

# *“Spiritual Things... Are Spiritually Discerned”*

## 1

### *From Glory to Glory*



Character development is said to be the most important work ever entrusted to human beings. During the next hour we will explore both our privilege and our responsibility to become Christ-like in character. Join us now for this powerful time of personal renewal as Pastor Stephen Wallace takes us "From Glory to Glory."

Good to have you here, I appreciate so much your presence. I've been looking forward to this time with you ever since we first started talking about it, which has been several weeks. It's a privilege to be here. I am so glad that you have chosen to come tonight and I hope, and pray that you will choose to keep coming. We launch tonight a very intensive seminar entitled "From Glory to Glory," and you can tell that, if you have your binder there with your inserts and lined paper for notes.

We are going to be studying together the most important work ever entrusted to human beings. What is it that we are going to be studying? The most important work ever entrusted to human beings. What is that? What is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings? ...with the notebook in hand, I hear the answer: "Character Building;" and that's a good logical answer to give. But you know, typically when we ask that question people respond: "Soul-winning." "Sharing our faith," that's the most important work; and I would guess that that's what went through many of your minds, when I asked the question. But is that really the most important work? Question: Can we be successful soul-winners if we are not Christ-like in character? Can we? No, we cannot. My dear friends, that which makes us effective soul-winners is being loving and lovable Christians. Do I hear an "amen"? How does Paul put it? **"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels but have no love, I am a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."** {1 Cor 13:1}

Please know, dear fellow-believers, that we might be able to argue someone into the corner on all 27 fundamental beliefs... No, it's 28 now, isn't it? All 28 fundamental beliefs with all key texts recorded in our memory bank, and in the process drive them away from Jesus Christ. Come on now... will you admit that? Is that possible? I'm afraid it is. Please know that that which truly brings people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ, is not so much convincing the mind as it is capturing the heart. Amen? Yes, the mind needs to be convinced regarding the truth but the heart has to be captured by Him, who is the Truth. Amen? Only then, is the will, the governing power, the power of choice, conquered by the Lord of Love, and that leads to genuine conversion. My dear friends, to bring someone into that kind of an experience, we need to be able to do more than just convince them that we have the truth. We have to let Him, who is the Truth, love them through us. Amen? That's precisely why there is an even more important work than soul-winning. Precisely because it is an essential prerequisite to effective soul-winning.

Let's turn to lesson one, it's actually called "Introduction" in your printout, and I want to read an inspired answer to the question I asked: What's the most important work ever entrusted to human beings? It's found in the book **Education, page 225** first entry... page 3. Quote... Listen closely! **"Character building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings; and never before was its diligent study so important as now."** What is the most important work, my friends? What is it? ...character building. Character building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings; and please note that last phrase: **"and never before was its diligent study so important as,"** when? **"now."** Why so important now? Because the King is coming soon. I heard two, I think, very faint "amens." I'm going to give you a second chance on that one. Why is the diligent study of character

building so important now? In fact never more important than now. Because, get ready: the King is coming soon. {Amen!} Yes! I thought we had some Adventists here tonight, those that believe in the imminence of the return of Jesus Christ. My dear friends, with my whole heart I believe that Jesus is coming soon ...with my whole heart.

In fact I insist, please hear me on this! I insist that it is impossible to have an intelligent understanding of prophetic end-time events combined with an understanding of current events, without coming to the conclusion that Jesus is coming very, very soon. The signs of the times are loud and clear. Are you aware of how little time there is? And yet there's much to be done. There's much to be done... There's a world to be warned... **A Gospel to be taken to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. {Rev 14:6}** A special message. It's called the "three angels' messages." A message that this Church was raised up to proclaim as the last merciful call into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. That work has got to be done. That message has got to be taken to the whole world; and our own lives must be prepared, to go home with Jesus when He comes. That essentially is the job that we have to do. We have the gospel to take to every kindred, tongue, and people **{Rev 14:6}**; and we have our own lives to prepare **{Rev 14:7}**. But please hear me my dear friends. Please hear me! The successful accomplishment of both of those tasks depends upon the very same thing, and what is that? ...the development of a Christ-like character. Amen? Why? Because we can be neither effective witnesses for the King nor fit citizens for the Kingdom, unless we have a Christ-like character. I want to repeat that, and you'll probably hear that again as the series goes on. We can be neither effective witnesses for the King nor fit citizens for the Kingdom, unless we have a Christ-like character. And because the King is coming soon, my dear friends, and because it takes time... **it takes time to develop a Christ-like character {5T 618.1}**; I insist on the truthfulness of that opening statement, **Education, page 225: "Character building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings and never before was its diligent study so important as now."** so important as now ...and that is precisely what we are going to be doing these next several days together.

