

Once again, greetings from London. This was pre-recorded, well, previous to this evening. I want to talk to you about some things this evening which I think are very important for all of us.

As we know, brethren, God has a plan for mankind, a very positive plan. A plan for each and every one of us, actually. He wants us to be part of His family, and that is a wonderful thing. He wants us to be able to enjoy blessings, and one of the very nice parts about following God's ways, we can already begin to enjoy some of those blessings. It doesn't mean that life is a bed of roses, as they say, but we can enjoy many, many blessings that God will already begin giving us. God wants us to be successful.

But, you know, brethren, there is another being, a very, very powerful spiritual being that is not interested in our success. In fact he wants us to fail. He wants us to lose our calling, lose hope, lose sight of anything spiritual. He wants us to distance ourselves from God. Because he does not want us to be close to God. He wants us to be closer to him. He hates us, and he hates us because he knows that we are destined to take over some of the jobs and offices that he wants to have, that he claims for himself.

Let's turn to 2 Corinthians, chapter 4 and verse 4.

**2 Cor. 4:4** *In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, shine upon them.*

Well, this verse tells us a few things. It tells us first of all, and this is my introductory scripture, that Satan is the god of this world. He genuinely is. Also, it lets us know that the world is deceived and we know that. We heard quite a bit about that just recently from Mr. Brian Orchard. The world is deceived. Sometimes we are deceived, and we need to be very careful. I will mention that a bit later in the Bible Study. We need to be very, very careful about that, because Satan would love, of all people on the face of the earth, he would love to deceive you, and to deceive me. That's what he wants.

But, you know, Satan's days are numbered! His days are numbered, and he knows that. He knows that. And, as time goes by, every day that goes by, we are that much closer to the

return of Jesus Christ, to the establishment of God's government on this earth and Satan knows that. He knows his time is ever shorter. And he is driven to destroy God's people. He wants to destroy us.

Now, we know that God protects us, and He does. God protects us and God puts limits on Satan, but He does permit Satan to deceive, to cause adversity, to cause division. But we can resist that. We can resist that and we can remain close to God. That's one of the things I'll be talking about this evening.

In the book of Job, and we won't turn there right now, Job 1 verse 12 and Job 2 verse 6, it's very clear that God has put Satan within certain constraints. God is the all-powerful Being, Satan is not. Satan has been constrained to a certain degree, for the time being, although he is the god of this world, God has allowed that. But he has certain constraints that have been put upon him. Interestingly enough, though, God does also allow Satan a certain latitude, which Satan uses to test and prove us. Well, actually, very often, God allows to happen so that we will be tested and proven. Satan does it with the intent of destroying us, of taking us out, of wearing us down. But that does not need to happen. It does not need to happen.

You know, God always knows what is best for us; He knows exactly what is best for us. And sometimes, I say unfortunately, but God knows what is best, and it is best, then it's not unfortunate. Sometimes, God allows difficulties and trials, that can even be brought on by Satan, because of Satan's involvement, but that gives us an opportunity to grow. An opportunity that God allows within our lives. That's not a bad thing; that's a very good thing. It all depends on how we look at it, and how we react to it and what we do with it. God is absolutely in charge, not Satan. Not Satan.

But, brethren, we must never underestimate Satan's power. We must never underestimate Satan's power. Turn to Revelation 12 and verse 9, a very well-known scripture. Most of you could probably quote it to me; there was a time when I could quote a lot of things. Some of those times are past.

**Revelation 12:9** *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world:*

We just got through reading I, what was it, in II Corinthians 4:4 that the world is

deceived. Satan is the god of this world. Once again, this underlines that.

Satan has deceived the whole world. Sometimes, we might be tempted to think, well, things are just running their normal course. I've got my job; I go to work. This happens, that happens, things are just normal. No, things are not normal. Things are not normal; Satan is after us. He has succeeded in deceiving the whole world.

When we look around - turn on the news one evening. Or, better yet, don't, just hear about it from someone else. It can sometimes be so incredibly sad. Incredibly sad, because we see Satan's hand in so many things in this world today. False ministers, false Christs, Now, there are true ministers, obviously, but Satan has his false ones. A false plan of God. Heaven and hell, that's what most of the Western world, the so-called Christian world, believes in. Heaven and hell, instead of the Kingdom of God, which we know, according to God's word, will be established on this earth.

There's a false Sabbath. Now, we know what the true Sabbath is, but so many in the world believe that the Sabbath is Sunday. Some believe that it's Friday. Some actually believe that it's Saturday, but don't know how to keep it, don't know what it means. God has given us a tremendous opportunity, a tremendous amount of knowledge about His way of life, and about what He plans for mankind. We know about the Sabbath; we know what it represents. It represents the fact that God is our God, and we are His people. The world doesn't know that, because if they keep anything, and so many don't, but if they keep anything, then they're keeping a false Sabbath.

