

Lessons from the Last Great Day

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I remember traveling from Boston to El Paso one time and I was asked to give a sermonette. I used three Scriptures, maybe four, and the pastor of the El Paso Church—a good friend, Keith Walden; he's dead now—but he got up and announced that I'd used every Scripture he had for his sermon. And back in those days when you did that, you were in deep trouble. But Keith, he was just a great guy. He said, "All that means is God wants it emphasized again." And I think we've all come to see through all the speakers that there's a thread here. There are common Scriptures, common themes, common points. And all that means is God has a message that He wants to get across to us here. And it's encouraging and it's inspiring to see God work because none of us checked with anybody else on any of these subjects. I had not a clue what anyone else was going to speak on and neither did anybody else. So it's very encouraging and inspiring that way. So what I hope to do is take all the points that you already know and all the Scriptures you've already read and weave them into the Last Great Day.

In several ways, this is my favorite holy day because it was pivotal in answering the questions that I had as a high school kid and as a college student about life. And it was the last link that clicked into place. It was the last piece of the puzzle as I began to study the booklets and all from the Worldwide Church of God.

And it answers the question "What happens to all the billions of people who have never even heard about God?" They've never heard the word "Bible". They've never heard the words "Jesus Christ." What happens to all those people?

And I asked my Presbyterian minister in high school that very question. Missionary work was a big deal at that time. And I said, "Well, what if one of the Presbyterian missionaries went to a village in Africa and there was an old man there. And he was going to try to convert everybody in the village. And he had a flat tire and couldn't go that day but came back a week later and the old man had died. So what happens to him?" And he said, "Well, you know it's just... He's lost."

And I thought to myself, "That doesn't sound right. That doesn't sound like a God who cares about human beings." And it just never set well. And when I began—as you began too—reading the booklets and studying the Bible about the Last Great Day, everything fell into place, everything made sense.

And then in the last fifteen years or so of my life anyway, the concept of "making things right" became important to me. Making the world right, making society right, making interpersonal relationships right. And many of us have the desire, the same desire I believe, to make things right with people that we've stepped on

in our lives, that maybe we've treated badly in our lives. And you can't go back and make it right because they're not here anymore. They're dead—parents, family members, acquaintances. And you just want an opportunity to go back and put your arm around them and say, "I'm sorry about the way I treated you." And the Last Great Day gives all of us a chance to make things right. And that's why it's so important.

So what we want to do today is we're going to rehearse the Scriptures about this day, but then we're going to talk about Four Lessons that we can take away from the Last Great Day, lessons we can learn from the Last Great Day and take into our lives over the coming weeks and months. And hopefully make things right in our lives and in the lives of others.

So first thing, let's review some Scriptures about what this time pictures. Those who have never been called, those who have never had God's holy spirit will be resurrected and have their chance, as James pointed out, to have their chance to know the only One and True God and Jesus Christ and to have a chance at eternal life.

Let's go to Matthew chapter 12 and we're going to read verses 41 and 42. Christ made a comment that you know when I first began reading the Bible just goes right over your head, but this is very, very important. He was signaling something that is going to happen that's represented by this day. Matthew 12 verse 41, He says:

Matthew 12:41. *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation ... (KJV)*

Men of Nineveh? They're going to rise up and they're going to judge the generation that He was talking to at that moment?

And He says:

Matthew 12:41b. *...and shall condemn it: because they [the men of Nineveh, the people of Nineveh] repented at the preaching of [Jonah]; and, behold, a greater than [Jonah] is here. (KJV)*

And verse 42, He says:

Matthew 12:42. *The queen of the south shall rise up ... (KJV)*

What a concept! Rise up! The queen of the south was long dead. The men of Nineveh were long dead. He said:

Matthew 12:42b. *... [they will] rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. (KJV)*

And then we've heard the Scripture read a couple of times already. We won't turn there. Revelation 20 and the beginning of verse 5: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until" what? "The thousand years were finished." The rest of the dead didn't live until. So there's going to come a time when they live.

And that time is described in Ezekiel chapter 37. We're going to read the first fourteen verses out of the New King James. Ezekiel 37 verse 1, this is where the old song "Dry Bones" comes from. I think we've all heard that. In years past, it was sung at the Feast, I think. Ezekiel 37 verse 1. Now I want you to not just read these Scriptures. I want you to put yourself as a spirit being watching this happen. Now think about this! You are going to be watching this very thing happen.

Ezekiel 37:1. The hand of the LORD came upon me [Ezekiel is saying.] and brought me out in the Spirit of the [Eternal], and set me down in the [middle] of [a] valley; and it was full of bones. (NKJ)

Dorothy and I and some of you here live in the Yakima Valley. And it's a valley about ninety miles long. The Yakima River runs through it, and I often ride my motorcycle up on the ridges of the valley and stop and look down in this valley and it stretches as far as the eye can see. And you think, "What would it be like to see this tiny valley—really—be hip deep in bones, or knee-deep in bones—just scattered bones over a valley that large?" And that's what Ezekiel was looking at.

Verse 2:

Ezekiel 37:2. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. (NKJ)

They were bleached white. I grew up in the desert of West Texas and you see some cattle bones out in the desert, and they are just pure white, dry, bleached. And that's what he was saying. They've been there a long, long time.

Verse 3:

Ezekiel 37:3. And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" (NKJ)

Now if this was asked from somebody today, I can see somebody popping up, "Well, according to my research.... I've looked here and there and there," and then would give an answer. But old Ezekiel was pretty sharp because Ezekiel said:

Ezekiel 37:3b. ... Lord, You know." (NKJ)

He wasn't going to step into that one. God knew. And I think sometimes we would be well advised, rather than stick our neck out too far and go where angels

fear to tread, just say, "God, you know." We're going to learn sooner or later.

Verse 4:

Ezekiel 37:4. *Again He said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the [Eternal, the] LORD!*

5) 'Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. (NKJ)

And that's what this day pictures.

