

**Coming to Know and Trust God #5;  
God's Judgments Manifest His Character**

**2010 Feast of Tabernacles, Fourth Day  
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Well, this morning, brethren, on the fourth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, we are going to continue right along with this theme—the eight messages that I have prepared for you—concerning what it means to know and to trust God. To know God and to trust Him. I hope that by this point, if I've done even a reasonable job of presenting what I had planned, you have figured out that the idea of coming to know God is not as easy, or simplistic, or superficial as it might seem on the surface—let alone what it means to come to trust Him. All kinds of human beings make a claim of believing in God, of revering God, and they say, "Praise the Lord," and all kinds of things, and yet, by their behavior they prove that they don't really get it. But the called—of which many of you before me and under the hearing of my voice are a part—have an opportunity, which the rest of the world does not have at this time, of coming into a close, personal relationship with this God. Not just to know Him on an intellectual basis—a superficial basis—but to come to really value Him. And it is getting to know Him—the individual personality that God is, and what makes Him tick, if you will—and coming to value and to esteem Him, to esteem His character, and what He is like, and what He is doing, that is important. That means coming to know Him at such a level that it draws you to Him and makes you say, "I want to be close to this God. This isn't just some powerful God that I fear from a distance and so I am trying to massage my way around and stay out of trouble." And I am afraid that's the way all too many people in God's church really view Him. He is like an austere father—a father figure, yes, but it's not a close, loving relationship. That's not because God doesn't want to have that close and loving relationship with us, it is because you and I have to learn to know Him and come to value Him in order to have that. And He is ready and willing to offer it. All we have to do is come to the point that we take Him up on the offer and step into that position. Then He will embrace us and provide for all that we need.

We can say on an intellectual basis that we agree that God is good and never makes a mistake. We can nod our heads and say, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah." But what about when we experience problems? What about when we experience problems? That's when people—God's people in the church—always run into difficulties. So believing that God is good is not always in an intellectual agreement with a concept, or a philosophy, or a principle. It is when the rubber meets the road—when you and I are faced with personal trials, and challenges, and supernatural attacks—that we are really put to the test as to what we believe and what we value down deep inside. That's when we find out what we really believe. You've probably seen it in yourself at times, when you thought you believed something, but when faced with a crisis, you found yourself bolting and making decisions you never thought you would make. Have you ever surprised yourself in that way? Have you ever been ashamed of yourself because you thought you were stronger? You thought you believed—you thought you had this crystal clear principle that you stood by—and then you found that you abandoned it in the heat of trial or crisis. Those are the kinds of things that can be very instructive. They are not a sign of permanent failure. But we all go through those things and if we use them wisely, we can assess where we really stand, and knowing where we stand is the beginning point of being able to grow. Because having a false concept about where we are, is the worst thing that we can experience. That is self-deception.

So forget about the failures of the past—and I don't mean by that to forget the lessons, but I mean to stop crying over spilled milk and be honest with what you have been through, what you have experienced, and where you stand. If you have a desire to know this God, and if you want a relationship with Him of love and intimacy, I don't care what you have done in the past—it doesn't matter what mistakes you have made in the past—you can have it, because He is ever willing to forgive, through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and to embrace you as a beloved child. It doesn't matter what your history has been, you can walk forward in a closeness with Him that will provide for everything you need in that walk between now and the end of your life, or the return of Jesus Christ—whichever comes first.

But remember, it is not just to believe superficially in God. Remember, I gave you that text in James that says the demons believe and tremble too. So, just recognizing God as a powerful Creator—or Sustainer, the Boss—is not enough.

He wants an intimate relationship with you, and that is going to come because you and I respond to His invitation, and we come not only to accept Him, but also to value who and what He is. Let's begin again this morning with Hebrews 11 and verse 6—our theme text, if you will. Hebrews 11 and verse 6:

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is [that is what we have been focusing upon in the last few messages], and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Do you believe that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him? In other words, as we said yesterday, do you really believe that He will honor His word? Do you believe that this is a God who is a Rock—unchanging, dependable? Can you count on Him, and in your time of crisis will He be there where He said He would be, and will He follow through and do what He said He would do? That's the test of faith for you and me. The fact is that He *is* faithful; He *is* unchanging; He *is* a Rock; you and I *can* depend upon Him. But do you and I believe that? Do you and I believe that, and will we prove it when the chips are down? Or, in the heat of our trials, will we prove we don't really trust Him, so we kind of give ourselves an out—a back door to save ourselves in some way, major or minor?

Psalm 40 and verse 2. Psalm 40 and beginning in verse 2: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." This is the inspiration of a Psalmist who speaks on behalf of the Church of God—those Spirit-begotten ones. Because in every case, you see, that's what you and I have been through. Whether you, like me, were raised in the church and were taught those principles from your childhood, or whether you were called as an adult, either way, it doesn't matter, because we have all gone through this process of recognizing what we are in the flesh—abhorring it and rejecting it—and turning to walk in a new way. So we have all been in a horrible pit. We were plucked, every one of us, out of the miry clay, and if we have embraced this Way of Life, then He has set our feet upon a Rock, because He gave us the Truth. God gave the Church the Truth—it was the foundation. It is the building block for everything that comes afterward. But the majority of these other ministers didn't value that foundation in the last days. They thought they had some better principles. So what did they do? They, in essence, took a

jackhammer to the foundation and they started chipping out big blocks because they thought they could pour a better foundation. You can't do it.

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it . . .

Oh, the day is coming, as we have seen at this Feast, when the whole world is going to have their understanding opened to receive this God. But right now, it's just a small number. "[M]any shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the [Eternal]." A day is coming when millions and millions will be called and converted, and they will value it, and they *will* put their trust in this God. What about us?

