

## “What Is Man, That You Are Mindful Of Him?”

(Day 3—Feast of Tabernacles)

Fred R. Coulter—September 23, 2002

Time is marching right along, and, you know, this is a good thing for us to understand. I'll just tell a good one here for you. I remember one minister up at Squaw Valley who got up there on the first Holy Day at the Feast of Tabernacles, and he gave a rousing prayer, and he said:

O God, bless us on this first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

And he didn't even know that he did it until after he got down and got to his seat, and someone told him, 'This is the Feast of Tabernacles.'

Now if you want a title for this sermon, we can entitle it, "*What Is Man That You Are Mindful Of Him?*"

The whole lesson of the Feast of Tabernacles is that everything physical is temporary. Yet, there is sort of an incongruity with man. Because with his mind and the spirit of man that God puts into his mind, even though human beings can comprehend that there is a beginning and there's an ending. Yet, in their own lives they have no consciousness of when they began. They can look to the time when they may die, but they have no mental comprehension of death either.

So this is kind of the enigma of us human beings, made of flesh and made of the dust of the earth. But in it there is a great and fantastic potential that even though this physical life is temporary, God has a great and a marvelous plan and purpose for all of mankind, which He is going to work out.

That's why David said, 'What is man that You are mindful of him?'

Psalm 8:1: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! You have set Your glory above the heavens!"

Even though He's done that, this is telling us a principle that we learn in the New Testament that Jesus taught: "The one who humbles himself shall be exalted; the one who exalts himself shall be abased."

Unless we become as little children we shall not enter into the Kingdom of God.

Verse 2: "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have ordained strength because of Your adversaries, to silence the enemy and the avenger."

Now isn't that something how God does it? *He takes the weak!* Like He did with Gideon, and the 300 that conquered all the Amorites and the Moabites! He didn't take the army of 30,000 that showed up when Gideon sent out for volunteers. He took the 300.

So here, God can overcome the enemy with babes. That's why we're to have this attitude, and that's why we're able to overcome Satan the devil, because of what God does.

I imagine David, when he went out on the rooftop of his house in Jerusalem, and went out there at night. In Jerusalem they have these stone buildings and the flat roofs, and they can get out there at night. Remember, there was no smog; there was nothing to interfere with it. I imagine he saw all the stars and their glory.

Verse 3: "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained."

Isn't it interesting that God ordained them for times and for seasons, and those things?

Verse 4: "What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?"

What is it? *Well, we'll see!* Because as weak as we are, and as corruptible as we are, and made of dust that we are, God has a fantastic plan and purpose. But this life, and this body, and this living in the world today in the flesh *is all temporary!* Just like dwelling in a tent. It is a temporary tabernacle, or place, of living. So, this also ties in with the Feast of Tabernacles to tell us that we have something greater to look forward to.

Verse 5: "For You have made him a little lower than God... [the Hebrew here is Elohim, meaning God] ...and have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands..." (vs 5-6).

Yes, God gave a tremendous blessing and inheritance to all human beings on this earth.

"...You have put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the birds of heaven, the fish of the sea, and all that pass through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!" (vs 6-9).

James also points out in James 3 that at man has been able to tame every kind of animal that there is. Yet, the hardest thing to tame is the old tongue, which really becomes a point of conversion. So, let's go on from here, because this is really profound. This is really great.

When we look at ourselves, and we see our lives, and all of us are another year older than we were from the last Feast of Tabernacles. But don't despair, don't be discouraged and don't think because life is temporary that God does not have something great and wonderful for you.

Psalm 144:1: "Blessed is the LORD my Rock, Who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle."

Now we don't fight the enemy directly, but we overcome Satan the devil. We learn the spiritual things to overcome.

Verse 2: "He is my loving kindness and my fortress, my high tower and my deliverer, my shield and He in Whom I take refuge, Who subdues my people under me. O LORD, **what is man that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You think of him?**" (vs 2-3).

So, David thought of this over and over again as he was contemplating and understanding what it was that man is. "**...Or the son of man, that You think of him?**"

Verse 4: "**Man is like a breath...**"

We're going to see that all human life, if it does not have the plan and purpose of God, *it is all vain! It is all empty! And it comes to naught!* But from that, God is able to create the sons and daughters of God. We're going to see that He put it all subject to vanity for a great purpose.

"...his days are like a shadow that passes away" (v 4).

*So, we kind of come and go! We don't have long to live. Of course, you can pick up the paper every day and you can go to the section where the people are born, you go to the obituary where people have died. And it's kind of just like a planting and a harvest that's going on every single day.*

I wonder how many people die every day? If you are in God's position looking down on the earth, and the earth is turning, He knows whenever a human being dies; He knows whenever a human being is born. I imagine God is very pleased, because He has in His mind what it is that He is going to do.

All of the vanity, and all the things that humans go through is all going to come to a great and marvelous conclusion one of these days. That's all wrapped up in the Plan of God. The Feast of Tabernacles for us pictures when we are living in this tabernacle, our bodies as we will see, and that we are going to receive a new mind and a new body. ***We're looking forward to that!***

Psalm 146:1. "O praise the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. While I live I will praise the LORD..." *That's a good thing!* While there is still life, do what you need to do.