Now just think of it again. You're looking at this valley. We're spirit beings and this valley is full of bones. And God is saying in verse 6:

Ezekiel 37:6. *"[I'm going to] put sinews on you and flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the [Eternal]."" (NKJ)*

I mean what greater manifestation of God's power than to take some dry bones and all of a sudden tendons and ligaments and sinews and muscles and flesh begin to cover these bones!

Verse 7:

Ezekiel 37:7. *So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; (NKJ)*

I don't know if they're going to be ankle deep, knee deep, hip deep, but all of a sudden you see these bones start moving. And you hear the bones clicking together. "Bone to bone," it says. And in verse 8:

Ezekiel 37:8. *... as I looked, the sinews and flesh came upon them ... (NKJ)*

And so bones started to come together and then connections were made with ligaments and tendons and flesh began to form. "But there was no breath in them," at the end of verse 8 and also:

Ezekiel 37:9. *Then He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.'"" (NKJ)*

And many, as this day pictures died in a horrible, tragic, violent, death.

Verse 10:

Ezekiel 37:10. *So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived ... (NKJ)*

Now notice this! They were lying down. The bones were just scattered. The bones came together. The flesh came upon them. They were lying down. And it says:

Ezekiel 37:10b. ... [they] stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

11) Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say [metaphorically], 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' (NKJ)

That's what they thought in their last breath that they took. Maybe the machete was coming down to slice somebody right over the shoulder and that was the last thing they remember. "I'm a goner. I've got no hope."

Verse 12:

Ezekiel 37:12. "Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the [Eternal] GOD: "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

13) "Then you shall know that I am the [Eternal], when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.

14) "I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it," says the [Eternal]."' (NKJ)

And so, this breath comes and the people—you can just imagine—people just kind of shaking their heads and looking around and they don't know what's going on. And we, as spirit beings, are in amongst them and we were right with them. And they will have the opportunity to live with God's spirit in a better world than the world they exited. Far better world than the world they left!

And, as James pointed out, we're going to see our dead relatives. We're going to see our friends. We're going to see acquaintances. We're going to see our neighborhood kids that we grew up with. And parents are going to see their dead children. We have in the Church adult mom and dads that have lost their kids, as James pointed out. We're going to see widows seeing their husbands; widowers seeing their wives; children seeing their dead parents; and parents seeing their dead children. What a day when you can see your mom and dad and your grandparents looking around, not knowing what's going on! And you have the chance to walk up to them, put your arm around them and say, "It's me. I'm here."

Look at Isaiah chapter 65. We're going to read verses 20 and 25. This is probably the pivotal Scripture that gives us the understanding that this time is going to be a hundred years long. Isaiah 65 verse 20:

Isaiah 65:20. There shall be no more [there] an infant of days, nor an old man that [hasn't] fulfilled his days ... (KJV)

Isaiah 65 middle of verse 20, but we're told here:

Isaiah 65:20b. ... the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old [is going to] be [cursed]. (KJV)

Verse 21 and these people when they're resurrected:

Isaiah 65:21. And they shall build houses, [they'll] inhabit them; [they're going to] plant vineyards, and [they are going to be free to] eat the fruit of [their own vineyard]. (KJV)

Nobody's going to come and rob and still and pillage and make war.

Verse 22:

Isaiah 65:22. They shall not build, and another inhabit ... (KJV)

They're not going to have their property stolen unethically as we see today.

Isaiah 65:22b. ... they shall not plant, and another eat: (KJV)

They're not going to have their farms taken over to where they're kicked off their own land!

Isaiah 65:22 continued. ... for as the days of a tree ... (KJV)

Trees live a long time!

Isaiah 65:22 continued. ... as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and [my] elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. (KJV)

A hundred years! That's a long time to enjoy the work of your hands!

Isaiah 65:23. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; [Notice this!] they are the seed of the blessed of the [Eternal], (KJV)

"They," those resurrected, are the seed, meaning related to the blessed of the Eternal. Who are the blessed of the Eternal? It's the firstfruits. These are the seed of the firstfruits. They're related to the firstfruits. We're going to be able to see our relatives again.

And my grandfather, who changed his name and ran from the law. I want to find out all about that. I want to see what he was running from. What did this guy do? I'll find out someday!

Isaiah 65:23b. ... and their offspring with them. (KJV)

Verse 24:

Isaiah 65:24. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer ... (KJV)

God will be so involved in their life that before they even get the words out of their mouth, God's going to answer. Blessing upon blessing!

Isaiah 65:24b. ... and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.
25) The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the [Eternal]. (KJV)

What a time! What a time! I'm so glad James had this subject for his sermonette because this indeed, for me, is going to be the best time. To be able to see all of those people who have ever lived and to show them a better way, to show them God's way! And, as we're going to see in a little bit, we're going to have some traumatized people we're going to need to deal with and to talk to and to settle down.

But they're going to have their time to be judged according to God's Word. Let's go to Revelation 20. We'll read verses 12 and 13. John says in verse 12 of Revelation 20:

Revelation 20:12. And I saw the dead, [the] small [ones] and [the] great [ones] ... (NKJ)

All the names of history! The Stalins, the Mussolinis, the Genghis Khans—all of those people are going to come up. And they're going to:

Revelation 20:12b. ... stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ... (NKJ)

All those sailors! I just think of those sailors over the centuries. They were involved in a storm and they were tossed overboard or their ship was destroyed. And they're trying to tread water in a cold ocean and they have no hope and they die, and within their mind no hope. And the sea gives up their dead and they're going to be resurrected.

Revelation 20:13b. ... and death and hell [the grave] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man [every woman] according to their works. (KJV)

So what a wonderful time this is going to be! And, as we're going to see, we're not going to be just spectators. We're going to be participants.

Now let's ask the question. We've reviewed some basic Scriptures. Let's ask the question: What lessons can we learn for us today relative to the Last Great Day? And there are some important lessons that I think—I'm speaking of the greater Church of God, God's people all over the world, wherever they may be. There

are some lessons that I think we have forgotten or that we underemphasize or that we don't even think about.

Point Number One, Lesson One:

I. God loves all—and I emphasize the word "all"—God loves all His children, every one of them! Every single one!

All the people who are alive today, He loves! Chinese, Indians, Arabs, South Americans, Eskimos—He loves them all! And I think sometimes people in the greater Church of God have forgotten this.