We are going to be diligently studying what saith the Lord on this ultimately important topic; and I want to assure you right off the bat, that I have not come all the way from Montana to share with you my own personal theories or opinions regarding character building. God forbid! My dear friends when you are dealing with something as important as character building, you need something a whole lot more dependable and trustworthy, than the opinions of some poor mortal. Amen? {Amen.} When you're dealing with a subject that... you must understand - in order to be effective witnesses for the King and fit citizens for the Kingdom - you need to have something much more than just somebody's philosophy. You need to know what saith the Lord on the topic, and I want to assure you that that is what we have come to share with you: What saith the Lord on the topic.

As you have looked at your handout, you might have noticed something rather unique: there is nothing from Steve Wallace in here. Well... with a few minor exceptions, little notes slipped in, once in a while, but it is almost entirely what inspiration has to say about this topic; and you see, that is what we want to base our study on. I am simply going to serve by God's grace, as a tour guide, to consider with you what saith the Lord on this ultimately important topic. Would you let me do that? I am earnestly praying, that the Holy Spirit will guide and direct me, as I guide and direct you to consider what saith the Lord on this topic.

We will be using as our primary textbook, the Bible, Scripture. I will be using, and I hope this doesn't upset anyone... I will be using the New King James Version of the Bible. Now, I appreciate the King James, it is the people's Bible, it is the Bible that this Church was born and raised on, and it is the Bible of preference for many; particularly the silver-haired saints amongst us. But the Elizabethan English is getting increasingly difficult for the younger generation, and for that reason, I have selected the new King James. It has exactly the same manuscript heritage behind it as the King James. It is so

similar, that if you have the King James, you probably won't have any trouble following along as I read from the New King James, and actually, in certain instances - and we will be pointing out some of these - the New King James has rendered more precisely, some of the original language. So, I really appreciate the New King James, and I recommend it as an excellent study Bible.

I need to let you know right from the onset as well, that we will be supplementing and I underscore that word "supplement..." ...we will be supplementing our study of Scripture, with the study of the inspired commentary on Scripture, that we enjoy as a people, known as the: "Spirit of Prophecy." Now, I want to go on record right from the onset, as one who has been profoundly affected, positively influenced, and blessed, by the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy. My dear friends, I wouldn't be here without that gift, I don't think. The Lord has... tremendously blessed me through the study of those wonderful books; and I value tremendously, the insight that they give in the study of Scripture. and that's the way we will be using them, not to supplant Scripture, but to supplement the study of Scripture. We will be referring to the Spirit of Prophecy, as inspired commentary on the biblical passages that we will be studying; to help us better understand the principles enfolded in Scripture, and to help us practically apply those principles to the daily life; and that, by the way, is where the Spirit of Prophecy really shines; it's in practical application of biblical principle, and I could not possibly deprive you of those precious insights. Therefore, we will be referring to them frequently and you see that, in your handout as inspired commentary on the Scriptures. I have your permission to do that, do I? {Yes.} Good, thank you.

There is another point that I must very, very emphatically underscore in this introductory study, and that is, as our title summarizes it, **spiritual things are**, what? **...spiritually discerned.** {1 Cor 2:13-14} My dear friends, what does that mean, **"...spiritual things are spiritually discerned"**? Well... basically that says, that without the help of the Holy Spirit, we simply don't have what it takes, to come to understand the truth to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power, in our lives. Did you... did you hear what I've just said, there? The passage from which we take the title... Let's read it. It's found in **1 Corinthians 2:13-14: "These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."** But... Paul is warning us here, **"...the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are,"** what? **"spiritually discerned."** Now, the natural man... who is that? Well, that's all of us except for the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. That's human nature without Divine help, that's the natural man; and please notice, to the natural man the things of God... are what? ...foolishness. They're foolishness. Why? Because they are only spiritually discerned. Now that word, **"discerned"**, in the Greek is an interesting term, it not only means **"rightly understood"** but it, more particularly, means **"rightly valued," "rightly appreciated."** You see... it takes the power of the Holy Spirit, my dear friends, not only to make it possible for us, to understand with the intellect the truth; but it takes the power of the Holy Spirit for us, to rightly value the truth, and appreciate it with our hearts, and choose to apply it to our lives. Without the help of the Holy Spirit, we cannot possibly experience, I repeat, the liberating, sanctifying power of the truth.

