misunderstood that truth, and they were in confusion, because in fact the church of God had been subverted as the book of Jude tells us. When he was about to write us on one subject he said I have to tell you about another; that "you must earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered." And some earnestly contended.

Now when you look at the New Testament history of the church you find something that differs from our day. Jude speaks of many of these people as being in the fellowship of the church. The fact remains that in that age it was not possible to communicate that easily. There was no radio, there was no television, there was no airplane, there was no railroad, there was no steam engine. There were Roman roads and horses and donkeys and camels, there were sailing vessels and vessels that could be rowed, but in such a world it was possible for teachers to rise up, as Paul said to the Ephesians, and who could get control of the local congregation, and the people wanted more and more teachers who would please the people's itching ears. Not everybody was converted, anymore than everybody in our fellowship is. But we have learned, Mr. Armstrong learned by mistakes. We even had to learn through the 70s we hadn't perfected our methodology yet. There were people who could rise into prominence and who could err and break up the church. In our day the overwhelming majority have remained faithful. In that day the majority drifted further and further away, and there was a minority. Undoubtedly there were people who saw truth as the Bible makes it plain. There were those who saw it as Arius saw it, partly truth, partly error; the Trinitarians partly truth, mostly error.

The same with respect to the crucifixion and the resurrection and the Sabbath. The Greek Orthodox Church observed Sabbath and Sunday for 900 years after the crucifixion. The Roman Church had abandoned it within a 100 years.

So in this world Christianity was a mixture of truth and error, and it went further and further into error. And finally all those in the church who still maintained the truth and were converted were read out of the general fellowship of the church, but there was a time that such men as Polycarp and Polycrates could still have a discussion with the bishops at Rome, or with others. The concept of disfellowship was never administered in the later history of the church as at first. Why at first was it ministered like Peter expelled Simon Magus? Answer: It was just a small area. They could control it. But as the church grew and grew and grew geographically in space, it was no longer possible. Just simply not possible. And finally there was no way to resolve the problem, and ultimately the separation finally occurred. It occurred early in some places and late in others. But that's another subject.

Let us move on to some other interesting points of view. Pg. 58: "The horror with which the Orthodox thinkers regarded the Arian assertion containing (pertaining) Christ has been well documented. To think the Christ morally free and capable of choice even theoretical was to them tantamount to obliterating his capacity to be Savior."

Now I think that most of us have never understood what a Trinitarian actually has to believe. A Trinitarian has to believe that Christ is one who is unchangeable because he is not morally free. He is not in that sense one who exercises free will or capable of choice, or else they're afraid he would sin. What a remarkable misunderstanding that went along with their correct understanding that the One who became the Son was eternal.

So we move along to another statement here. Again, here we are. "Arians saw themselves mirrored in this portrait of the Christ" as referred to in the Bible "as one who proceeded in his life in obedience to God" I'm changing the wording there purposefully because I don't want to get into an argument over the way it's worded, "winning the prize"—now to get to the sentence that's important—"All that he is," all that Messiah is, the Arians said, "they are," or can also become, in the sense that we too can overcome, we too can become accounted the sons of God.

The Arians concentrated on the creaturely performance of the Savior, and trusted that by making the very same advance which he made when he became man," which was the Trinitarian explanation of the Arian view, "they too should become the elect of God." That's the Arian explanation. And by which they saw in this that we could in fact become the sons of God, which the Trinitarians denied.

Now let me see if there's another one here. Yes. Now I'll want to go to an earlier view—no, a view expressed at an earlier time by Uraneus (sp) (Ireneus?) who was a churchman of Greek background who was in Gaul, who spoke to Victor of Rome at the close of the 2nd century, not to be so rash in dealing with Polycrates of Smyrna in Asia-Minor. Now this Uraneus who is essentially a Trinitarian, approximately a

quarter of a century and more before the Nicean Council, he said: "There is none other called God by the scripture except the Father of all, and the Son, and those who possess the adoption." Now adoption is Paul's words. We're not going to argue the word adoption at this moment. It meant to become truly one's son.

