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Somewhere along the line, you essentially have had the explanation that it is one of a series of festivals in which this is the beginning of the autumnal season, or at least the late summer, early autumn, and that the festivals themselves picture the plan of God, which plan was revealed to the children of Israel.

Now, most of you who have read the literature should generally understand that I would recall one of the songs we sang this morning, where when reading in Zechariah chapter 14 you come to this place of what the nation shall do, who remain over when the day of the Lord has occurred.

They will go up to Jerusalem from year to year and keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

And when I sang that, it would seem to me that I'd have to be pretty naive, not to think that God meant what He said when He said it there.

Now, there are those who have left, beginning in 1974, now they didn't leave in a way that was in numbers any greater than some of the people who left in the thirties and the forties and the fifties that I knew percentage-wise, it just happened to be that they decided to make more noise at the time, and one of the things that they abandoned was the keeping of the holy days, which they had to do because they couldn't keep the second tithes, which they didn't want to keep because they decided they didn't want to observe the first one.

So it was the logical chain of events.

I think that should be clear.

And of what they understand of the plan of God today, I would let history judge, and that plan conveys something of what God is doing, both in a broad scale with respect to the world and also with respect to ourselves.

Now, the material that was presented this morning and comments this afternoon should lead us to realize that we have a role to play ourselves.

There are many things that could be said in different approaches for the Festival of Trumpets, and I would like to focus in on something in particular that I think is fundamentally important because it does appear that the impact of the local ministry here is important in steering most of you in the right direction, but unfortunately we can still say that there are perhaps as large a number who over a period of time have left this have been replaced by, shall we say, new spiritual blood.

Now this is not good, so we might as well really understand what the issues are.

The Feast of Trumpets essentially focuses in on the day of the Lord, the day of God's intervention.

But God often first intervenes by speaking, and then by shouting a little louder.

Now we're in a state today where I think we need to look at how God speaks, both through us and to us.

Now we're going to speak to the world, but you know when dealing with the world, God has never decided to deal just one way.

There were times in the days of Moses that God dealt like this.

He smashed them good when something happened.

Fire burned at the borders of the camp.

A plague suddenly struck and didn't know what happened.

And other times God did nothing.

Now there's a reason why God on occasion acts, and there's a reason why he seems to be far off.

The degree to which God acts is the degree to which you are near.

The degree to which he may not, and merely gently tap on the door, is the degree to which you may be far away.

You see, if God wanted to reach people, if I may take an analogy, if he wanted to really sit down and talk with you, he wouldn't have to stand at the door and knock.

He could kick it open.

He's a creator.

But the reason he stands at the door and knocks, is that he's treating you in the same way, if that's the way you look at life, as you treat him.

We should reflect on some of these things.

Now there are too many whose private lives are reflected in a situation where they might be found seated around the table, but if Jesus Christ were to knock at the door, we wouldn't really want him to rush in and hear what they were saying, and we would have to be apologetic and ask each other, well, what was it that we were discussing there, and somebody comes up with a bright idea that nobody had talked about before, because it would have been embarrassed to have Christ hear what they were saying.

That's especially reflected when you have husbands and wives.

Mr. Tkach would like to express his and his wife's and family's best wishes.

You know that Tkach's were here, he and I were at a family where a husband and wife both asked us the evening before I flew here to come and talk with them.

They have one child and we asked them what they had in common.

They concluded the only thing they had in common was their child, and happily that was the cake.

But I pointed up that they have certainly more in common than that, they have each other.

We haven't thought about that.

Now, when a husband and a wife, and I illustrated it on the floor yesterday evening and showed how they sat on the sofas with respect to each other, when husbands and wives behave like that, there's really a need somewhere along the line to blow a trumpet to straighten out the human family in the church.

We have too many who are not living like they should, and the problem is that these things go on and on, and when the crisis has already been full blown and you can't hide it from the children and

you can't hide it from the neighbors, then you bring it out to the ministry and you want to have a little council.

The time to counsel is before you marry, and the time to counsel afterward is when there is a problem that you really can't settle.