Let's go to Acts 17 and verse 26. Paul is talking on Mars Hill in Athens. And he's trying to tell people about the nature of God and the nature of Christ and their place in all of this. Acts 17 verse 26, and the verse says "And". And it's referring about Jesus Christ.

Acts 17:26. *And [Christ has] made of one blood all nations ... (KJV)*

He has made of one blood!

Acts 17:26b. *... all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and [has] determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; (KJV)*

God loves His creation, His people so much that He is intimately involved since the time of Adam and Eve, setting their boundaries, watching them develop and grow. And, as we know, the six thousand years is letting man have his way, but the fact is God is still intimately involved in all of this because He loves and has loved every one who has ever lived.

And all will be given and opportunity. God's not a god that because of a flat tire somebody is just going to cease to exist for an eternity. Let's go to 1 Timothy 2 verse 4. God is a God of fairness. God is not a respecter of persons. 1 Timothy 2 and verse 4, this is God's desire. This is what God wants. 1 Timothy 2 verse 4, he says:

1 Timothy 2:4. *Who will have all men [and women] to be saved, and to come to [a] knowledge of the truth. (KJV)*

Now we have to understand that God is as concerned about people on the other side of the earth as He is as concerned about the firstfruits. We are not some elite group that His light shines us and then He curses the rest of humanity down through the ages. Yes, they're reaping what they sow. No question about that! But God has an underlying love for them and they will have their opportunity. They have the opportunity of salvation.

Look what Peter says in 2 Peter 3 and verse 9. Peter is saying, "God is not a slacker. God doesn't forget His promises." God somehow doesn't have memory lapses like we do, especially as we get older. You're standing in front of the

refrigerator and you think, "What am I doing here? What was I going to do?" Well, God's not that way. 2 Peter 3 and verse 9:

2 Peter 3:9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us, not willing that any ... (KJV)*

It doesn't say "some." It doesn't say "most". It says:

2 Peter 3:9b. *... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (KJV)*

And I think there's an error in the belief of some in the greater Church of God that God loves Israel to the exclusion of others. God maybe loves the Jews to the exclusion of others. God loves the firstfruits to the exclusion of others. And God loves Republicans to the exclusion of others (laughter). There's a belief in that! You can just see it kind of hiding back in there from all the e-mails I get. God just loves Republicans and the T-Partiers, but boy He hates those Democrats. He hates the liberals.

And I hope we understand that God wants everybody who has ever lived in His Family! We have to understand that. We have to make it part of our being! And we sometimes just dismiss the rest of the world or people who are not like us. And we just kind of write them off sometimes. But God is saying, "They're all My children. I want them in My Kingdom. I want them to be part of My Family for an eternity." And so we have to understand all of mankind who lives now or who has ever lived God wants to be in His Kingdom. And if that's the case, then they're going to be our brothers and sisters for eternity!

Now think about that! All who have ever lived are going to be our brothers and sisters. Now if you let that concept sink in, that means people on the other side of the world; that means poor people; that means rich people; that means people who have done horrible things; that means little babies as we heard died in the very earliest of their years, will be our brothers and sisters! We have to get that concept across! And I think in some cases, the greater Church has just not grasped that concept.

So if that's the case, if all who have ever lived are our brothers and sisters, what are the consequences coming from that understanding? What is the fallout—the logical progression of reasoning from that understanding? And that leads us to the Second Lesson. And we're going to spend a good bit of time on this lesson that we have to learn.

We must because all mankind are going to be our brothers and sisters—are our brothers and sisters—we must, therefore, love all of our brothers and sisters. Not some. Not most. But all of our brothers and sisters because we're going to have a family for and eternity! And who are we to say, "Well, I'm going to pick and choose who I love. I'm going to pick and choose who I like."? And God is saying, "Unh huh. I have billions of people in My Family!" And we have better come to understand that we have to love every one of our brothers and sisters.

And you would think by now in the greater Church that we would have understood that, but please bear with me and maybe we'll see that we haven't understood it as fully as we need to.

Now Christ made this point very clear that we have to love all of our brothers and sisters. Let's go to Luke chapter 10 and we're going to begin in verse 25 and go through verse 37 because, as typical, there was a lawyer that was after Jesus Christ. And with the proliferation of lawyers today, it becomes very understandable I think to us today. You look in the yellow pages and if you've got a phone book that thick, probably one-fifth of it is lawyers. Luke 10 verse 25:

Luke 10:25. *And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and [tested] him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*

26) *[Christ] said unto him, What is written in the law? [How do you read it? How do you understand what's written in the Law? (KJV)*

Verse 27:

Luke 10:27. *And he [answered and] said, [You shall] love the Lord [your] God with all [your] heart, and with all [your] soul, and with all [your] strength, and with all [your] mind; and [your neighbor] as [yourself]. (KJV)*

And Christ said to him in verse 28:

Luke 10:28. *[He] said, [You've] answered [correctly. This is the right answer]: ... (KJV)*

But notice what He said:

Luke 20:28b. *... this do ... (KJV)*

Not think about!

Luke 20:28b. *... [But this do], and [you shall] live. (KJV)*

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." As much as we love ourselves, our flesh, we are to love our neighbors to the same degree.

But now notice in verse 29, it says:

Luke 20:29. *But he [the lawyer], willing to justify himself ... (KJV)*

Because he knew that he didn't love his neighbor fully, as much as he loved himself. "He said to Jesus"—technical question. "Well, okay, who is my [neighbor then]? If I've got to love them as myself, then tell me who my neighbor is" (verse 29 paraphrased).

In verse 30 Christ answered and, as He often did, gave it in a parable.

Luke 20:30. *And [He] answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho ... (KJV)*

Now He used the word "down" because there's over a three thousand foot elevation difference between Jerusalem, which is upon the top of a mountain, down to Jericho, which is below sea level.

And He said, "He went down to Jericho." And Jericho was a Levitical city. There were many priests there. And so this man who was traveling to Jericho—it's understandable—I think we can logically assume that he was a Jew because he was going to a Levitical city. I don't think that's too much of a stretch.