Now what Uraneus is saying, there is none other called God in scripture other than Father, Son, and those who possess the adoption, which is to say that even as late as the end of the 2nd century, those who essentially espoused the Trinitarian idea—I say essentially—did not deny the fact that we could become God, even if they used the term adoption, which means come into the family, in which they used the term adoption like saying that our ultimate father by genetics was Adam, and therefore we have sonship; by that they meant the sense of adoption not begettal. But it is important to realize that Uraneus viewed, as Trinitarians, as Catholics then did, that even we could be called god in the sense of sons of God like the Son is, and the Father who is the Father, all of which are called God.

Now that's remarkable because the final limitation of the Trinity came to be limited to three, whereas earlier that argument was not yet solidified. And even the sons of God could be defined as bearing the name God according to Uraneus, writing approximately the last quarter of the 2nd century of the present era. Pg. 68 that is found on.

Now let's see, there's one other good quote, perhaps, here. Bottom of 64: "Arian Christians professed that we are able to become sons, just as Christ was a son," that's taken from a direct quote. There are many direct quotes and then there are the statements of the authors themselves.

The conclusion to properly draw from this opponent, Pg. 65: "As a consequence, he, that is Messiah, is no longer the one Son of God and Word and wisdom, but as others, is one out of many." Now we recognize, of course, that by birth from Mary, Jesus was unique, the only begotten. That's clear, we're not arguing that this evening. Trinitarians overlook that though that is true, Jesus also is defined as one out of many, and we have many scriptures in the New Testament to indicate this, so that one after another you could see that they were—one group was running away from one set of scriptures, the other group was running away from another set of scriptures.

Now let's look at another page. I think 69. No, I won't take time for that. So we'll go on now, Pg. 70:

The Trinitarian view: "But if he (Christ) wishes us to call his very own Father our Father, it is not necessary on this account to equate ourselves with the Son according to nature." That is the Trinitarians gradually drifted in the direction where it came to be thought that the nature of the Father and the nature of the Son would forever preclude us from sharing in the same nature. And that's how come ultimately the idea

of Uranus expressed in an earlier century, the 2nd—now wait a minute—I should have corrected—I have made a mistake in terms of time. The Nicean Council was in the beginning of the 4th century. When we deal with Uranus we are dealing with a person at the end of the 2nd century. That was a slip. So there was upwards of a century and a quarter, not a quarter century, to the Council of Nicea. Sorry about that.

Anyway, they moved away from the idea that we too could be called God. They moved away from that and finally came to the conclusion that we could never in that sense participate in the same nature, where in fact the Bible says that we can. Jesus took upon himself our nature, and in turn that made possible the fact that we can inherit the nature of God; that we can in fact be his sons. There are a number of verses in the Bible, at the very close I will bring them to your attention without necessarily reading them.

But it is interesting. Therefore it is not possible that his nature should abide in us, or his seed, according to Trinitarian ideas.

Now we'll look in another chapter. The Trinitarian view was that God was always a Father, always a Son. Arius' view was there was a time there was neither Father nor Son, but that the Son was created. That was an error, the first was an error. They both erred because they assumed that the Son, Page 81, existed as the Son of God before creation, rather than came to be the Son of God as a result of his begetting, that is the begetting of the Word in Mary's womb.

So on pages 82 and 83 are some very interesting quotes in this connection. Arius took the view God was not always Father of the Son but when the Son came into being and was created then God was called his Father. That was an error. The Trinitarians of course had the other illogical idea and error as well.

On Page 88 there is a quote here I think worth looking at. "Though Arius professed the eternity of God he clearly taught there was a beginning of the relationship in which the terms Father and Son apply."

Absolutely correct, but absolutely misunderstood as to when. One of the tragedies in this great debate.

We will stop with that.

Now, there's some verses in the Bible that I would like to draw to your attention. We'll put them down, you can look them up as you wish, but we'll put them down as verses that both sides may have cited:

Romans 8:15, 23, and 29;

Romans 9:4;

Galatians 4:5;

Ephesians 1:5;

I Peter 1:23, also verse 3;

James 1:18;

I John 5:1 and 18;

Philippians 2:5 to 11;

Hebrews 3:2 and also 1:6;

I John 4:13.