- praise God
- love God
- obey God

"...I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. Do not put your trust in princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no salvation" (vs 2-3). *This tells us that:*

- no political solution of men
- no plan of men
- no scheme of men

***is going to result in anything other than death!***

There may be some temporary good along the way. But even that is a point of vanity, because it doesn't last forever.

Verse 4: "His breath goes forth; he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

Yet, isn't it amazing that we cannot contemplate being dead, and we cannot comprehend when we were conceived. So, it's a great plan that God has. It's a marvelous thing indeed!

There are lots of things in the Psalms concerning this, because David was a man after God's heart. God gave him understanding of things because he's going to be in the first resurrection. So, it's really quite a thing that God is doing! The whole creation is geared for the Plan of God. We've been blessed with the knowledge and understanding from the Word of God to understand how God is doing this.

Psalm 33:1: "Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous ones; praise is becoming for the upright. Praise the LORD with a lyre; sing unto Him with a harp of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song; play skillfully with shouts of joy, for the Word of the LORD is upright; and all His works are *done in faithfulness*" (vs 1-4).

That's one of the great and marvelous ways that God has given that we can understand the Truth of the Bible:

- we know that God is always right
- we know that God is righteous
- we know that God has a plan

*His way is certainly better than what any man can do!*

- Can a man tell God what to do?
- Can a man come up with something greater as a scheme for human life than what God has created and ordained?

*Of course not! No way!*

Verse 5: "He loves righteousness and justice... [that's what God is looking to] ... the earth is full of the loving kindness of the LORD."

The New Testament says that 'He makes the sun to rise on the just and on the unjust, and He sends the rain on the righteous and on the wicked.' So, the earth is full of His goodness.

Verse 6: "By the Word of the LORD were the heavens made... [He just commanded and they were there] ...and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

We're going to go back and see the crowning glory of God's physical creation in just a minute.

Verse 7: "He gathered the waters of the sea together like a heap, putting the depths in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD..." (vs 7-8).

This is going to happen during the Millennium. The whole world is going to know God. All human beings will receive the blessing of God, ***IF*** they love Him and keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

"...let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spoke, and it was done..." (vs 8-9). *That's quite different from men!*

- How many times do we say things and nothing ever happens?
- How many times do we have good intentions and don't do it?

*God just speaks and it's done!*

"...He commanded, and it stood fast. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the people. The counsel of the LORD... [or the Plan of the Lord] ... stands

forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.... [here's this wonderful verse]: ...Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, and the people He has chosen for His own inheritance" (vs 9-12).

We've been chosen for it! That's a marvelous thing. That's why David said, 'What is man that You are mindful of him?' Or we can think of it this way for us: 'What am I, that You, God, are mindful of me?' Just put it in a personal way.

That's a very humbling thing when you come to really grasp and understand it: ***that God the Father Himself has called you!*** God the Father, through the powers that He gave to Jesus Christ, created all mankind. He's created you. I like the part in William Tyndale's book *The Obedience of a Christian Man*, where he starts out with the children and he says:

One day when your mother and father came together, you were created in secret.

*Quite a marvelous thing!* Let's see how awesome and wonderful this physical creation is, even though it is subject to vanity.

None of the other things that God has created, in everything that there is, because He goes through the whole creation: the first day, second day, third day, fourth day, fifth day, and the sixth day. The crowning glory of the creation of this physical earth is mankind.

Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let Us...'— *The two of Elohim, the One Who became the Father and the One Who became the Son!*

"...make man... [mankind] ...in Our image, after Our likeness:..." (v 26).

So, right here in the very first part of Genesis, God is revealing His Plan to a great deal. The whole rest of the Bible is this: not only are we made in the image of God, and after His likeness, ***but also we will be after His kind!*** Now none of the other things that God has created, not even the angels in heaven, have that blessing. Made in the image and likeness of God. Now notice how generous God is:

"...and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.' And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female" (vs 26-27). *This is a summary!*

When we come to Gen. 2 we get the details on how God did it. There are some people who say that this was ‘a first creation over here in vs 26 & 27 of Gen. 1. But if that be so, how can Adam be the first man and Eve be the first woman? So, this gives us a summary. Now we come to Gen 2 and we find out *how* God made man. We’re made after His image.

Genesis 2:7: “Then the LORD God formed man *of the* dust of the ground... [just made out of red clay] ...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

Then God had the Garden of Eden; He put the man in it. He commanded him to dress it and keep it. God also had Adam name all the animals. So, not only did he have the breath of life when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and Adam became a living soul, but he was also created with a language already programmed into his mind. He could talk with God, he could think, that he was able to look at things, like all the animals. Adam named them; and whatever Adam named them, that was the name of it. There again is another tremendous blessing that God gives!

Here is a tremendous lesson. God gave them the command to not eat of the Tree of Good and Evil. Yet, he did, *and we all received a sinful nature as result of that!* But let’s see something else that’s very important.