Luke 20:30b. *... and [on the way though, he] fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. (KJV)*

Now this was a serious beating. This was not just a few cuts and bruises. He was half dead. He was lying at the side of the road. Probably couldn't get up. Probably bleeding. Could have had some broken bones.

Verse 31:

Luke 20:31. *And by chance there came a certain priest [a Jew—and he came by] the way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (KJV)*

This is his own tribe! This was his brother! And he just passes by. Looks at him and says, "Oh well, that's too bad." And then goes on!

In verse 32:

Luke 20:32. *... a Levite, [came] at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by [he went on] the other side. (KJV)*

He didn't want anything to do with this guy!

Luke 20:33. *But [then] a certain Samaritan ... (KJV)*

Now I think we all understand that Samaritans were looked down upon by the Jews. They were reviled by the Jews. They were hated by the Jews. A good analogy today would be a Muslim in New York City. And there's a guy lying in the gutter in New York City. And a Muslim walks by after two of his New York friends walk by and didn't do anything. Here's a Muslim walking by this guy laying in the gutter. Same thing here! Same relationship!

Luke 20:33b. *... [and] as he journeyed, [he] came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,
34) And [he] went to him, and [he] bound up his wounds, [he poured] in oil and wine, and set him on his own [animal], and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. (KJV)*

We're talking about going above and beyond.

Luke 20:35. *And [then the next day in the morning], he departed ... (KJV)*

He obviously had things to do.

Luke 20:35b. *... [And] he took out [some money], gave [it] to the host [the innkeeper], and said unto him, Take care of him; and [whatever you spend] more, when I come again, I will repay [you]. (KJV)*

It was like he was a traveling salesman. He went back and forth because he was obviously familiar with this innkeeper.

Verse 36:

Luke 20:36. *[And] now of these three, [Christ asks this lawyer, "Who] was [a neighbor] unto him that fell among thieves?
37) And he said, [Well, I guess it was he] that showed mercy on him.
Then [Christ] said ... (KJV)*

And notice what He said!

Luke 20:36b. *[He] said, Go, and do likewise. (KJV)*

Now that's a command! That's every much of a command as keeping the Sabbath! And I think we've blown these Scriptures off over the decades in God's Church. We just for some reason they just don't apply to us.

And so what Christ was telling to those that were gathering around when He gave this parable, He said, "You have to do good to those who hate you! You have to do good to those who look down upon you. And you have to do good to those who are of a different race or of a different religion because all that was true between the Samaritan and the guy lying on the ground. And Christ said, "Go and do likewise!"

And did Christ not do likewise? Remember when He was on the cross and they were parting His garments? This was after they spit on Him, after they put the crown of thorns mashed into His head, after they had scourged Him, after they had mocked Him—all of that! What did He say? We won't turn there. You know the Scripture, Luke 23 and verse 34. He said, "Father, forgive them because they don't understand what they are doing. They don't understand." And so Christ followed His own parable. These people who spit on you and curse you, "forgive them Father because they don't understand." This isn't their time. They haven't been called. Their mind hasn't been opened.

Now did the apostles just drop that teaching and just kind of emphasize other things and forget about it? Did they do that? Let's go to Romans 13 and we'll read verses 8, 9, and 10. Paul is addressing the Church in Rome and he picks

up this same theme. Romans 13 verse 8, he's saying to the Brethren there and to us today, he says:

Romans 13:8. *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: (KJV)*

Now he's not talking— He doesn't say, "Church Brethren." He doesn't say, "Jews." He doesn't categorize it. He says, "Owe no man" or by extension obviously women":

Romans 13:8b. *... but to love one another for he that [loves] another ... (KJV)*

Again not specified not categorized!

Romans 13:8 continued. *... he that [loves] another [has] fulfilled the law. (KJV)*

He says:

Romans 13:9. *For this [in fulfilling the Law, he says], [You shall] not commit adultery, [You can't] kill, [You can't] steal, [You don't] bear false witness, [Don't] covet; and if there [is] any other commandment ... (KJV)*

And we have statutes and judgments that back up all of this.

Romans 13:9b. *... if there [is] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, [You shall] love [your] neighbor as [yourself]. (KJV)*

Exactly what Christ said to the lawyer! Same theme, same understanding! Verse 10, it says:

Romans 13:10. *Love [works] no ill to his [neighbor]: (KJV)*

We just heard the definition of a neighbor. It's somebody that is not of your race, not of your religion, not of the color of your skin, not necessarily your beliefs! They're still neighbors!

Right next door we have an Italian federal agent—undercover agent. Totally different than us. He gets involved in things that I don't even want to know about! But he's still our neighbor, wife and kids.

He says:

Romans 13:10b. *... therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (KJV)*

So Paul wrote this to the Church in Rome. Notice what he wrote in his first letter to the Church in Thessalonica. We'll look at chapter 5 and read verse 15. 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 15, same theme, same understanding! He says:

1 Thessalonians 5:15. *See that none render evil for evil ... (KJV)*

Christ said that too, Sermon on the Mount!

1 Thessalonians 5:15. *See that none render evil for evil ... (KJV)*

But notice what he says, "unto any." Now the word "man" is in italics. That was added by the translators.

1 Thessalonians 5:15. *See that none render evil for evil to any ... (KJV)*

Men, women, race, color, creed makes no difference!

1 Thessalonians 5:15b. *... but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all (KJV)*

The word "man" is again in italics. Meaning: everybody! Everybody! It makes no difference to their race. It makes no difference their background, their economic status, the color of their skin, or their religion. There are no qualifiers here.

God is not a respecter of persons. And we could spend the rest of the sermon just talking about being a respecter of persons. Many Scriptures saying God is not a respecter of persons, neither should we be. And we shouldn't treat various people differently just because they're different from us in some manner or in some way.

I remember my first experience at prejudice when I was a little kid. I was—I don't know—six, seven years old. And my grandmother lived in Taylor, Texas. And that's a little town about ten, twelve miles from Austin, Texas. Hot, humid! We'd go down there in the summer and visit. And somebody coming from dry west Texas, it was—as a kid you don't pay attention to that, but—it was misery. And my grandmother had a big white home typical of the day with a big front porch. And then the back porch was screened in.

