

Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 109
The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit

Faith #18

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Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. Once again, now, this is a tape on the subject of faith, and a continuation of that long series on the overall subject of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit. We've spent quite a lot of time on this subject of faith, and there is yet much, much more to be said, because we have not really come, as yet, to the basic word that is used—or translated—as "faith" in the *King James* translation. So, we have to come to that a little later, but in the meantime, we are picking it up in alphabetical sequence—that is, the Greek order of the words—and we have now come down to this word *apistos*. And, as I've explained to you in times past, the "a" added on to this makes it negative in connotation—*pistos* being a matter of faith. And, really, the basic root word for this is *pistis*—p-i-s-t-i-s. *Pistos* is only a derivation therefrom. So the "a" negates that. It means "faithlessness." So, in this tape number 18, now, we are going to continue in this subject of the particular word *apistos*.

The last time, we covered the first question—or the first subtopic—entitled, "What Are the Tragic Results of Faithlessness?" And we went through a couple of texts to show that the generation in which we live has become a faithless generation. That is, they don't really have any relationship with God. Everything is now superficial. They talk a good talk—they talk at random about conceptions and ideologies, thought patterns, ways of life, and so on, but they don't have any real respect for God at all. So it is a faithless generation—a generation that has no real regard for God, whatsoever. They have categorically rejected Him, and they have molded and fashioned their own gods out of their own minds, their own hearts, and their own thought patterns. So they have created gods that they have set out here, and before whom they bow.

Then we went through the second point: "Those called, God wants to have faith." And we went through the example, if you will remember, of the apostle—or

the disciple, at that time—who said he wasn't going to believe, except . . . And Christ said, when He finally met them the next time, "I don't want you to be faithless, but believing." He had called them to *believe*, not to continue to exist in the natural proclivities—the traits, or the tendencies—of human minds. That is, to be agnostic, or even worse, atheistic—if there is any such individual, really. They are atheists as long as everything is going well, and then, as I have mentioned to you so many times, they turn around and say, "Well, *if* there is a God, then such and such." So there is always a doubt nagging away at their minds and their hearts.

People cannot live in confidence—they cannot live peaceable lives—because they have not learned what it is to really trust God. Peace and every marvelous characteristic that man wants, like joy, and satisfaction, and contentment in life, comes as a result of the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit, as manifested in absolute faith, and then that is manifested in a conviction toward God—a belief in God. That is the obvious manifestation. Where there is any of this doubt; where there is any struggling for explanations; a questioning spirit; an attitude of conciliation, or compromise, you can rest assured that it is not of God, because God is absolute; His Spirit is absolute; His Way is absolute, and when He calls an individual and gives them that Spirit, they are not existing in doubt. They are not existing in frustration or misgiving. So, they, therefore, are not faithless—they do have faith; they have confidence; they have assurance.

It is a long, long uphill grind for human beings to obtain that kind of faith, because we are not born with it. We are born subjected to the natural proclivities of the flesh and mind. We are weak, by nature, and we tend to vacillate—we tend to have no certain direction in life. We tend to find rationalizations, or justifications in our minds and our hearts that allow us to do the things that seem to be convenient, momentarily. We want to do them, but our minds constantly censure us for the things that we do, until we either turn around in faithful obedience to God, or until we harden our minds and then we go do whatever we want because we are no longer influenced or affected by it. And the Bible speaks of both of those categories.

So we find that the vast majority of human beings—the cauldron of humanity, the restless sea of humanity—sitting here trying to figure things out. They are troubled, perplexed and agnostic in nature, and some even profess to be atheistic, which is really not true at all.

Now, this kind of thing prevailed in the day of the apostles—including the Apostle Paul. So, here, we are coming next to a particular point that, to me, is quite interesting. Because people will talk about the greatness of God—His Creation. They are rather liberal and profuse in the verbiage—the language—that they use regarding God, until it comes to a personal relationship with themselves. And then, all of a sudden, they begin to hedge—they have doubts, or misgivings, or whatever it is. So, objectively, they can talk about God: "He was a great Creator, He was this, and He was that," but, then, when it gets right down close to the thing that is going to affect their own lives, and they are faced with a choice between real confidence, faith, belief, and trust in the promises of God, or the natural doubts and misgivings of humanity, they begin to hedge. They will always do it.