And, of course, the world that we live in today, it's scary. It really is scary. As I said, this is coming to you from London. Most everyone who is hearing this is in the United States, not everyone. We have some in Great Britain, we have some in France, Switzerland, Germany, people all over the world listening in from time to time, and many on a regular basis. But, from my vantage point here in London, where we've got a lot of news here, it's really scary. When you look at what is going on in the world. When you see what is happening. Immorality does not begin to describe what you see going on around us.

I personally grew up in the southeastern part of the United States. I find myself in the southeastern part of England right now. But in the southeastern part of the United States it was,

you know, the Bible Belt. That doesn't mean that people really understood the Bible, they didn't. That doesn't mean that people really lived according to God's Word—well, they tried, some of them, in their own way. But, what I'm saying is, we didn't have probably a lot of the open immorality that we see in the world today.

Other parts of the world, no holds barred, do anything you want, dress any way you want. Go out in public in any form of dress or undress that you want. No one bats an eye! No one bats an eye. It's just so, the immorality of the society in which we live today is all-pervasive. Satan has, as Mr. Brian Orchard was saying recently in a Bible Study, Satan has set this up. He's planned it for thousands of years. He's planned it from the beginning, too. From when he became Satan, he's planned to lead the world in a certain way, and it's gone that way. We're running down that path as fast as we possibly can.

Brethren, that's why we need to be very, very careful, because this society is the one that we live in. I walk out that door, and I'm in this society. We live in a little town called Reigate. It has a lovely little high street, as they call the main street. A beautiful little town, but it's Satan's society. I'm not trying to, I don't mean that we should be afraid of Satan around every bush, we just need to realize the power of Satan, and how much he has influenced the world that we live in. The world that you live in, no matter where you live. The world that I live in. I John chapter 3, let's go there for just a moment.

**1 John 3:8; 10** *He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sinned from the beginning.*

And he has done, has, continues to, and wants us to join that lifestyle, become like he is. We are striving to become like Our Father, God the Father, and Satan wants us to become like him.

*for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

We see the works of the devil all around us. Once again, in this society in which we live, permeated by, saturated with, the works of the devil. And Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has come to put an end to that. And we can have a part in that. We need to have a part in that. We go down to verse 10.

**Verse 10** *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil:*

Where are we? Which side are we on? For us, it's very clear. But sometimes we stretch our toes out in the other direction a little bit. We need to be very careful of that, because we're going to be on one side or the other. One side or the other.

*In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God*

That's pretty plain, that's black and white. Sometimes, people like to talk about gray, and nuance and all this kind of stuff. No, no. This is black and white. We're either going God's way, or we're not. Now, does that mean that we will never fail? Oh, yes, we will sometimes fail. What is, though, our intention, our intent, our desire? Because with that right intention and desire, and asking diligently and regularly, and imploring God to help us, God will help us, and He will ensure that we can keep going forward.

Let's look at a scripture briefly in Hebrews chapter 2.

**Heb. 2:14** *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;*

That's what all of Satan's mighty powers are directed toward—death. That's where they end. That's where he wants us to end. He doesn't want us living with God in eternity, in a righteous and a moral environment. His whole way of life, the works of Satan that we read about in I John 3:8, they lead to death. They lead to death. But, you know, the way of death that Satan has set in motion, we see it all around us, that way will be terminated. It will be stopped.

Because God is in charge. God is in charge, in absolute charge.

But, once again, and I know I've said this a lot, and I will continue to emphasize it, Satan is our adversary. He is our adversary. We need to be familiar with how Satan works, how he operates, so that we can be on guard against him. Because we need to be on guard against him.

Let look at a couple of scriptures once again concerning Satan. Ephesians chapter 6. Ephesians chapter 6 and beginning in verse 10. We won't go through this whole section right now about the armor of God, just a little bit toward the beginning.

**Ephesians 6:10** *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

That's what we frankly sometimes forget. There is power in God. God wants to give us

some of that power. He wants to help us make it through life. Sometimes we forget that. I say “we”—I, you! All of us. We don’t always think about that. We don’t have it in the forefront of our minds, as we should.

