

# Who Is the King of Glory?

Terry Swagerty

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Here we are, brethren, on day six of the Feast of Tabernacles, and we're all on a spiritual journey of sorts. The title of this sermon is, "Who Is the King of Glory?"

This is the last remnant to the original sermon that I had prepared for this particular occasion. I will touch on the question, not just because it's part of the title but to illustrate the principle that I want to talk about today. Most of what I was going to say, related to the King of Glory—from Psalm 24, and Zechariah 13 and 14—has been covered once, twice, three times, so no need for me necessarily to re-do all of that. However, in our spiritual journey we've all had a starting point of sorts, have we not? Some of us have been at it for decades and even generations. There are perhaps some who have had a little later start, but nevertheless, we're on this journey and we take our beliefs and practices from the cues we get in our youth, from our families, from our communities, and thus we grow up believing what we've seen around us.

In my case, I grew up in a mainstream Protestant family. We did the usual things—went to Sunday School every Sunday of my life, I suppose, until I left for college (University of California Davis) and like most college students there were so many other activities; maybe I made it to church on Sunday, maybe I didn't. That's the way it was—Methodist Youth Fellowship, on Christmas we set up our Christmas tree, and we looked for ways to make the Christmas tree fit some kind of an imaginary or mythological Christianity that we had come to understand. We did our little gifts up and in our particular tradition, in central California, we gathered up boxes of gifts and sent them to the Fred Finch Children's Home in Stockton. It was an orphanage and we were learning to share and give in the Christmas spirit and all that sort of thing. It seemed like a good thing to do.

One day, once upon a time, something happened to upset the apple cart, so to speak—to interrupt the status quo. As I recall the story, it was the summer of 1962; my brother was tuning the dial of his big transistor radio, looking for his favorite pop tune, and he encountered XERB, a 50,000-watt, gospel radio station out of California, and that's where we encountered *The World Tomorrow* broadcast. We were challenged to blow the dust off our Bible and take a look to see if what we believed was actually there. Seems like a strange thing to do—well, of course what I believe is true! Grandma and Grandpa do it, Mom and Dad do it, so naturally I do it—it has to be true, right? That's just the way it is.

So we did blow the dust off our Bible, and then certain questions began to arise, as we studied the scripture and began to look at it. Which day is the Christian Sabbath, for example. Sunday, of course, because that's what Grandma and Grandpa did, it's what Mom and Dad did. As we looked closer, we realized that's really not what the scripture says. Okay, everybody does it—everybody keeps Sunday. Seventh Day Adventists

didn't, but I didn't know any Seventh Day Adventists, so I just assumed that we were right about Sunday. So other things came up—our understanding of Easter and Good Friday and that sort of thing, and one by one we began to realize that a lot of our long-held beliefs were based on tradition, not really on scripture. It began to have that effect—a turn-you-on-your-head effect—and we realized that we had some adjustments to make. So a question came up then: Why the sudden interest in alternatives?

Things were going along perfectly well in my Protestant upbringing, everything was quite satisfactory, but suddenly there was this interest in alternatives. In the course of events, maybe it was a through a Correspondence Course lesson or something, we came to the principle, in Revelation 12:9, that there is a devil who deceives the entire world. That's an interesting concept—could it be that I've been deceived and that what I believe is really just a clever counterfeit? That sort of causes one to pause and give it some thought.

Thus began my fifty-seven-year journey of a spiritual nature, to try and make myself become a part of what God wants done. Let's turn to Matthew, chapter 13. As we reflect on these things, as I've said, I've been at it now for fifty-seven years and been up and down, kicked from pillar to post a few times, and, as we say, this old boy has been around the block a couple of times. Granted, Wil Berg has been around it a time or two more than I have, but after this length of time, one begins to realize that this is serious business—being called of God and trying to take His way of life seriously.

**Matthew 13:10** *And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"*

11) *He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. (NKJV)*

Notice, *it has been given to you*. It is not something that we came up with on our own. I was perfectly happy to be a Methodist, to keep Christmas, to put up my Christmas tree, hide Easter eggs, and all the rest of that stuff. But this was given to us.

12) *For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.*

13) *Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.*

14) *And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive;*

15) *For the hearts of this people have grown dull. (NKJV)*

That pretty well describes our modern world, relative to the spiritual principles that God is teaching us. *The hearts of this people have grown dull*. How does that happen? How does a knife get dull? You use it, you don't sharpen it, and it gets dull. If we don't sharpen our minds spiritually, we get dull; we lose the concept of God's way of life.