So here is a classic example of that in Acts the twenty-sixth chapter, and let's begin in verse 4. But we are going to find the actual word in verse 8. Here in Acts 26:4, it says, Paul speaking: "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews." In other words, "They know what I was; they know the manner of life that I lived; they know what I did to them; they know the philosophical concepts with which I existed"—because the Apostle Paul was taught at the feet of Gamaliel. Paul was no slouch, intellectually. Paul was a giant mind of those days, and so, he said, "The Jews all know that. They are well aware of the fact that I went through all of this school of learning; that I was in various responsibilities; that I sat at the very head of committees; that I was looked up to, venerated and respected for all of my technical know-how," and so on. "The Jews know my manner of life."

"Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." So, the Apostle Paul said, "I lived those concepts that I taught, and upon which I based my actions and so on."

"And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers." You see, what Paul is doing is engaging in a unique manner of reasoning. Paul is capitalizing upon the very physical relationship he had with the Jews, and their past ancestry. Now, he's not talking about the concepts and beliefs that they had begun to practice, but he is saying, "Now, I was a strict Jew, and now all I am doing is accepting, verbatim, the promises that were originally given to us as a people." Now, how could they take an exception with that? So he leveled a

rationalization—a bombardment—toward them that they could not answer. They could not respond to it. "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers ["for the very things that I believed, by the very Jews that knew me. They knew my background; they knew my history; they knew my tenacity; they knew my veracity in that way of life. And now I am judged by those same people because I believe in what my forefathers said?"].

"Unto which promise our twelve tribes [he was saying that the very twelve tribes were the recipients of those promises], instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews ["the very thing that they are supposed to believe. They claim to believe; they claim to be Pharisees; they claim to be Jews; and I know that they are my people; and my people are the ones, in their ancient ancestry—the twelve tribes—who received these very things that I am preaching here today. And, yet, now they are bringing me before you and accusing me"]. Well, that would leave you pretty much high and dry, wouldn't it—without too much recourse?

Now he said, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" The word "incredible" here—"a thing incredible"—is this word *apistos*. That is, "Why should it seem utterly impossible?" Here, God has already said these things to the twelve tribes—He has given promise that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those that would follow them, were going to achieve things that they never achieved in the physical domain. They never did. Then, if it is going to be achieved somewhere down the road, why is it an utter impossibility that now is the time that it should happen?

You see, that's the thing, my dear brethren, that I keep bringing up regarding our time. We oftentimes read God's Word, and then, because it seems so hard, and so difficult for us to allow ourselves to think that the reality of the promises—the reality of the tragic events of the last days—could happen in our very day, we always push them off a generation. "Oh, somewhere down the road they are going to happen." But that generation never comes. It's like tomorrow, it just never gets here. But that is not true, brethren. There is a day in which reality is going to manifest itself, and the strange and innate thing is, that people at that point in time, are going to be rationalizing and justifying their behavior just as much as other generations did before. But they are going to be wrong—they are going to be absolutely wrong—because these things are going to happen. Just like the Jews

pushed this thing clear off into some distant future—clear outside of their realm—yet, here was the day in which Christ actually appeared, in which the very promises that were given to the fathers had actually come to pass, and they refused to believe it, they refused to accept it.

Now, how many of us, brethren, are going to be in the same boat if we do not manifest the real meaning of the word *pistis*—p-i-s-t-i-s—that is, faith in God? Because when we "see these things come to pass, know therefore," as the Bible says concerning the approach of that time, "that it is nigh, even at hand." Therefore, when the events that prognosticate the actual day itself—when those things arrive—know you, therefore, that it has come. It is here. And there are events and circumstances that are strongly indicative of the times in which we live. And I said to you—I have said a dozen times, or a hundred times, I guess, if once—that one of the strongest of all of the promises that were given is the fact that the body to whom the Truth of God was originally given, went apostate. That is one of the very signs that God Almighty gave. "That day cannot come, except," this thing come to pass. It did come to pass, and the people do not want to believe it. And, yet, there are many people who have heard *my* voice who are *still* turning away, because they refuse to believe it, and they refuse to accept it. But what are we going to do in the day of reality? What's going to happen then?

So, you see, we are not much different than they were in the day of the Apostle Paul, who they held in awesome esteem and respect when he did what they wanted him to do, but when he lived and abode by the principles of the Bible—that is, he was honest with the Word of God and he no longer corrupted it through rationalization, through human reasoning; he no longer was taking that course of life—then they turned against him, and now they were ready to kill him. They even brought him up and they wanted the ruler in this particular situation to get rid of him—to censure or condemn. This was one they had idolized and respected beforehand. That tells you how quickly people can turn—how fickle they really are.