**Verse 11** *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

Those of you listening in the United States, if you are of a certain age, my age or older, you’ll remember the Roadrunner cartoons. They were silly. They were horribly violent, actually. We didn’t know that when we were children, we just thought, oh, that’s what happens, you know, and, anyway. There was this roadrunner who would run around, and there was this silly coyote who was always chasing him, and wanted to kill him, and I guess eat him, I don’t know, I assume that’s what his goal was. And the poor coyote was just, I can’t say this any other way, just really, really stupid. And he would always end up with a gigantic rock, or half a mountain, landing on him squashing him flat, or he’d end up blowing something. But it was interesting that he was called “the wily coyote.” The wily coyote. No, he wasn’t wily, in reality he wasn’t wily at all; he was very stupid.

But, you know, Satan is wily. Satan has wiles. Satan has tricks and things and methods that he employs that are incredible, many of which we probably don’t think about, ever. Don’t even know about them. But some of them, we can know about. It says, *Put on the whole armour of God,*

Part of the armor is not enough. Every piece of armor is wonderful, but just one or two pieces are not enough. We need to have *the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* Going on a just little bit in verse 12,

**Verse 12:** *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,*

In modern-day television, there is so much of this kind of thing, you know, magic and the dark world and all of that, it’s just become so commonplace that we don’t think a thing about it. But it is real. I don’t say that to scare us. I just say that to help us to realize it genuinely is real, and we cannot forget that. Satan is the prince of the power of the air; he is one of these principalities, he is a very powerful ruler, he is of the darkness of this world.

*against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Satan is involved in very high places, all throughout this world. He's been involved for hundreds, for thousands of years, directing, trying his best to direct mankind to go the wrong way, and he's been extremely successful. But he cannot be successful with us. He will be, if we're not on the ball, if we're not realizing what's happened. If we're not thinking about what's going on, it could be Satan would have a certain amount of success with us. That's why I'm saying, don't forget that he is our adversary.

I Peter 5:8. Once again, a very well-known scripture concerning Satan.

**1 Peter 5:8** *Be sober, be vigilant;*

That's part of what I'm saying this evening is just underlining this scripture, and many others. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary—your enemy—the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour:*

Now, the roaring lion, I don't know what you think about a roaring lion, the king of beasts, a powerful animal that pounces on its prey, and goes for it, and no animal can resist. And, to a certain degree, that's how it goes. But when you think about it, when the lion is stalking its prey, is the lion roaring at that moment? No, it's very silent. He's in stealth mode. You talk about stealthy animals. We've named all of our military weapons. We have planes that can't be detected because they are in stealth mode. Well, this is the original stealth mode! The lion is a perfect example of stealth mode, quiet, stalking the prey, about to pounce. So, yes, the roaring lion, the roaring symbolizing the power of the beast. Satan is extremely powerful, but when he's after us, he can be very quiet. Very stealthy, very deceptive.

The Hebrew word for Satan means "adversary". Satan has many different ways. We talked about the wiles of Satan. There are many ways, many different methods to try to trick us, to deceive us into following him, or at the very least, not following God. That's fine; if Satan can reach that, he's happy. We will not follow God—that's good. But the wiles of Satan are many.

Just very quickly, I'd like to point out one thing here concerning the deception of Satan, and I know Mr. Brian Orchard talked about this at a great deal more length. Just very, very briefly, and as a reminder, deception, of course being deceived by Satan, is a horrible thing. We

want to avoid that at all costs. It sounds bad and it really, really is. But, brethren, don't you think that you and I at some time in our lives, maybe more than once, probably, have fallen prey to the deception of Satan? I can almost guarantee you, and I know I have, and I can just about guarantee that you have, too. We have to be careful. We have to be ready, we have to be knowledgeable about how Satan operates. Once again, if you have, and we all have, fallen prey to Satan, that's a horrible thing, yes it is, any time that we deviate from God's path, it's not a good thing. God doesn't look at that with joy, but does that mean that we're lost? Absolutely not. It means that we go back to God, and we say, "God, please help me. I've gotten off the path. I realize I've been deceived here, I've gone the wrong way. Help me to get back to doing what is right!"

In 2 Corinthians 11:12, just briefly.

**2Cor 11:12** *But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast.*

**Verse 13** *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ.*

So, is Satan deceptive? He has deceived the whole world, and a large part of the world think they're following Jesus Christ! Because he has deceived, and set up decoys, false Christs, false ministers, talked about that a little bit earlier. And there they are, we know that. But we need to be careful nevertheless.

Can there be false ministers within God's church? Well, there have been! Throughout the history of God's church, the Bible talks about some of them. I could turn to some of those places right now, so-and-so-and-so left us. So-and-so did this and that and the other. There have been people within the church that have led people astray.

2 Corinthians chapter 2 and in verse 11, just to underline what we read there in Ephesians 6.

**2. Cor. 2:11** *lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

And we are not, and we shouldn't be, and we don't have to be. And we need to make sure that we're not. And I think all of us have had the opportunity to see Satan at work in some very, very powerful ways over that last many, many years, actually, during our time in God's

Church. I would dare say, that most of us here now, most of you hearing my voice, have been around for a long, long time. Twenty years, thirty years, forty years, plus, and we've seen a lot.

