

801004 Purpose of Life Character HLH PAS CA

Good afternoon to you.

For all the years that I have known Mr. Hal Finch and he now is in the photo files for the plain truth and is responsible for acquiring the photographic resources of the magazine, I had never realized that his wife plays piano like that.

We have a rather quiet area, I think we should have a change.

I really appreciate the implications also of the song in terms of the making us aware of the important events taking place in Eastern Europe and in the thinking, especially in the people who took the brunt of the Second World War.

In 41 years ago, of course, this month Poland was brought down by the armies of Nazi Germany.

Today, of course, things seem so different and the Poles are still seeking to acquire that kind of respectable freedom that has given them the capacity as a people to survive linguistically and nationally despite major powers on either side of her.

I would like to give best wishes from any of the brethren who might normally be in Detroit or may have been there for the festival.

My wife and I were there for the first part of the festival.

It is an in-city environment right along the river linking two of the Great Lakes.

Detroit certainly reflected as a festival site what many of us experienced for years in the region of Big Sandy, Texas.

Even though the environment was quite different, the hall was very, very similar in the response, the nature of the setting.

Of all the music I heard during the festival, apart from what one might have seen on film from Tucson, one doesn't judge that in the same way as when you see the live performers, I was remarkably impressed by the finesse of the groups that contributed to the music in Detroit.

Everything seemed to be right on time.

That is, the voices simply hung together as very few groups do when you combine groups from different church areas.

A remarkable presentation.

We had the chance also of spending a little more time in an area of South Dakota, Rapid City, east of the Black Hills, one of the more beautiful sites in the nation, and certainly the setting there was a reminder of the grounds around here, though not so well kept.

Of course, it's a municipal setting.

Yet the public building, which belongs to the community in which the services were held and the study, was in a beautiful setting with stream, lake, trees, and lawns.

Not to mention, of course, the lovely area around and the climate.

Most of the people there were farmers.

We had a special study, and I would say that probably half to two-thirds of all the people, the minimum turned out for a study devoted to specific questions that two of us handled with respect to the problems of farming, the Bible, connection with our responsibility in handling that part of God's nature.

I had a chance briefly to be in Tucson.

I was not scheduled to be back here, but since I spoke on Tuesday and found that going from Rapid City to Tucson was going from rest to the artificial noise of the...

I guess one would say it's typical of most hotels and motels.

You have the constant noise all night of the air conditioner, and we simply didn't get any suitable rest.

And I decided that since our children were here, I might as well come back, and we enjoyed the last two days in the services while we were in the gymnasium.

All of us all piped in. It was very clear and effective.

So I was asked today, since I didn't have a chance to greet any of the brethren formally during the feast here, if I would pinch it for Mr. Tkach, who was asked to go to Arizona.

Before I go on with the subject, however, I would just like to mention one small matter.

One of the members from Long Beach Church handed me an interesting to me clipping from the Los Angeles Times of today on the impact of the visit of the King of Tonga to West Germany.

Many of the West Germans have now become interested in going there.

Of course, as any great visitor, he said, I love the Germans when he visited West Germany, and all the Germans who heard him took him so seriously that there has been an overwhelming response to either visit the country or to want to settle there.

He said, I would like to have more Germans in my kingdom, but he didn't realize that there are so many Germans that it would overwhelm his realm.

Anyway, they're solving the problem in part by telling the Germans that it would be better if they want to get an answer to their interest and correspondence if they'd write in English, because English, of course, is the international language of Tonga.

I happen to have in my office a package, which is one of the reasons for mentioning it, which is a photograph of the King of Tonga and his wife visiting the president and his wife of West Germany.

It was taken by our staff members on the plain truth.

Also, the gentlemen anyway, both of them in a sense, work for the work, but the gentleman, Mr. Alfred Hennig, is also the official West German photographer, and he took a beautiful picture as well as others of his series, and Mr. Frank Schnee, who is responsible for our efforts in Germany, had a non-glare glass and a beautiful but simple wooden frame put around the picture, and it's left to me to see that we get it to Tonga, and Mr. Hangana, who is responsible for our group there, will use his good judgment as to how he should present it to the king, Tupu IV and his wife, which would be very important for, of course, our work there.

For in Tonga, we are now on radio that's supported by the tithes of the local brethren.

Also, the prince of Tonga has a radio broadcast, and in many cases, Mr. Hangana has reported in others, that the prince listens to what we have to say about world news and world events and explains it to his people in Tonga, which is a real development.

I was scheduled to take a trip around the world, but I have decided with the events in the Middle East, and an insufficient amount of time that I might have to do at piecemeal.

Some time later, our office in New Zealand had asked me to give a plain truth lecture, which would, of course, be in translation in Tonga, and I will not forget that, but at this moment, I think it would be better to wait for a proper longer range moment for such a program.

Anyway, the work there is gradually developing outside now for the first time of the one main island, whereas in Fiji, nearby, the work has been scattered through the islands in Tonga, it was rather limited.

But it's good news wherever the work has grown, and I hope to hear how things went there.

I've recently had a letter from Mr. Hangana and wrote him back on behalf of all of the brethren here in Pasadena.

This afternoon, in our near and hour left, I would like to discuss an overview after we have heard the Festival of Tabernacles, the 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 discussed and I should say 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, and inheritance or 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 go 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, have 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 1 John 1, in the beginning you have the word logos, verbom 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, verses 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 in English, but just left as the original Hebrew is, a seraph and a carib, 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 light bringer 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 had 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 light bringer, this supreme angel or carib, 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 is important that we turn to this particular verse.

John 8.44, I'm reading from the Revised Standard Version.

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 have 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, 1 John.

Chapter 3, verse 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 a 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 a transgression of the law.

In verse John 3.4, same book.

Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness.

Sin is lawlessness.

King James Version says sin is a transgression of law.

Now here we are dealing with the nature.

Satan speaks of 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 effective 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 governance 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 Yahweh, who is the ever-living God.

Yahweh is the Hebrew word, which means ever-living, or the eternal one.

Translated Lord, usually in the most English renderings, that 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, abandoned 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 redefine the way the universe should be run to determine the results of how spirits should live.

In this 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, or 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 had 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 whom we know as the devil or that serpent, Lucifer, who had become a Satan or an adversary, deceived the woman into thinking that there were other ways of acquiring all the things that God knew rather than 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 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 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 6,000 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, and 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 2,000 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 King James is more effective here, perfect, blameless as 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 lords or Yahweh'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, to 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, and 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, was voluntary, a particular nation that God would choose, and he would provide them a land in which to live, 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 a masculine sense, they should also be a church.

That is, the religious 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 and the pastures that the bees would simply produce more than enough good things to eat, and the cattle, and 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 with the first Israeli governor general of the Sinai, who has been a friend of this work ever since, Major Rotem is his name, and as you get to the top, of course, it is suddenly smooth and you take off your shoes.

And the picture had me in bare feet, and the photographer thought that's no way to print the picture, and so they colored the feet green, that would do for shoes.

I was not at all pleased with their editorial views, or I would have kept my shoes on.

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 fourth, 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.

And 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 that 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 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 know other people, to know Indians in the New World, to know people in Europe or Africa, to know 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 His 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, will 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 Yahweh 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 in 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 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 a 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 was 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 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 people 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 19th centuries, God's churches 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 is 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 lifetime 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're 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 2 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 rethink 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 in all the human family that has been repentant, converted and ultimately born again, functioning as the wife of Christ, who was the husband, just as ancient Israel should have been the wife, and Yahweh 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 are 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.