15 continued) ...*Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed ...* (NKJV)

That's how it is sometimes; we brush up against the truth and say, uh-oh, I don't want to go there, let's close our eyes and move on.

15 continued) ... *Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.*' (NKJV)

This particular bit of scripture is sandwiched in between the parable of the sower and the seed, and the explanation of the parable. I will touch on the parable a little bit but I want to go first to Matthew 7. I think the principle of the narrow and straight gate mentioned earlier bears repeating, because this is what we've come up against. As we begin to allow our lives to get into harmony with God's way of thinking, God's way of doing things, we notice it's not exactly an easy way. These are the words of Jesus, from the Sermon on the Mount, chapter 7 and verse 13.

**Matthew 7:13** *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.* (NKJV)

If you stop and meditate on that principle, it's a way that leads to destruction, and there are many who are being destroyed.

14) *Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

15) *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*

16) *You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?*

17) *Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.* (NKJV)

So we have the principle. We realize it's difficult—and if you didn't realize it right up front, let's go back to the parable and the explanation in chapter 13. It becomes apparent to us, as we begin to understand God's way and He begins to reveal the truth to us, that certain obstacles are immediately in the way. The parable of the sower and the seed illustrates the point. As Jesus says here in verse 18 of chapter 13,

**Matthew 13:18** *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower:*

19) *When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.* (NKJV)

Some people are so inclined that if something religious is presented to them—I don't want anything to do with that, see you later—they walk away. Other people are happy

with their religion—don't tell me about it, I'm happy with what I have; don't bother me with whatever else you're trying to present here. Other people of course just don't comprehend. When someone hears the word of the Kingdom and does not understand, the wicked one has come along—there's a wicked one involved. The devil doesn't want us to understand. The devil doesn't want anyone to understand. We understand because God has given us a special insight so that we can begin to comprehend. Notice verse 20.

*20) But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; (NKJV)*

I recall, over the years, visiting numerous families that we viewed as prospective members; they had inquired about a visit and they were just excited and joyful about coming to an understanding of the truth.

*21) yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. (NKJV)*

A lot of people want the Kingdom of God, and they want the the joy that it brings, but without tribulation, without persecution. Oh, time out—I thought this was from God, so I shouldn't have to be suffering these things. If that's what it means, I'll go back to my comfortable situation, put up my Christmas tree along with my friends and relatives, and just carry on. This one has stumbled, and the truth of God just doesn't take root.

*22) Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. (NKJV)*

It's hard for us sometimes to comprehend that you cannot serve two masters—it's one or the other. The world will insist that you pursue the cares of the world, and there is a deceitfulness of riches—the primary college curriculum can be summarized as promoting upward mobility. And if somehow or other, God doesn't choose to put you on a track for upward mobility, where you're going to have more than your parents and your children will have more than you have, and somehow or other it looks like that's not going to happen, what is the solution to this? Go back to the way you were? The deceitfulness of riches chokes the Word and one becomes unfruitful. Oh yes, there are always things out there to choke the Word.

*23) But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it ... (NKJV)*

And in spite of the tribulation, in spite of the persecution, in spite of the pressures of this world and the difficulties around, this one manages, with God's help, to bear fruit.

23 continued) ... *who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*" (NKJV)

I don't think it's an exaggeration to say, if we were to sit down and compare notes, that there isn't anyone in this room or anyone listening in who hasn't had to endure some very serious situations that made them somewhat uncomfortable. We have to come to grips with the fact that the truth of God is disruptive. Just think back to the beginning, when you began to embrace the concept (or just the practicality) of trying to observe the seventh-day Sabbath, and what that might have meant for you. Your friends, family, and neighbors might have thought, what kind of a weird organization are you hooked up with? Then there's the business of employment and the kids' activities at school, and all that sort of thing, and it can be disruptive. God is in the process of teaching us the truth. Are we going to put God first or are we not? We just have to come to grips with the fact that Almighty God has called us to a different way, and we have to decide what we're going to be doing and how we are going to do it. Are we going to obey God or are we just going to stick to our old paradigms and go on as usual?