Verse 4: "Blessed is that man that maketh the [Eternal] his trust . . ." Blessed is that man that makes the Eternal his trust. Think about the significance of that statement. It's a promise of God. No matter what you face—no matter what terrors, no matter what fears, no matter what worries, no matter what pains, or sufferings—this statement is always true: "Blessed is that man that maketh the [Eternal] his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies"—that means all of these others who have made themselves false prophets, and in the name of God have told us things that are not true. And I don't care how close you and I have been to many of them—ministers, laymembers, friends—when they allow deception to lead them by the nose into a wrong orientation, you and I have the obligation to say, "I love you, but I ain't goin' there. I love what God revealed. My trust is in that God who does not change and I am going to stand fast in that way."

Verse 5: "Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward." He is a loving God—He is compassionate and longsuffering and patient. He does have our best interests at heart. "[T]hey cannot be reckoned"—meaning all of these blessings—"up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Do you feel that way—that you have to be careful how you allocate the time you spend in prayer because you could end up spending your whole time really listing and counting your blessings, and all of the benefits that you derive on a day-by-day basis? Or, when we are overwhelmed by those crises of

mind—whatever is plaguing and troubling us—do we find it hard to think of anything for which to thank God? Often it might seem that way, but the reality is, no matter what you and I have experienced, or will experience, we have much to thank Him for continually because we are blessed.

As I mentioned earlier in this series, Job was a righteous man—God said so. And that means that Job was showing fear and respect for God and was obedient to the Law—the Commandments of God. And yet, he still had not come to trust that this God is always fair. Now, many of you are aware that I did that long series on the Book of Job—forty-something sermons. And the answer in the back of the book—which very few understand—is that even though Job went through the motions of fear and respect for the power of God, and acknowledged the existence and authority of God, and was obedient to the letter of the Law of this God, he still had not come to love, cherish and revere Him. It wasn't the close, intimate relationship that God wanted, and that was what God was after with Job.

The whole interpretation that said that Job was self-righteous, and therefore, God was chastising him and cutting the legs out from underneath him in order to teach him a lesson, flies in the face of the fact that God is the one that said he was a righteous man. He *was* righteous, he was obedient to the Law, but what he lacked was a personal connection to, an appreciation of, and a love for God. To Job, God was the eight-hundred-pound gorilla. He feared God, he respected Him, he acknowledged His power, but he didn't love Him. We know that. Turn to Job 42 and we will read verses 1 through 6 very quickly. This is what Job went through. At the end of the trial, when all was said and done, and God had finally brought him around, what was it that Job had learned? Job 42 and beginning in verse 1: "Then Job answered the [Eternal], and said, I know that thou canst do every thing . . ." You see, he had always believed that. Job had always believed that God could do everything—which just means that he believed in the things I went through earlier concerning the fundamentals of the power of God. He believed that God is omnipotent; that He is omnipresent; that He is omniscient—that He has all power, that He is ever present, and that He has all knowledge. Job didn't seem to have a problem with that. But it wasn't enough. God wanted more. "I know that thou canst do every thing." And there are a lot of human beings who will also pay lip service to that concept. ". . . and that no thought can be withholden from thee." Right there he expressed the fact that God can do everything—that's omnipotence; and that no thought can be withheld from Him—that's omniscience. Job understood the omnipotence and the omniscience of God.

Verse 3: "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?" Who is going to pull the wool over your eyes, O God? Who is going to be able to deceive you? "[T]herefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." Job had allowed himself to get into questioning the fairness of God, because God did not respond quickly enough to save Job from the new trials, as He allowed Satan to attack Job. It was a lesson that could not be learned unless Job was put through tribulation. When everything was good, because he was obedient and God was blessing him, and blessing him, and blessing him, Job wasn't learning this crucial lesson. He had to have it all taken away from him to see how he would respond to God then—to see what he would think about God. And when God, then, didn't respond in a timely enough manner to save him, and to remove the suffering and give him relief from the horrible trial, Job began to question whether God was being fair to him. "O God, if you will just give me an audience. Just give me a chance to come before you and make my case, because I know—I know—that if you will just give me a chance, you will see my side of the story here, and then we can kind of get through this thing." In the final analysis, he is saying, "God, I didn't know what I was talking about. I have come to see, O God, that I had no idea. My orientation about this trial was dead wrong."

. . . therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

He's saying, "God I am really, finally, willing to communicate with you on a respectful basis, to acknowledge you—that not only are you a powerful God, but that you are a good God, that you are a good God all of the time, even when you don't give me everything, the way I want it, when I want it. You are never defective."

Verse 5: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear"—a superficial acknowledgment, a superficial relationship with God, and yet, Job was closer to God in his day than any other human being. There was no one righteous like Job was, and yet even that was a superficial relationship. It was not what God was looking for. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." Now Job had experienced a total transformation of mind and he was viewing God in a totally different way than he had ever done before. What happened? He actually came to know God in a way that he had never recognized

before. And coming to know that God also attracted him to that God in a way that he had never been attracted before, with a sense of feeling, of love—love for God. "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."

And what is the result when you and I actually come to see God and appreciate God for what He is, in His perfect character? Do you know what happens? Do you know what the automatic result is? Exactly what Job says in verse 6: "Wherefore [because now, God, I see you in a way I never did before, and I appreciate you as I never have before] I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Coming to believe and to trust God is simultaneously coming to abhor the self. And to the extent that you and I hold on to our own ideas of mind and heart, carnally, like big fat idols, and refuse to get rid of them, it will impede us, it will prevent us, from valuing God. It is impossible. You and I have to get ourselves out of the way in order for this relationship to occur. That's why the crucifixion of the carnal mind is imperative. It is imperative.