Verse 18: “And the LORD God said, ‘*It is not good that the man should be alone...*”

Now, if there’s one lesson the Catholic Church and all of those who believe in forced celibacy need to learn is, they are violating the very beginning of the creation of God. God made us sexual creatures, and God made the sexual organs to be used properly within the marriage estate, to reproduce our own kind, to have love and to glorify God. So, there’s a right way of doing things:

“...I will make a helper compatible for him” (v 18).

He put Adam to sleep. He took one of his ribs and He formed Eve and brought her to him.

Verse 23: “And Adam said, ‘*This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man.*”

Then God performed the wedding ceremony and said,

Verse 24: “For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

We’re not going to go through all the things concerning the sin that they did. We’re very well aware of that. We’re very well aware that it puts *in every human being the law of sin and death!*

This also is why we need to be redeemed. As we will see tomorrow, why Christ came and did what He did. So, it’s really quite a thing. All of this ties in with the Feast of Tabernacles, meaning that we are temporarily dwelling in physical dwellings. But there’s something greater for us to look to.

I was thinking of this in preparing this message, and it finally dawned on me. that sometimes you learn after a long, long time, and sometimes things come together and you think about it in a way that you’ve never thought of it before.

The Mormons say that human beings were actually spirit beings first in heaven above. So then, Adam and Eve had to sin so that they could have children. So, every time a child is born, a spirit comes out of heaven and comes into the body of the new child.

To release all these spirits in heaven, you have to have many, many, many children. Therefore, that was the excuse for polygamy, and so forth.

However, let’s come here to 1-Cor. 15 and learn something here very important. It’s talking about the resurrection of the dead.

1-Corinthians 15:42: “So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; accordingly, it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam *became an ever-living Spirit.*’ However, the spiritual *was not first...*” (vs 42-46).

Therefore, we can conclude, that the doctrine that human beings were spirits in heaven first and must come and possess a physical body is really a doctrine of demons, because demons like to come and possess physical bodies. They were created before man. However, as far as human beings are concerned, that which is spiritual is not first.

“...but the natural—then the spiritual” (v 46).

We’re made of the dust of the earth, and unless God gives us eternal life, there’s no hope of anything. That’s why at the beginning of 1-Cor.15 he says, ‘If the dead are not raised, then we’re of all

men most miserable. And if Christ is not raised, then we've all died in vain.'

Verse 48: "As *is* the one made of dust, so also *are all* those who are made of dust... [meaning those who are of the dust are of the earth] ...and as *is* the heavenly *One*, so also *are all* those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust... [this temporary tabernacle (body) that we have right now] ... we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *One*" (vs 48-49)—*showing the hope and the glory that God is going to give to us!*

Let's see how we start out, because in spite of the fact that human beings are subject to vanity and subject to death, and so forth, the creation of human beings is an awesome thing indeed. Everything about a human being, every process that God has put in it, even the process of procreation is really a marvelous thing. Because out of that very little speck, pinprick of life, comes a new human being. Isn't that something? Now David thought on that, too:

Psalms 139:1: "O LORD, You have searched me and have known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thoughts afar off. You measure my going about and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways" (vs 1-3).

Why? Because God put everything in us! He knows all about us; no question about it.

Verse 4: "For there is not a word on my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether."

Men cannot hide from God, though they think they can. That's sort of a vain, foolish thought in itself too. Can physical man, created by God, hide himself from God, and God not know? Yet, God has given us some tremendous abilities, and we misuse these abilities and tell God to go away.

Verse 5: "You have enclosed me behind and in front, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it" (vs 5-6).

Well, today we have a few more scientific facts to understand about it. But do we really understand it? *No, we don't!* Even though we can identify the process of how a child develops in the womb through the DNA, and RNA, and so forth, we still don't understand it. So David said:

Verse 7: "Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence? If I go up into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed

in the grave, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the farthest parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me shall be night'; even the darkness does not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; as is the darkness, so is the light to You" (vs 7-12). *It's quite a thing, the awesome presence of God!*

Verse 13: "For You have possessed my reins..."

God has a way of testing the human heart. It's called *the reins!* We won't get into that today, but with that, God tests us and tries us, and sees whether we're going to be willing and obedient to Him. So, David said:

"...You have knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am awesomely and wonderfully made..." (vs 13-14)—*and we are!*

The creation of every human being is a special creation from God, though it be accomplished through procreation, because He wants us to share in His creation by reproducing ourselves.

- every human being is a combination of mother and father
- every human being is unique and distinct, though there be countless billions

### ***Only God could do that!***

Human beings make things, but it's kind of like cookies. You take a cookie cutter and you only have so many different cookie cutters that you can use that you can produce so many cookies, cars, houses or whatever it is. It's all ending up kind of being 'Pete & Repeat.'

But not with God! Every human being is unique! Every human being is different. *Every human being has been created in the image of God, whether male or female!* Yet, look at the silliness and foolishness that we are as human beings when we're cut off from God. That's why we need God.

"...I am awesomely and wonderfully made; Your works are marvelous and my soul knows it very well. My substance was not hidden from You..." (vs 14-15).

Just like Tyndale said, 'When your father and mother came together, you were created in secret.'

Now ‘substance’ is what they call the very first part of human life after conception. So this is a scientific term that is even used today.