And so he said, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible?" Why should it seem impossible? If we believe that there is anything to the Bible whatsoever, why don't we believe what it says? Why do we have to restructure it? Why do we have to warp it and twist it around so that it suits our fancy, or so that it justifies everything else we are doing? Why don't we take it at face value? Why don't we believe it for just what it is?

You know, the ability to accept at face value the Word of God, seems to be the most difficult thing for man to achieve. He just can't do it. Faith has to come from God's Holy Spirit, and that actually means, more than anything else, that we had better be on our knees praying, "O God, stir up that faith within me. Give me that solidarity of conviction and purpose."

So, those things believed by the called are thought incredible by the faithless. The very fact that we believe in the verity of God's Word is incredible to them—the very fact that we believe in the consistency of God, that He never changes in the absolute authenticity of His Word, a Word that does not have to be reinterpreted and warped on the basis of present circumstances or conditions (what is commonly termed "situational ethics"). No, you don't change it. You abide in its simplicity; you accept it, as the Bible clearly implies, at face value, because God will give us that ability to look at and to accept the Word of God on the basis of honesty, simplicity and integrity, only one time. And if we revert to the warping, the twisting and the tendency to pervert in order to justify the self, if we return to any of these characteristics, we will never again be able to really see nor comprehend the simplicity of God's Truth. We will once again be enmeshed and entangled in the troubled warping of man's own natural mind. And, then, everything is going to seem right to us, but it is in opposition to everybody else, and away we go in the continuous round of fighting and bickering that is unique with problems and difficulties of one nature or another. Why should it be a difficult thing that there is an absolute Way of Life that God has given that doesn't need to be reinterpreted—it's just plainly, simply what it is—and accept it on that basis?

Now, the next point on this is that believers and unbelievers are classified in the Bible. I want to turn to First Corinthians the sixth chapter. 1 Corinthians 6 and we are going to begin in verse 1: "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" Here is a warning by the Apostle Paul: "Don't you take your problems before legal entities." That is, problems within. Why? I think there is a very cogent reason, and we should stop to think about it. If we could only understand what our real mission and purpose in life is—if we could just remember that God has called us to achieve some great and awesome objective for tomorrow—then maybe we can begin to understand what our responsibilities are today. So he said:

Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?

That's right. You look at the horrendous things that have been going on in this world, and they are frightening. It is not only frightening in the lethal aspect of it—in the intent and purpose of Satan to brutalize and to eliminate mankind—it is also frightening in its scope and its complexity. How many of you would like to sit down and try to figure out the whys and the wherefores of Ethiopia right now? Or of Central America? Or of the economics of this country? It would be absolutely ponderous to try to sort out these things.

You know, people come along and say, "Well, don't you believe in helping the poor?" Yes, I believe in what God says: "Don't forget the poor." But that is only a surface consideration in this matter. What about the fact that there are those who are deliberately putting them in this station and using them politically for reason? What I am saying, brethren, is, don't accept surface information. You could get caught on it. Let me tell you that there is much, much more going on in North Africa, in Central and South America, and even in the United States and Canada, than what you see on the surface. How in the world are you going to judge that propitiously if you do not understand the causative factors? So, it is going to be essential in the revelation of all of this to understand what has precipitated the conditions and the circumstances today. In other words, I'm talking about the *modus operandi* of factors, forces and powers in the world today, and you are going to have to see that.

Now, the Bible clearly says: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" Well, that ought to be enough, in its own right, to make a few of us sweat, if I can use the vernacular. That's a frightening thing. And it would be terrifying except for the fact that there is a power that knows and understands, and is going to make known all things. Yes, the Bible clearly tells us that there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed. That statement in itself implies that there is conspiracy. Why do you have to reveal what is not hidden? So, then, obviously, there is something unique—conspiratorial—that is transpiring on the face of this earth today. And God says there is not one single element of that mystery that is not going to be made known. It is going to be revealed.