If you and I do not truly believe—even under pressure—that God's judgements are always fair, the day is coming when we will forsake Him. You may not have faced that kind of trial up to this point, but, you see, God is going to test us to the 'n'th degree. And He knows our hearts and minds like we don't. And if He knows there is a defect there, if He knows that our love and commitment toward Him runs only so deep—to Him it is too shallow and insufficient—sooner or later He is going to push us past that limit and put us in a position to choose—a breaking point. Because He is going to bring out in every one of us whether or not there is anything we love more than this God. And how many of our beloved friends and family members have we seen over the years—decades in the church—who have persisted as ostensibly strong members in the church, even pillars, for years, until they faced a particular, crucial trial that tested their Achilles' heal, if you will, their particular weaknesses, their hot-button issues, whatever they were. And then you find that they crumbled and they became bitter, or offended, or went off on some tangent. It's happened time and time again, proving that their commitment to the Truth was really not that deep at all.

It's a warning to you and me, brethren, not for the purpose of looking down our noses at those who have failed, or who have stumbled, but to show that this can happen to you and me just as easily. Where are our weaknesses? What are the things that get in the way of *our* close relationship with God? Do we recognize

them and are we working to get rid of those things now? Or, are we going to have to have God beat us over the head with a trial in order to bring it to the fore? He loves us enough that if we don't get to work and start digging to overcome those things, He is going to put us in a circumstance that puts us to the test. That's what a loving parent does—loving chastisement, correction of beloved children. And we think God is being mean to us. Again, God is playing the end-game which is much greater than the here and now. He wants us in the Kingdom forever with Him. So, anything that we are doing, or not doing, right now that threatens that ultimate goal, He is going to test, because we are not growing.

Mr. Raymond Cole used to say that when we have a test—a particular test—and we fail it, very often God is going to let us go through it again, not because He is being mean to us, but because He is now giving us a second opportunity to do it right. It's all in how we view it. "God's persecuting me. I got sick." That's a big one for many of God's people. The original teaching of Mr. Armstrong—which was not Mr. Armstrong's teaching, but God's—was that we should avoid the modern medical system and put our trust in God. That doesn't mean to say, "God please heal me. Work through the hands of the surgeon." God doesn't work through the hands of human surgeons. It's a counterfeit. That's what the church taught for the first forty years—or forty-five years—before they started justifying going to doctors, taking medication. It's not what we were taught. The church turned to that, and the majority are saying "that's the way God heals." Well, that's what the Protestants say too. You might as well be a Protestant. "God heals through the hands of the doctors." No, He doesn't.

But, do you know what? You can be committed to the idea philosophically—you can desire to trust God for healing—but you don't know and I don't know until we face a health crisis what we are going to do. And as I have told you before, I am not passing judgement on anybody who has failed that test, because I have not faced a life-threatening illness. Between you and me, I'm not very good with pain. I'm not. I don't like to hurt. I think that would be a really, really hard one for me. God has blessed me with very good health. I try to appreciate it, but I know that I take it for granted. But I can't tell you what I would do if I were in that situation. Some of you have stood up. Some of you before me have faced it, and you have stood firm, and you have set a marvelous example, and I thank you for that. I don't know what I would do. Until you face it, no one can say. You can have the philosophical belief in the doctrine—the faith once delivered—but you don't know whether or not your faith and confidence is really

in God as Healer until you face your own crisis. That's when you find out. Do you really trust Him? He promised to be our doctor. What will you do?

That was the other thing Job seemed to understand, as we see in Job 13 and verse 15, I think it is, where he said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." That was one thing. Job was committed to upholding the Law. In essence he was saying, "God, even if I think you are not being fair to me, you are the Lawmaker, you are the Sustainer, and I am subject to your Law, and I will obey your Law. Even if you kill me, *I will not compromise.*" Do we even have that kind of commitment and resolve? If you don't trust Him—if you don't really trust Him—in the day of your calamity and your trial, you will bail, you will push the panic button.

Now, what about those of us who have pushed the panic button—and many of us have in different areas of our lives? We thought we were stronger than that and then we found out that we were not. As Mr. Cole has said, well, alright, now you know where you stand in faith. You know that your faith is not as strong as you thought or hoped it was. Alright, use that to your advantage now—go forward, use it constructively. If you push the panic button and you try to save yourself by breaking God's Law in some way, don't be surprised if you face a similar trial again. Now, you can treat it as if God is persecuting you: "I've already been through this once. Why am I going through it again?" But here is your opportunity to do it right this time. Here is your chance to succeed. That's what God is after. Honor Him and show confidence and trust in Him by not freaking out. Trust Him. *Believe. Prove it* by holding firm and saying, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." It's like one of those trials where we might say, "Well, I just don't see how this is going to work out. This is a train wreck waiting to happen. If I really put God first, disaster is ahead of me." And yet, like Job, we say, "Though He slay me, I will trust in Him and I will not compromise." That's what He is after. That's the proof of our love and our real belief in that God.

Lack of faith is always the key to this issue of salvation. As we have already seen in Hebrews 11, faith is the whole thing. But notice Deuteronomy 1 and verse 21. I'm going to read beginning in verse 21 and all the way through verse 36 because it is a synoptic, historical account of the failure of ancient Israel. God wrote it not simply to condemn those ancient people, but it is a lesson for the last-day Church and that is why it is here. The very same problems of mind that

they had, which caused them to fail, are the very same things you and I are grappling with on a day-by-day basis. This lesson is for us. What happened to them? What did *they* do? Deuteronomy 1 and beginning in verse 21: "Behold, the [Eternal] thy God hath set the land before thee." He says, "I've promised you this great and glorious land, flowing with milk and honey. Here it is, right across the Jordan River. I want you to have it. I've promised it to you. Trust me, I'm not shining you on. Take me at my word and follow my instructions and you will inherit that land." That's what He is saying.

. . . go up and possess it [Take it, it's yours. No one can stop you because I have given it to you.], as the [Eternal] God of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged.