And she had a black gardener that would come several times a week and mow the yard and trim and prune the flowers and do all of that. And then she had a black lady that would come and clean and would cook.

And back then the big meal of the day was dinner which was the noon meal because of the heat. And so the pots were boiling and everything, fried chicken and okra, which I just hated, and all of that. We had this big giant meal out on this screened porch. And my cousins were there, brother was there, mom was there, and the whole family was there.

And I remember as distinctly as yesterday. We were starting to eat and I looked out in the yard, the back yard, and there was the black gardener and the black cook and they were sitting at two chairs out in yard. And I turned to my mom and I said, "Mom, why are they out there? Why don't they come and sit at the table with us?" And she said, "Well, we just don't do that." And I said, "But mom!" I

was feeling sorry for them because they were out there all by themselves and we were laughing and carrying on. I said, "Why can't they come in here?" You know parents are really good at shushing their children. So she shushed me up pretty good.

And it just stuck with me all these years because it just wasn't right! It just wasn't correct. And we had great times talking to that black gardener because he had stories to tell. And the cook was jolly and all that. As kids, we just loved the two of them, but I couldn't understand why we couldn't sit at the same table!

And in the world tomorrow and in the world that's described by this day, we are all going to eat at the same table. We have to understand that. And we have to make it part of us that there is nobody on this earth that we wouldn't sit down at the same table with. There's nobody beneath us. We're not so good or too good to eat a meal with somebody. All the people who have ever lived, we have to view them, love them the same way we love ourselves. And we should be willing to sit down with them and break bread with them.

We cannot—we must not ever hate anybody! Now we hate what they do, but we don't hate them. We can't be prejudiced. We can't look down on people. We can't be racist. We can't be bigots. And yet in all those cases over the years, I've heard that coming from the mouths of God's people. And it hurts. It hurts them. And it hurts the example that the greater Church sets.

And the fact is, see what we have to realize—and Steve brought that out. He was talking about himself and he looked at himself. And we have to realize that we're the same as those that we judge and condemn. We are just as guilty before God as those we look down upon or we judge, and we condemn.

Let's go to Ephesians 2 and read the first three verses. Paul is trying to tell the Church at Ephesus, "Look folks! You're in the same boat that they're in. You've been there." You know, "Been there, done that, got the T-shirt," as Harold is fond of saying! We've been there. We shouldn't have been there. Too bad we've been there, but we've been there. Ephesians 2 verse 1:

Ephesians 2:1. *And you [he has] quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; (KJV)*

And before we were baptized, we were dead in our trespasses and sins. And when Dave came up out of the water yesterday, it was such a joy to look him in the eye and say, "You are no longer held accountable for your sins. They are completely wiped away. You are as a newborn lamb. You are completely washed from all your sins for the first time in your life!"

And Paul is saying here we were dead in those sins before we were baptized, before the blood of Christ wiped them away.

Verse 2:

Ephesians 2:2. *Wherein [he says] in time past ... (KJV)*

And we should apply this to us!

Ephesians 2:2b. ... in time past [you] walked according to the course of this world ... (KJV)

I have. Man I was just heading headlong into this world! I wanted to be a fighter pilot so bad. I wanted to kill the enemy. I wanted to blow up their planes. I wanted to do all of that! Just headlong into the world! God took that away. And then I wanted to be a martial arts teacher. Beat people up! Pound on them! God took that away. I'll tell you I'm the sinner above all because I was dragged into the Church kicking and screaming.

Ephesians 2:2. Wherein in time past [you] walked according to the course of this world according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now [works] in the children of disobedience: (KJV)

We had that spirit of disobedience working in us before we were called and up to the time of our baptism. And even now that spirit still lingers around. We have God's spirit in us, but that spirit of disobedience is still kind of trying to whisper in our ear from time to time.

Verse 3:

Ephesians 2:3. Among whom also we ... (KJV)

Paul is referring to himself too.

Ephesians 2:3b. ... all had our [conduct] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (KJV)

He is saying, "We used to be just like them." And so my point is: How can we look down on them because we came out of the same pot? We came out of the same slime pit that they're in now only by the grace of God. Understand God, He doesn't count sin to those whose minds have not yet been opened. It's not like they're having their time and they rejected God. Look at Acts 17. We're going to read verses 29 and 30. I'll read it out of the New King James. Paul is speaking in Athens and he says:

Acts 17:29. "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think ... (NKJ)

I'll wait till the pages stop turning here. He says Acts 17 verse 29:

Acts 17:29. "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone [people making idols], something shaped by art and man's devising. (NKJ)

Verse 30:

Acts 17:30. *"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked ... (NKJ)*

New King James says "overlooked." King James says, "winked at." The Greek can also mean "disregarded." God disregarded because it wasn't their time. They weren't called. They didn't understand.

But he says:

Acts 27:30b. *... but now commands all men everywhere to repent, (NKJ)*

Now let's understand that everything that's happening in the world today is part of God's plan. Once Adam and Eve rejected God, God said, "Okay. You want to decide for yourself. I'm going to give you six thousand years to play that out. And let's see at the end of six thousand years what your way looks like and where society ends up six thousand years of man deciding for himself." And we're at the end of that. And so all that is happening in the world is part of God's plan as He watches mankind reap what mankind sows. We're watching it. We see it on the news. Mankind is reaping what he sows.

The total focus on the self, particularly in the developing nations. The immorality of our leaders, lying, cheating, stealing, graft, bribery is just common today. Illegal immigration problems. You think God's not aware of that? People wanting a better life and coming across along with those who are evil and those who are criminals. A recession caused by ambition and greed. The rise of China and India. The rise of Islam. The rise of terrorism. It's all man is reaping what he's sowing. And God is watching it and is aware of it. And it's all part of His plan.

And yet, some in the greater Church seem to think they've got to get politically active and somehow do something about all these problems. This is part of God's plan. If you want to swim against the stream, you're saying, "God, I'm going to try to change Your plan. So I'm going to go out here and do this and campaign for that and carry a placard over here." It's all part of God's plan.