“...My substance was not hidden from You when I was made in secret... [just like Tyndale said]... and intricately formed in the lowest parts of the earth.... [ in his mother’s womb] ...Your eyes did see my substance, yet, being unformed...” (vs 15-16).

That’s the way human beings start. Then they just automatically grow, and grow, and the cells divide, and the cells become hands, and feet, and internal organs, and arms, and legs, and head, and eyes, and ears.

“...And in Thy book... [in other words, according to what we call DNA and RNA today] ...all my members were written...” (v 16).

They’re trying to catalog all of this in what is called the human genome. In other words, make a book of how all of the genes and chromosomes work to produce a human being. So, David was right up to snuff as far as modern technology is concerned!

“...and in Your book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet, there were none of them” (v 16).

Then one day after nine months you’re born. Marvelous and fantastic thing!

Verse 17: “How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!.... [when we add to that the Plan of God, it’s awesome indeed] ...If I should count them, they are more than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You” (vs 17-18).

This is a great thing that we understand this. In spite of the fact we’re made very awesomely this way, we’re still made of the dust of the earth. In another sense, because of the vanity of human beings let’s see how all flesh is compared to God. When you take everything that human beings have, you put it all together. Look at all the mammoth accomplishments that man has done. What is that compared to God?

Here’s the prophecy of John the Baptist coming to prepare the way for Christ.

Isaiah 40:6: “A voice says, ‘Cry!’ And he said, ‘What shall I cry?’ ‘All flesh *is* grass, and all the beauty of it *is* as the flower of the field”

Now it is true, ***we are all grass!*** Now think about that.

- Where do we get our food from? *We eat meat from animals!*
- What do they eat? *They eat grass and shrubs and grain and things like that, and then we eat them!*

We eat fruits and vegetables, that’s just like grass. So mankind, in a sense, really is *no more than grass!*

Verse 7: “The grass withers, the flower fades because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people *are* grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand forever” (vs 7-8).

Now even James said, ‘You rich men, don’t get all excited and get carried away with what you’re doing. He asked, ‘Your life, what is it? *It’s just like a flower that sort of blossoms today, and then the sun comes at its great intensity, and it withers and it’s gone!* (James 1) So is man in his pursuit after the physical things. You strive for it.

- so you produce
- so you get a name
- so you make money
- so you build houses
- so you buy lands
  - Now what?
  - What does that result in?
  - Is it anything permanent?
  - Is it anything spiritual?

People look upon those things as great accomplishments.

Let’s come to the book of Ecclesiastes, because the book of Ecclesiastes is really very profound and important. Because it tells us that without God, human life truly is vain indeed. *Quite a book!* Solomon is the one who wrote it. Here is a tremendous example for us. Remember, as we read yesterday, how David prepared everything for Solomon to build the temple.

Solomon had everything in the world. And even the blessing of God. I think it’s very fitting that Solomon writes the book of Ecclesiastes, the book of wisdom. Even though he learned a lot of lessons, he never really understood. He went against God. He started out well.

Ecclesiastes 1:1: “The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.... [that could only be Solomon] ...‘Vanity of vanities,’ says the Preacher, ‘vanity of vanities! All *is* vanity” (vs 1-2).

As you look out on the world scene and you see things that happen, and you see people, and you see lands and buildings, and you see the accomplishments of human beings, and so forth, and just give it a longer, broader view from God's perspective.

- What is it going to amount to?
- What is it going to lead to?
- *It's all vanity!*

Verse 3: "What profit does a man have in all his labor, which he labors under the sun? One generation passes away, and another generation comes..."

We're in that right now with the Church, aren't we? *We're in a generational change! Yes we are!* There are many of us who are getting old and gray and we're contemplating when we'll be in the grave when we come to the end of our lives. Though right now at this minute:

- in our own mind
- in our own actions
- in our own feelings

*aside from the rusting out that comes along with age:*

- we don't feel old
- we don't think old

Of course, that's all part of the miracle of the human mind. So, life goes on!

Verse 5: "The sun also arises, and the sun goes down, and hurries to its place where it arose. The wind goes toward the south, and it turns around to the north; it whirls around continually; and the wind returns on its circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet, the sea *is* not full; to the place from where the rivers come, there they return again" (vs 5-7).

And after he's gone through with all of these philosophical statements about things, then he says

Verse 9: "That which has been *is* that which shall be,... [we see that every day] ...and that which has been done *is* that which shall be done; and *there is* nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing *of* which it may be said, 'See, this *is* new'? It has already been in days of old, which were before us" (vs. 9-10).

What a true statement! We think today we're living in a modern age, don't we, with all the things that we have. Even the technology, which allows us to make these videotapes and send them on to you, and so forth, so you can have a wonderful

Feast. But you know something? We don't know what it was like before the Flood, do we? The only thing we understand is this: that 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall be in the days of the Son of man.'

So there's nothing new. Just like Solomon was inspired to say. *So, he set out to find out:*

- what it was that there was to do under the sun
- what it was that God wanted for man
- what it was that he could learn from it

*so he found this out,*

Verse 14: "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and striving after wind." *You end up being frustrated!*

Let's learn some lessons of life, of *what it's like **IF** God is not the center of your life!* That's the whole lesson of the book of Ecclesiastes. You can go through and read the whole thing. We're just going to cover a few more verses here.