That's sufficient. So we have about four minutes. Let me state a few things.

Mr. Tkach did approve a paper, we assent to it, those who have read it, and that means the ministry as a whole, that we should have a clearer understanding of the concept of the word "adoption." That is, the church came to understand what it meant to be begotten of God, what it meant to be born again, etc. But that does not mean that we should therefore translate the word "adoption" by the word "sonship" as if it is absolutely equivalent to the sense of "begotten."

Now what I want to address to you is this in simple terms. The only New Testament writer who uses the term "adoption" in this connection, used five times, and it's already in your notes, is the apostle Paul. The apostle Paul never uses the term "spora" meaning "seed," as Peter does, and he never uses the term "begotten" in the sense that other writers do. Paul speaks of "begotten" in Philemon 10, and in I Corinthians 4:15, in a figurative sense. In a figurative sense.

Now we have to face the fact that just as John received the Revelation, or the Apocalypse, and Paul died before Christ ever opened the book for John to hear and see, we also have to face the fact that John was the only writer of the gospels who records a private conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus about being born again. Only John refers to that event. Neither Matthew nor Mark nor Luke do, and in fact Jesus never again addressed that term in public, of which we have any knowledge. That was said exclusively and privately so that the Jews would know ultimately the basis of Jesus' thinking, and his doctrine. In no case publicly anywhere else in the gospels or through Paul is there another statement: "you must be born again."

Whether one can say absolutely, perhaps not, but it does not appear that Paul heard from Christ that he should not use the word "adoption" and must use the word "born again." Now you will note clearly I worded it that way because we have no other information.

The evidence is that Christ did not forbid Paul to use the word "adoption" in the sense that we came from the family of Adam and are adopted into the family of God. But at the same time Paul did not in any verse anywhere in any book preserved in the Bible written by him use the term "born again." And only late in his life, when he wrote to the Hebrews, did he use the term "firstborn" when referring to Messiah in Hebrews 1:6, which may well indicate that earlier in his life it had not yet fully registered what the church has today sometimes confused.

We have tried to make the word "adoption" be absolutely equivalent to "sonship" or being "begotten" or "born of God." You know, that sense.

The Roman adoption never presumed that the father and the son relationship was by some kind of new birth. It was simply a covenantal relationship absolutely bringing one into a family relationship, but

not by nature. And therefore we have to face the fact that Paul never addressed in any of his letters to the Greek world directly, never addressed that they should be begotten other than in his figurative term, "I have begotten you, and I have begotten you through the gospel" two terms in these two verses, I Corinthians 4:15 and Philemon 10.

And only later—Paul never went beyond the point that Jesus was the "first begotten," and it can be therefore posed whether or not Christ chose to reveal as much to him on this point as he may have chosen later to reveal to Peter or John or James. In any case, Paul never saw the Revelation and neither did Peter or James. It is not true that all the apostles understood everything written in the New Testament. Many of them, and in fact all of them were dead before the book of Revelation was ever revealed.

Now it is unique that ultimately only among the twelve, and Jesus' half brother James, do we find the sense of the term "begotten," his "seed," or his nature, and those terms used, or John saying that "we shall be like him." That has to be because we're going to see him as he is, not merely as he manifests himself.

So it does not appear that Jesus revealed to the disciples everything all at once, but he said "The Spirit will bring to your attention all things whatsoever I have taught you," and what was brought to their attention was not all brought to their attention on the first day of the first hour of Pentecost. It wasn't brought to Mr. Armstrong's attention either. It took him ten, twenty, thirty, forty years to think some things through, and don't assume the same was utterly impossible for the New Testament church.

So there is a reason Paul used the word as he did. He saw it from another perspective. There is a reason why Peter and James and John wrote what they did, because the full impact of what it meant to be begotten of God and born of God is such a shocking concept that ultimately the Christian world rejected it.

