

Deep Things of God

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung – 4/21/2012

The space shuttle has been in the news as this part of the program comes to a close. I love NASA – the National Aeronautics and Space Administration – with its space exploration and scientific discovery. I love the rockets, the satellites, the space shuttles, the photos of deep space, and the space stations.

In 1969 I was at Cape Canaveral, Florida for the launch of the Apollo 11 spaceflight which landed the first humans, Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr., on the Moon.

Cape Canaveral has been renamed – Cape Kennedy, for President John Kennedy's successful effort to beat the Russians to the moon.

Command Module Pilot Michael Collins remained in orbit around the moon as Armstrong and Aldrin landed in the Sea of Tranquility and became the first humans to walk on the Moon on July 21, 1969.

I wrote in my diary that day that --- man has begun a process that will never end as mankind reaches throughout the entire universe.

Later, after coming into God's Church, I realized that God did indeed have plans for the entire universe – but that mankind would not be traveling across our vast universe by rocket power.

In 1958, when congress and President Eisenhower established the National Aeronautics and Space Administration – its purpose was to coordinate and conduct peaceful aeronautical and space research and activities for the United States – including the conveyance of some of our military hardware into space.

But did you know that a primary purpose for the existence of NASA is to find **extraterrestrial** life on other planets and in outer space. Among the many programs which NASA now runs, is a search for life outside our home planet – Earth.

Both the Pioneer and the Voyager space probes carry messages from the Earth for the extraterrestrial life they hope to encounter. Even now (April 2012), – a Mars rover is on a mission searching for evidence of past or present life on Mars.

Scientists believe that if they can find life in space – it will prove that the **evolution** of life is a common happenstance. And if **life** evolved elsewhere – and here – then there is no need for a God – and if there is no God – then we do not need to follow those restrictive **laws and morals**.

Secularists conclude that a world **without** law and morality would be a wonderful paradise of liberty and freedom!!! Brethren, the world is blind. They want to get rid of God completely.

John 12:

40 [The Lord] has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

In Corinthians we will see an incredible contrast between this blinded world – and the glorious light of Truth wherein we are able to see and experience the **Deep Things of God**.

1 Corinthians 2:

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Title here:

1 Corinthians 2:

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the **deep things of God**.

Those men who are looking into **deep** space for the answers to life – are looking in the wrong place – because God has revealed *them* unto us by His Spirit: - yes, the Deep Things of God.

1 Corinthians 2:

11 For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.

That is where we find the answers to life – even eternal Life!

1 Corinthians 2:

12 Now we have received, **not** the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Until God opens the mind of the rocket scientists – they will continue to be blinded and to look in all the wrong places.

1 Corinthians 2:

14 But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are **spiritually discerned**.

15 But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

The Holy Spirit is the MIND, the LIFE, the POWER, the LIGHT, the LOVE of God – and much, much more.

1 Corinthians 2:

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Brethren, here is the question:

How do we come out of this blinded world we live in – into the glorious light of Truth wherein we are able to see and experience the Deep Things of God? Here is what has happened – not only to the rocket scientists – but to the entire world.

1 Corinthians 4:

4 In whom the god of this world [Satan] has **blinded the minds** of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Brethren, let's keep in mind that those who attend Sabbath services are not immune from the wiles of Satan. Following the death of Herbert W. Armstrong the people of God were assaulted by a great apostasy.

Among the myriad of heresies that divided us was one that said that our Church brethren were really **no different** than the good "Christian" folks down at the corner protestant church.

Here is the reasoning that **tricked** so many people who attended with us in the Worldwide Church of God. We were told that God **loves** everybody – and we could not argue with that. And, we were told that we should not judge anybody. (That is just another trick – because it is God who judges those who break His law.)

1 Corinthians 4:

4 ... He that judges me is the Lord.

The conclusion was that "I'm OK, you are OK – and everybody is OK," so just be true to your humanity because God is not doing anything with a special people.

Brethren, that was a false conclusion.

We were taught that this is "**the** day of salvation for all mankind."

Is it true that in God's eyes all men are viewed the same - **or** - is God calling a **special** people who are **accountable** to Him at this time, out of this present evil world?

1 Peter 2:

9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [**very special**] people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath **called you out** of darkness into his marvelous light:

Isaiah 49:

8 Thus saith the Lord, In **an acceptable time** have I heard thee, and in **a day of salvation** have I helped thee.

1 Peter 4:

17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.