That means that in our very days, brethren, somehow, God is going to begin to manifest everything that is going on—the thought patterns of various people behind the scenes, in meetings around the world. He is going to absolutely make known all of the machinations, and everything that is being designed, for the intent and the purpose of finally subjugating mankind. And we are finally going to see the revelation of the fact that there is one power, and one force, on the face of this earth that intends to destroy man—even those who have become instruments of that individual at the present time, not realizing that those very same beings are going to be destroyed also. They do not know the cleverness—the hatefulness—of the very one they are listening to, that is inspiring, motivating, guiding and directing them at the present time. They are not aware of it. He has one objective in mind, and that is to destroy humanity.

Why does he want to destroy humanity? Because God made man in His own image for the very purpose of ultimately being born into the very Family of God. And when you are born into the very Family of God, then you are challenging this other force, and this other power—Satan and his demons—in all of their aspirations and their hopes. And, so, they have one objective: they want to destroy man. Now, they will use them. We have all kinds of people today—if you just read enough articles—who are used, and as soon as Satan and his demons are finished with them, they turn right around and eliminate them. They've gotten the goods out of them—they've used them for whatever purpose—and as soon as they have accomplished that objective, they get rid of them. They know no honesty nor integrity—they have no allegiance whatsoever. They don't care. The minute they have achieved their objective, they will get rid of them. And yet, strangely enough, we have a bunch of dumb sheep that will turn right around and—for some grandiose plan, promise, or whatever it is—do exactly the same thing again. And then they get snuffed out. And so it goes on, and on, and on, and on.

Don't you know, brethren, that you are going to judge this world, if you remain the faithful of God? "[A]nd if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters," right now? You know, that ought to set us right back on our heels, and we should say, "You know, if I'm going to judge circumstances in the world tomorrow—in the greatness of the Kingdom of God, in that Millennial reign—if I am going to be imbued with that kind of responsibility and power, does it not make sense that I had better be able to handle my little

domestic problems today? How in the world am I going to be given universal responsibility when I cannot even handle a geographic responsibility?" He said, "[A]nd if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters." The problem is, brethren, we are not willing to face realities, and to realize that some little, pitiful thing out here, is absolutely meaningless for this moment. Set that thing aside and say, "It has been for my good. It has been a burr under my saddle, or whatever, but it is excellent for me because it has forced me to reevaluate my life and to get on down the road to achieving the objective of the call of God."

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Oh, now it is getting bigger. I don't know, I would assume it involves, probably, billions of angels—at least multiple millions. And I would certainly believe that it is probably billions—billions of angels. And out of those, one-third of them were led in defiance and rebellion. But it doesn't stop with that. Apparently, even beyond that, all angels are ultimately going to be judged. That's what this implies. How well did they do in the responsibility given to them? And what was that responsibility? Turn to the first chapter of the book of Hebrews, and you will find out. Are they not even ministering spirits? They are your servants in the carrying out of responsibilities in this life. They are greater in power and might today, but not greater than what you shall be. And God gave them that great power, and the ability to move unseen, instantaneously, to wherever they need to go in order to achieve certain things with respect to His purpose here on this earth. I wonder to what extent we really stop to think about the movement of angels in our own lives, and the work that they are doing? Oh, I am sure that it is extremely great.

"Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life [this should be a question], [do you] set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church [?]" That is, are you seeking out somebody who is going to justify you in what you want to do? That's what Paul is saying. Remember, the people here in Corinth were seeking for individuals and putting them in positions. It reminds me of something that happened just a few years ago in the church that I know. They began to seek out people who did not really believe the Truth—who did not really have faith in God—but who were willing to refashion their thinking, their pattern of life, in order to achieve certain objectives. They weren't looking for down-to-earth sincerity, honesty and truthfulness. And so we find that here in

Corinth, the same type of thing was happening. They were seeking out those who would justify the actions and the behavior of others so that they could get by with what they wanted to do.

"If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, [do you] set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church [?]" That is, who are not capable, who are not equipped to make the necessary judgments, who do not manifest that kind of dedication to God's Truth—that sincerity, that unwillingness to change, and so on? Are you putting people in there who you can manipulate—that's what Paul is saying—because you want advantage out of it?

"I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you?" No one that really fears God—that loves the Truth of God, that really wants the will of God, rather than the will of any man, regardless of station, position or responsibility?

Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother [so they get involved in lawsuits; and look what is going on], and that before the unbelievers.