With regard to the present challenges in the church, we are involved, quite frankly, in a paradigm shift. We're coming to a deeper understanding of certain things as God leads us—we trust that that is indeed the case; I think that it certainly is. We're moving from a paradigm in which at one point we embraced the idea that we are the one and only true church, who possess the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. That's the whole paradigm, isn't it? Then we come to realize, maybe that's not right, maybe what we need to do is simply hook into the leadership of God's Holy Spirit and go where the Spirit leads us. It does make for an interesting paradigm shift. It's important for us to recognize that there is truth, but we have to be careful to make sure we don't get involved in a situation where we decide, I've got it all now, all the truth, and I'll build a fence around it and defend it. That's sometimes what we find ourselves doing, and I had to come to grips with that personally, in my own situation.

A couple years ago, as it began to influence me personally, I encountered a situation; it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread, in which you prepare sermons in the usual way, and there's the old concept—the current controversy, which oftentimes revolves around the record of God and Christ in scripture—and one of the big principles was, is Jesus the God of the Old Testament? I remember when it hit me—when it struck me personally—and I said, wait a second, let's take a closer look at that. That's the way we were schooled, that's what we came to understand. I said, let's do a little survey; I did a web search prior to the Days of Unleavened Bread a couple years ago, and I looked up six different church of God websites, and it wasn't hard to identify literature that claimed that Jesus was the God of the Old Testament. They quoted 1 Corinthians 10:4—that Rock that followed them was Christ. That was cited as proof that Jesus was the God of the Old Testament.

So I pause and I think about that for a minute, and I say, wait a second, what does it actually say? Well, right there—it says it right there—Jesus is the God of the Old Testament. Really? Why didn't I see this before? What it says is, *For they drank of*

*that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.* Okay, He was there, wasn't He? But does it say He was the God of the Old Testament?

Think about the term, God of the Old Testament, for just a second. What does that imply? Does it imply there's a God of the New Testament? What have you heard relative to God of the Old Testament and God of the New Testament? There are those who contend that the God of the Old Testament is just an old, hanging judge, who is out to find all kinds of excuses to get rid of people, to curse them, to carry out genocide and all that sort of stuff. The God of the New Testament is gracious, compassionate and loving—right? Yet they want Jesus to be the God of the Old Testament. How does that work? Has anybody ever thought that through?

I might ask myself, did I think it through? Well, yes, one begins to examine the subject thoroughly. So I did this little survey and in the sermon I gave in the aftermath of that, I made note of this survey, and I said that it's been a long-held belief, and part of our doctrinal integrity, that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament, and frankly, 1 Corinthians 10:4 doesn't say that. I tell you what, that got me in hot water. They had to pull the sermon—don't post that one! I got in trouble over that, and it was interesting, about that time I decided that I needed to weigh in. Are we being led into all truth or are we not? What's the deal? Do I build a fence around my beliefs and allow nothing in or out? At some point in time I said it's time for me to weigh in, because my understanding is changing and I'm beginning to see some things I hadn't seen before, and there is potential for trouble here.

So I wrote a memo—I'll call it my memo of concern—and I'll share parts of it with you, just to give you an example of, how do we respond, to whom do we owe our allegiance, and at what point do we recognize that some adjustments need to be made? So I sent this to the authorities there—the powers that be—and I quoted certain sources, word-for-word from scripture. I quoted Peter; I quoted the other apostles; I quoted Stephen; I quoted Jesus; I quoted Paul. No commentary, and I didn't quote any church literature, just straight out of the scripture, and the whole thing was on half a page—all of it. Then I closed the memo this way: *Clearly, Jesus is not the God of the Old Testament. That notion is not found in scripture but in the literature and tradition of the various churches of God. When are we going to correct this error?* I had the presumption to point out that there was an error that needed to be corrected. Frankly, I thought at the time that my influence would be about as weighty as the dust on the scale, and, as it turned out, it was even less than that.

So what did I get in response? I got a four-page, technical paper, which discussed, not the scripture, but defended the corporate understanding, and in that, there are certain denominational and doctrinal biases that are there. What I was looking for was, can we acknowledge this issue? I responded to the four-page, technical explanation, defending the current understanding in this way: Is Peter not a good witness? Is he not a reliable witness? What about the other apostles? Can we not take what they say as being true? How about Stephen? How about Paul? What about Jesus? One of the points made in the defense of the corporate approach was John 5:37; let's read it. It's been

pointed out earlier—Will Berg pointed it out—that there are some distinct biases that have crept into, or been deliberately put into, the English translations of the scripture that are misleading.