You see, there was a time when Mr. Rowan Spears, for instance, would visit any of you, now used as an illustration, that he had to have his Bible with him because you were asking questions about the Bible.

This is normally not the necessity today.

If there's one book we don't have to have in most counseling, it's the Bible, because now people are oriented to their own personal problem.

Of course, the answers are in the Bible, but since they think they know it and don't really look at it, they don't need to find the answer there.

They don't know what it means.

Husbands love your wives.

They don't know what it means.

Wives, love your husbands, commit, be concerned, when a woman says, I can't stand to see the side of my husband, you know all of these things that keep coming out, or he doesn't talk to me, and since he doesn't talk to me, then she sits in front of TV to get somebody to talk to her.

That's the way to solve it.

That is really very intelligent, but that's what was happening in this particular family.

And so when her husband didn't talk to her, she decided she'd get her sister in the house.

That really does it.

She's doing everything to create a problem, instead of a solution.

All right, the Feast of Trumpets is God's solution to the world's problems, whether the world wants it or not, and we have a role to play in the sense that we must be ready when those trumpets blow in a political sense, because the trumpet is a symbol of war.

The trumpets are described in the Book of Revelation as a series of events, but in advance of that, the church is also told to lift up a trumpet, the voice like one that is, and to cry out and spare not, and there is a time when we need to tell you what's going on in the world, but the time, and I'm going to decide it this way today, I have seen that there are enough problems in the church at the time has come to blow the trumpet on you.

Therefore you are counted out, because there is no small percentage that is now counted out, and we're going to have to either rethink it or it's too late, and our time is now to investigate that matter and to see what our role should be.

God does not speak to the people in the same manner in every age.

Now let me be plain, let's go back to the Book of Genesis and see how God introduces the Sabbath. The Sabbath we often say is the test commandment, this is not an issue at the moment, but I just want to point it out. Genesis chapter 2.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made, and he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

And for us this, there is one word that he commanded Adam to keep the Sabbath, that challenged any of you to find in this chapter, number two of the Book of Genesis, that God here ever commanded man to keep the Sabbath. And you know there are people who reason like that? Let me tell you, God set an example. He rested and he hallowed this day.

Is this here because God couldn't think of anything else to say? Or is this here because God was dealing with Adam as parents should deal with their children? You set an example and you ought to have sense enough to follow it.

God hallowed something, what do you do with hallowed time? But there are people in the church, some in the ministry, more out of it than some out of the church. They have decided that if God doesn't command them something, they're going to do the opposite. If God doesn't forbid it, they're going to do it. They do not look at the biblical examples and say, well look, if God rested on the Sabbath day and hallowed it, then I ought to consider what I ought to do with something that God has hallowed. Whether he has commanded me or not, whether I'm a Jew or not. And this is where the big division in the thinking and approach of people in the church is today. Between those who look at law for a loophole and who don't look at examples at all or feel that if God hasn't written in the Bible in some way, it was just the form of literature and it really hasn't any more meaning than for the generation which was living at the time it was written. God spoke to Adam by way of example, and when God was dealing with Adam, he also, since they were close, he also dealt very firmly when action had to be taken.

Now when God came to dealing with Cain and Abel, God told man, in the case of the person of Cain, not to take any action, God put a penalty on Cain and he said to man, don't take the life of Cain.

That's my responsibility. I reserve it for myself.

And when it came to the event just after the flood, something else happened. God said, by man shall man's blood be shed. You see, the pre-flood world was an illustration of what happens when you try to deal with criminals and turn them loose somewhere else in society, or out of society as Cain started and it soon becomes a society.

So God decided to transfer more responsibility to man to control crime. Then he called people like Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, Joseph. He talks to them. He doesn't give them a code of laws, they're individuals. They're not needing a constitution, they're family.