Several years back, we saw people who knew about the Sabbath and the Annual Holy Days and how they demonstrate God's Plan of salvation for mankind, and we saw many, many of those people just turn their backs on what we thought they knew. What they seemed to have known. Now it's been quite a while back. And those who led them astray did it under the guise of "Christ-centeredness". I thought it was very, very interesting. Mr. Herb Van Curen gave that sermon on, I forget if it was the First or Last Day of Unleavened Bread. He gave that quote from Barclay, and I don't have it again right here, but the quote basically said, people who were hurting the church, people who came from within the church, and they weren't trying to hurt the church. They thought that they were improving the church. The people who did what they did 15, 20 years ago in God's Church, and even more—did they think they were improving the church? Certainly they did. "Christ-centeredness." The basic, fundamental truths of God just thrown out the window—the Sabbath, Holy Days, Plan of God—they were ridiculed and derided in the name of getting closer to God. There have been people that have been entrusted with the spiritual tutelage of many, many people over the years—and they've led people away. No, Satan is very, very wily and very, very powerful and extremely deceptive. You cannot forget that. He is still capable of a tremendous amount of hurt and deception.

I'd like to look at one of the, just one, well, it's kind of two-pronged device of Satan this evening, the remaining time, so that we will not be ignorant of his devices. And I'd like to begin talking about it by reading a little piece that I found years and years ago, but I think it illustrates the point quite well. It's called "The Devil's Best Tool."

The devil, according to legend, once advertised his tools for sale at public auction. This is obviously a fictitious story, but it illustrates a point. The devil advertising his tools at a public auction. There was one tool labeled "Dishonesty", another with a tag, which said "Hatred" and yet another described as "Greed". They all had enormous price tags on them. When the prospective buyers assembled, there was one oddly-shaped tool, which was labeled "Not for Sale." Asked to explain why this was, the devil answered, "I can spare my other tools, but this one, this one is without a doubt one of the most useful implement that I have. It's called

Discouragement, and with it I can work my way into the hearts that are otherwise inaccessible. When I am successful at using this tool on someone, the way is open to cause untold damage.”

We’ve often said that Satan has something for everyone. Satan has something for everyone. He tailors his style of attack also, to us as individuals. Sometimes just an all-out broadside is the best, and that works pretty well for some people. But more often than not, Satan uses his subtlety to get a foot in the door. His subtlety to work one of his tools into our heart, so that he can cause even more damage.

Let’s go to Ephesians chapter 2, beginning with verse 2.

**Ephesians 2:2** *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, As I said, go out my front door, I’m out in the street—that’s the world, that’s where I am. And that’s where we all are, people walking along, cars driving by, little corner stores, that’s the world, isn’t it? walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, because behind all of that, Satan is working his angle, he’s working, using his power and his subtlety and his deception, to drive people in a certain direction. the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience:*

**Verse 3** *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

We can’t think that we were vastly different. We were just going along like everybody else. See, that’s the danger, we can do that now. With all the knowledge of God’s Word that we have, we can still do that. We can forget, we can not focus on what God is telling us. And we can just, go along, normal life. *Brethren, we cannot have a normal life!* Sorry, we just can’t! Our lives have been vastly changed by the fact that God has opened our minds and shown us some things that the world doesn’t see, yet. Now we’re involved in a plan right now which will—we’re learning how we can then later bring this message to everyone. So we cannot have, we can’t settle for, a normal life. The fact that God has intervened in our lives and shown us His plan of salvation, has shown us the way to go. The path has been lit before us, and what, we’re just going to walk off into the darkness? Sometimes we do, we need then of course to get back on the path, go back to the light. Stay in the light. Ask God for help to walk on that path.

2 Corinthians, chapter 11, we were there a little bit earlier. Let's go this time to **2 Corinthians 11:3** *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

Now, he's writing to the Corinthians. Maybe not one of your most stalwart and righteous bunches, I'm not sure. But are we? We try to be. But this applies to us, too. Satan used his subtlety, his deceitful ways, to get to Eve, and he will continue to use those, that subtlety and his deceitful ways, to get to us if he can. We just need to keep that door closed so that he can't. That's not easy.

So, we know now that Satan is subtle. I mentioned that he uses discouragement to try to take us down. He uses discouragement—now, does that mean, brethren, when I say that, does that mean that, any time we are ever discouraged, obviously, we have fallen prey to Satan, and he's got a foot in the door, and he's working on us? No, that is not what I'm saying. What I am saying, though, is we need to be very alert to that, because many times that will be exactly the case. It is a very powerful tool that Satan uses, discouragement.