**John 5:37** *And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.* (NKJV)

So there you have it. That was one of the points made in the response to my memo, that nobody has heard God's voice. I said, okay, let's consider that. Let's turn to Mark, chapter 12, just as an example, because things have to make sense. I'm trying to weigh in, and let it be known that there are some troubling issues here and let's examine them. Considering the voice of God—has anybody ever heard the voice of God? What's the deal? Was John confused, was Jesus confused? This is Mark 12:24, where there were these seven brothers and one woman, and she in turn married all seven of them in succession, and the question was, in the resurrection, who will be her husband? Whose wife will she be?

**Mark 12:24** *Jesus answered and said to them, "Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?*

*25) For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.*

*26) But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses [this is Jesus speaking—I have a red-letter edition, it's all in red], in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him ...* (NKJV)

Jesus said God spoke to Moses in the burning bush. How then you can say that no one has ever heard the voice of God? What did Jesus say?

*26 continued) ... how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?*

*27) He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken."* (NKJV)

I suppose what got me in trouble with my original memo was I didn't quote church literature, I just quoted the scripture. I'm going to read a couple of these scriptures for your consideration. God's Holy Spirit begins to ruffle the waters (and your feathers a little bit) saying, you need to wake up and understand certain things that are happening. You're familiar with these scriptures; they're not new to you. So Peter says in Acts 3:13,

**Acts 3:13** *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.* (NKJV)

Jesus is the glorified Servant of God, He is not the God of the Old Testament. That's what Peter said. Is Peter a reliable witness? Ask yourself—was he? Can we believe

what he said, can we depend on his testimony? Later, in Acts 5, Peter and the other apostles were quoted, saying,

**Acts 5:30** *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.*

31) *Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior ...* (NKJV)

He's not the God of the Old Testament. He's the Son whom God raised up, whom God placed at His own right hand. Is the testimony of the apostles reliable? Stephen—he's about ready to be stoned for his testimony. He stated, concerning the incident at the burning bush, that when Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight as he drew near to observe, and the voice of the LORD came to him saying, I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob. Then of course, in Jesus' own words, as we saw in Mark 12, He confirmed the fact that it was the Father who spoke to Moses. Paul, in writing to Timothy, declares, for there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus Christ. So Jesus Christ is not the one God, He is the Mediator between the one God and man. In writing to the Corinthians, in 1 Corinthians 8 and verse 6, Paul says,

**1 Corinthians 8:6** *... yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.* (NKJV)

Brethren, what should I do, how should I respond? I quoted scripture and it wasn't very well received. So we run up against this paradigm, once again. I go back and I review the paradigm just briefly, because, you see, we're moving away from this whole notion that because we have long-held beliefs, therefore they must be true because we've believed them for a long time. There was a time when our long-held belief and a part of our doctrinal integrity included keeping Pentecost on Monday. When was the last time you did that? There are probably people in here who have never done that because it's been a number of years ago. There was a time when our understanding of divorce and remarriage just placed a big, huge, stumbling block into the path of many people who would have been upstanding Christians—members of the church of God.

There was a time when we had this special understanding about the prophetic significance of nineteen-year time cycles. That was a part of our doctrinal integrity—we made a big deal out of it. What about that? The point is, we have been wrong before, we might be wrong again. Now if you insist on being the one true church, possessing the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, then that's the end of growth—you cannot grow because you have it all. Anybody who brings any alternative, some kind of new insight, into understanding some particular point or other—no, dismiss them. Call them a heretic. I've been called worse than that. (As my father-in-law would have said, call me anything you want, just don't call me late for dinner.)

It's a serious business, so what are you going to do? To be fair now, when we started this whole business, I would like to believe that the ecclesiastical and the corporate



portions were pretty much harmonious; that there was an attempt to recover truth, to present it as scripture-based, and to set aside our traditions and the like.

Let's just notice a couple of principles here. You remember the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. Let's turn to Acts 8 and notice, because Philip is told, in verse 29 of Acts 8,

**Acts 8:29** *Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." (NKJV)*

So this Ethiopian, who is from the Queen's court, is there, and Philip overtakes him, and what does he find?

30) *So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"*

31) *And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" (NKJV)*

We have to be taught. Somehow or other, God makes a way for us to come in contact with a teacher of some sort. It might have been a voice over the radio, it might have been certain literature—there's nothing wrong with material to enhance our biblical understanding; Bible study aides, if you will. But we have to make sure, of course, that they are in harmony with what the scripture says.