And you do know, that there is liberating and sanctifying power in the truth, don't you? Jesus puts it this way: **John 8:32: "And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."** Is there power in the truth to set us free from the natural bondage, that we are all under? Bondage to sin, self, and Satan, that unholy trinity that tyrannizes the natural man? Yes, there's power in the truth to set us free. But my dear friends, we cannot experience that liberating power, unless we receive the truth under the influence of the Spirit of truth; and in the power of the Spirit of truth, choose to incorporate it into our lives. There's also sanctifying power in the truth. Look at the next verse. **John 17:17: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your Word is truth."** Does the truth have power to sanctify us? To make us holy? Yes, it does. But my dear friends, we cannot possibly experience the sanctifying power of the

truth, unless again, we study it, and receive it, and apply it by the power of the Spirit of truth. That's the only way; that is the only way. You see, there's a vast difference between knowing the truth intellectually, and knowing it to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power in our lives, isn't there? Is it possible to have a head knowledge of the truth and not be set free or sanctified by it? Is it possible? Oh, you know that's the case... You know that's the case... It's very possible... It's frighteningly possible to know a whole lot of truth and not have any experience of its sanctifying, liberating power in the life. You see, to know the truth then, requires much more than just giving intellectual assent to it. You can give intellectual assent to the truth and not be transformed by it.

What does it mean then, to know the truth to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power? Let me just give you three steps involved. Jot them down... They're very important. To know the truth to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power in the life you must, number 1: grasp it with the intellect. You must what? Grasp it with the intellect. You must, yes, give intellectual assent to the truth. You must understand it. Comprehend it. This is essential. I'm not saying it's not essential to grasp the truth with the intellect, but I'm saying it's not enough to just grasp the truth with the intellect. What's the second thing we must do? Number 1, we must grasp it with the intellect. Number 2, we must embrace it with the affections. In other words, we must come to love the truth, to appreciate the truth, to value the truth, to count it the most precious thing in our lives; to recognize, that it is the pearl of great price. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} Now, right here is where we have to have supernatural help. But before I explain that, let me take you to the third step that we must take, if we are going to know the truth to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power in our lives. Number 3, we must submit to the truth with the will. Did you get those three? Number 1: We must grasp it with the intellect Number 2: We must what? Embrace it with the affections. Number 3, and most importantly. We must what? Submit to it with the will. We must yield to the truth, we must obey the truth. We must choose to live our lives in harmony with the claims of Him, who is the Truth. When we do that, my dear friends, but, not until... when we do that, we will experience its liberating, sanctifying power in the life. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} You see...

I like to put it this way: We must not only understand the truth, we must stand under the truth. Is there a difference between understanding the truth, and standing under the truth? Yes! To understand the truth is to give intellectual assent to it; to stand under the truth, is to submit to it, to yield your will to it, to let it have its way in your life. My friends, what is going to take you from understanding the truth, to standing under the Truth? It's the middle step. What's that? Embracing the Truth, loving the Truth. Do I hear an "amen"? You see... when we recognize that the Truth is not just an abstract concept, but a person, namely, who? ...Jesus Christ; and we come to love Him - that's when we will choose to yield our wills to Him, without reservation. Amen? {Amen.}

And it is not until we take that third step, my dear brother, sister that we will ever experience in our lives, the sanctifying, liberating power of the truth. We've got to take that third step. But here is the key point... Don't miss it... Though we can take step number 1, give intellectual assent to the truth; ...without the help of the Holy Spirit to a significant degree, you can comprehend, you can understand the truth... not fully, not deeply... not to the degree that Holy Spirit can enable you to do so; but to a significant degree, you can do that without the help of the Holy Spirit. You can give intellectual assent to the truth. But, my dear friends, what you and I cannot do, is take steps 2 and 3 without the help of the Holy Spirit. Why? Romans 8:7... Romans 8:7... It's not there but jot it down in your notes. What does **Romans 8:7**, say? **"The carnal mind is"** what? **"...enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God nor indeed"** what? **"...can be!"** Really? Yes, really. Let's make sure we understand, what Paul is telling us here. First of all, what is the "carnal mind"? What is the carnal mind? You know... I used to think that... if the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God nor indeed can be. Then, that must be someone who's really gotten serious into sin. That's a mature rebel. Is that the