How often are we overwhelmed by fear or discouragement? It happens, doesn't it? God says, "Don't be afraid. Oh, I know that by nature you are going to be afraid because you see all of these great giants over there in their walled cities." And just because God said, "It's your land, go and take it," yet human beings look at that and say, "Yeah, right [laughs]. Have you seen those armies? Have you seen those cities? And you think we are going to go up against them? How's that going to work?" That's exactly the way they thought. But do you think we would have been any different in that situation? No. What we see with our eyes, and face in real life, is incredibly compelling, and God loves to tell us that things that are impossible are possible, and we naturally say, "No, that doesn't compute." These weren't stupid people. These were highly intelligent people, but they were carnal. "Fear not, neither be discouraged." He says, "Stop giving in to your fears and what you see." Verse 22:

And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, We will send men before us, and they shall search us out the land, and bring us word again by what way we must go up, and into what cities we shall come.

So there was an initial agreement: "Okay, God says He is going to give it to us? O-o-o-kay, uhh, we'll send out some search parties. Let's go scout this out and figure out which way we can actually do what you are telling us to do." Well, what was the result of that? Let's skip down to verse 26. At the end of the day, their assessment was: failed mission, impossible, can't be done. "Notwithstanding ye would not go up." God said, "Go up," and they considered all of the facts and

the end result was that they said, "No, God, we would be slaughtering ourselves and our families to do what you are telling us we are supposed to do. You must have something else in mind, surely. Maybe you are just not aware of all of the facts, or *maybe* you are not really our friend after all. Maybe you are just setting us up to get killed." What are the other conclusions?

"Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the [Eternal] your God." God always reduces everything down to, "you either obey, or you disobey." But we like to have all of these shades of gray. We are really good at that kind of stuff. And we read accounts in the Bible, and because God is telling the story and putting it in black-and-white terms, we think it was really easy for everybody to see. Like, why did Aaron build the golden calf? "Come on, Aaron, you knew that was wrong." No, we were not in his situation, and we were not facing the mob. We didn't hear all of the rationalizations. They were afraid that Moses was dead, and they didn't know what to do. Aaron didn't know what to do. They all panicked. Don't assume that you would have done anything different if you had been in their position. God told the story and He put it in black and white terms which are easy for us to read after the fact and think it was all so clear cut. "Oh, well, it is obvious that they should have done this instead of doing that." Your trials and your circumstances don't ever seem so clear cut, do they? Yours always seem like: "Well, wait a minute, there might be a way that I can take this sideways path and not really offend God." It's the same thing they were doing. But, you see, God is the one telling the story here, and He reduces it down to black and white. "Notwithstanding, you wouldn't go up." He just says, "Justify it any way you want—rationalize as to why you did what you did, and why you weren't at fault—but I said to go up and you didn't go up. End of story."

Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the [Eternal] your God. [Verse 27:] And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the [Eternal] hated us . . .

Now, do you think they really, necessarily, used those words? "God hates us." Maybe, but I suspect a lot of them were not really using those words, but what I think is definitely true is that by their orientation of mind not to trust Him, it was the same thing to God as accusing Him of hating them. Why would God tell a vulnerable people with families and little children to cross a river and go into the heart of an army camp—the fortified cities of enemies—if He wasn't going to

create a miracle in order to give it to them? If He wasn't going to create the miracle, then He *was* setting them up to get slaughtered, wasn't He? And what do you say about a God who does that to a whole nation? He must hate them. If He would do that and not follow through on the promise, He must hate them. So, whether or not they used the words, it doesn't matter, God assessed that there was a lack of love. What they said by refusing to have the faith to go up is that "we don't think you are going to follow through, God; we don't think you really love us like you say you do; we think you hate us; we think you are going to kill us." What other conclusion can there be?

And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the [Eternal] hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart [they were discouraged], saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there. ["There is no way we can do what you ask of us, God; we will get slaughtered." Verse 29:] Then I said unto you . . .

God says, "I'm God, I have all power, and not only that, I am committed to saving you—to using that awesome power to protect you, and to promote you, and to bless you. Trust me—trust me. I am going to do what I say; I am honest; I am not flighty; I am not inconsistent; I am not tossed to and fro; don't you be either."

Then I said unto you [God speaking], Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The [Eternal] your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes; And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the [Eternal] thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

Their rebellion wouldn't have been nearly as egregious had they not already seen so many interventions in their lives already to that point. The fact that they had been the beneficiaries of so many miracles in their lives meant that their failure to trust Him now, at this point, was an incredible slap in the face. And that's really where it gets down to you and me. Because if you will look back and analyze the way that God has intervened in your life up until now, and all of the things that He has done to prove to you that you are called with this incredible

opportunity, and has blessed you and promoted you, you are like those Israelites. Meaning that you have no excuse for having fear or rebellion.

[Verse 32:] Yet in this thing ye did not believe the LORD your God, Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day. And the [Eternal] heard the voice of your words, and was wroth [Why? Because they rebelled and would not love Him.], and sware, saying [So in verse 35, He pronounces a curse upon them:], Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers [There were two exceptions, but only one listed here:], Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it, and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed the [Eternal].

Joshua was the other one. Those two and their families were the only ones out of that initial generation which came out of Egypt who actually went across the Jordan River. The whole rest of the nation—millions—died within a forty-year period and did not see it. That's because God requires us to trust Him. Not trusting Him is disrespectful, and He is simply not going to reward with the Promised Land—for us, eternal life in the Kingdom of God—anyone who refuses to take Him at His word, and honor Him with obedience. It's an integral part of the way God thinks and what is important to Him. If you want to get to know this God, take that concept very seriously. It is salvation to you and to me.

What are some of our challenges today that are comparable to those which kept ancient Israel out of their promised land back then? Because, again, it is easy to look at the Scriptures and say, "Well, yeah, all of those stupid people back there. I can't believe they did that." And then we don't see the very same challenges happening in our lives. But they are comparable. What are the equivalent circumstances today that affect you in mind and heart as they are manifested in either your obedience or your lack of obedience?