The word "unbelievers" here is the word *apistos*. Then, if the unbelievers in this world are classified as *apistos*, then the believers are either *pistos* or *pistis*, whichever—the faithful, those who manifest faith and who believe, those who really trust God. So the believers and the unbelievers are classified. They are classified by God. Who is it that really believes the Truth of God, and that implicitly trusts Him, and that would rather suffer the consequence of his own action than to change from that revealed Way of Life, and to believe God with all that is resident within Him? He will not back up from that Way of Life. That's a believer. He trusts it. That belief—that conviction—sways his life, not the momentary exigencies. He's not interested in those exigencies—he is interested in absolute and implicit trust in God, and he will leave the matter in the hands of God. He will leave all matters in the hands of God.

Now, next, I want us to notice that even though the world is divided among believers and unbelievers, sometimes families are too. And, you know, God has all power. There is nothing that God cannot do. God could call the world

instantaneously if He wanted to—He could call every one. But the one thing we have to recognize is that God is the Creator of all circumstances and God is going to do what *He* thinks is best. And man has one option. Well, he has two options, but one honorable one, and that is to accept the will of God—whatever that will is—and leave it in the hands of God. And the other is that he can reject it. But even so, he finally is going to have to pay the price, and that will be the ultimate price.

Here in First Corinthians the seventh chapter, now. 1 Corinthians 7, and let's note verse 12: "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not [the phrase "believeth not" is *apistos*], and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away." So, there is some plain language. Forget all of the technicalities, and forget all of the nonsense that goes with that, I think these are relatively simple words here—there is not a word here that the average person in the United States cannot understand. There's not a big word there. It just simply says that if there is any brother that has a wife that believes not—that does not really grasp nor understand the Truth—"and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away." It says very clearly that if she is pleased, on the basis of the marriage agreement, to stay with him, he cannot put her away. The action cannot begin with the converted individual. It must originate with the one who is not converted, if anything is to happen. So, "[the] wife that believeth not, [if] she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away."

Now let's notice verse 13: "And the woman which hath an husband that [*apistos*] believeth not . . ." So we just turn it all the way around. Now we find a woman that believes, but she has a husband that believes not. "[A]nd if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." It seems to me that there is nothing too complex about *that* verse either. And so it just simply means that if they will to live with one another, those who believe cannot put the unbelievers away. It just cannot be done.

Verse 14 says, "For the unbelieving [*apistos*] husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving [*apistos*] wife is sanctified by the husband." Why? Because God *was* involved in that marriage. That's right. That's what made it sanctified in the first place. God sanctified marriage—God was involved in those marriages. "[E]lse were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

Obviously, the marriages in these cases occurred before the call, and God didn't elect to call the other one. That is, either the husband, or the wife, whichever the case may be, remains an unbeliever. Now, why would God call one and not the other? There are many, many circumstances that God is working out in this life. God reads hearts and minds, and God knows what is necessary. Now, sometimes God, having read the hearts of all of us, looks down and says, "I am going to have to do certain things with certain individuals." And God knows exactly how to give to those individuals the trials and the experiences necessary to develop the kind of character essential for the inheritance of everlasting life.

Hold your place there, and I want to turn back to Jeremiah the seventeenth chapter—a text that we have given to you so many times. Jeremiah 17 and beginning in verse 9: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" So He says to us: "First, I want you to recognize your own makeup—the means by which you think and rationalize."

"I the LORD search the heart." So God is down here searching us. Now, how does He do that? He didn't come down here and quiz me, and He didn't come down and quiz any of you, either—that I know. Well, then, how in the world did He search the heart? By the experiences He allows. You see, He is the ruler on the face of this earth. Now, I am not talking about it in the sense that Satan is the god of this world. I am talking about the fact that there is nothing happening here that God has not expressly allowed or willed. And that is one thing that the Book of Daniel teaches us: that we are going to have to come to recognize that no matter what happens, it is according to the will of God, and God has had something to do with it. Therefore, it is absolutely essential for us to recognize that the experiences that we are undergoing, are there for purpose. And He said, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways." So God is allowing these experiences—nationally, community-wise, family-wise, and individually. God is allowing all of these things, and by that, He is determining what needs to be done. He sees your responses; He reads your hearts; He reads your minds; He knows what you are saying, and He reads, evaluates and tries on the basis of these human experiences, and then He is going to give you what is essential—or necessary.