Many, several generations later, we come to the person of Moses, and here and now we have a family grown great into a nation. And this nation does need to be organized because it is so large and God decides to make a constitution or an agreement, a covenant with them. And when this covenant is given since he's dealing with a carnal nation, a physical nation born of the family of Abraham, but not born of the spirit of God. They were not promised the spirit of God, they were promised the land of Canaan. They were promised long life, not eternal life. They were promised physical things. To them, God decided, well look, since you're physical, I'll give you the law in what we call the letter. That's the way you would define a law so that it is administrable by men. And so God started out in

chapter 20 of the book of Exodus and he explains the law. The law says, you shall not commit adultery. It doesn't define adultery specifically, just as adultery. You're supposed to know its meaning. And you are to do no labor on the Sabbath day. You shall not kill, you shall not steal. And of course the people needed amplification, so you had statutes, laws of another sort, the judgments when new cases arose, and you have the book of the law, which was finally complete when you have the book of Deuteronomy. Here you find many laws that are stated that govern the way the society should be. The children of Israel were asked to be responsible human beings, setting an example of what God's law would be if human beings executed punishment, praise those who do well, and obey God as a man could administer law.

It would be very difficult for you to say you shall not look on a woman to lust after her, because how are you going to define whether the look is lust? So it was just written in a simple term, you shall not commit adultery. But you know when you look at all the things that are written in the law, whether the Ten Commandments or the laws of Moses in any form, which are really the laws of God given to Moses because the people didn't want to hear God, you have a situation in which, listen carefully, in which the people's righteousness would have been manifested, but no eternal life would have resulted, because it would have obeyed God with whatever human strength they had. But Moses and Joshua both saw that the people didn't even have enough strength to obey the law in the letter. The prophets came to warn, and finally Jesus Christ came, and Christ came to propose a solution to the problem, the problem of what to do with man.

And what Jesus Christ proposed was to come to pay the penalty of sin, and next, to define the law in terms of its intent and purpose.

Now what is important today is that we have a new look at the Bible. I'm sure all of you will think, well I knew that all along, but if people everywhere in the church had known this, people wouldn't be doing what they have done. When Christ comes back again, he's going to establish the new covenant. He now asks you to anticipate that covenant by living in accordance with its principles now. He doesn't ask you to live according to the letter of the law, but the spirit and intent. The ministry of the church, parents in the home are asked to administer the Spirit of God, not the discipline of the letter of the law.

So Jesus came, and upon a mountaintop in Matthew chapter 5, he laid out some fundamental proposals.

He proposed to bless people with the following attitudes, and these may be found in the first several verses through verse 12 of chapter 5 of the book of Matthew. You're all familiar with what are called these Beatitudes, which as terms don't really mean very much.

And here you have a situation where you were asked, one, not to be haughty but poor in spirit.

You were asked, yes it's working, thank you, to be meek. You were asked to hunger and thirst after righteousness. You were asked to be merciful, to be pure in heart, to be a peacemaker, and not argue with your neighbor. You're told that you can become the children of God. You're going to be able to see God. You will obtain mercy. You'll be filled with righteousness. You'll inherit the earth, and you don't have to struggle for it like Mao has had to. And now the earth has inherited him, of course. We're told that we are blessed if we're persecuted for righteousness's sake, because we're going to inherit the kingdom or government of God or heaven as Matthew renders it.

Need to be the salt of the earth, verse 13. Oh, you've heard these expressions of what does it mean? It means you add something that is otherwise missing in the lives of people.

Now, so we understand how you are to be the salt of the earth, how you are to be the light of the world. Jesus said, think not that I am come to destroy the law of the prophets, I am come to fulfill. To heaven and earth, paths that are governed by natural law, not one jot or tittle, not the least addition to the letter, the smallest letter of the alphabet, shall in any wise pass from the law, till it all be fulfilled, but in what manner? The spiritual law lasts longer, obviously, therefore, the natural law. And if we have still heaven and earth around us, we certainly then have the spiritual law. That's what Jesus is emphasizing. Now, the letter of the law is the attempt to convey in Hebrew and for us in English, and of course for the Greeks and Greek, the spirit of the law, but in the only manner in which lawyers and judges and people could argue the case and come to conclusions and administer it.