What about when God does not grant you a particular blessing you would like to receive when you think you need it? Do you get frustrated and begin to doubt His compassion? If you do, don't try and cover it up. I mean, you don't need to confess it to anybody else, but before God, be honest. That's the first step.

None of us are going to pull the wool over God's eyes. He knows our hearts and minds. If we have those doubts, and we have had those negative feelings toward God, the best thing you and I can do is to acknowledge it. Get on your knees and say, "God, I have to be honest, I'm really ticked off at you. I know I'm not supposed to be, but I feel resentful. I feel I have this need, and I am trying the best that I know how to obey. I know I'm not perfect, but I have this really serious need right now. Why aren't you helping me? Why aren't you solving this problem for me? And I feel resentful. I don't want to feel resentful. Help me. Help me to change my orientation, because I now understand that you are perfect; you are compassionate; you are the epitome of love. There is nothing wrong with you, therefore, it must be me. Help me to see it. I don't want to be resentful anymore. You deserve to be loved and to be revered. Help me to have that relationship with you." If you will take that approach, brethren, and you are sincere about it, you can do it. You might be amazed at what He opens up for you.

Romans 8 and verse 35. Romans 8 and beginning in verse 35: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Who? What power, what circumstance, should ever separate us from God? Family members? Close friends? A job? Health crisis? Some other circumstance? What, legitimately, should cause us to disobey God—which is what is involved in separating us from the love of Christ? He said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Compromising His commandments, even out of fear or despondency, is separating us from His love. What circumstance should ever do that? "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation . . ." What level of tribulation can you and I endure without compromising? It is maybe yet to be seen.

"[S]hall tribulation, or distress . . ." What about emotional pressures that cause great distress of mind and heart? You have had them, and don't they pull you and really make you want to tumble off the cliff and separate you from God? Should it? No, not if our relationship with Him is strong.

"[S]hall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine . . ." What if He lets you starve to death? We have a hard enough time fasting for twenty-four hours on the Day of Atonement, don't we? What if He lets you go without food? Some of you have done that in your lives in the past, and not because you were choosing to fast, but because you literally didn't have the money or the resources. What if He lets you starve to death? Would you still be committed to your belief that He is a good God? Or do you have a breaking point? "Oh, I thought you

were a good God and I was willing to go without food for three days, but if you don't give me something to eat in the next twelve hours, it must mean that you are not really a good God after all."

"Oh, I would never put a limit like that on God." Really? We do it all the time. We do it all the time. "Oh, God, please heal me. But God didn't heal me, so I have no choice but to go to the doctor. Well, I gave it a week [or I gave it a month] but He didn't heal me, so I have no alternative. I have to try and save myself the best way I can. Because I guess God was on vacation, or I guess He just wanted to be mean to me." You see, I'm putting in blunt, disrespectful terms the kind of thoughts that you and I have, and many times we don't even recognize them. I'm trying to put this in terms of the way God thinks about our actions and our thoughts, which are the antithesis of the love that He requires us to learn.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ"—what excuse do we have? "[S]hall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness [nakedness?], or peril, or sword?" What if you were in danger of being killed by a street gang? Would it make you doubt God's loving compassion for you, or would you still say, as Job did, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him"? The problem is never with God. "I will not turn, I will not doubt Him, no matter what, because He is trustworthy and He is worthy to be worshiped at all times, no matter what He allows me to endure." Can we do that?

"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." You know what? If you are going to be a true Christian, get ready for the persecution and the tribulation because that is exactly what God is going to allow us all to experience in one way or another in this purification process. If you think there is a way to do everything just right and to skate, then you are in the wrong line of work. Those kinds of tests and trials are God's purging tools to help to hone our faith, and our trust, and our confidence in Him. It's not a matter of *if* we will endure it, it is a matter of *when* we will endure it.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." None of these threats should derail us if we have our minds in the right place. He will give us the capacity to endure them. And many of us may even be martyrs. It may be God's will for us to be martyred.

Last year at the Feast of Tabernacles, I gave you a series on the seven churches of Revelation. And one of those was the church at Philadelphia which was promised a place of safety, and I demonstrated to you that the whole idea of a place of safety is an absolute idol to the church, and the ministry made it so. God just says, prophetically, that there will be a place of safety. There will be a certain number of His faithful children whom He will choose to protect and shield, but He didn't set that up like some thing to be grasped at, as if now, the ministers are selling tickets to the place of safety. No, they don't control it. They can't give you a pass or a guarantee. And if you demand to be in the place of safety, I can already guarantee that you won't be there. You and I need to be preparing for the potential of the "worst"—which is that God may want us, for His reasons, to be martyrs. Are you willing? The Bible says that many of His people *have been* martyred and *will be* martyred. Just read Daniel 11. They are going to fall by the sword. Are you willing to be a part of those, or will you, all of a sudden, decide that God has abandoned you if you face that kind of threat?

And most of the time, brethren, it's not even necessarily that you will have to endure it. We all have heard these examples—I have since the time I was a child in the church—like, "Well, I hope when the soldier knocks on my door and threatens to torture me, that I will have the faith to stand and say, 'I won't repudiate God.'" Or, "I hope that when they put me on the rack and torture me, that I will be able to keep my teeth clamped shut so that I don't curse God." Very likely, those are not the kind of things you are going to have to endure. But you know what you are definitely going to have to endure? The fear, the threat, of one of those potential circumstances. It is the idea in our minds of trying to avoid doom, and pain, and suffering that is our biggest enemy. It's the *fear*. That's what got the Israelites at the edge of the Jordan River. To them, crossing the Jordan and going up against those cities, was death—slaughter. Now, you and I know—in retrospect—that it wasn't so, because God was going to create a miracle and spare them. To them, however, it was "if I cross that river, I'm dead." To you and me, it's "if I don't work on the Sabbath, I'm going to be homeless"; or, "if I don't go to the doctor, I'm going to die"; or "if I don't capitulate and allow them to inoculate my children, they are going to take them away from me." How many others? And we compromise, and we bail out, and we panic, not because we actually face those things, but because the fear overwhelms us. We compromise because we do not trust God to the end.