And some seem to think that we need to take sides and hate. We don't like what they do and then tied into that is we're going to hate them. People who are blind. People who don't understand. People who don't know. We need to remember Philippians 3 and verse 20. Let's go there. We'll read it out of the New King James. Philippians 3 and verse 20. You see our concern should not be—we're going to see that we're not part of society, the world's society in which we live. God says, "Don't make that mistake. Don't make that mistake." Philippians 3 and verse 20:

Philippians 3:20. *For our citizenship is in heaven ... (NKJ)*

It's not on this earth. And once we're baptized, once we commit to this way of life, our citizenship is with God and Christ. Our citizenship ceases to any nation on this earth. Now are we happy to be and live in the United States and Canada? Of course. Are we happy to have the blessings? Of course, we're very thankful for that. But do we support the bombing of Iraq? Do we want to

just wave the flag? Or do we want to go do this or do that. That should not be our concern. Our concern is being the Bride of Christ, correcting ourselves, changing ourselves, as we're going to see, to be the Bride of Christ.

Philippians 3:20. *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (NKJ)*

And we eagerly await for this Day when all of that is going to change and all those people get their chance!

God is in the process today of showing man that all of his systems are failing and will fail. Governmental systems including democracy are going to fail. They're failing now. They're becoming dysfunctional and they are going to fail. And we're going to watch it. We're going to see it. Financial and economic systems including capitalism are all going to fail. They're breaking down right now. We can see it with our own eyes with this recession and everything that happened. The educational system, including our godless and secular educational system today, that's going to fail too. All of man's systems, anything that man devised is going to fail and is in the process of failing.

God is also in the process of showing man that all of man's religious systems are false and are going to fail. The Catholics are going to fail. The Protestants are going to fail. The Charismatics are going to fail. The Evangelicals are going to fail. The Muslims are going to fail. The eastern religions, all the mystic eastern religions, are all going to fail. The humanistic man-centered religions that we see today in California, the kind of trendy humanistic religions, all of those are going to fail. God's in the process of showing mankind very graphically that all of the religious things you've devised apart from— "You want to ignore the Bible. You want to ignore My teaching. You want to ignore My revelation to mankind. You want to ignore all that and go on and form your own religions. Fine. But they're falling apart and they're going to fail. And they're not going to benefit you anything! They're going to fail!

Even the Churches of God—this is my opinion—but even the Churches of God who are man-centered and not Christ and God-centered are going to fail. If our focus isn't on the Father and on the Son as the Churches of God, they're going to fail too, because the focus is not on a man, not on any human being. It's got to be on God and Christ. And God is going show us before this is all over with, "You want quail. I'll give you quail! It's going to come out your nostrils. It's going to come out your throat. It's going to come out your ears. I'm going to give you whatever you want and you're going to see that it doesn't work!"

Look at Revelation 18 and we'll read the first four verses. Revelation 18 and the first four verses, John is saying:

Revelation 18:1. *And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, [and this angel had] great power; and the earth was [lit up] with [the] glory [of this angel]. (KJV)*

Man! Is that going to be something! Verse 2:

Revelation 18:2. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen ... [has] become the habitation of devils [demons], and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (KJV)*

Verse 3—now focus on this verse!

Revelation 18:3. *For all nations ... (KJV)*

That includes the "Christian nations" of the U.S. and Canada and the U.K. and New Zealand and Australia. Somehow we think that we're better than others, but we're reading here that:

Revelation 18:3b. *... all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication ... (KJV)*

All nations have bought into this system of Satan. We see it in our politics. We see it in our economics. We see it in our immorality. We see it in the character of our leaders. They bought in!

Revelation 18:3 continued. *... and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her ... (KJV)*

And I'm sure after it's all over; we don't have a clue of the depth of the fornication that has been committed between the leaders and this system.

Revelation 18:3 continued. *... and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. (KJV)*

Graft, corruption, under the table dealing! Verse 4:

Revelation 18:4. *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying ... (KJV)*

This is the Word to us:

Revelation 18:4b. *... Come out of her, my people ... (KJV)*

We cannot be part of these systems. We are citizens in heaven. Not on this earth!

Revelation 18:5 continued. *... that [you] be not partakers of her sins, and that [you] receive not of her plagues. (KJV)*

Now this Day when this resurrection occurs, I am sure many—if not most—of those who are resurrected already know that their system didn't work because they died. They starved to death, they were hacked to death. They died in misery and suffering. And they'll look back on their life—and talk about an open door—they're system didn't work and they know that.

We can't be part of any of these systems! And the greater Church needs to learn this because—we won't turn there, James 1 and verse 27—what are we supposed to do? "Keep ourselves unspotted from" what? "The world." Not spotted. None of that filth come upon us! We have to distance ourselves from hatred and bigotry and prejudice. Or distance ourselves from getting involved in trying to somehow circumvent God's plan that's already been cast in stone.

Look what we see today. We see hate for illegal immigrants. "Just put them all in a bunch. They're all a bunch of scoundrels and evil people." Well, there are scoundrels and evil people there, but there are also some good moms and dads that just want to better their life. But they're all our brothers and sisters. That's my point. They just are blind. They haven't had their chance. But you see hatred for illegal immigrants. You see hatred for Muslims. You see hatred for Democrats. You see hatred for Republicans. You see hatred for liberals and you see hatred for conservatives.

Society is becoming polarized. If you project that polarization down the road, it's easy to see if that polarization continues society will be against Jewish Christians. People who keep the Sabbath—because we're different. And it's not a stretch to see that day coming.

But you see, too many in the Church, I believe, we just get caught up in the world we live in and we have hatred for others, whether it's Muslims, Blacks, Hispanics. I recently heard a woman say—not of our group, but she's a member of the Church of God; she has God's holy spirit, but she says—"Those Mexicans!" Just like that, about that tone of voice. And we should never, ever think that way because they're our brothers and our sisters. They're our brothers and our sisters.

Romans 12 and verse 2, let's run over there very quickly. Romans 12 verse 2, well, I'll read it again out of the New King James. Christ says we should be different.