Now, in conclusion, though I'm just a very few minutes over, we want to summarize it this way. Jesus Christ is the Son of God the Father. By nature he is eternal and we are not, but we can inherit the same nature but we have never eternally existed in the past, if the word past is proper to define the level at which God lives.

But collectively, even though we have this nature and will be composed ultimately of it, and will be perfect as God is perfect, because that's the goal, "Be you perfect," the fact remains that even collectively the church born into the family, or kingdom of God, having God as a Father and Christ as an elder brother, even so collectively by the very fact that we are all creatures, and all having that same origin on the one side of the family, God the Father, or through the Holy Spirit, yet we function as a wife. And the wife is not the head of her husband. The husband is the head of the wife. This will be proved also to a certain group of liberated women, but that will be in the second resurrection.

And that is a type of the fact that the older brother will still have a predominance over collectively all who are in the family of God, as the husband bears ultimate responsibility in the family and is the head of the wife. So we don't misunderstand, the church does not say we're going to be co-equal with God the Father or the Son in terms of governments. Jesus himself said "My Father is greater than I" a problem verse, not for the Arians but for the Trinitarians; because in the God realm and later in the God family, there are diversities of governments, simply diversities of governments, and levels of inheritance. In any human family the same is true.

We'll stop with that. You have some interesting things in the Bible in those verses to read and contemplate. Don't bother researching most of these things. I think that what I have given you is essentially sufficient to show the different perspectives. The most important thing is to look to see what the Bible itself says, and the remarkable thing, as this man said, that every evidence is, that unlike the Arians and the Trinitarians, the Church of God has hit upon—I'll use that term—an understanding of Christology and theology and salvation that puts together everything correctly as it was intended.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Dr. Hoeh—April 4, 1994

One acquires different perspectives over time. I am the oldest surviving Ambassador College student however, I met a lady who was baptized the year I was born (1928).

We are not to become divided. There will be different perspectives, yet the Church is one. Those different views represent different levels of spiritual maturity. We don't always agree. We don't have to leave, except in some cases such as abuse. We are to submit one to another like in a marriage. Some are forgetful.

Decisions have to be made and leaders chosen. The work of the Church and the teachings of the Church are not yet complete. We did not find out all there is to know. You will not agree 100% with everything your mate says or does. In a marriage the husband and wife don't always agree but you don't get a divorce over the differences. Christ and the Church is like a husband and wife relationship. The Church is to function as a wife and bride to be: we have an agreed-upon date for the marriage. If Christ is the head of the Church then who are we to divorce ourselves?

I will explain how I approach difficult things. How to look at recent changes in doctrine. We look at two things:

- What do we clearly know and understand? What is being said?
- What is officially presented?

Do you understand the other person's point of view? We look at what we don't clearly know and what is yet to be known.

The past administration was trained in advertising which seeks to understand and to know the audience's point of view. Theologians write for each other. Examine the evidence. Is it in the Bible? Or is it reason? Reason is a gift of God, the premise may not be. Dr. Stavrinides is a Greek who loves Americans but thinks Greek. He is interested in answers to questions that most of us have not even thought to ask.

The premise from which we reason is critical. It's not reasoning that's wrong, it is God's gift to man. Let's look at two booklets I have here:

- The current *Statement of Beliefs*, copyrighted 1993 (the one with third paragraph on first page running over onto second page).
- The current *God is...* booklet, copyrighted 1993, both are updates which supersede the previous versions. The early version of this booklet was done prematurely.

Read the new one fresh. We should note what is fundamental: what are questions needing corrections and what are still questions. This subject will be written about again--the booklet is not the only thing that can be said. These are not comprehensive booklets; for example, we omit *Divorce and Remarriage* and the *Laying on of Hands* doctrines.

If we look at the doctrinal history in the church, by the second century after Christ there were differing ideas in the church. The Christian church had become so large that by the 4th century it took on a public role and the Councils like that of Nicea replaced Passover for Easter, the nature of God was formulated in the Creeds, and the church left its first love.