And what if it is not His will to save us? What if He lets the soldier in the black suit take us and torture us? "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." That's our goal. They wouldn't do it. "Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land," because they disrespected God—they wouldn't trust that His word was true. What about us?

Verse 37: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." God does love us, even when He allows us to suffer tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword. He still loves us. Verse 38:

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Are you that resolved? Are you that determined?

What is another category of tests, besides those personal kinds of trials, that has derailed many? What about the whole issue of relationships in the church—and especially the ministry with the laity? Boy, has that authority thing, and church government, been a major thorn for many. What about when the ministers of God make administrative decisions that you or I don't immediately understand or agree with? Now, I'm not talking about perverted doctrine. You know very well what we have given you. I continue, as Mr. Cole did, to hammer the fact that you have the yardstick by which to evaluate any servant, and just because a minister is faithful now doesn't mean he has *carte blanche* forever. Because if he ever turns and begins to espouse false doctrines which are not consistent with the faith once delivered, then you are to reject him. But assuming that you do believe and know where a faithful ministry is preaching by the legitimate authority of Jesus Christ, does that mean it is all roses? No, because as Mr. Litz told us the other morning, it is a mixed multitude—and always has been and will be until the end—because God is trying us, even in relationships within the physical body. As he mentioned, there is a difference between big "C" and little "c"—capital "C" is the Church, meaning the Spirit Body of Jesus Christ, and little "c" is the physical assembly of all of those who make a claim, but who are not all, necessarily, legitimate. We can't tell because you and I don't read hearts and minds. But we can see certain things by their fruits. But it is a mixed multitude.

Within that environment, then, is God-ordained leadership to try and keep peace. But those ministers do not have the authority to intervene in your private lives. Huge mistakes were made in our parent organization because they failed to recognize that, and even with the good intentions of trying to "get us all into the Kingdom," the ministry basically started stepping upon personal and family authority, and God never intended that. Husbands and fathers, *you* are the heads of your households, not the ministers. I have no business in your personal lives. All of you individually, *you* are responsible for your own salvation. Work out your own salvation. You will be held accountable for your own faith. I can't get you into the Kingdom, and you can't get me into the Kingdom. You are going to have to build the faith on your own—one-on-one with God. But, when we all come into a physical assembly like this, there have to be some kind of rules for orderly conduct. And He gave the ministry the responsibility to take care of and to protect the sheepfold. And there is strong condemnation for those ministers who run and leave the sheep as victims when the wolves come. Now, you figure out how we are supposed to fulfill that responsibility without making some kind of administrative judgements and decisions sometimes?

Now, I grew up in our parent organization—the Worldwide Church of God—and I saw a whole lot, and experienced a whole lot, of abuse and heavy-handed administration. I hated it and I know whereof I speak. I had to grapple with that too, and I was probably the most rebellious against it of anyone, and as a teenager, I expressed it. But my orientation wasn't right either. I came to be convicted of that. But it is very much an area that tests the people of God, and many of you have been through some of that. What happens when the ministry makes an administrative judgement, and you don't have all the facts, but looking from afar you have a serious, honest doubt as to whether or not they did the right thing? It can be a test.

That's one of the reasons that Mr. Raymond Cole, whenever possible, would defer making a difficult decision, because he knew there were always potential ramifications as to how it would affect other brethren. If there was any way he could take a softer approach, he tried to do that. But when he was convinced there was no such way, he was firm in acting, and he was always challenged and criticized for it. Is there an example of that? Turn to Numbers 16 and verse 31. Now, somebody is probably out there thinking, "Ah, he is going to give us the Korah speech. That's what the ministers always do when they are trying to

reaffirm their authority and make everybody toe the mark and get behind them and do whatever they say. He's giving the Korah speech." Yes, a lot of ministers have abused it, and that is exactly the way they have used this text, but is there a legitimate lesson in the story of Korah, Dathan and Abiram—a reason for which God put it in the Bible? Can it maybe be used legitimately? I think so. You be the judge. I'm giving you this small piece of it so that you can evaluate for yourself and make sure you are not accidentally falling into this kind of thinking at times. Numbers 16 and beginning in verse 31—we are just going to pick up the end of the story. You know what happened. Korah, Dathan and Abiram, and 250 princes of Israel—these were the movers and the shakers within the nation, and they had a strong personal following within their families and all of the various tribes. They had political clout and they didn't think Moses was making good decisions administratively. And Moses wasn't well spoken—he wasn't a dynamic figure. He really wasn't Charlton Heston [laughs]. That's the image you and I have. You know, he wasn't. He was meek and he wasn't a good speaker. Aaron had to do the speaking for him. Now you have these dynamic princes of Israel who *do* have that power, and that personality, and that charisma, and the people looked to them. And they are saying, "You know, Moses, we are Israelites too. We are the leaders of the nation; we have a little bit of experience; we are likewise the people of God and we should have some say in some of this stuff." Well, you know how the story came out. God said, "Uh-uh. I didn't call you; I don't care what your resume is; I don't care what you think about yourself; I didn't call you, I called Moses to do the job. Like it or not, he is my man. As weak, outwardly, as he appears, he is the one I am speaking through, and not any of you guys." But they didn't get it. Moses said, "Please don't do this. Please don't do this. You are going to be sorry," but they were adamant and you know what happened. Verse 31:

And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

Now, all of a sudden, these people, rather than being this confident, organized mob that was going to assert its power in bending Moses to their will, are fleeing in terror. The God of Israel had a way of getting His point across, didn't He? Now, what do you think should have happened after this? They should have all said, "Whoa! Boy, did we make a mistake. Let's rewind and reconsider our conclusions. We just saw a demonstration of God wiping out the leaders of this movement we thought was good, but God proved otherwise. Let's step back." But was it just Korah and those particular families that were rebellious?