Ecclesiastes 1:14: "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and striving after wind. What *is* crooked cannot be made straight; and *what is* lacking cannot be numbered" (vs 14-15).

You just look at all the social programs that men have designed to try and help and cure problems and try and make the world right.

- Is the world right?
- Are the problems solved?
- Has the crooked been made straight?
- Has all of those things that are wanting been taken care of?

*Of course not!*

Verse 16: "I spoke within my own heart, saying, 'Lo, I have become great and have gathered more wisdom than all that have been before me in Jerusalem; yea, my heart has experienced great wisdom and knowledge.' And I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I perceived that this also *is* striving after wind" (vs 14-17).

So he became a hippie for a while. Went out and experimented with everything.

Verse 18: "For in much wisdom *is* much grief; and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow." *That is true, too!*

The reason is because of the vanity of human nature. So, Solomon said, 'Ok. I'm going to

do this. I'm going to build that. I'm going to do the other thing. I'm going to look at everything.'

He found out that when he was done and it was finished, and he looked at it, guess what? *He wasn't satisfied, all was vanity!* The very greatest that man can do is a vain thing.

What we need to understand is that the very greatest, most experienced man that there ever was in anything was Solomon. What did he learn? It was all vanity and vexation of spirit! David also understood this, and David probably taught it to him.

Psalm 39: 4: "O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am."

That's surely true, isn't it? Let's just take, for example, all the football players. They get out there and they smash and they hit and they look almost invincible, don't they? Well, I tell you what, you ought to see the other side of the story after they retire. All the pain, agony and hurt, They realize how frail that they really are.

Verse 5: "Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth..."

If you want to know what 70 or 80 years is like, you just hold up your hand, look at it, compared to God that's what it is.

"...and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah " (v 5). *That's what mankind is! It's all temporary.*

God made it that way so that we wouldn't set our hearts on the things of flesh. So that we wouldn't think that in the flesh we could live forever. That isn't going to be!

Just imagine what David understood and knew, and just go back and study about his life and all the things that he did in:

- loving God and serving Him
- fighting the enemy
- writing all of the Psalms
- being there right before the Ark of the Covenant
- seeing God in the sanctuary as he did

*That's quite a wonderful thing that David went through and experienced!* He learned this one very important thing:

Psalm 62:5: "My soul, wait in silence for God alone..."

- not on any other men
- not in any other things
- not in any other hope
- not in any other plan
- not in any other scheme

Because it's all going to come to an end, isn't it? And it's all going to result in something that isn't going to work out.

"...for from Him comes my hope. He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my strong tower; I shall not be moved" (vs 5-6).

That's what we need to do. We need to have that relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ:

- in prayer and study
- to love Them with all our heart, mind, soul and being
- to fulfill the spiritual purpose in our life

That's why we have the physical body and the mind and everything that God has given us.

That's why He's made us in His image, so that we can be in His Family. This temporary body that we have now is just like a temporary tabernacle. We'll see a little later that even the Apostle Peter likens it unto a tabernacle, as well as the Apostle Paul.

Verse 7: "In God is my salvation and my glory, the Rock of my strength; my refuge is in God."

Always remember that in time of trouble, flee to God. Go to God and say:

O God, help me! Help me to understand; give me of Your Spirit. Give me of Your mind that I may know.

Verse 8: "Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah." **God knows!**

- He knows our down-sitting and our uprising
- He knows what's in our mind
- He realizes that we are weak
- He realizes that we are flesh

He has compassion and mercy upon us. That's why Christ came; very profound! God's Plan is marvelous!

Verse 9: "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie... [we see that proved every day] ...when weighed in the

balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity.... [just a breath and a wind that is gone] ... Trust not in oppression, and do not take pride in stolen goods; if riches increase, do not set your heart upon them” (vs 9-10).

God is the One Who gives the power to get wealth. If they increase, don't set your heart on them. That's what we've done in this generation. Look what's happened to:

- the stock market
- the banks
- all of these schemes of men to get rich

How many people are in the same position as the farmer who had great crops, remember that? *A man said to himself:*

Soul, what am I going to do with all these great riches and everything? I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to tear down my barns and build greater ones. I'm going to store all this, and I'm going to sit back and I'm going to say, 'Soul, take your ease. For I have many things laid up for many years.

And God said, 'You fool. Tonight your soul is required of you.'

Maybe it's not required of everyone tonight. But you see, many of those people who did that and thought, 'Boy. I've got all these stocks. I have all this money. I'm going to retire.' Now they can't retire. A matter of fact, a lot of them are going to have to go back to work. Because they trusted in men of high degree who are vanity, ***rather than trusting in God!***

Verse 11: "God has spoken once; twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God."

Of course, what are the greatest riches? Well, that's likened to building spiritual character of gold, silver, and precious stone. ***But too many people build on wood, hay, or stubble!*** It all gets burned up. It's all vanity!

Verse 12: "Also to You, O LORD, belongs mercy; for You give to every man according to his work."

That's a true thing in life. That happens all the time. That's just the way it is. My wife has a famous saying, which is, 'That's the way the mop flops, and the jelly rolls.' That's just the way that it is.