case? No my dear friends, that's what we all are by nature. Really? Yes. You see... **whatsoever is born of flesh is flesh {Jn 3:6}**, and we are carnally minded until we are, what? ...born of the Spirit, born again... Then, we become spiritually minded. But until conversion we are all by nature, what? ...carnally minded. Are you with me on this? ...and as such, we naturally... What's our attitude towards God? The carnal mind is what? ...enmity against God. What does "enmity" mean? You can understand it by the word "enemy." The carnal mind has an "animosity," a "hatred" towards God. Now, some of you might be saying: *"Well,... wait a minute! You know... that's a little strong, isn't it?"* I know people, who don't make any claims to be converted, to be born of the Spirit, who would never claim to hate God. My dear friends, please hear me...

If you really want to know, what the natural man thinks towards God, then, you need to go to Calvary. What will the natural man do to God, given a chance? He will murder Him. You see... Calvary not only reveals the character of God, in the person of Jesus Christ, it reveals the character of man, in the person of those who are nailing Him to the cross. Pretty scary what we see about ourselves there, isn't it? We hate God naturally so much, that given a chance, we will eliminate Him. This is precisely why, dear friends, if we're going to be able to take step 2: embrace the Truth with the affections... and remember, the Truth is ultimately... Who? ...Jesus. ...if we're going to embrace Him, rather than crucify Him; we've got to have something supernatural happen. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.}

We have got to have a new heart, a heart to know Him, with supernatural capacities to love Him... whom we naturally hate. Does that make sense? ...and if you can't take step 2... ...if I can't take step 2 by the power of the Holy Spirit, and come to love the Truth; we're never going to take step 3. **It's the love of Christ that constrains us. {2 Cor 5:14}** When I submit my will to Jesus, if it's truly submitted to Him, it's because I love Him and I know He loves me. By the way, **I can only love Him, because He first loved me. {1 Jn 4:19}** Amen? {Amen.} ...and where do I discover how much He first loves me? At the Cross again, Calvary. See... you find out an awful lot about not only yourself but about Jesus at the cross; and about the Father at the cross.

We're going to be spending a lot of time this seminar, taking you to the cross, my dear friends. See... I have the same obsession that the apostle Paul had. **I am determined to know nothing among you, save Christ and Him crucified. {1 Cor 2:2}** That's where the transforming power is. **It's beholding the Lamb... slain. {Rev 5:6}** That's where the power is. That's where the heart is captured, and that's where the will is conquered. Amen? {Amen.} See... there are all sorts of things that happen at the cross... The conscience is convicted, the mind is convinced, the heart is captured, the will is conquered, and the life is converted. It all happens... where? At the cross, at the cross. Please... let me bring you, let me bring you frequently as we study together, to the foot of the cross. That's where it happens, my friends. God help us realize though, that if we are going to know the truth, - to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power in the life - we have got to have supernatural help. Because, not only is the carnal mind enmity against God. What does that same verse go on to say? The carnal mind being enmity against God keeps us from taking step 2. Naturally. But what does the verse go on to say? **"It is not subject to the law of God nor indeed..."** what? **"...can be!" {Rom 8:7}** That keeps us from taking, what?

Step 3! Yielding... your will... choosing to obey the Truth. You and I can't do that, my dear friends, without the power of the Holy Spirit. We can't! It's impossible! Now, I've got to put a little qualifier in there, and don't miss this, we're going to be harping on this point as the series goes on. Please know, that though the carnal mind cannot subject or submit itself to the spirit of the law; the carnal mind can do a remarkable job of submitting the behavior, to the letter of the law. Did you hear that qualifier? Is that significant? You better believe it is significant. Let me repeat it. Though the carnal mind cannot subject itself, its own processes, your thoughts and feelings, and your motives and desires to the spirit of the law... ...what can the carnal mind do to a frighteningly remarkable degree if ego motivation is

sufficient? What can the carnal mind do? It can subject your behavior to the letter of the law, and precisely therein, lies its remarkable capacity to fool us into thinking we're something we're not. Do you hear me, dear friends?