Verse 35: "And there came out a fire from the [Eternal], and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." The supporters of the ringleaders were consumed by a fire on top of the other ones who had been buried alive. Pretty strong stuff. Is there anything more definitive that God could have done to get their attention and to make His will known? They didn't have electricity then, so He couldn't put a big neon sign up saying, "Moses is my man." They should have gotten the message, but did they? What was the result after they had fled, and after they had some time overnight to simmer down and think about it? What did they do?

Verse 41: "But on the morrow . . ." They have slept on it, they have considered what has just happened and have rationalized it in their minds. Now, did they come back and say, "God, we are sorry we disrespected you. Moses is obviously the servant through whom you are working. We are going to follow those administrative judgements not as having come from the man, but as having come from you." No.

Verse 41: "But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron . . ." *WHAT?* They didn't learn their lesson? What's wrong with these people? They "murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the [Eternal]": "These were important, valuable Israelites. They were the leaders of our nation, and Moses, because of you they are all dead." Why did they do this? Were they really all just stupid? No, no more than you and me. These were people they loved and trusted, and they got crosswise with God and ended up getting wiped out of the nation. And then their friends and the others had to make a decision. What do you think about that negative thing that happened? Are you going to be supportive of God's decision—even when it is punitive and even when people get hurt? Or, are you

going to grumble and murmur and say that the minister screwed up? They said, "Moses, this didn't have to happen had you made better decisions. Those people could have been saved. Their blood is on your hands, Moses. We loved them. They were our friends and now they are gone from our congregation and it is your fault. Your judgement is defective."

And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the [Eternal] appeared. And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the [Eternal] spake unto Moses, saying, [How did God view this? Verse 45:] Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment.

It was an act of disrespect and dishonor to God. They just thought they were going to put Moses in his place. No, they were showing disrespect to God because Moses was His appointed representative to the nation. Therefore, they did not believe that God was fair. They did not believe that God was a good God. They believed He was a powerful God—oh, they had witnessed that. Could they have denied it? Who else could have opened up the ground and swallowed these men and their families and created a consuming fire that burned the flesh right off their skeletons? Oh, they believed there was a God. Oh, they believed He had all power—they believed He was omnipotent—but they didn't believe He was a good God. They thought He was a vindictive God; they thought He was a defective God; they thought He was vengeful; they thought He was anything but loving, because He killed their friends and their leaders.

What about you and me? What happens when a circumstance occurs—and thankfully it doesn't happen very often, and it certainly hasn't in this congregation in a long, long time—when people are put out? And we have been through some of those trials in which somebody we love and respect all of a sudden runs into a problem and gets crosswise and begins to challenge. You know, it's one thing if they just keep it to themselves personally, but it's another thing when they start spreading it among the congregation, and that is a situation in which Jesus Christ said—and gave the analogy—that if your hand offend you, cut it off, or if your eye offend you, pluck it out. He is not talking about self-mutilation. He is saying that the Body—which is the Church—is more important as a whole than any one member, and none of us are indispensable. None of us.

In the true Church of God, you and I are given as much time and patience to overcome our personal weaknesses as we need. That's between you and God, and I don't care how many times you fall, how many times you fail, how many mistakes you make along the way, you will get support, compassion and comfort here. We have a remnant full of people with problems. You know, you are a bunch of misfits and I'm not saying that disrespectfully. That is true from the standpoint of how the other groups treat you, because you were kicked out of them. You are the offscouring of a lot of other groups because their ministry just couldn't take the time to tend to some of you who were "high maintenance" as they viewed it. Because you didn't fit the model of an ideal church member, which was to be quiet—don't cause any trouble—don't ask any questions, and pay lots of tithes and offerings. That's the perfect church member—"low maintenance," profitable. "But those high maintenance ones where we have to spend a lot of time in contacting and counseling, and who have problems and weaknesses that sometimes touch other brethren and little fires get started, no, we don't have time for them. Just get 'em out." But many of you, hopefully, have found a home in this little remnant. And many of you who were considered incorrigible and beyond hope in other groups have shown incredible growth when given time, and support, and patience in this group.

But that doesn't mean, brethren, that we are pushovers. You can't come into this fellowship—this congregation—and do anything you want, especially when it comes to doctrine. We are not here to listen to *your* ideas about doctrine. We are here as a remnant body founded upon the premise of defending the faith once delivered that we learned through Herbert Armstrong. We are not interested in other concepts. No disrespect intended, but we know what we believe doctrinally. So it doesn't matter if somebody changes their mind at some point and decides, for example, that we should be keeping new moons as Sabbaths, or that we should reject the calendar for figuring Holy Days, or decides that they don't agree with what Mr. Armstrong taught us about the modern identity of Israel. You can have whatever belief you want, but we ain't goin' for it. What God taught through Herbert Armstrong is what we accept as the Truth and nothing else—no disrespect. And anybody who comes into this fellowship and seeks to destabilize, to teach, or to espouse a different concept which violates those principles, it will not be tolerated.