As I mentioned earlier, there is a generational change in the Church. There are many of us here who have gray hair. We've been around a

while. Hopefully we have learned, and hopefully we have built character, and hopefully that we have been faithful and loyal to God. If we go day-by-day, then we have.

Psa. 90 was actually a prayer of Moses, the man of God, which was preserved and David put it into the Psalms:

Psalm 90:9: "For all our days pass away in Your wrath; we finish our years as with a sigh. The days of our years are threescore years and ten..." (vs 9-10)—*80-years-old!*

God gave to Moses another 40, and he lived to be 120!

"...and if by reason of strength they are fourscore years... [there's the 80] ...yet, their span is but trouble and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away" (vs 9-10).

In other words, we die. Our breath goes back to God; and that day our thoughts perish and we know nothing.

Psa. 71 is a promise!. Here's something we need to claim of God every day. Now there's also an odd peculiarity that happens when we're growing up. As kids, we look at old people and we don't think one day we'll be like them, because we don't comprehend that day. But sooner or later it does happen! God has a promise. Here is something we all need to claim.

God put it in us that we would get old. God put it in us that we would die: as in Adam we all die. Time is going to come when that's going to be a reality for a lot of us. That's going to be such a thing then, if we die before the end comes, then God has spared us from the time of Tribulation at the end, ***and our place of safety is in the grave!***

That's why it's so important that we set our mind and heart on God, and not on the physical things. Here's a promise:

Psalm 71:9: "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength fails." ***That's exactly what happens!***

- it happened to Abraham
- it happened to Isaac
- it happened to Jacob
- it happened to Moses
- it happened to all the men of God
- it happened to David
- it happened to Solomon
- it happen to all of the apostles
- it happened to all the Christians

It's happened to every person who has been born from the time of Adam and Eve clear on down to the time of the last human being when we get to the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium.

Verse 17: "O God, You have taught me from my youth; and until now I have declared Your wonderful works. But now also when I am old and gray-headed, O God, do not forsake me until I have declared Your strength to this generation, and Your power to everyone who is to come" (vs 17-18).

That means that he was able to finish the psalms and get those ready. And we have it, and that we are part of the generations to come where we can see the strength of God, the righteousness of God, and His power to every generation!

Verse 19: "And Your righteousness, O God, is very high, You Who have done great things. O God, who is like You?"

That's the whole thing that we need to understand. Even though we're temporary, even though we're made of the dust of the earth, even though we have, as it were, a tabernacle, which is temporary. Well, the Feast of Tabernacles shows us that there is hope beyond, there is life beyond vanity, there is life beyond this physical life.

Let's see that. God knows what He's doing. He did this in such a way for hope. So that in spite of all the weakness that men have, in spite of the law of sin and death that is within us, in spite of the vanity of our minds and our lives and the things that we do, and the futility as Solomon saw, that everything is frustration and vexation of spirit and vanity, we were made subject to vanity. The whole creation was.

But God has His plan. God is going to rescue the whole creation from this vanity. The whole lesson that we can learn through the Feast of Tabernacles is that:

- ***IF*** we grow, change and overcome
- ***IF*** we attain to the Kingdom of God
- ***IF*** we overcome the vanity
- ***IF*** we overcome the human nature through the Spirit of God in us
- ***IF*** we develop the mind of Christ as we are to do
- ***THEN*** we have a part in helping the world overcome their vanity and the futility of their lives.

This gives us an inheritance, as we covered part of this the other day.

Romans 8:16: "The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now, if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs—truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him" (vs 16-17).

So, here is the hope, and here is what Paul always knew and understood:

Verse 18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

Go read in the book of Acts what the Apostle Paul went through:

- how he suffered
- how he was persecuted
- how he was chased from place to place

and all the things there in 2-Cor. 11 that he enumerated:

- he was beaten with rods
- he was left for shipwrecked
- he was stoned; he was a day and a night in the deep; he was in hungering
- he was fasting
- he was watching in painfulness

Paul said, '*Look, all of this is not comparable to what God has for us.*'

He understood that the whole world was this way, and in it there is an expectation of the creation:

Verse 19: "For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God."

God has called us to be part of the solution. God has called us:

- to overcome our problems
- to overcome our difficulties
- to live as God wants us to live
- to do the things that God wants us to do

***The world is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God!***

Verse 20: "Because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly..."

No one went up to God and said, 'God, I think it would be a great idea if You made me a vain fool.' We are that by nature. But there is hope.

"...but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in

hope” (v 20)—*because there is a way out!*

There is a plan! There is a means by which God is going to correct all these things and make them right. And we have a part in it.

Verse 21: “In order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

- we’re going to bring the freedom
- we’re going to bring the liberty
- we’re going to teach people the way of God

*There’s hope in all of this vanity and all the things that men have gone through!*

We’re going to be able to show them and teach them and help them and lead them as kings and priests. Isn’t that going to be a wonderful thing? God has called every one of us to have a part in it. This is also in the hope of the resurrection, because Job said ‘If I die shall I live again? All the days I am in the grave I will await until You call. And I will hear Your voice and I will answer Your call and come out of the grave.’ ***That, brethren, is the hope!***

Verse 28 is what we have to understand. This is a lesson of life; something that Solomon never really grasped, though he:

- was wiser than any man
- was richer than any man
- had all of the things that to make him a great man

*and he died in vain!*

We don’t even have a record of his repentance, if he did. He went against everything that his father instructed him when he was about to take over the kingdom and build the House of God. But here is a lesson for us.