And, you know, there is a sister to discouragement, and that's doubt. It may have been a tool lying right next to discouragement. Discouragement and doubt go together. Often, not always, but often.

Some people are prone to discouragement. I know that. I can say I know that from first-hand experience. Some of you are, you know that, and you tend to get discouraged easily. We don't want that, do we, we want to remain stalwart and strong and faithful, and we do try. We ask for God's help in doing that, and He does help. Sometimes we will become discouraged. And if we become discouraged, that doesn't mean, Satan has taken us over—that's not what I'm talking about at all. But it does mean that we need to be careful. Because very, very often, along with discouragement comes doubt.

Once he's gotten us discouraged, in whatever way, or once we've gotten ourselves discouraged, in whatever way, then Satan can begin to introduce doubts. And how does he do that? Well, there's a plethora of ways. We're talking to someone, and someone says, kind of like in the Garden of Eden, "Oh, do you think that so-and-so really is," or, "Do you think that really is true?" Almost a positive way of introducing a doubt into your mind. It sounds so light

and airy, “Do you think that is really true?” Anything to introduce doubt! “You know what, I know that person, he is this, that and the other.” Or, “I heard this.” Or, “You don’t know the real underlying story there.”

So very often doubt comes about because we have questions, maybe questions come up in our minds. We don’t ask them. We just let them sit. Let them sit, let them simmer, and sometimes they will boil over. That doubt will come to fruition and cause us to do some things that maybe we wouldn’t normally have done. Once again, discouragement and doubt, be very, very careful about both of those.

Let’s go to James chapter 1 and verse 6 for a moment. I am constantly amazed—I shouldn’t be, but nevertheless I am constantly amazed—when I read God’s word, how very often it just says, *This is the way; walk you in it.* There’s no, “oh, well, you know.” I’m not saying that God is harsh. God is not harsh, He is extremely merciful. And when we have fallen, when we have departed from the way, we go back to Him, and He’s more than happy to take us back, He wants us to be on the right path. But very often, in the Bible, the description of the right path is very succinct, and we don’t have to wonder what it is.

**James 1:6** *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.*

We’ve kind of broken into the thought here, but I want to emphasize the faith, and the not wavering part of it. *Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.* And that is not presented as a good thing. And, it’s not. It really isn’t. Going on in verse 7:

**Verse 7** *For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

Rather blunt, isn’t it? If we are wavering, back and forth, like the waves of the sea. Wavering back, and I think I’ll go with this group, that’s wonderful. No, no, no, that group over there. Oh, what about this group here? I’m wavering and wavering and wavering. Well? Sooner or later in our lives, we need to make some decisions. Or, is this the right thing to do? Or, is that the right thing to do? We need to look into God’s word, determine what the right thing is to do, and do the right thing.

I’ve always said, you can never go wrong doing the right thing. I’ve told young people that at camps for years and years and years, because it’s kind of a catchy little phrase—but it’s

true! You can never go wrong, doing the right thing. You can often be very, very uncomfortable. You can often destroy a lot of peace of mind and tranquility, even within a family sometimes, if you do the right thing. Doing the right thing is not easy. It is not easy; doing the right thing is difficult. The path that we are on is a difficult path; it is not an easy path. We need to realize that. And, as I've said, there's someone trying to push us off, every chance he gets, and so we need to stay on the path.

I've talked to people that are wondering, and wavering, and thinking about this, and what about that, and oh, I've got to get more facts. I've got to get facts, facts, facts. You know, we should get a certain amount of facts. But let me tell you one truism in life, we will never get all the facts. We will Never. Get. All. Of the facts. And, at some point, as I said, we need to make some decisions in our lives. We need to have those based on God's word. And, we also have to have it based on what God's Holy Spirit is showing us. I have told so many people over the years, and I mean, I'm talking years and years and years now. I've told people when they're wondering about something, I've said, "Ask God to help you. Ask God through His Holy Spirit to give you some certainty on that." And, He will. If you do that; you ask Him; He will. A lot of people want all the facts, but we'll never have all the facts.

Where is the shepherd's voice? Where do you hear the shepherd's voice? Where do I hear the shepherd's voice? That's where the Shepherd is. John 10:14. We'll look at that very briefly.

**John 10:14** *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*

*I am known of mine.* We can know where Jesus Christ is. We can know where we should be, what we should be doing. What kind of life we should be living. We go to God the Father and we ask Him for help. If we don't know that, we ask for help. And He'll show us. Because this wavering as the wave of the sea—a *double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways*. A double-minded man—we read it, this was back in

**James, chapter 1, verse 6 and 7.** We read verse 7, *for let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.*

**Verse 8,** *a double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways.*

And, we've not been called to instability. We have been called to stability. We've been called to knowing what the truth is, and holding on to that for dear life. Holding on to the truth.