You see, this is precisely what hypocrisy is. It's conforming to the letter of the law, and putting on a real good show. Behaving well, and fooling others, and perhaps even yourself, into thinking that you are... a what? ...a Christian. After all, you behave so much better than most people do. What does Scripture say about this natural heart? It says, **it's deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.** {**Jer 17:9**} But the scary thing about it, is that it can hide the wicked interior with a fancy exterior. Jesus called it a "**whited sepulcher.**" {**Mat 23:27**} Are you with me? A white-washed tomb..., and what did He go on to say about the white-washed tomb? He said it's beautiful... where? ...on the outside. Oh, it looks real good. But inside... what's going on? ...dead men's bones and all corruption. There's a vile, dead, selfish, old man behind all that white wash; doing all the right things for all the wrong reasons. Bless your hearts, is it just possible, that some of that might be going on even today, in God's church? Did the scribes and Pharisees, have an exclusive experience with hypocrisy or is that human nature to be hypocritical? I'm here to tell you it's human nature, and please... bear with me here. Okay? What I'm going to say at this point, is not going to make you very comfortable or happy with me, but bless your hearts... I've got to love you enough to do that anyway. Okay? I'm going to have to be coming back over and over again through this seminar to this hypocrisy issue. Why? Because according to the verdict of the True Witness, it happens to be a very predominant problem in the end-time church.

Come on now, work with me on this! What in Revelation is the end-time church, called? The last one... Laodicea. Are we at the end of time? {Yes.} That means that we are... what? ...the Laodicean Church. Now granted, there are aspects of all the seven churches that exist in all periods of time. But there are predominant characteristics that exist at a certain period of time, and the predominant characteristic of the end-time church, according to the True Witness is... what? We are what? ...lukewarm! We are what? ...lukewarm. Now what, pray tell, would it mean to be lukewarm? Well... the True Witness says you're neither hot nor cold. You ought to turn with me there. It's found in Revelation, chapter 13, isn't it? Revelation, chapter 13... No, correction... It's **Revelation, chapter 3** and verse 16. Well... we should probably pick it up a little earlier, **verse 14: "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot."** Pause. Isn't that a remarkable statement? The True Witness would actually rather have us even cold than... what? ...lukewarm! More on that later... **Verse 16 "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will,"** what? **"spew you out of My mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked."**

Some very frightening self-deception going on here, isn't there? Why is it that the Laodicean Church is so terribly self-deceived? Why is it that they think they are rich, increased in goods, and have need of nothing, and don't know that they are actually wretched, poor, blind, miserable, and naked? Why?! Because, my dear friends, they have a **FORM of godliness.** {**2 Tim 3:5**} Did you hear what I said? They have a... what? ...they have a form of godliness. They have a carnal heart that has brought their behavior, in compliance with the letter of the law. Did you hear what I just said? Are they truly converted? No! Do they think they're truly converted? Yes! They think they're rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing. Why are they so self-deceived? Because they've done such a remarkable job of putting white wash on the tomb. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} Little quiet out there tonight. They are so beautiful on the outside that they have themselves, and others, fooled into thinking that they are... what? ...Christians.

My dear friends, please, please understand that it's quite possible that some of us might be in this trap; and if you resent me for even suggesting that, I'm sorry but I've got to suggest it because this is what the True Witness says. I'm not judging you, I'm simply sharing with you His verdict; and does He rightly judge us? Does He? Yes! Why? Because He doesn't see as man sees. **Man looks on the outward appearance but He looks...** where? Come on, He looks where? **He looks at the heart! {1 Sam 16:7}** And you see, He observes not only what we do, and what we don't do, but He observes more importantly, why we do it, and why we don't do it. He looks at the spirit behind the behavior. We're typically just analyzing behavior, but He's looking at the motives. And my dear friends, it's precisely what lukewarmness is all about. You see... work with me here. To be cold, that's to do the wrong things for the wrong reasons. Does that make sense? You're outwardly godless because you're inwardly godless. What's hot? To do the right things for the right reasons. You're outwardly living in compliance with the letter of the law, because your heart is in harmony with the spirit of the law. You're doing the right things for the right reasons. Are you with me? What do you suppose lukewarm is? It's doing the right things for the wrong reasons. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen!} **It's having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof {2 Tim 3:5}; and what's the power of the gospel? It is to transform us by the renewing of our minds. {Rom 1:16 & 12:2} Amen? {Amen.}**