Jesus came to fulfill it, not in accordance with the letter of the law, but in its intent and purpose. He said, whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and teach men so. And we've had those who've left the church, who've done that and some who've stayed behind, who doubt, doubt the covenant, doubt God's law, doubt the holy days, doubt tithing, doubt God. That's what it means. They shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

I hope none of you will be at the bottom of the totem pole there. Whosoever shall do and teach them. You have to do both. The same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Now, how do we do and how do we teach them? This is what we ask. How do Jesus fulfill it? How do we do and teach? The answer is very simple. We come now to the explanation and Jesus proposes now how we should understand law. Now, the point at issue is very simple, very clear.

Except our righteousness, verse 20, shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees will not even enter in. There's was righteousness in terms of trying to obey the letter of the law, with their own natural strength. And if we don't improve on that significantly, we won't even inherit eternal life. Because to keep the law of Moses in the letter of the law, in the letter of the law, perfect is still insufficient. Because you have to have the Spirit of God to gain eternal life. And if all you do is keep it with your natural strength, you don't have the Spirit of God. So, Jesus now says, you were given the Bible. That is, you have the Bible. You have the examples of God. You have the law as given to the ancient Israelites. Nothing, not one jot or one tittle of that law is going to be altered. It is all here, all written, not changed. The question is, what are you to do with it? How are you to live by it? Jesus didn't alter the text of the Old Testament. Not one letter or addition, a declaration to a letter has been altered in that law. That's what he said. It's here, translated for us into English. The question is, how do you live by it? If it must exceed the way described in Pharisees' lips, answer. Verse 21, point one, you have heard that it has been said by them of old, thou shalt not kill. This is one of the Ten Commandments. Does Jesus now say you can kill? No. What he says, whosoever shall kill will be in danger of the judgment. I won't have to go over every verse, but I will read the point of fundamental issue. I say to you, whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And he expounds on this matter. He expounds on this matter through verse 26. Now the point is that one of the Ten Commandments is at stake here. Jesus said, you have heard it said, you shall not kill, and you have also heard it said, that whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment, of course. How then do we deal with these problems defined in the law, problems of human experience? Shall we say that we're going to change the law, that it's now all right to kill, to murder, to be angry to hate? No, the statement is whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And if you're angry with the cause, at least let your wrath come down by night. But I want you to notice, brother, in what is not said. What do you mean angry? What do you mean without a cause? You're told to examine yourself in terms of anger.

Now, some people are much more temperamental than others. Some people, when they're angry, are really angry, and when others are angry, it's not so serious. Some people's bite is worse than their bark. Some people only bite. Now, the point is, it says if you're angry with your brother without a cause, but it doesn't define a list of 120 causes that you can use.

You become the judge of the cause. Is it sufficient to be angry? Let me think about that. Jesus makes you responsible. If you're going to learn to govern the universe with Christ, you're going to have to learn to make decisions.

The one decision here now you're faced with is to determine whether what you are talking about is a sufficient cause to be angry. My wife isn't here, so I'll tell a little story.

Very often the most important things that I want saved, she burns. The least important are saved.

Well, I've educated her out of that over a period of time.

If you didn't pay to be angry, you had to use reasons.

You know, there are a lot of little things, sometimes big things, but you see she never saw the problem as I did. What was important to her was not important to me and vice versa.

I'll tell the other story on myself. I burned something that belonged to my daughter, because I thought it was not worth keeping either, so we can all have reasons to be concerned with other people. The point, brethren, is that Jesus leaves it up to you to determine whether the cause is just, and whether if it is just you need to be so angry.

How do you determine the degree of anger? How do you determine the value of the cause? And the decision is left to you on the basis of the examples of scripture and the conduct of Jesus Christ, the prophets, and the apostle.

Now, most women would find that if they were to talk to other women, some women take a lot from their husbands, and some take a little. It depends on the man. Some women are very temperamental, and other are, in fact, the stability of the home.

What may be a just cause for an emotional woman wouldn't even begin to be the cause for a stable woman. And any woman who has ability to be the pillar of her home and stability can't use the same cause as another woman who's very emotional could, and be justified in God's sight.