31 continued) *... And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.*

32) *The place in the Scripture which he read was this [quoting from Isaiah]: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opened not His mouth.*

33) *In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth."*

34) *So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" (NKJV)*

Teach me—what have you found? There comes a moment when we need to be taught.

35) *Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. (NKJV)*

I think it's interesting—*beginning at this Scripture*. Thus, one doesn't need to turn to the latest booklet just off the press. Philip taught him from the scriptures.

Now let's turn to Titus. Paul is writing to Titus and he's giving instruction here. Titus is commissioned to raise up elders and lead them in the church, so Paul gives him some instruction on the kind of characteristics that an elder should have. Actually, the term in the King James and the New King James is *bishop*, but it means "an overseer". "Bishop" is one of those terms that Wil Berg was referring to, that was inserted into scripture to maintain the status quo, relative to government from the top down.

**Titus 1:7** *For a bishop [an overseer] must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,*

*8) but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,*

*9) holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. (NKJV)*

We are to teach as we have been taught. History tells us that we have been taught some things that weren't correct. So going forward then, we should be careful that what we are teaching is correct. This changed the whole dynamic.

I've had this conversation with other elders who find it their responsibility now to stand at the pulpit and teach, and I have to admit that the realization came to me, not too many years ago (and I've admitted this in public before), that I had spent the bulk of my ministry in the church of God, teaching, to do—what? To support and defend the status quo: This is what the booklet says, this is what the Correspondence Course says, and I assumed that it was harmonious with scripture. Let's be fair, in most cases it was, but there have been instances where obviously we had to make some changes. So this realization was a horrible reawakening.

When you consider preparing a sermon, a message, and you're going to present it, what do you do? It isn't now a matter of being harmonious with some corporate representation or understanding, but rather, what does the scripture say? Is what you're about to say in harmony with the word of God? Abraham was seventy-five-years old when God called him. I turned seventy-five last December and was really hoping that this was the end of the trail. Really, I was ready to hang it up, I had had enough. Well, here I am. I've learned this: You can run but you cannot hide. Believe me, I've had my situations that I've had to deal with.

If there is sound doctrine, there must be unsound doctrine, and there are some that contradict, so we must be careful. We can't just go around preaching any old blasphemous fairy tale that comes to mind. What we teach has to be in harmony with scripture and what God teaches. 1 Corinthians 1—this is another one of those principles that we are reminded of. Pity the poor Corinthian church—they had their issues, and Paul had to deal with some of those.

**1 Corinthians 1:10** *Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (NKJV)*

Very well. What happens? You find yourself thinking, if you quote scripture and it doesn't meet with some standard or understanding, what are you supposed to do? What was I supposed to do? How would you respond? How did you respond? We had

that to deal with. We are all to speak the same thing. Suddenly, I'm not speaking the same thing, so what could I do? "You can believe whatever you want but you can't teach it here." Very well—adios. It's a difficult thing, once again, to come to grips with the fact that you have your conscience to live with.

Seek out your own salvation with fear and trembling. I know everybody wants to be saved, brethren, but where is the fear and trembling? Do we truly fear and tremble? We have to get our nose into the scripture and truly read it and study it. We have to wean ourselves from the notion that reading a magazine article or a booklet of some kind is Bible study. Get your nose in the scripture, allow the Holy Spirit to lead you, listen to the voice of the Shepherd—He'll teach you, He will speak to you. There again, there's no excuse. We can't just go around teaching any old crazy thing we want to.

Now you had the old principle—do you remember it?—that new truth comes from God's Apostle, right? (A nod of recognition down here in the front row.) Let's talk about that. First of all, there is no new truth—there's just the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Let's consider that for a moment. Wil Berg made reference last night to the replacing of Judas. Let's turn to Acts 1 and take a look at how that happened. He was talking about, well, what is an apostle and how does that work? Of course, Judas died, so they had the task of replacing him; we find the story here in Acts 1. Let's pick it up in verse 21.

**Acts 1:21** *"Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22) beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."* (NKJV)

So to be an apostle you had to be around from the beginning. From the time of John the Baptist, you had to be a witness to the resurrection. There were only so many individuals who could do that and now they are all dead. Anybody claiming to be the apostle through whom the truth of God now comes had better be careful, because you just want to be careful about that. Continuing:

23) *And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.*

24) *And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen*

25) *to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."*

26) *And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.* (NKJV)

Now turn to Ephesians, chapter 2. We see the place of the apostles in the establishment of truth and what we need to look to. Ephesians 2:19. This is an amazing revelation to the Gentiles.