You see... true Christianity involves just a whole lot more than behavior modification. True Christianity involves heart transformation. But there's an awful lot of hypocrisy going on, where we are trying to "play church." Pretend that we're Christians by keeping our behavior in compliance with the letter of the law. And the scary thing about it, is that we've gotten so good at it, that we've got ourselves fooled, and we've got others fooled. But who's never fooled? Come on... who's never fooled? God is never fooled. Brother, sister, please, do some heart searching with me these next weeks. Is it well with your soul? See? That's the question. Is it well with your... what? ...your soul. Are you genuinely a Christian? Or are you just pretending to be one? ...and if that offends you, that I'm asking you that... You know... some of you silver-haired saints, have been in the church for "umpteen" years, and... you know, you might take offense that I'm even having the nerve to ask you that question. But, bless your hearts, you can have been in the church for your whole life, and not even be converted. You know that... I hope. Not even be converted! And you can be performing very well, ...and putting on a real good show, ...and being honored and respected by your fellow church members. You can be holding down an office in the church and not even be converted.

So back to what we were saying, when I say the carnal mind can't take step three- submit to the Truth- I am not saying that the carnal mind can't do a remarkable job of bringing your behavior into compliance with the letter of the law. But I am saying that the carnal mind cannot possibly bring thoughts and feelings, your desires and motives, into harmony with the spirit of the law. That's what I am saying. Are we all clear on this? {Yes.} Therefore, if we are going to come to know the Truth to the point of experiencing its liberating, sanctifying power in our lives... my dear friends... what must we have? What must we have? ...we must have the help and the power of the Holy Spirit in our studies. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} You know... with my whole heart, with my whole heart, soul, and mind, I want this to be a life-changing experience for everyone of you. God forbid that we just have intellectual exercises. Oh yes, we're going to be challenging your intellects. We're going to be dealing with deep, profound truths. We're going to be rolling up our sleeves and studying diligently, the Word of God. Are you prepared for that? {Amen. Yes.} I'll ask that again. I need a little more enthusiastic response. Are you prepared for that? {Amen!} Is that what you want? {Yes.} I'm here to tell you, my dear friends, I haven't come to entertain you. I haven't come here to share with you sensational ideas of a human devising. I have come, by God's grace, to roll up my sleeves and dig deep in the mine of truth, with you. To come to have a life-changing knowledge of the Truth. Is that what you desire? {Amen.} Good. Good. Keep coming then, please, and let's diligently study together.

Let me read a statement that talks about this whole difference between having the truth, and letting the Truth have us. Is there a difference there? Do we as a people have the truth? Do we? {Yes.} My friends, I have no question about that. God has entrusted us with the truth. But there's a problem. What is it? We haven't let the Truth have us. What gives me the nerve to say that? Well... bless your hearts... we're still here. We shouldn't even be here still. I want to hear more than one "amen". We shouldn't even be here still. {Amen!} We should have been in the Kingdom by now. {Amen!} We should have long ago become effective witnesses for the King, and fit citizens for the Kingdom. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} A long time ago! But we're still here. Why? Because we don't have the truth? No, we have the truth. What's the problem? We haven't let the Truth have us! That's why we're still here, and we are going to stay here until we let the Truth have us. Bless your hearts, if I sound angry, I'm not. I'm just earnest. There's a difference. My dear wife tells me every once in a while, "*Steve, you come across like you're angry with the people.*" I'm not. I love you. By God's grace, I can't naturally do that, and I want to see you in the Kingdom. But I know, from personal experience, that just having the Truth, isn't going to get you there. You've got to let the Truth, have you. You've got to be transformed by the Truth from the inside out. You've got to be made a radically different person. You can't just get to Heaven by keeping your act together.