That's what we have to do. So, where do you hear the Shepherd's voice? God will show you, if you don't know, through the power of His Holy Spirit. He'll show you what He is doing, and He'll show you where He is. And that's not a decision that will be based simply on facts.

If we were to look at the story of Gideon, and I'm not going to go there right now. You might want to look at Judges chapter 6. Judges chapter 6, I won't turn there right now, but the story of Gideon is quite interesting. At the beginning, the Midianites were coming once again, coming against the Israelites, and I think there were, was it 32,000, or 36,000, there were quite a large band of people making themselves ready to attack. Gideon was called upon by God to lead the counter-attack.

Now, if you read through that story, if you look at facts there, well, Gideon wasn't doing too well. Just look at the facts; he wasn't doing very well at all. He wouldn't have made it. But it's interesting. Who was Gideon? He came from the least of the tribes. He said, he was of the least of the clans of the tribes. He was nothing. He didn't think that he should be leading any kind of counter-attack. But God said, yes you will do that, and Gideon didn't doubt. This is interesting, when you read through the story of Gideon. It wasn't that Gideon doubted; it was that he needed to have his confidence bolstered. He was a bit uncertain. What? Me? Really? Me? That can't be. I know who I am. I know what I'm capable of. I can't do that. He thought. And so he went through the fleece dry, and the fleece wet, and all that sort of thing, to just have his confidence bolstered to the point that he could do what God said that he needed to do. So, that shows me that, there will be time for uncertainty.

But, that's different from a negative, doubting attitude. "Oh, I don't think that's right!" "So and so said this and this, and that's just not right. I'm doubting now about whether I should do this or go there or whatever." There's a difference there. A bit of uncertainty, yes. We will have that from time to time. But doubting in the negative sense of the word, where does that come from? Who engenders that? And why does he do it? We know it comes from Satan. We know that Satan will do anything that he can to rip us away from the Body of Christ. Anything. So, we need to be very, very careful.

And when we start having serious doubts about things, we need to clear that up. I said earlier that sometimes we begin to doubt because we have questions, and we never ask those

questions. Ask the questions. People ask me questions. I don't mind people asking me questions, except for the fact that I don't always have the answers. Who does? I don't know of anyone who does. And I have not been shy to admit when I don't have the answers. No one does. But, you know we're trying. We're trying. God gives us help. Many, many times throughout my ministry, I've had to go to some of my superiors and say, I was asked this question but I don't really know the answer to it. What do you think? Or, what is the answer? What should we say to this person? That's happened many, many times. But it's the questions that are never asked that sometimes lead to doubts and more doubts and more doubts, and you build upon those doubts. It doesn't usually lead to a good place.

Now, Gideon wanted to believe. He wanted to believe. He knew that God existed; he knew that it was God giving him this task to complete. It wasn't an impudent, negative, prove-this-to-me-God, who do you think you are, what are you trying to do with me? It was, I know this is right, but I just need some more certainty. That's what God gave him. What God gave him.

What do we do when we realize that we're being pushed off the path? That Satan has worked some in our lives; that we've fallen prey to some doubts that are not leading to anything good. We see that we're not doing what we should be doing. We see that Satan has had a certain amount of success in our lives. What do we do? How do we handle that?

I've already said several times, we go to God. We go right back to God; we go screaming to God and begging Him to help us, to give us the power to resist. Now, there are so many things—I've given the example before. I was never a smoker. I did smoke a few cigarettes with my brothers one time, but this was because we were not supposed to do that, but I think between the three of us, we smoked, like four cigarettes. I was never a smoker, but some of you have been—maybe a few of you are still, I hope not—I know from talking to others that it can be an extremely difficult thing to overcome. Because it is an addiction, it is a physical / chemical addiction. That's just the way it is. I've talked to people that were very strong smokers, or very heavy smokers for many, many years in their lives. And they came into God's church, stopped. That's not easy, but they stopped. Then 20 years later, after a meal, you still feel that urge to light up! Because that's what you did most of your life, and your body still

wants that.

If you have that problem, do you go around a lot of smokers? No. Do you go to the bar down on the corner? Do you go to the pub? I can go to the pub, I've got a pub, I can go to the pub right there. Haven't been there yet, but I'm sure it looks nice. Do you go to the pub that's smoke-filled, although actually, it wouldn't be smoke-filled here any more because they banned smoking, but there are outside smoking areas. You go to somewhere a lot of people are smoking cigarettes if you have a problem like that? No, you avoid it. If you do go somewhere like that—let's say you've got a problem with alcohol. You go in amongst a bunch of drinkers; if you do that, chances are very strong, very good, that you will fall prey to going back into drink, and you'll be in trouble!