Do you ever think about that? That's what it's all about. Your ability to make decisions without having to have now a Talmud explaining the law of Moses. The Jews went in the direction of having a Talmud to explain the law. Jesus decided the reverse. There will only be certain fundamental points, and instead of trying to get around the law, you will try to analyze what it is that fulfills the law more perfectly. Point number two, you've heard it said of old, you shall not commit adultery.

Another one of the ten commandments in question, you shall not commit adultery. Statement, I say to you, whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. Now we recognize that the statement, you shall not commit adultery, that's manageable, that's able to be judged by lawyers and judges of this land. But who's going to judge and say that you have looked on a woman to lust after her? Or that some woman has looked on a man's car or his bank book and decides to lust after him? That is his money. The answer is how are you going to approve it? You see, men can't decide that way, but God wants his law to reflect this approach.

Therefore, Jesus defines the killing in a very refined area. He says you must go even further and examine the question of anger. He looks at adultery and says you must go further and examine the

whole question of lust in attitude of mind, not merely indeed. And then he expounds on that, which we won't have time to do here. Now, point three, it has been said of old, whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. Moses didn't command divorcing, he commanded that a writing should be given if a divorce occurred.

Now, what does Jesus say? After all, that lets you do pretty well what you want to. He just says, whosoever shall put away his wife, without restriction for the hardness of their heart.

I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except for porneia, causes her to commit adultery. To put away your wife for burnt toast is insufficient, even twice in a row is insufficient.

I hope you all understand that principle. And surely enough, in Pasadena, somebody will say that I said that if a woman burns her toast three times, it's all right. And you can divorce her.

I didn't say any such thing.

Saving for the cause of porneia, that's the Greek from which the word porneation is translated.

Point one, at this juncture, Jesus does not define the word porneia.

He didn't say there must be a church council to define it.

He said, you ought to have sense enough when speaking Greek to know what I mean, you don't have to define any further.

You don't have to have a Talmud defining all the possibilities.

Porneia in general meant sexual promiscuity, sexual unlawful misconduct in that area.

I don't have to define it in all its details. Now let me point it out.

Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for this cause, may get himself and her involved in adultery.

I want you to note it doesn't say whosoever commits porneia must be put away.

It doesn't say that you must divorce the porneia. It only says whoever does it for any other cause than this is in serious trouble, spiritually, and it doesn't even say that you ought to put one away for porneia.

Knowing how it can affect people, it might be better to do it on occasion than to live with such a problem. Therefore, divorce in a situation like this is better than living in misery with the problem and Jesus therefore allows it. He doesn't require it. Let us say, when is porneia sufficient for you? Is one act of adultery porneia? Are five acts of adultery porneia? Are a hundred acts of adultery porneia? The answer is very simple.

One act of adultery by a man can so change certain women with that woman can never live a normal life with that man.

And yet I know women who themselves were involved in premarital misconduct, marry a man who was involved in premarital misconduct, both say, shall we forgive each other's past when they agree and they can live happily? There's no problem. But for others, there would be.

Rather than put it simply, we say this. What is sufficient porneia for one may not be for another because maybe you're big enough to forgive and emotionally can take it and somebody else can't.

You're not about to draw a Talmud stating how many acts constituted because the Greeks never thought in that way. We ought to at least have as much sense as the Greeks.

There shall be a responsibility on your shoulders to determine whether there is sufficient reason even when porneia occurs. It certainly includes prostitution, homosexuality, and it includes a lot more that most people are not really aware of. But the question is, is it sufficient in your case? Is it warranted even if it's permissible? And you're going to be judged whether you're angry with a brother on the basis of a sufficient cause. You're going to be judged whether it was needful to break a home and ruin children's lives because porneia was involved.

Sexual misconduct or whether it would be better to forgive.

There is no statement that if you forgive her once or twice or three times that you can't forgive her again or no statement that you can't get a divorce that the problem gets worse and becomes intolerable. But the responsibility is yours to make the decision.

And you're going to be judged for the kind of decision you make.