Views of Dr. Arius and Trinitarian ideas were in the Churches of God 7th Day. At that time, Arianism or trinitarianism in Eugene was not a question of fellowship. The idea of three persons in one person makes no logical sense (3x equals 1x is absurd). This was a problem. The Greek mind says that God is three persons in one person IS not logical.¹ We're not traditional arians. We disagree with Arianism where it says that "the Word did not eternally exist." The Logos was *not* a created being. Mr. H.W. Armstrong never accepted Arianism, with the idea that Christ is the first created being. WCG never accepted idea that Christ didn't always exist.

Knowledge is composed of good and evil, correct and incorrect views. You will find true knowledge and error. You may walk away from the idea of "three beings in one being" (3x in 1x) in knowledge of the *truth*. We have not arrived today at an evangelical position. We haven't focused on some verses in the Old Testament and the New Testament yet. *Trinity* means different things to different people. We have yet "unfinished business." We will have clearer perspectives.

Different languages have different problems. God, Lord in English comes from the Hebrew YHVH. YHVH has a plural form in Hebrew, with a singular verb and adjective.

"I am the Lord, besides me there is no other God" (Isaiah 45:5, 45:6, 45:14, 45:18, 45:22 and others). The Father did not give the ten commandments at Sinai. The Logos/Father (equals One God) gave the ten commandments. The God of the Old Testament was not the "Father," but neither was the "Logos" of the New Testament. The Father was not the angry God of the Old Testament.

How do we explain "besides me there is no other God"? YHVH refers to the Father and at times to the Son. The Father and Son are one in a way we never understood before. The Father and Son were Gods was never the official teaching of the Worldwide Church of God! This is an error the Church never taught.² The Father and Son are one God. Two spirits was never the official teaching of the Church, God is one spirit (John 4:24). The Church said that the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9; I Peter 1:11) and the Spirit of God (Romans 8:9; Romans 8:14; I Corinthians 2:11; I John 4:2; and others) or Spirit of the Father (Matthew 10:10; John 15:26) were ONE spirit (Ephesians 2:18; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:4; I Corinthians 6:17).

We always taught one spirit. God is *one* Spirit. If there are two persons, how can God be one spirit? H. W. Armstrong didn't know how to explain it.³ Mr. Armstrong never gave any reasons why we had one spirit and two persons. Mr. Armstrong left "unfinished business." Yet, by *one* spirit we are all baptized. Mr. Armstrong never resolved it. He knew they were cooperative Father and Son.

The Church did not adequately explained the subject. Christians tried to resolve it. Christ is YHVH, Father is YHVH, how can they be one?

Dr. Hoeh's mother is of German ancestry going back to Madgeburger, Germany and there were ministers in the family every other generation or so. His mother belonged to the German Methodist Church. Dr. Hoeh asked her if Christ is a person, then how is He Father. If Christ was a person why call Him "the Word"? "Word" was thought to be a person but it means "utterance", not "utterer." Was the Word a "Spokesman"—a speaker? This was an error. Does "Word" mean a person who speaks? That's what we thought. *Logos* does not mean speaker; it means utterance—not the person uttering. Now how did we come to understand certain things, we must know these things.

"In the beginning was utterance and the utterance was divine," (the god, *theos* in Greek) John 1:1.⁴ If God is one and He thinks and utters, what he utters is also divine. What God speaks is also divine. God's utterance was divine as well. God is a being in a different plane—Spirit. God thinks, we think. When we think we have thoughts, some are not uttered. God is one—thought and utterance (expression of thought).

You know who you are by your mind and your thoughts. A person with amnesia does not know who he is. You are able to think and capture your thoughts. What does it mean to be in God's image? We are mortal, God is spirit. We think. God is thinker, thought, utterance.

You know who you are because you were told. Also what you thought. The memory of your life also tells you. God is both thinker and thought. Father is *thinker* and Son is *thought*. You cannot separate thought and thinking from you. God is divine mind. He does not "run" around.