Greg Gaetzman was telling me that the local folks that were here watching the dinner dance and they were just astonished that our kids would be up here dancing. They said, "We've never seen that before! Families being together and dancing. Dads dancing with their daughters. Daughters dancing with their siblings. And Moms dancing with their sons. And the kids running around having a good time. "We've never seen that!" We're different! Doing it God's way, hopefully!

Romans 12 verse 2:

Romans 12:2. And do not be conformed to this world, (NKJ)

We have to be careful that we don't get caught up in all of this—this fighting and polarization and bickering and hating!

Romans 12:2b. ... but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (NKJ)

Jump down to verse 17. This same theme, He says:

Romans 12:17. Repay no one evil for evil.....

18) If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. (NKJ)

Live peaceably. And you see, Christ's commands us to do it that way.

In Matthew chapter 5, what did Christ say? "You've heard it said of old 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'." That's the way we were taught. And then he says, "But I say unto you that if somebody slaps you on one cheek, rather than fight back, turn the other cheek. And if they want to take away your cloak, rather than fight them, your tunic, give them your cloak." He says, "If somebody asks and wants you to go a mile, go two."

And then He also said, "You've heard of old time that you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." Now think about this! The United States views, we'll just take the example of Muslims. The United States views the Arab nations, the Muslim nations as our enemy—the United States government. And He says, "You've heard it was said of old time, 'Love your neighbor but hate your enemy.'" And we hate our enemy. We do. As a country I mean, not us.

And He says "But I'm saying to you." What did He say? "I say 'Love your enemies. Bless those who curse you. Be kind to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you.'" Why? Because they are blind. They are not yet called. They are in the same boat we were in before we were ever called. And He says, going on in that theme, He says, "If you love those that love you, what's the big deal? Tax collectors do that. Criminals do that." He says. But the challenge is to love those who hate you. Love those who are after you. That's where the rubber meets the road as far as being a Christian.

Now let me just ask this and we're closing out this Second Lesson. How can we hate certain people today and then turn around and love them and help them in the Last Great day? Now think about that! This Day symbolizes these people rising up—murderers, criminals, child molesters. They're all being raised up. Now if in our life, we hated them and we spat on them and we cursed them and we condemned them, how on earth can we come back on this day and put our arms around them and say, "We love you and I want to show you a better way." Christ is saying, "You need to start that process now," because we can't have hate and bitterness and bigotry and prejudice among us.

So how should we view our neighbors? How should we view those that oppose us? They're wayward brothers and sisters. They're like the prodigal son that just went off. They're wayward. They don't understand. We should feel sorry for them because they're held captive by blindness and by Satan just as we were before we were called. We hate what they do, but we don't hate them. Just as

God hates what I do sometimes, but thankfully He doesn't hate me! And He's patient with me and kind with me and gentle with me. We need to be so with our brothers and sisters who are going to be with us through an eternity.

How would you like to hate somebody and then when their eyes are opened, they get down on their knees and they cry their eyes out and say how sorry they are? And then we have to remember, "I hated that guy. I hated that woman. I despised them. I looked down upon them." And now they're here on the Last Great Day and they are repenting, and they want a hug. They want some help!

So Point Number Two:

II. We're being watched now and we're being given time now to see if we're going to obey these simple commands that we've read all our lives.

James said he's been in the Church all his life. We've read them for decades. Are we going to obey them? Or are we going to kind of put them in the category, well, that applies to other people? We need to obey them. And as we go forward from this Last Great Day, we need to think about mankind as being our brothers and our sisters. And on this day, we're going to be able to hug them and console them and put our arms around them and show them a better way.

That leads us to the Third Point:

III. As spirit beings we will teach all—and I'm emphasizing all—all mankind to live a godly life and a different life.

We are going to teach them. Some people think—James alluded to it and Harold alluded to it—that somehow God's going to wave His magic wand and He's going to do all the work. Everything will be just right and we'll be spectators. And God doesn't operate that way. God's not going to do all the work and we just watch. We need to understand that we will be instrumental in making those changes. We will be part of that system. We will be involved firsthand in dealing with those who have been resurrected.

One of my interest in study is World War II history. And when Iwo Jima was invaded in 1945, the Japanese had indoctrinated the natives of Iwo Jima that the United States was going to come in and if they get to you, they're going to rape the women and they're going to butcher your children. And so as the U.S. Forces swept over the island and they came through villages—and there are pictures of this, moving pictures—these moms with their little babies started migrating toward the cliffs as the U.S. Forces came. And the soldiers were pleading with these women. "We're not going to hurt you. We have food here. We have water here." And they were so afraid and so indoctrinated, they went to the edge of the cliffs and they jumped off with their babies in their arms.

Now you think about that! Think about that! When that mother wakes up—and I'm sure God in His mercy will have her baby in her arms waking up at the same time—you think about that, they're going to be traumatized. They're going to be

scared out of their minds, trembling! And the last thing this mother remembers is the cliffs rushing up to greet her, to meet her.

And here we have these people that are absolutely traumatized and we're going to have to deal with them on a personal level! God's not going to wave the magic wand. We're going to have to walk up to them and talk to them and deal with them. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 1 and read verses 3 and 4. Paul is saying:

2 Corinthians 1:3. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... (KJV)*

But notice what he said. Notice the characteristic of God!

2 Corinthians 1:3b. *... the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort: (KJV)*

And notice in verse 4, he says:

2 Corinthians 1:4. *[This God of all comfort comforts] us in all our tribulation [here today] ... (KJV)*

And there is a reason for it

2 Corinthians 1:4b. *... that we may be able to comfort them [who] are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves [have been] comforted ... (KJV)*

God says, "I'm going to comfort you. I'm going to come to you and help you and aid you, but I want you to turn that around and shed it abroad to others. And we on this Day are going to be able to do that. We'll look back on our life and see how merciful and kind and gentle and good God has been with us. And we're going to want to do the same thing for this woman that's traumatized and that's holding her baby. Or the woman who was raped and raped and raped and raped and then had a sword through her belly. And you could go on all afternoon talking about those.