So, there are certain physical things that we can do, that we have to do. There may be some people that you need to stay away from. If they are always engendering doubt in your mind, you may just need to stay away from them. That might be the best course of action.

Mr. Armstrong gave the example, a physical example which shows us what we need to do. He said, if you've got a milk bottle, and that shows you how old he was. Nobody has milk bottles any more, although they do exist in some parts of the world. If you have a milk bottle, let's say it's empty, but it's not empty—it's full of air. A milk bottle has air. And I want to get that air out of that milk bottle. How do I do that? Well, I pour milk or water or something in that bottle, I pour that in there, and that forces the air out. In other words, I've got to substitute for what is in there, that I don't want in there, with something else that I do want in there. And that's what we have to do, too.

We have to replace the doubt and the discouragement with faith and confidence. And it happens just like that! No, it doesn't, no it doesn't, and I know that it doesn't. And I know that this is easily said, but, brethren, I also know that it works. I also know that it works. It's hard, it's hard work, but it's something that we can do. Something that you can do, and something that I can do. If you're doubtful, if you're discouraged, open up God's word. I've done that many times. Or I've gone down on my knees. There have been many times over the years where I've gone on my knees and said, "God, I am discouraged. Please help me. Please lift me up again. Because this is no place to be." And, God has answered those prayers.

But then you have to fill your mind with positive, encouraging things. That's important, to fill your mind with positive, encouraging, faith-building things. You know, faith is a strange thing. I've told our brethren in Germany so many times, this is a work of faith that we are doing. Now faith is—faith means we believe in something that we can't see, yet. If it had already happened, there would be no need to have faith in it. We have faith that God is doing something through us. We want Him to. We desire Him to. We pray for Him to. And we know that He will, because we have faith. We may not know all of the particulars—and we don't. But we know, because of our faith, that He will help us, and He will guide us. So, we need to go to God if we are discouraged, if we are doubtful, if we are tormented. We go to God and we ask for help. We ask for His intervention, we ask for His guidance, we ask Him to fill us with things that are positive and encouraging.

And then we go to our Bibles. We pray, we read positive things, we pick up some old articles from Mr. Armstrong—whatever. Or some new articles from anyone who is writing about God's word, in a proper and appropriate way, that will fill us with faith and hope. That is good; that's what we need. That's what we need to do.

If you find yourself like the wave of the sea, doubtful, maybe even negative, ask God to help you to hear the Shepherd's voice. Ask Him that, in all honesty and sincerity.

In Mark 9 verse 24, we won't turn there right now. Mark 9:24 talks about the father whose child was demon possessed, and Christ said, well, if you just believe. And he said, *I believe! Help you my unbelief!* Sometimes we have to do that. Sometimes we need to pray that prayer. He was talking with Jesus Christ. We need to talk sometimes with God the Father and say, please help my unbelief. Give me certainty. Give me stability. Give me a spiritual mind.

Let's go now to James chapter 4. A very, very interesting little scripture here—or section of scripture. James chapter 4, and let's begin in verse 7. You knew I was getting to this sooner or later, talking about resisting the devil. But it's interesting, when we read this a bit.

**James 4:7** *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

Whether he has assailed you with doubt and discouragement, or illicit thoughts, or whatever. If you do this, then the devil will flee from you. But once again, this is simple, but this is not easy. Just a few words, but it requires work. It requires effort. It requires a huge

amount of effort.

**Verse 8** *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands,*

This is what I wanted to emphasize here. Go back to verse 6, to get the context here.

**Verse 6** *But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, And what is Satan if anything but proud. That is his being. Pride. In himself. resists the proud But gives grace to the humble."*

So we need to be humble. We don't need to be like Satan the devil and be proud.

**Verse 7** *Therefore submit to God.*

In other words, humble yourself before God. Submit to the authority of God. Anytime anyone leaves God's church, it's almost always about authority, because they didn't want to submit to God's authority in some way. Mr. Armstrong said that many, many years ago, and I've seen the truth of it over the years. We talking about government. Do we want to be under the government of God? Submit yourselves to God. Put yourself under the government of God. *Resist the devil* Now when we submit to God, we are resisting the devil. That's part of resisting the devil is submitting to God, and going God's way. That's what it means. *Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

**Verse 8** *Draw near to God.* I said earlier, Satan wants to put distance between us and God.

That's exactly what he wants to do. We need to draw nigh to God, be very close to God.