"[A]ccording to the fruit of his doings." So God, then, is going to evaluate all of these conditions and circumstances in order to determine what needs to be

done in the lives of us all, and then He is going to give us, shall we call it, the antidote. Because what He is giving us—if we will recognize it—will cure the illness. Either that, or we are going to grow hard out of it—whichever the case may be. So, God is giving us, spiritually, the antidote, if we can but recognize it.

So, God, in some cases calls whole families. It has been an absolutely amazing thing, out of the years in which I have been in the ministry, how I have seen, miraculously, whole families spontaneously respond. And, yet, in other cases, there is one single individual called, and the other one couldn't have been more volatile and hateful. Why? Why didn't God—if He is a compassionate and loving God, and ever-merciful and kind—call the whole family of the other one, too? Because God read the heart and the mind of the one that He intended to work with, and He knew that the only thing that was going to help that individual was that situation—providing that the individual will recognize it, accept it for what it is, and bring about the necessary mastery in his own life. And, then, the Bible clearly shows us that if that responsibility is wisely and judiciously handled, he might even reap the unconverted one. So, maybe there is a reason for all of these things.

So, he said here in verse 14:

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. [Verse 15 says:] But if the unbelieving [that is, the *apistos*] depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases.

Now, marriage is never classified as "bondage." I would like for somebody to show me where marriage was ever called "bondage." Then, why in the world, are some turning around and calling the marriage the bondage? Therefore, they can be liberated from that, freeing the individual to go and marry again. It's absolute nonsense. No, what Paul is showing is that the bondage is involved in being in a circumstance that is anything but judicious—healthy. It does not generate happiness, enthusiasm, purpose, peace, and settled conditions and circumstances. God has not called you, necessarily, to live in those circumstances. Therefore, if the unbelieving depart—not recognizing the right of the other individual to live his or her conviction, just as much as the other one wants to; he

or she will not give that right and privilege to the other—if the unconverted one will not recognize those rights, then let him depart, whether the husband or the wife. Because you are not in bondage to remain in a situation that is only going to agitate and create turmoil. You are not held accountable for it. That's what God is saying. You are not held accountable for what the unbelieving does. The unbelieving will pay that price later on, somewhere down the road, when God wills it that way. So, sometimes families are divided between believers and unbelievers, and so are other elements of society—not only in families, but also in communities, neighbors, and areas. We find that there are believers and unbelievers, and there is a great deal of agitation that takes place.

Now, point number six, as a subtopic: "Some miracles are for the benefit of unbelievers, others are for believers." You see, God has given great powers and capabilities to His Church. Some of those abilities are expressly for the benefit of unbelievers, for the purpose of pointing out certain things to them; to open up their eyes; to create circumstances and conditions under which they can favorably respond. But others are specifically for the benefit of the chosen of God—that is, the believers. They are intended to motivate, to guide, to inspire, or to give a sense of urgency, purpose and direction to those called of God. In First Corinthians 14 and verse 22—1 Corinthians 14 and let's note verse 22:

Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe [that is, those who are called], but to them that believe not [that is, the *apistos*; whereas the others are the *pistos*]: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.

So prophesying has no purpose in a work addressing people that have never been called, or who do not believe. It's not for that purpose, whatsoever. Prophesying, in this case, is for those who believe. The first example of "tongues"—and I mean speaking in foreign languages, I don't mean gibberish, at all; it's a matter of speaking in languages—was what occurred back at the time God poured out His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. And when they spoke, these various peoples from various nations *understood* what they were hearing. Therefore, they were speaking in their languages, not some gibberish at all. They were speaking in a language that was understood, and could be interpreted legitimately, legally—and could be testified thereto.

So, "tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe," and yet, I tell you, there are many people that still want it, and they have built whole organizations around this very thing—thinking that is a proof of their belief and their trust in God, which is exactly the opposite of what God says.

Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying serveth not for them that believe not [that is, the *apistos*], but [it serves] for them which believe.

Now, next, I want us to notice verses 23 through 24:

If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with [languages (the word "tongue" just simply means a language)], and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers [that is, the *apistos*], will they not say that ye are mad?

Indeed they will, and I've heard it many times. People go before these people—and the "tongues" that are happening in this world are not even legitimate—and when they come out of there, the first thing they say is, "Well, those people are crazy"—which is literally true.

"But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not [that is, an *apistos*], or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all"—because prophesying, then, would be the laying out of future events and circumstances, and would, indeed, be profound. Let me assure you that it would be.