We will have close personal relationships with those we help. Look at Isaiah chapter 30 and we'll read verse 20 and 21. We're going to help them by personal training, teaching, examples. All done through the power of God's holy spirit! Isaiah 30 verses 20 and 21, we're told:

Isaiah 30:20. *And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction ... (KJV)*

And we've had that. We have it in our lives. They will have it sometimes in their lives

Isaiah 30:20b. *... yet shall not [your] teachers be removed into a corner any more, but [your] eyes shall see [your] teachers: (KJV)*

That tells me that it's going to be a close personal relationship as student and teacher. We're going to be involved in their lives. We're going to sit down and talk to them. We're going to help them because that's what it's going to take for these traumatized people to start living a good life.

Verse 21:

Isaiah 30:21. And [your] ears shall hear a word behind [you], saying, This is the way, walk [you] in it, when [you] turn to the right [or] to the left. (KJV)

And we're going to be there and say, "No, no. No, you don't want to do that. Let me explain. I've been through this. Here's what you want to do." And we do it kindly and gently. And God will only have in His Kingdom those who want to have the same patience, the same kindness, the same forbearance to those on the Last Great Day that God has shown us in our lives.

And not a rod of iron! The Kingdom was portrayed in the old days as "We're going to sit up on a throne and we're just going to crack that whip and boy, they're going fall in line or they're going to know I'm going to get after them." No! We're going to be down with them, putting our arms around them, having them cry on our shoulders, we're going to be gently explaining to them how they should live their life. And we'll be explaining to them that we've made some of the same mistakes. "Don't do like I did. I've learned. Here's the way you need to go."

As Harold Lee pointed out, that it's an erroneous view that when we become spirit, we're going to have all knowledge, all wisdom, and all experience. God's not going to wave a magic wand and just have that. We're going to learn as we go. We will have infinite capacity. We will learn instantaneously and very quickly. We won't have any memory lapses like we do today. We're going to gain knowledge and experience as we go. We will have God's spirit in abundance, filled with God spirit. So we're not going to direct people in the wrong way, but we're going to learn as we go.

So this Third Point we have to understand, don't you think it might be a good idea since we're going to be helping people in the Great White Throne Judgment, loving them, taking care of them, don't you think it might be a good idea to begin practicing that now?

And I think we are here at the Feast. It's been commented several times that we're a family. We love each other. Nobody's out to exalt himself. Nobody's got an agenda. Nobody's politicking to do this or that. We're just trying to serve and help one another. And we're learning that now because this Day, as James pointed out, this is where the rubber meets the road. This is it! This is where all the training, all the experience, the accumulation of a thousand years and what we've learned in this physical life gets focused on a hundred year period when we can make it right with the rest of the world.

And I'm just going to—I had a Fourth Point. And I'm just going to basically mention that because of the time that we have. It is that:

IV. We're going to be able to make things right with those that we have hurt in our life, we've offended, we've sinned against.

They're going to come up and I can think in my mind, there are several people, particularly my mom and dad, that I want to go up and apologize to them. I want to say, "I wasn't the son I should have been. I wasn't as thankful. I wasn't as grateful for the sacrifices you made for me. I just blew them off and kind of accepted that. I didn't know the struggles you had. I didn't appreciate what you've done for me. And I want to apologize. And, by the way, I want to show you a better way. Let's sit down and talk." I can't wait for that Day to happen. I've offended people and stepped on people's toes. And you can't go to them because they're dead now. Neighbors, friends—shenanigans we pulled. All that kind of stuff. You just want to go and you want to make it right. You want to make it right this Day.

That was my Fourth Point that was going to take about twenty minutes, but that's two minutes! Ha ha! And Laura's relieved in the back of the room.

So let's summarize. These Fall Holy Days give us a hope that the world doesn't have. We know things are going to turn out right. We know things are going to be made right. The Millennium, as has been pointed out, we will be able to put into practice making things right. And the Last Great Day, we're going to use all of that experience to make things right with all those who have ever lived. And we of all people should rejoice in what this day means.

And we need to take the lessons of this Day with us as we go home tonight and tomorrow that God loves all of His children. We can't forget that. And, therefore, we should love our neighbor as ourselves. No equivocation. No exceptions. And we should begin developing and practicing loving and comforting and helping one another now because that's what we're going to be doing for the Millennium and during the Last Great Day. And we should look forward to this Day when we can make things right. And we can undo some of the wrongs that we've committed in our lives.

Let's close with one Scripture. Revelation 21, we're going to read verses 3 and 4—one of my favorite Scriptures. Revelation 21 verses 3 and 4, John says:

Revelation 21:3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying ... (KJV)*

What a day this is going to be! What a wonderful time this is going to be!

Revelation 23:3b. *... Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men ... (KJV)*

At last God's government on the earth!

Revelation 23:3 continued. *... and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and [will] be their God. 4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any*

*more pain: for [all these things, these] former things are passed away.
(KJV)*

What a day this symbolizes! It's all over. It's gone! All of that suffering and misery is now gone. All things have been made right.

And all those who have ever lived have had their chance—a better chance, a world without Satan, a world filled with God's holy spirit. They have their human nature to deal with. They have to unlearn everything they've learned, but we can help them and we will be there as brothers and sisters. So let's understand that the world today, they are our ultimate brothers and sisters and will be so for an eternity.

I'd just like to make a couple of closing remarks. I just want to thank you all for coming to Kellogg and making this Feast. Years ago we talked about the "best Feast ever." This is for us, Dorothy and I, just speaking personally, the best Feast we've ever had. And I want to thank you for allowing the holy spirit to work in you to make this a most wonderful Feast!

And so as we go forward, we're going into the dark days of winter. Spring's a ways away. A lot of things can happen between now and then. Please stay close to God! And please stay close to each other, as we head into the winter, and continue to love God with all your heart and continue to love each other as ourselves and our neighbors as ourselves.

And let's be obedient to God in every way. Let's learn to be more obedient than we are now. And let's learn especially to seek God's will in everything. Not our will. Not a human way, but God's way in everything! So we can be together again at the Feast in 2011.