*Cleanse your hands, you sinners;* You've gotten off the path, get back on the path. Stop doing the wrong thing, do the right thing. That's what we've got to do. *Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

We just got through reading about double-minded waves of the sea. A double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways. Don't be double-minded. I just wanted to bring that out. We are to resist Satan. We resist Satan by submitting to God. By going God's way, by filling our minds with the things of God, by drawing close to God. We have to stop sinning. Wish that were easy. That means our whole intent and drive and life has to be going God's way. We will fall; we will stumble. We will go off the path from time to time. But we go back. We go back and we ask God for help. We beg God to show us the light, to get us back into the light.

**Jer. 29:13** *And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*

God doesn't want halfway. We're over here, or we're over there. We're the sheep, or we're the goats. We're the black, or we're the white. God wants our whole heart to be going His way. Once again, that doesn't mean we won't fail or we won't fall along the way. But are we going on the way, are we walking along God's path? That's important. It's extremely important. We have to do that with our whole heart. It's not, well, I'll show up for Sabbath services and be nice and sweet and talk to everybody, and then during the week I'm a different person. I've seen that. I've seen that, and we cannot be that way. As I said earlier, we cannot have a normal life. Our lives in Christ, our lives as sons of God, as members of the family of God, are different. They are different, and they have to be different. And they need to be different.

In conclusion now, brethren, God has called us out of where we were to where we are. I believe that, or else I would not be here. You believe that, or else you probably wouldn't be here, either. Let us continue to pray that God teach us what we need to know. There's so much that we need to know. Let's pray that God teach us that. Let's have patience. We ask God for direction. But it's not that, we snap our fingers, and God, hop to, and show us, right now. We cannot do that. We pray, we put our hearts into our prayers, we ask for direction. And then we have patience. We wait upon God's direction. That's not easy to do sometimes. It's not easy to do, but we must do it. We are all being tried in special ways, every single one of us, we're being tried in special ways. A testing and a proving of us has already and will continue to test our mettle. Our mettle is being tested. As the Germans say, "God wants to see what kind of wood we are carved of." He's testing us, to see. Now, I've seen things in myself over the last few months, I didn't think were there, I thought I had gotten rid of, but I hadn't. They were still hanging on. We, brethren, need to realize that we're being tested. God is watching us, in a very positive way. He's testing us—you know when a big car company tests a car before it goes off the assembly line, do they test that car so the car will fail and they can chop it up into little pieces and start over? No, that's not what happens. They want that car to go off that assembly line successfully, having stood the test! And that's exactly what God wants for us, He wants us to stand the test. He tests us; He allows us to be proven and tried. So that we will grow in strength, so that we will grow in spiritual understanding, that's what it's all about.

God is still teaching us some things. I think He's still teaching us a lot of things. I'm not really sure we really know we still have to learn. And He will use us. He will use us. And we learned, and this is what we need to continue to do, to learn what He's trying to tell us. We need to be patient; we need to be thankful. Sometimes we're not as thankful as we should be. Sometimes we don't realize the power of God, I've talked about the power of Satan; sometimes we need to realize the power of God. And that is something that we need to have in the forefront of our minds every single day! Because it's a fight in this world, it really is.

But once again, brethren. Pray, ask God for help. Ask God for direction personally. Certainly, I do that, I know you do that. Ask God for direction for His work, for what we're doing here now. And then, have the patience to wait on His answer. As I said, God is teaching us and we need to learn. Let's be about doing that.

So, has Satan gone off somewhere, is he leaving us alone, is he letting us do our own thing now? No, no. He is still attacking. He will continue. He always has been, throughout the history of God's church, and he will continue to do so. We have to be aware of Satan's intentions. And we have to make sure that our personal Bible Study, our personal prayer lives, are sound. Solid. Stable. And that we don't give ground to Satan. Because, if we do, he'll take it. He will take it. The less we pray, the less we study, the further away we will be from God. That is a principle that is always at work. So, we need to keep up with that. Push ourselves.

Obviously, the further away we get from God, the easier it is for Satan to get a toehold in our lives. We read earlier, and I'll close with this scripture in Ephesians 6, verse 10.

**Ephesians 6:10** *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

**Verse 11** *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

**Verse 12** *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

**Verse 13** *Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

That's what God wants for us; He wants us to be able to stand in His truth, and in His

way. We have to submit to Him, and as we submit to God more perfectly, then we will be resisting the devil. Yes, Satan will continue to attack, but we have God's protection. If we stay close to God in study and prayer and in truly living His way of life, and on walking on that straight and narrow path that has been lit for us by Almighty God, then we will not be hurt by the efforts of Satan. That's a promise!

Good night.