Jesus Christ has purchased eternal life for everyone of us. We can't earn eternal life. But, my dear friends, I'm here to tell you that we have got to get ready if we are ever going to enjoy eternal life. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} You can't buy Heaven, but you've got to learn to be happy there. And no one is going to be happy in Heaven, unless they've learned to be holy. Because happiness is the by-product of holiness. Did you hear what I said? Happiness is the by-product of holiness; and this is precisely why so few people are truly happy in this world. Why? Because they're seeking happiness, and if you're seeking happiness, you'll never find it. Is that true? Yes, that's true. If you're seeking to make yourself happy, you will never truly find happiness. Yes, you might find **the pleasures of sin for a season.** {**Heb 11:25**} But you better believe, and you better know, that it's a real short season; and you are going to end up more miserable after having messed with it. Do I hear an "amen"? I'm talking straight to you folks! If you really want to be happy, then learn to be holy. Learn to live your life wholly, entirely for God and for others; therein, is happiness, and that's how you get ready to be happy in Heaven, because that's all they do in Heaven. They don't live for themselves. They live for everyone else. By the way... I'm looking forward to living in a place where everyone is placing my happiness, before their own. Think of it! Think of it! What a wonderful place that would be! What's it like here? Just the opposite. Who's really looking out for your happiness? You are, naturally. You're looking out for number one, and everyone is looking out for themselves; and if you get in my way, and threaten my happiness, then I've got to deal with you - and that's the way the world operates. Are you hearing me? That's why it's such a miserable place.

But we, by God's grace, one of these days, are going to live in a place where absolutely everyone else, puts your happiness - my happiness, before their own. Can you imagine what a wonderful place that would be to live in? But, my dear friends, if you and I are going to be ready to live in such a place, we have got to learn to live that way here and now. Do I hear an "amen"? {Amen.} This is where we become fit citizens for the Kingdom. This is where we learn to be holy. To live entirely for God and for others, and not for self. God help us experience this kind of transformation, that is so radical, that the Bible calls it "being born again," - becoming a new creature.

Listen! Review and Herald, September 25, 1888. **[Review and Herald, September 25, 1888: "...unless those who profess to believe the truth are sanctified through it and exalted in thought and character they are not in as favorable a position before God as the sinner who has never been enlightened in regard to its claims."](#)** Wow! Really? Yes. God would rather have us cold than lukewarm. You see, if you have the truth, you think that you're, what? ...rich, and increased in goods,

and have need of? ...nothing. - And you're a whole lot less likely to be reached by the truth - if you think you have it. Reading on: **"We are rapidly approaching the close of this world's history. Every moment is of the most solemn importance to the child of God. The questions that should come to every heart are, 'Am I a Christian?'" "...Am I a Christian? Is the Word of God my study? Is Christ dwelling in my heart by faith? Is the law of God the rule of my life? Do the searching truths I profess to believe, penetrate into the very secret places of my life? Do I carry out its principles in my business life? Is the influence I exert, having a saving power on those with whom I associate?' Unless the truth does have a marked and decided influence upon the character and life of its recipient, it is not doing its work in the life as it should be; and those who are not being sanctified through obedience to the truth must be converted, or they will be..."** what? "...lost!"

Brother, sister... we have the truth. God grant, that we let the Truth have us, and be converted thereby; and how is that going to happen? By the power of the Spirit of Truth. Therefore, it will be our practice, before we proceed with any of our studies, to earnestly, personally invite God's Spirit into our hearts. Now, we're going to do it right now, in closing of this introductory study; and then, after a short break, we're going to continue. But I want you, my dear friends, to take a moment to get up from the table, that we are gathered around, and go to the door. What does... what does the True Witness say to the Laodicean church? **"Behold I stand at the door and..."** what? **"...knock."** {Rev 3:20} He wants to come in and... what? ...sup with us. We are gathered around the table to open **the Bread of Life {Jn 6:48}** and feed ourselves. But what must we do if we are going to be nourished and strengthened by the meal? What must we do? We must invite the Holy Spirit to come in and... what? ...sup with us... sup with us... Would you kneel with me for just a few moments of silent prayer in closing? Personally inviting God's Spirit to come in, and sup with you.

*My Father in Heaven, ours is a precious opportunity, we want to make the most of it. We are gathered around Your table this evening, for the purpose of feeding on the Bread of Life; but we must have the Holy Spirit to join us just now. We hear the knock at the door of our heart and we choose to open that door and say, "Come in, come in Heavenly Guest. Come in, and sup with us. Give us that hungering and thirsting that we don't naturally have. Give us an appetite for spiritual food and then, most importantly, give us the supernatural capacity to digest and assimilate the Bread of Life, that we might be nourished by it." Please grant this prayer, for I ask it in Jesus name. Amen.*