You better think clearly before you make one with insufficient ground once you end up in the kingdom of God with insufficient reason to be above the bottom of the totem pole. And then you've heard it said, you shall not forswear yourself, but you shall perform under the Lord your oaths. Now Jesus here is varying from two of the Ten Commandments. Then he takes the question of administering divorce. There are laws pertaining to that. Now there are laws pertaining to the appearance of one in court. How do you handle a matter of oaths? And he points up here that we're not to swear.

We're to be telling the truth when we say yes and telling the truth when we say no and leave it at that. And in verse 38 he said you've heard that it has been said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. I say unto you that you resist not evil. It doesn't say the evil one because you are to resist the devil. We're talking about here, listen carefully, people whose motives are not right who would take advantage of you in a court situation because he's following up on the question of swearing in a place like that. Instead of anybody smites you on the right cheek, turn to him the other way. So you're in court and if you're smitten on one side, take it even if he wants to smite you on the other. You're not talking of somebody who wants to break into your home and rape your wife and your daughter. I think we need to get these pictures clear and see the context. That's the time to smite him on both cheeks and somewhere else too.

And I'm not speaking out of turn and I'm speaking church doctrine.

There are some people who don't understand when you take action to constrain an individual and when you submit to public abuse.

If any man will sue you at law and wants to take your coat, don't make a big issue and try to deny him something else.

Whosoever will compel you like the Romans did the Jews to go a mile, be willing to go even two. Don't argue at the end of the first mile.

You see you are dealing with matters here that are important in terms of the administration.

The law says eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth and you have to know how to administer it.

When parents spank children, which is too often now neglected in the church of God, because some didn't know how to handle it properly, the others decided not to handle it at all.

The answer is you're using a certain amount of careful punishment to bring around the individual and to correct that individual.

But there's a time that you don't abuse individuals and authority in a court.

I've been in a court twice and you have to be very careful what you say.

You can put the judge on the spot and do it right or you can do it wrong.

Like the one time when I was in a court in California, the opposition lawyer said now, would you mean to tell me the judge so-and-so could not become a member of your church and remain on the bench? He was going to try to get me to say something that would impugn the ability of the judge either to be converted or to be the judge. So I said very plain and simple.

He just walked into this one. I said, if judge so-and-so can in all good conscience uphold the law of the land and obey the Bible, he can sit on the bench and be a member of the church.

It's up to the judge to decide.

The lawyer got off on another question right away because obviously he had put the judge in a bad spot. Now the law further says, give to him who asked of you and of him who would borrow of you, turn not away. And if some people who don't understand how to apply this to the point where they decide they can give everything away, assume the other man now is the owner and you're the borrower. Jesus gave a principle and it is up to you to judge how far you go with it.

And you're going to be held responsible for whether you spend your children's and your grandchildren's inheritance merely because some neighbor knows your soft touch.

If there is a need, make a provision. We're told that if a man will not work, he should not eat.

That's contrary of course to American practice today, where we take care of all people, the lazy, and the promiscuous as well in our society.

List 43. You've heard that has been said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemies.

I say unto you, love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to them who hate you, pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you. Point number one, what do you mean, love your enemies? Jesus doesn't define it any further. He just says love your enemies, says bless those that curse you. How do you do it? It isn't further defined. Do good to those who hate you. Well, how much good? Pray for those who despitefully use you. It's up to you to decide how much to pray. There's no limit set except loving your enemies. That's the broadest perspective and how you carry it out emotionally might differ. If your enemy has just killed your mother or your children, you might not react in the same way as if you are otherwise untouched by an enemy. And God would have to understand both situations. I say there are people who, because of what Adolf Hitler did, are going to put themselves out of the kingdom of God who couldn't forgive him. There are people who have put themselves out of the church of God because they couldn't forgive the mistake of someone in the church. There was a woman years ago who said, if you're going to be in the kingdom of God, I won't be there. I decided to stay there.

And she stayed away for years.

And when she finally acknowledged it's all my fault, she came back and she was a changed woman.

So he has six points thus far. If you've numbered them, notice it. Verse 21 is 1. Verse 27 is 2.