Hebrews 1:3 states: "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (NIV). Father is *glory, light* and Son is *radiance*. Father is divine mind. God is Holy Spirit and is not limited. He can link with my mind. God appeared externally. God chooses to appear in space and matter. It is the nature of God to appear in matter, it is call a "theophany". That is not spirit. The image and likeness issue I will not argue at this time.

In the beginning was divine *thought* and His thought molded His *thinking*. God thought something. The Creation resulted. God is not only thinker and not thought. Thinking is governed by thought. You remold your thoughts to affect you. The Spirit is the *mover*. The utterance is the *Logos*. God is the *thinker*. God made man in His image.

Matthew 28 has Father, Son and Holy Spirit—singular. God is spirit; God is thought; God is Thinker and acts. Thought is in natural world. Thought needs Thinker, then an act comes from thought. Spirit is life. Natural is breath equated with life. **Separate centers of consciousness** involved here. We breathe the same air. Air communicates our words and hearing. It takes air to convey our thoughts.

The Father and Son has inadequately been explained. Father of thought—similar to our concept of "father of an idea." This concept is not referential to beings with different centers of consciousness. Son is the product or utterance of the Father. There is a Father and Son relationship here. A Son proceeds from the Father. God always thinks. Was there a time when God couldn't think? Eternal thought is the Son. God was never "unthinking."

The Greeks question the folly they had inherited. The Church has not answered the question about the nature of Christ. If *Logos* is thought, how is *Logos* associated with Christ?

Why was *Logos* made flesh by act of Holy Spirit? God, or Father intended His thought to be in this individual, Christ. Some things about Christ will be answered in a future new booklet.

There are three distinct or *ways* of being—hypostasis. *Logos* is thoughts. We distinguish them. Jesus is not the Father in the flesh. Utterance in the flesh. *Logos* made flesh by an act of the Holy Spirit. God as Father intended his thoughts to be in this infant. Jesus joined with God's thoughts in a physical level in the ovum of Mary's womb.

We are born with different memories of "nine months in the womb." This baby had in his mind everything that God thought plus the will of God. Through the Holy Spirit you get divine will. When Christ said He didn't know when He would return, the thought was not in His memory. All essential thoughts of God, the divine will, are the divine memory of Christ.

Some deal with moral problems. Jesus had eternal thoughts. He could picture Himself as being there, "let us make man" was the memory. God as thinker and thought gave the ten commandments. This became the memory of one person with two wills and two natures.

This what Christ had and what we have. As a person, you have to make the decisions. (An old saying goes "too soon old, too late schmart") We can do things now we couldn't do before. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, spiritual maturity, over time, will be there for us.

God is spirit. He is light. Hebrews 1:3, the radiance of that light is God's mind. God is light source, the Son is the radiance. God is light, there is no darkness in him. God's mind is full of thoughts. There is a radiance: God's thoughts. We have a person born of Mary. Paul spoke of One God the Father and One Lord, Jesus Christ. One God, one Lord, who *are*. What is Jesus Christ doing today as our High Priest? Christ is our elder brother.⁵ God has a family and is building a family!

<End>

ENDNOTES

1. In the Pasadena presentation of the same material, HLH said that the Protestant stand of the 1930s of three persons in one person was not logical. He did not say that it was the Greek position, but rather the Protestant deviation from the original.
2. True. "Christ and the Father are ONE God, *not two Gods—one Elohim.*" See H. W. Armstrong's *Is Jesus God* reprint (869). (c) 1955 WCG.
3. Mr. H. W. Armstrong explained this concept very well. He knew how to explain it. See *Is Jesus God?* reprint cited previously.
4. We have been able to find this only in Moffatt. *Companion Bible*, Appendix 98 shows that the Greek for divine is another word: *theios*, not just *theos*. We are not clear with "divine" explanation.
5. In Pasadena's presentation, HLH said that we come up in the resurrection with separate personalities. Thus he implied that Jesus, too, will have separate personality. HLH ends up in the Stephen position—of seeing two in heaven, although he does not say it publically. His absence of saying that God has/has not a shape is loud by its silence.