Judgment is now for the Church of God – but the judgment of the world will come later – the time the bible refers to as the Last Great Day.

The King James translators did not understand the plan of God – and now and then their misunderstandings came out in their translations. This mistake is easily corrected by comparing the Old Testament to the New.

2 Corinthians 6:

2 (For He says, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is **the** accepted time; behold, now is **the** day of salvation.)

If you have not done so – please mark your bible accordingly. The correct translation is “**an** accepted time, and **a** day of salvation.”

Please note that Isaiah 49:8 is correct in the King James translation.

Isaiah 49:

8 Thus saith the Lord, In **an acceptable time** have I heard thee, and in **a day of salvation** have I helped thee.

God is not trying to save the entire world right now – If He were – we’d have to conclude that He is failing miserably. God is calling only a select – special people – for a very special purpose right now.

Galatians 1:

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,

4 Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver **us** from this **present evil world**, according to the will of God and our Father.

The answer according to the Word of God is that God is calling **a** people (John 6:44, 65). Not the entire world.

Those now being called **belong to Christ** and there is an order to the resurrections.

1 Corinthians 15:

23 Every man **in his own order**: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.

Paul calls this resurrection of the **saints** a "better resurrection."

Hebrews 11:

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a **better** resurrection.

God has told us how to **figure out** when Pentecost is – we are to "Count" Pentecost. Have you ever wondered why we are told to "count fifty?" God's Holy Days are tied together and fixed on certain days of the month – but Pentecost must be **counted** every year.

Leviticus 23:

15 And ye shall **count** unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete.

16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number **fifty** days. "

That brings us up to the Feast of Pentecost! Presently, as I give this sermon, we are within that counting / numbering of fifty days.

Brethren, we are now in the seven week period that began with the wave sheaf offering and concludes as we come up to the Feast of Pentecost. Pentecost is a harvest of the firstfruits. Pentecost is a harvest Feast – and it is called by other names in the Scriptures.

Pentecost is also called the **Feast of Weeks** – because of the seven weeks. In the New Testament is where we find the first use of the word "Pentecost." It is a Greek word for number fifty or **fiftieth**.

Pentecost marked the birthday – the inauguration of the New Testament Church of God – God's called out ones receiving His Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Pentecost pictures the firstfruits who have God's Holy Spirit and are ready to be **harvested** into the Kingdom of God.

Pentecost is also called the **Feast of Harvest**.

Exodus 23:

16 "And the **Feast of Harvest**, the firstfruits of thy labors, which thou hast sown in the field."

In the same way that Jesus Christ was represented by the wave sheaf offering and was accepted by God on the wave sheaf day...

The Church brethren are represented by the two wave loaves – and they will be offered and **accepted on Pentecost** (Leviticus 23:10-20) by God the Father.

Revelation 4:

6 And before the throne [of God the Father] there was a sea of glass like unto crystal.

Revelation 15:

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them [the resurrected saints] that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

Now – in these **weeks** between the Spring Holy Days and Pentecost – is the timeframe in which we **Christians are to become acceptable to God.**

Romans 12:

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, **acceptable unto God**, which is your reasonable service.

Brethren, if you want to do a very profitable Bible Study – study out this concept of being **acceptable to God.**

This fifty-day period of time – that we are in right now between the Spring Holy Days and Pentecost – represents a great transitional period wherein we are being transformed from our carnal humanity into spiritual children of God.

God has purposefully tied the **Spring Holy Days to Pentecost** – He tells us to count 50 days. The resurrection of Jesus Christ and our resurrection are closely tied together. We are a part of that one and the same – first resurrection.

You may ask, “Why fifty days?” The answer is that the fiftieth day concludes the time period of coming to **spiritual perfection**. The number “seven” is important in the plan of God.

The seven weeks between the Spring Holy Days and Pentecost represents the time in which we Christians **are to go on to perfection.**

Hebrews 6:

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.

This time of “seven times seven” represents **completion** and **spiritual perfection**.

- For example, God created the seven day week.
- The Sabbath is the seventh day.
- The millennium is the seventh one thousand year period, and so forth.
- The culmination of 7 days X 7 weeks = forty-nine days of spiritual growth and development are then marked by Pentecost – also known as the Feast of Weeks.

For Christians, this time period represents our lives after being called by God – when we come out of the world and go on to perfection.

Remarkably, Jesus' resurrection and our resurrection constitute one and the same resurrection. We are **firstfruits** in God's great plan of salvation, following Jesus who is the firstborn of the firstfruits.