**Ephesians 2:19** *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God*  
20) *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,*  
21) *in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord ... (NKJV)*

Notice, *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets*—they formed the foundation, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone. Now the whole building, being fit together, grows.

22) *in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. (NKJV)*

We need to comprehend there is a basic foundation. There is truth, and it needs to be taught. We need to be extremely careful then about how we handle the truth of God and what we do with it. It's just a particularly awesome responsibility, either as a teacher or as a recipient of the truth. We're all being prepared for the day where we are going to have to teach the truth of God on a much greater scale than we are now, of course. We have to come to grips with the fact that we have to deal with the truth. There are certain denominational and doctrinal biases that creep in, that we have to deal with. The original title of the sermon—it still is, I guess you would say—is, who is the King of Glory?

Let's turn to Psalm 24; I do want to deal with this particular point and it does illustrate the principle that I'm trying to focus on here today. We have to look to the scripture to guide us. When you look at Psalm 24, in Handel's "Messiah", the later verses (7–10) of Psalm 24 are quoted and of course are sung in the choral number, "Lift up Your Heads". This occurs in the second portion of "Messiah", which deals with the death of Jesus Christ and the events leading up to and around His death.

**Psalm 24:7** *Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.*

8) *Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD [this is YHVH (the tetragrammaton—four consonants, in the Hebrew), this is Yehovah, the LORD], mighty in battle.*

9) *Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.*

10) *Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah (NKJV)*

From what we know about Handel's "Messiah", which is about Jesus—who He is and what He did and what He accomplished—we'd be lead to believe that the King of Glory is Jesus Christ; is that who David is talking about? The psalm answers the question for us. Who is the King of Glory? The LORD of hosts. Several times we've been in Zechariah 14, so I don't have to go into a great deal there, but let's just notice briefly

that when it comes to the LORD of hosts, we need to understand what we're talking about. From what I read, the term *LORD of hosts* appears in scripture about 260 times. I haven't looked up all 260 of them but I looked up all fifty-one of them that are in Zechariah and they are pretty much in harmony. They all pretty well focus on the same place, the same situation. So we have a distinction here between the LORD of hosts and, as in verse 7, the Shepherd who will be smitten. Now, let's notice again,

**Zechariah 13:7** *"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion," says the LORD of hosts [YHVH Sabaoth].*

You have a distinction then between the Shepherd—who is a companion of the LORD of hosts—and the LORD of hosts Himself.

7 continued) *"Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; (NKJV)*

Who is the Shepherd that is to be struck? This would be Jesus Christ. Later, in the book of Matthew, this verse from Zechariah would be quoted [in Matthew 26:31].

7 continued) *Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.*

8) *And it shall come to pass in all the land," says the LORD ... (NKJV)*

We have a distinction made between a Shepherd who will be stricken—that would be Jesus—and the LORD of hosts, who is Yehovah. Now in chapter 14, once again, we've been here; I won't spend a lot of time but it's worthy of note.

**Zechariah 14:1** *Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst.*

2) *For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*

3) *Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle.*

4) *And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. (NKJV)*

The LORD will stand. We read then, later, in verse 13,

13) *It shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor [great things are happening here], and raise his hand against his neighbor's hand;*

16) *And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. (NKJV)*

The LORD of hosts is going to be on the mount, He will be worshipped, and of course they will keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

17) *And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain.* (NKJV)

Once again, the basic understanding, or the basic current controversy or challenge, revolves around the knowledge of the record of God and Christ in scripture. I would like you to turn to Luke 1 because the coming of Jesus Christ was of course a momentous event, long prophesied, and had great implications for what was going to happen next. Here's the story—Luke and Matthew give detailed accounts of events leading up to and including the birth of Jesus, whereas Mark and John don't deal with that issue specifically. In Luke 1, the angel Gabriel appears to Mary. Let's go to verse 26.

**Luke 1:26** *Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,*

27) *to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.*

28) *And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*

29) *But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.*

30) *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." (NKJV)*

I've often wondered, how would I respond if Gabriel appeared to me? Would I be troubled? Would I be fearful? I suppose I might reason, why would Gabriel want to appear before me anyway? He might have some things to point out that trouble me. Nevertheless, Mary found favor with God. Now notice verse 31.