That's not the ministry throwing its weight around to your harm, that's to preserve our peace, and if we don't do that, God will hold us accountable as having

been hirelings. John 10 says the hireling doesn't care about the sheep and when the wolf comes in, they just kind of let them do whatever they want. The true and faithful ministers are representatives of Jesus Christ—who is the true Shepherd—and they are there to protect the Body, not to interfere in your personal lives. And that's the way that some of our decisions have been interpreted, and some who have wound up outside have accused us of violating their free moral agency with the intent to rule in their personal lives. No, what you do in your personal life is between you and God, but don't bring your false concepts into this congregation. Don't be writing letters to our members that espouse doctrines we do not believe. Don't be pulling our members aside trying to get them to buy into these concepts. You *will* get crosswise with this ministry, and in love we will handle it. We have to understand the proper role of church government as well as personal responsibility, family authority and civil government. They all have a role. They are four separate venues of authority. But it is one of those things that can be a test to us. And you and I can nod our heads and say, "Yes, we believe in the Truth and the Law," but then we can get into one of those situations in the church, and all of a sudden, we become offended. It's happened many times.

The Israelites of old did not believe that God was fair—powerful, yes, but defective in judgement. And that is the way many treat the servants of God today. "Oh, that minister made a wrong decision. We don't agree with that." Just be careful. If it is a matter of doctrine—if he has changed and is teaching perverted doctrine—then, oh, yes, you are obligated by God to act—not to stir up contention in the midst of the church. But if, all of a sudden, you believe that minister is not being inspired by the Holy Spirit because he has embraced false doctrine, you should get out of there. Mr. Raymond Cole gave us that example. When the church departed, and after enough months had passed and he became absolutely convinced they had no intention of rethinking the changes and getting back to the faith once delivered, he ended up on the outside. He didn't stay as an insurgent, trying to do his work within, against the will of the leadership. No such insurgency is ever God's way of working. No way.

If we really trust Him, it will be manifested in confidence, even in troubling times. No matter what accusations, no matter what threats are uttered—personal or collectively against the Body—if you have your yardstick by which you are measuring, you will have a means of making the right decisions and to avoid being troubled in mind and losing faith. We went through those trials back when Mr. Cole was still alive when some of prominence within our fellowship rose up and

started some of that, and they made all kinds of personal accusations against Mr. Cole. And I was living in Kansas City at the time—I wasn't anywhere near. I didn't know the specifics firsthand. I was hearing all of this he said/she said stuff going around, and I had people trying to write to me in order to pull me to their side. Do you know what my answer was? "In what way has Raymond Cole departed from the faith once delivered?" All of their accusations were of a personal nature—Raymond Cole did this, he thought that, he's evil. "*In what way has Raymond Cole departed from the faith once delivered?* Show me what corrupt doctrine he is now teaching. Where has he changed?" They couldn't answer it. And I said, "That answers it for me." I don't have to get involved in the he said/she said stuff, we are always going to have that. Our decisions must be made upon the basis of the Truth. And, do you know what? If a man, a minister—one of the other ministers or me—*does* all of a sudden start leading a double life and becomes deceived and buys into the "dark side," and starts turning into a Jekyll and Hyde, or whatever, but tries to keep up a good front on the surface, it's ultimately going to come out. You can't hide that stuff. It will ultimately be manifested in a doctrinal perversion, I guarantee it. Because any human being—and especially a minister—who cuts himself off from the Holy Spirit is a sitting duck for Satan, and you *will* see the change manifested publicly in what he speaks and what he writes. You don't have to worry about getting tabloid information in order to figure out what is really going on. Wait for what you see in the fruits that are manifested publicly. I never saw any change, publicly, in the speaking of Raymond Cole—in the sermons, in the quality and conviction of his writing, or any of those things. He was absolutely consistent, and yet I was hearing all of these attacks on him personally. And when I supported Raymond Cole instead of his detractors on the basis of what Mr. Cole was preaching from the pulpit, and writing, they just accused me of selling out. Oh, they believed their accusations against him personally, or else they seemed to, and the fact that I would not accept their "evidence" of a personal nature, then, all of a sudden, *I* was selling out. No, I don't trust accusers. I don't trust it. So we have faced those kinds of things and we will probably face more.

None of us is without mistakes. Can we make administrative blunders? Yes. Am I happy with every single administrative decision that I have made as director of this little remnant body? No, in hindsight, there are certain times when I've thought, "Well, I wish I had done this instead of that." We are not talking about doctrine. The question is, to what extent is God really guiding and directing? Be careful—be very, very careful—in how you assess those kinds of

issues that may come up, and will come up, in the future. If we really trust God, it is manifested in confidence, even in troubling times. You have the yardstick for evaluation. You don't need to become destabilized, or fearful, or fretful, or worried. Go by the fruits that you see. Psalm 112:

Praise ye the [Eternal]. Blessed is the man that feareth the [Eternal], that delighteth greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever. Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever [you do not have to be tossed to and fro—you don't have to live in doubt]: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the [Eternal].

What's the key to salvation? Hebrews 11:6: to "believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." To trust Him.

John 16:33: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace." You and I should carry our peace with us regardless of the circumstances we face. "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation." You are going to have it, because God says it is part of our training and development. Don't turn bitter against Him—don't doubt. "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." There is nothing that can defeat you if you will hold to this plan—if you will get to know Him, if you will come into that loving relationship with Him and really trust Him. Never assume that you already love and trust God now. You have to prove it. What if you just think that you do?

Psalm 139 and verse 23 in closing. Psalm 129 and beginning in verse 23. Here's how to know. Make this your prayer: "Search me, O God, and know my heart." Oh, He already knows, but what the Psalmist is asking is "show *me*, help *me* to see what I know you already know."

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me . . .

See if there is some hidden weakness I am not even aware of that may trip me up one day if I do not get a handle on it now. Help me to find those chinks in my armor, spiritually, and to address them and get rid of them.

"[A]nd lead me in the way everlasting." Have confidence in the judgements of God and be willing to practice them in reality—not just philosophically—in your life, day by day.

Next time, we are going to examine a specific area of our Christian walk that I think you are going to be very amazed about and which may give you pause concerning how you really think about God at this time. Next time.