1 Corinthians 15:

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the **firstfruits** of them that slept.

Romans 8:

29 For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He [Jesus Christ] might be the **firstborn** among many brethren.

The resurrection and acceptance of Jesus Christ came at an exact appointed time. In the same way, our resurrection and presentation before the Father will also come at an exact appointed time. The resurrection of Jesus and our resurrection are closely tied together.

The **time period for Pentecost is complete after seven times seven weeks.**

Deuteronomy 16:

9 Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou begin to put the sickle to the corn. [At the time of the wave sheaf.]

10 And thou shalt keep the **feast of weeks** unto the Lord thy God...

Feast of Weeks = Pentecost

Jesus Christ is the first of the firstfruits. We, the called-out saints, are also to be firstfruits – also represented by the smaller spring harvest.

All the rest of the world – those who will be in the second resurrection at the Great White Throne Judgment are represented by the larger harvest of autumn – they are the latter-fruits.

We brethren, the elect of this time, are to be the firstfruits of the first spiritual harvest into the Kingdom of God with Jesus Christ.

James 1:

18 Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a **kind of firstfruits** of His creation.

God instructs us to make good use of our time -> in a spiritual way.

Psalm 90:

12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

God instructs us to use our time profitably – this is another good example of using our time on earth wisely.

Romans 13:

- 11** And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake **out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we [first] believed.**
- 12** The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore **cast off the works of darkness**, and let us put on the armor of light.

This present evil world has not been privileged to see what God has so graciously given to us. We know that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

1 John 3:

- 1** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knows us not, because it knew him not.
- 2** Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall **see Him as He is.**

We will be **glorious** then too – and we will see God in His glory – as He is!

Psalms 149:

- 5** Let the saints be joyful in glory.

Philippians 3:

- 21** Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

This time period between the Wave Sheaf offering and Pentecost represents, in the Plan of God, the Church's occasion to go on to **perfection**.

We diligently work on **perfecting ourselves** because judgment has begun on the house of God – on us.

1 Peter 4:

- 17** For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God.

John echoes this same understanding next:

1 John 3:

- 3** And every man that hath this hope in him **purifies himself**, even as he [Jesus Christ] is pure.
- 4** Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
- 5** And ye know that [Jesus Christ] was manifested to take away our sins; and in **Him is no sin.**

Jesus Christ is our example.

Psalm 8:

- 1** A Psalm of David. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory **above the heavens**.

God's glory is greater than all the stars and suns combined. The answers to life are not in deep space – because God's **spiritual realm** is greater than that.

Psalm 8:

- 2** Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou might still the enemy and the avenger.

David gives God the credit for His Creation.

Psalm 8:

- 3** When I consider thy heavens, the work of **thy** fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.

The **orbits** of the earth, moon and planets – the **spirals** of the galaxies – God has set them in motion... And having done all that...

Psalm 8:

- 4** **What is man**, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that you visit him?

That was the very Scripture that Herbert W. Armstrong was preaching when I first heard the World Tomorrow radio broadcast in 1964. It changed my life!

David knows the answer to "What is man...?" And he knows the Plan of God and why God busies Himself in the lives of the saints.

Psalm 8:

- 5** For thou hast made him [man] a little [while] lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.

That is our Incredible Human Potential.

Psalm 8:

- 6** Thou made him [man] to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put **all things** under his feet:

All things – that is the **entire universe** – created for our discretion and judgment.

Psalm 8:

- 7** All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;
8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas.
9 O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

We are now counting up to Pentecost. We are able to understand this timing and process by the instructions for the Wave Sheaf offering, and the counting of the 7 weeks. Pentecost is a picture of the Church coming into spiritual perfection.

Pentecost pictures us, the firstfruits, imbued with God's Holy Spirit. Pentecost shows the first spiritual harvest, the better resurrection that we are to be a part of.

God has told us to "count fifty" because this number and timing is highly significant. Pentecost will be day # 50 – and it begins immediately at the conclusion of the 49th day.

It is when the "seven times seven" is fully complete that the Feast of Pentecost is then observed on that fiftieth day. In the same way that the Wave Sheaf follows the weekly Sabbath - Pentecost, in turn, follows the weekly Sabbath.

Pentecost is a picture of God's called out people being acceptable and coming to **spiritual perfection** through the Holy Spirit - the first part of the spiritual harvest.

End: Deep Things of God