31) *And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.* (NKJV)

God's name, the Father's name, is Yehovah or Yahweh—that's His name, that's what it is. The Messiah's name is Jesus. You shall call His name Jesus.

32) *He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.* (NKJV)

Now take note, how many are called *the Highest*? We are told from the very beginning that Jesus is *the Son of the Highest*. There's only one Highest—in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, before time, at any point in history. Somehow we've managed to overlook some of these titles and the significance of them. So the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. That's right, Jesus Christ is going to rule also. He's going to rule on the throne of His father David, which will be granted to Him by His Father, the Lord God.

33) *And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.*" (NKJV)

That's comforting—that day is coming. We're struggling away in this life, trying to make things work, trying to figure things out, doing our best to keep our head above water, as we say, and hoping all will turn out. Yes, absolutely—we want things to turn out right, we want things to be proper, and we want things to focus properly. Well, again, we are called to understand the truth and it's sometimes a bit difficult for us because we are who we are. We are human beings, and for those of us in this room, who grew up in the United States of America, we have pretty high expectations in this country about the comforts, the creature comforts, and the things we've got to have to make life worth living, if you will. Of course, God calls us to His understanding, not to be so concerned about the things of men.

So here we are, it's the Feast of Tabernacles, we've been called to become a part of a whole different way of doing things, and as we go forward, consider that we have been told to listen for the voice of the Shepherd. We have to avoid defending long-held beliefs just because we have always believed them. Is it right or is it not? History has demonstrated that because we've been wrong before, we could be wrong again. We have to be careful.

We move forward looking to God to guide and direct us, not to circle the wagons and defend the status quo. That's a tremendous paradigm shift, if you will. We have to learn to cope with it. Let's bear in mind as we move ahead, we've been called to a whole different way of doing things and we have quite a stiff current that we have to contend with because there are all kinds of opposition, from virtually every corner, trying to slow us down, get in our way, and discourage us. Brethren, we're looking forward to a restitution of all things. It's coming. It's actually going to happen, and, as a matter of fact, we are a part of the restitution already. We have the opportunity to restore right thinking, to be properly oriented with the right Spirit. There is a wrong spirit. There's a right Spirit—God's Spirit. We are here to be in harmony with that Spirit, to do what we can to be a part of God's way.

Going forward, brethren, remember, we don't have all the answers, we don't have all knowledge. One thing I think we are dedicated to do—we don't have all the answers—but we are dedicated to at least correcting the error that has been pointed out to us. That we are dedicated to do, as God reveals it to us.

Have you ever noticed how the truth of God is handled? You look back on your calling, when God revealed something to you—this came up over and over again as we visited new people; God would reveal certain understanding to them, whatever it was—the Sabbath day, let's say—but if they didn't put it into practice, after a time, the Holy Spirit would no longer lead them. One can get left behind in the dust. God is not obligated to reveal more to you if you close your ears, close your eyes. If I take my hearing aids out, I can hear you, but I don't know what you're saying. If I plug my ears, what will I hear? Again, when it's revealed to us that a certain understanding needs to be adjusted

somewhat, or God gives us additional understanding, we need to embrace it, celebrate it, practice it, otherwise—as I've said, and it's been pointed out before—the Holy Spirit can be quenched, and won't grow in us. We have to keep growing, and we have to set aside our self will.

The Shepherd is for us, but if we insist on our own way, and resist God, the Holy Spirit moves on and we get further and further behind, and suddenly we are left alone. The Shepherd's voice becomes dimmer and dimmer and dimmer, until, finally, it's not there at all. Now what? Now we're back with the unprofitable individuals who refuse to go God's way.

Restoration of all things is underway. We have the opportunity to begin that restoration process even now. So let's move ahead, let's move forward, eyes and ears open to God's direction, so that we truly can be a part of the solution to the problems of this world; so that we can be of assistance to God when He sets up His Kingdom and we are a part of it, ruling with Jesus Christ and seeing the restoration of all, so all people can benefit. What a wonderful blessing it will be.

There's so much agony, so much suffering in the world; it needs to be relieved. We are called to be part of the solution, so let's continue to yield to God, to respond to God's Spirit and to the voice of the Good Shepherd, so we end up in the proper place, being of assistance to God rather than a hinderance.

Let's continue to keep the festival in the time that is left, enjoy one another's company and the fellowship, and look forward to a time when all people will be able to participate.