You know, we have had, in the physical sense, seers in our day that have been very farsighted, and that have been very, very excellent speakers—to wit, General Douglas MacArthur, an absolute genius in his own right. He saw and he understood some rather unique things into the future—a darkened cloud hovering over the United States. He was a brilliant man. Oh yes, I knew his theatrics—there was no one that didn't—but this wasn't a converted man. He was a brilliant man—and I mean a very brilliant man—and people stood in awe of that brilliance, just exactly as this says. Now, if someone, chosen of God, is sent, and prophesies, people are going to stand in absolute awe of it, for the moment. "Let's hear what this man is saying"—because it is far-reaching, it is awesomely significant in its scope and intent, and also in its emotional impact. It will reach right down and get a hold of you—it always has.

Every time Jeremiah spoke, for example, oh, the people were mesmerized for the moment. They wanted to hear what that man was going to say. And as soon as it was all over, you know, and the old carnal mind came back, they threw him back in the slime pit. They did the same thing to Isaiah. Look, they listened to Christ, too, didn't they? They stood in awe of that man; they gathered around in droves. And what was it that brought these people around? Thousands of them gathered around to hear because He spoke those things that were very dramatic—far-reaching in their significance. It impacted their lives. "If this man is right, it means something for us; something is going to happen in our lives; it is going to impact our very existence." They were absolutely, deeply distraught by those things which they had heard and, at the moment, they wanted to hear more—they were attracted to it.

So the unbelievers *do* listen, very much, to prophesying. But if they hear somebody carrying on like some native out of a far-distant forest, or something else, they are going to say, "Well, that person is mad." They are not going to give him the time of the day. That's exactly what the Bible says, and that is exactly what you will find in real circumstances today. You let a man of real competence—real, far-reaching ability—stand up before people, and I don't care whether the people believe it or not, they will listen, because they want to hear what he is going to say.

I can think of two or three men today who are in that category. Oh, subsequently, they are going to do everything they can to smear him, but there is one man today, that in my estimation, is probably one of the most astute of all. I am not talking about somebody used of God, necessarily, as a prophet, but I am talking about somebody who is able to put two and two together and he always comes up with four. He is a tremendously capable individual, and I feel that he is a godsend, and that's why he is protected to this day. You know, that man is not listened to by only those who agree with him. He is listened to by those who disagree more than anybody else, because they are troubled by the knowledge, the power, the insight of this individual. It is absolutely characteristic—and an absolute certification—of the very principle that the Apostle Paul was inspired to give here in 1 Corinthians 14.

So, some miracles, then, are for the benefit of unbelievers, and other miracles are for believers. God Himself determines those things. And prophecy

doesn't happen when we press things out of context; when we try to force the meaning; when we don't let things happen naturally, as God wills. But false prophesying takes place only when men begin to assume—when men begin to usurp certain responsibilities, certain feelings—and they challenge the purposes of God, because they want to force things to come out their way. And that's what people do when they lay hold on certain prophecies. They want to force it so that they can, then, come around and say, "See, I was right." And I'll tell you one thing: I firmly—yeah, verily—believe that not one of them is ever going to be given the privilege of standing up and saying, "See, I was right." I think every one of them is going to be made to realize how colossally ignorant he really was. I am absolutely convinced of it. You cannot reinterpret the Bible—the prophecies of God. It must come naturally—it must come from the will of God. And when we allow God, naturally, to speak through His chosen servants, then it will come to pass, because it is God speaking. But any man who attempts to force these things in a way that substantiates himself—or an organization—he is going to be embarrassed and humiliated. It is an absolute certitude.

So, brethren, we do have a little more that we want to cover on this one word, and then we are going to move into some of the other words. But we have now come to the end of another tape, and I do hope that we are going to begin to recognize and to realize—if we will just review all of these things and put them together—the awesome importance of faith. It is not just some nebulous thing out here that we talk about. Faith has its manifestations, though it is a spiritual ingredient. It is an awesome thing. It is no wonder that God said, "The just shall live by faith." That's our hope; that's our sense of urgency; that's our direction. And when we understand the full scope and significance of faith, and we conform our lives—our thinking—in accord with that faith, we are not going to be embarrassed and humiliated, but we are going to be substantiated by God. That will come inevitably. Let those who are truly called of God—the *pistos*—stand up in that confidence and that conviction, and don't let anybody ever take it away from you. The unbelievers God will deal with in His own time.