Verse 28: “And we know that all things work together for good...”

All things, regardless of what they are. Even some of the most disastrous things that can happen, some of the most vain and futile and frustrating things that can take place, all work together for good, ***IF***; there is a big ***IF***:

“...to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose” (v 28). ***THEN*** they will work together for good.

Let’s just understand what a great and marvelous thing that God has done. Isn’t that

something? That God can take us, who are filled with human nature, vanity and self will and:

- convert us
  - give us His Spirit
  - change our nature
  - build in us the mind of Christ
- and ultimately give us*
- a new body
  - a new mind

In other words, *a new tabernacle!* Isn’t that something?

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; *who have been chosen* according to *the* predetermined knowledge of God *the* Father, by sanctification through *the* Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of *the* blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you” (vs 1-2)—*that’s what’s important:*

- you have God’s grace
- you have God’s peace
- you let the peace of Christ rule in your mind

***In spite of what’s going on in your life and around you, always stay close to God!*** Don’t let anything come in and destroy that relationship.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a living hope... [that’s what we have, a living hope]... through *the* resurrection of Jesus Christ from *the* dead; unto an inheritance incorruptible... [vanity and frustration will be all over] ...undefiled... [it won’t corrupt] ...and unfading... [because you have the glory of God] ...reserved in heaven for us” (vs 3-4).

We will see in a little bit that God is going to bring that to us and give it to us.

Verse 5: “Who *are* being safeguarded by *the* power of God through faith for salvation *that* is ready to be revealed in *the* last time. In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials” (vs 5-6). *Here’s why they come:*

Verse 7: “In order that the proving of your faith, which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire, may be found unto praise and honor and glory at *the* revelation of Jesus Christ; Whom, not having seen, you love; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, you believe, *and* rejoice with

unspeakable joy, and filled with glory; *and are* receiving the end of your faith—*even the* salvation of *your* lives” (vs 7-9).

That’s the hope that God wants us to have, when we look around and see all of the vanity and everything that human life is, and all the difficulties that confront us. Never focus in on the difficulties. ***Come to God and look for the solution, always! God will provide it!***

Let’s see where Peter likens this body to a tabernacle, and what He promised to do:

2-Peter 1:12: “Therefore, I will not neglect to make you always mindful of these things, although you *already* know them and have been established in the present Truth. For I consider it my duty, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by causing *you* to remember *these things*; knowing that shortly the putting off of my tabernacle *will come*, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has signified to me” (vs 12-14).

Paul shows that when we put off this tabernacle we are looking for the new one. We are looking for the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in our lives, to be living as God, with God, dwelling with Him.

2 Corinthians 4:14. “Knowing that He Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead* shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.”

The one thing that the apostles always did, brethren, and this is what we need to do, we need to look to the conclusion of the matter: the resurrection. Just like David said. David said, ‘O Lord! I will be satisfied when I shall be like You.’ *That needs to be the goal and the satisfaction that we need to look for!*

Verse 15: “For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding grace may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God.... [all of this is the grace of God] ...For this reason, we do not lose heart...” (vs 15-16).

*We should not be weak and faint and give up and fall by the wayside!*

“...but if our outward man is being brought to decay...” [perishing in getting older] ... yet, the inward *man* is being renewed day-by-day” (v 16).

That’s the whole purpose of it, especially for those of us who are getting toward the end of life. We don’t know how many years we will live. But day-by-day, we need to take the time to be renewed in Spirit, in mind, in heart, and in love.

Verse 17: “For the momentary lightness of our tribulation...”

Even though all the trials that Paul had, it’s a light affliction compared to what God is going to do.

“...is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory; while we consider not the things *that are* seen...” (vs 17-18).

That’s the whole problem and difficulty that people do. They look just at the circumstances and get focused in on the physical things, rather than come to the Word of God and focus on the spiritual things, and:

- keep your mind on the hope of God
- keep your mind on the purpose of God

*He said we don’t look on these things, because :*

“...but the things *that are* not seen. For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things *that are* not seen *are* eternal” (v 18).

2-Corinthians 5:1: “We know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed...”

That’s what happens when you die. You corrupt and your body dissolves.

“...we have a building from God, a house not made with *human* hands, eternal in the heavens” (v 1).

Now we have two houses. We have a new body, and we have New Jerusalem. Both apply here in this particular case. Now, to the physical body becoming spiritual:

Verse 2: “For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven; if indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked. For we who are in *this* tabernacle truly do groan, being burdened...” (vs 2-4).

It’s like the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain. We to overcome human nature.

“...not that we wish to be unclothed, but to be clothed upon so that the mortal *flesh* may be swallowed up by life” (v 4).