Verse 31 is 3. Verse 33 is 4. Verse 38 is 5. Verse 43 is 6. Now, Jesus, like the good minister, would have seven points. The last one is, therefore, be there for perfect even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect. And that covers all the rest of the law.

The other eight points of the Ten Commandments, the rest of administration. And you, brethren, become responsible for looking at the law, not how to get around it, not how to say, well, that example wasn't for us. We live in a different time. It's your responsibility to see that you make that law perfected in your life, that you make your lifestyle over so that you now have the way of life that God lays out. That we should be unified by is the way of life and not divided by the emphasis on lifestyle. We must come to the place where it is our clear responsibility to recognize whether headquarters speaks with one clarion voice or many of the latter is more common. That speaks at all. It is still your responsibility to fulfill Matthew 548.

Be you perfect even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect.

And if any of you fall short of that, you have more work to do.

We don't have to argue about birthdays because they're more important things.

We need to have our perspectives right.

I think Mr. Albert Atlas put it very well for me when we were talking about this very matter.

When we seek to have the Bible as the focus of our thinking and not whether what the world is doing is something we can do a little more left close. When we have the Bible as our focus, we'll begin to get right answers instead of looking at what the world does and say, well, can I do it or shouldn't I do it? I think it is ridiculous to waste time and argue the question of birthdays. I'm using that because it is that small in my mind. I want to know what God says I ought to be doing, not how far I can stretch the wall or not how close to the world I can come and still not be worldly. There is so much that we need to do that's in the Bible, both collectively and individually, that we really don't have time wondering about how many things in the world we can entertain ourselves with or do and not be condemned.

It's a long approach.

Jesus now has completed how we should take the law and look at it, and if you think that he left out 99 percent of the points, the answer is yes, he did and he leaves it up to you to go from here and to look at all the law. I was discussing the question of a man who recently was divorced with approval because he had in fact violated a fundamental law of God which says that a man should not marry the sister in the lifetime of the other one. A man shall not marry a mother and her daughter, whether he gets a divorce or not. That's really the basis for not divorce, it's the basis for annulment, but the world doesn't accept that. So I explained to this individual that there are those laws and in the sense this individual was not really aware, well we had never really looked at all that. I said to him clearly, I said whether I ever get to all the law from the pulpit, whether Mr. Meeker ever covers all the law or not, you are still accountable for it. Whether the church has ever spoken about a subject doesn't mean it is closed to you if it is in the Bible and you're responsible for handling a matter covered by a statement, an example, or a law. Jesus then goes on and he talks about alms that is giving to people who have need. Then he talks about prayer and how you approach the problem and where you put your investments.

Verse 19 of the next chapter, and you can't divide your allegiance. You either serve God or you serve the world. One possible service, of course some people merely serve themselves.

You're told to seek first the kingdom of God, verse 33, in his righteousness.

That's your motive. There he goes back and summarizes the whole thing that in all this you need to put first things first. Then he talks about how to handle judgmental matters in chapter seven. The manner in which you judge will be the manner in which you will be judged.

He discusses a number of other things. Today, of course, we have forgotten it seems much of verse 13 of chapter seven. Enter in at the straight gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way.

That leads to destruction and many there be that go in there at. Today, many ministers say, well, I want to be in the middle of the broad spectrum. That's exactly where they are.

In the middle of this broad road that leads to destruction. I've often said that's not my problem. I'm on another road entirely. I don't have to worry about whether I am to the far right or to the far left because the road I'm on doesn't allow for such broad decisions.

Jesus says the law of God isn't involved with that kind of thing.

It means you had straight for a goal and that there may be problems on one side and on another, and you avoid all pitfall. And you take the one path that God lays out even if there are problems that the law makes for you in this kind of society, which is lawless.

Verse 21, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of my Father who is in heaven. And this is the general summary.

He taught them as one having authority, not as the scribes who were arguing all kinds of points.

That's as far as we need to go.