Here our bodies are likened to a temporary tabernacle; wonderful thing. God is going to give us a new body, as we’re going to see here in a minute. Remember what Jesus said. Jesus said that, at the end, that He is going to send out His angels to gather all of those who are His, and ***then shall the righteous shine as the stars of heaven!*** That is the glory that God is going to give us. We’re going to have a glorious job, and a glorious work. Being with

Jesus Christ and God the Father forever and ever and ever.

That's what this Feast of Tabernacles pictures. Dwelling with God. Living with Him. And in spite of all that men have done, beginning with Adam and Eve to say, 'God, we don't want You in our lives,' ***God is still going to work it out!***

Through all the experience and frustration of human life, and all the pain, agony, death and sorrow that humans have experienced, He's going to bring them to understand that:

- yes, they want to live with God
- yes, they want to dwell with God
- yes, they want to be the children of God

*That's what it is with us now!* This helps us to have:

- the understanding
- the vision
- the knowledge
- the love of God
  - ✓ to give us strength
  - ✓ to give us inspiration to grow and to overcome

That's what God wants this to be. That's why we have the Feast of Tabernacles, and we come together for this concentrated time of learning, and growing, and overcoming, and understanding, and drawing close to God, fellowshiping with each other, spending time together with each other. And remember this:

1 John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God!...."—*a phenomenal thing!*

If we're just walking down the street, other people look at us, and they don't know that walking before them is a future son/daughter of God. They don't understand that. That's why it says"

"...For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are **the children of God...**" (vs 1-2).

The Greek there is 'teknon,' which means *His own begotten children; His own offspring!*

"...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be..." (v 2).

We don't know what it's going to be like to live in glory. We don't know what it's going to be like to have clothes made of Spirit that are going to be given to us that we can wear in glory and splendor.

"...but we know... [we understand] ...that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (v 2).

What is this to do for us? This is to inspire us, give us the strength, motivation, determination and yieldedness to God to grow and overcome through the grace of God.

Verse 3<sub>[transcriber's correction]</sub> "And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure."

Coming to God to take away the vanity, and the futility, and the frustration, and the aches, and the pains, and the mistakes, and things of human nature that come so that we can, then, receive of the glory of God so that

- we will live now, not in the flesh, ***but in the Spirit***
- we will live now, not with the things that afflict us, ***but with a:***
  - ✓ perfect life
  - ✓ perfect spiritual character
  - ✓ perfect understanding in the things of God

Isn't that going to be something?

We are going to have a life through all eternity that will be filling and satisfying and loving and accomplishing. God created the universe for His Family. We're going to be a part of that. Remember, we are the Church of the Firstborn, as we learned during Pentecost. We are going to:

- love this world
- serve this world
- follow Christ
- reveal the way of God
- teach all human beings that way

*Before that happens we have to have a change!* We're not going to do it in the flesh. We're not going to do it the way that we are. We are going to do it with a new mind and a new body.

Let's see what we need to do, brethren. Let's see how we need to follow after God's way. Look at the Apostle Paul.

All human life is vexation and frustration of Spirit, don't look at that and be despaired. Look at:

- the Plan of God
- the calling of God
- the things that God has given
- the things that God has granted and imparted to you

- what He has in store for you

Then you look at all the physical things around and all the problems and difficulty, and you can do as the Apostle Paul said here in:

Philippians 3:8: “But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things... [everything physical doesn't count] ...and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness...” (vs 8-9),

You can't accomplish this by your own goodness and morality. It has to be by the Spirit of God and the love of God!

Verse 9: “And may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness*, which *is by the* faith of Christ, the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (vs 9-11). He says, ‘I haven't arrived there yet.’

Verse 12: “Not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving... [this is what we need to do] ...so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but ***this one thing I do—forgetting the things that are behind...***” (vs 12-13).

Forgetting all the problems and frustrations and vexations, and all of the futility and all of the vanity;

“...forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth to the things that are ahead, I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (vs 13-14).

That's what we need to do, and God gives a wonderful promise, because:

- God wants us to do that
- God wants us in His Kingdom
- God wants us to be clothed from on high with a new body, with a new tabernacle

Verse 15: “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind....”

***IF*** you have this mind and attitude, ***THEN*** you are in perfect standing before God in doing the things that please Him. Here's another promise:

“...And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you” (v 15). ***So that you may repent and overcome!***

Verse 16: “Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Brethren, be imitators together of me...” (vs 16-17).

Verse 20: “But for us, the commonwealth of God exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our vile bodies...” (vs 20-21).

He's going to change the physical tabernacle we are living in, to give us a spiritual tabernacle, as Paul said there in 2-Cor., to be clothed upon from on high.

Verse 21: “Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself.”

***That, brethren, is the personal meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles for every one of the sons of God!***

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

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- 7) 1 Corinthians 15:42-49
- 8) Psalm 139:1-4, 7-18
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- 10) Ecclesiastes 1:1-3, 5-7, 9-10, 14-18
- 11) Psalm 39:4-5
- 12) Psalm 62:5-12
- 13) Psalm 90:9-10
- 14) Psalm 71:9
- 15) Romans 8:16-21, 28
- 16) 1 Peter 1:1-9
- 17) 2 Peter 1:12-14
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