We're here to see that when Jesus himself defines what a man's conduct should be, he approaches the topic interestingly in this fashion. Now there are some things that Jesus could approach by word. And what you read in Matthew chapter 5 represents the letter of the law of the New Covenant, because it is written in the letters of the Greek just like the Hebrew was the letter in Hebrew of the Old Covenant. You are asked to take that material and to go from there and to interpret the law according to the spirit and intent as revealed by other laws and as revealed by the examples of the patriarch's prophets and apostles and Jesus Christ himself. Now a point. There are some laws such as you shall not commit adultery that Jesus tightened up. There are other laws you shall not kill that he tightened up. In the sense that he put more constraints and defined that many loopholes really didn't exist except in people's mind. Now when those laws were given, they went to the extreme of allowing a lot of loopholes and attitudes. Now when the Sabbath was given, the Sabbath was given in a form like this, you shall not do any work. That is absolute. So Jesus came to lift certain burdens that in the letter of the law were imposed on the Sabbath that weren't there initially in Genesis chapter 2.

Jesus chose not to deal with the question of the Sabbath in the form of law, he chose to deal with the question of the Sabbath in the form of a personal series of examples.

And so we discover that through the New Testament we have the examples of Jesus. Jesus did rescind the letter of the law just like he tightened it up in other areas.

So that the statement you shall not do any work even to open or close this Bible is by technical definition involving a certain amount of the expenditure of energy and therefore his work.

Then how else were you going to administer a law and make it simple unless you forbid it all and then have the judge use good judgment as to how far to go. So the law was given in a very tight form

in that matter and Jesus therefore clearly loosed the people from some of the responsibilities that would obviously be imposed in the form that the law was initially given at Sinai in the letter. Now people needn't have jumped that track, they decided to loose the Sabbath which of course they have no right to do. Jesus has lorded that Sabbath and he showed how it ought to be kept so that we now have both the statements of Jesus, the teaching of Jesus, the apostles, prophets. We have the examples of Jesus, the patriarchs, sometimes the prophets and the apostles and it's up to us to be responsible for reading this material and put it to work.

Now this is not a message that allows you the liberty of doing everything you please but it does give you a responsibility. It is a message of responsibility, it is not a message of permissiveness. It is a message that tells you you better tighten up areas that you've allowed to become a little loose in your life and maybe you in a few cases need to loosen up areas that were needlessly tight in how you conducted yourself but in any case you're going to be responsible and anybody who thinks he can get around the intent of the law is sadly mistaken.

Now if we're going to fulfill our purpose in lifting up our voices as a trumpet and making God's message clear, it is time we did it in such a fashion that we all began to have the same fundamental right approach and respect to this book we call the Bible and the tragedy of course is that there is a great divergence in terms of whether this Bible really means what it says in terms of its impact on our lives. This is the festival of trumpets.

We could define God's dealing with the world. I have chosen instead to warn you because we are drifting to that stage where instead of being lovers of the word of God we take for granted because so much has been written so much has been said so many services have been attended so many festivals that we think we know it and we no longer have recourse to the Bible as the solution to our problems and we're not qualifying for the time of the resurrection which is at the last trump and we're going to be ready as individuals and as a collective body we're going to have to examine ourselves. I'm going to cite in closing that section which we used to cite when it was not a problem and now we don't want to face it when it is.

Jesus says to one of the congregations in a letter through John to all Christians for all time he says I stand at the door and knock if any man will hear my voice and open the door I will come in and sit down and suck with him and the problem there is not heresy the problem there is what you're doing in your private life if you please write around the dinner table because the issue is he doesn't say come in and I will teach you he doesn't say come in and we'll discuss doctrine he says come in and I'll sit down and we'll have a conversation and we'll be around the dinner table and we'll eat it is what is in the people's private lives at home that is the critical problem at the close of society and of the church of God and because people have not looked at the law in terms of its intent they've gotten gossip in their minds they're not interested in evaluating the implications of law as they should be they're interested in some new bit of information which is hugely misinformation they've got everything out of focus let us at this time in our lives at this time in the history of the Chicago churches of God we dedicate ourselves to the commitment which Jesus gave when he said we you therefore perfect as your father in heaven is perfect