

## God Has Called Each One of Us (FOT-2024)

James Farnsworth—November 2, 2024

As God has called each one of us, we start to learn the knowledge of God. And that's why we're here tonight and through this Feast, through the Last Great Day, to continue growing in grace and knowledge.

- we start to see God's Plan unfold
- we will see how these days will become real

God opens our mind; He allows us to see the sin that we have in our lives. God is preparing us to be part of His Family.

- we learn that Jesus Christ, our elder Brother, died for us

*Not only for us, but He died for all mankind!*

- we learn the tremendous sacrifice that was paid for you and for me
- we learn that we must yield our lives to God

We must repent of those sinful ways that we find in our life, as God begins to reveal those sins that we have.

- our lives have changed
- our thinking has changed

***We learn to fear God!***

Some people think that God is way off somewhere, and not concerned about anything going on in the world, not concerned about our lives.

God has a plan, which is greater than we can imagine. We see that plan when we know and understand God's true Holy Days. When someone says that God has no plan, they don't understand God's Holy Days, and they do not keep them.

God is creating a family to share it with for all eternity. Sometimes that's hard for us to understand, but we do find the blueprint for this wonderful ongoing creation in the pages of the Bible.

- What is God doing?
- What is His main objective?

Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; 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).

So, here in the Bible's first chapter, God states His goal. He is making man in His own image by using both image and likeness, and God explained that He would create man to look just like Him. Man would not only look like God, but humanity would also have a spiritual ability to understand God's nature and be able to conform to it.

Through the experiences of life, the different things that we go through, the process of building Godly character, we're able to put on the image of God and be resurrected into His Family.

1-Corinthians 15:49: "And as we have borne the image of the *one* made of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly *One*. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit *the* Kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in *the* twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for *the* trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruptibility, and this mortal must put on immortality" (vs 49-53).

This is our goal that we're looking forward to. Christ will return as King of kings and He will defeat man's satan-inspired rebellion and set up His Kingdom.

The saints will be changed to spirit and reign with Christ a thousand years, and that's what this time that we're observing now pictures. Satan will be bound throughout the Millennium, and then all who have ever lived will be resurrected to physical life and have a chance to accept God's way just as we have. We will learn more about that on the Last Great Day.

God's Family will live and work with Him throughout eternity. You know, it's hard to understand eternity.

Isaiah 65:17: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth. And the former things will not be remembered, nor come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever *in that* which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and I will joy in My people; and the voice of weeping will no more be heard in her, nor the voice of crying" (vs 17-19).

That is a blessing that God gives to us. The Holy Days give us a chance to spend extra time together.

- we spend extra time with members of God's Family
- we sing hymns together
- we pray together
- we listen to God's Word, expounded so we continue to grow in grace and knowledge
- we draw close to God
- we draw close to one another

It gives us time to spend fellowshiping, encouraging one another with some of the trials and stories that we've had throughout the year. One of the best times to do this is, of course, the Feast of Tabernacles. We have eight days, to be able to spend time together in one place.

1-Cor. 12:12—*Paul writes*: “For even as the body is one and has many members, yet, all the members of the one body, though many, are one body; so also *is* Christ.

- we all have different responsibilities.
- we have different circumstances that we've gone through
- we have different events that have shaped our lives

It all comes down to the members should have the same care for one another:

- if one member suffers, all the members suffer
- if one member is honored, then all the members rejoice and they're honored

*Paul also writes later in*:

2-Corinthians 1:3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and *the* God of all comfort; Who comforts us in all our tribulation, in order that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trial...” (vs 3-4).

God comforts us through our trials that we go through, so that we may be able to comfort those who are going through trials and difficulties. And how do we do that?

“...through the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For to the degree *that* the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ” (vs 4-5).

We do grow sharing our difficulties, sharing good blessings that we've had. Let's rejoice together as a body at this Feast, lifting each other up, working together. The Feast of Tabernacles gives us the opportunity to do more than any other time of the

year. But there's one thing that it does take. It takes love to be able to do this.

We not only assemble for services, but we're here for a whole week. We're like family, and we grow together like family. As we share our lives, we benefit, we grow, and ‘perfect love casts out fear’ (1-John 4:18).

***IF*** we really love one another as we say we do, and we tell each other we love one another, ***THEN*** we should use this time to:

- share those trials
- share the triumphs
- grow together

Ephesians 4:13—*this is one of our stated goals*: “Until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto *the* measure of *the* stature of the fullness of Christ.”

We're not perfect, yet; but we're seeking that. We look forward to the time when these days will become real. God has brought you and me here to this Feast to be able to learn what is to take place in the future, and He's given us an opportunity to know and understand that.

We also will learn how to get through these difficult times that we know are coming, and what God has in store for us. What will this Millennium period be like? *In a Millennium man will be at peace!*

- nations, neighbors, families will not fight
- cancer, diabetes, heart disease, blindness, deafness will be eradicated
- the deserts will produce bountiful harvests
- the animal kingdom will peacefully coexist with humanity

All this will be a result of ***an unprecedented explosion of knowledge*** and how to do things right, how to do things that God tells us to do! God's Truth and knowledge will be taught, and we will be part of that teaching; *we will teach this knowledge!*

So for the first time in history, man will be totally at-one with his Creator. Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and his evil, destructive influence will be totally cut off.

The Feast of tabernacles pictures the Millennium when the whole earth—can you imagine?—will be at rest? What do we need to do for these things to take place? *We need to have the fear of God!*

Without the fear of God, there is no wisdom. If we divorce God from knowledge, it becomes an instrument of destruction. Some people I've heard talking, when they hear the word *fearing God*, they want to cow-down over in the corner, they're just scared, they're afraid. They're afraid to do anything.

Fearing God is equated with obeying and complying to His laws, obeying His instruction, voluntarily measuring:

- our thoughts
- our behavior

*We measure that through His Law, through His Word!*

We are in training to help Christ restore this earth. We're learning that fear of God in a right way. We will be part of restoring this earth back from the brink of destruction. Israel will finally have been convinced that ***striving to attain knowledge apart from God leads to destruction!*** You can't take God out of everything.

The Feast of tabernacles depicts a time when the earth will be healed. It will heal from all the abuse it has incurred under man's—not rule—but man's misrule. Our purpose then will be to minister, to teach God's way of life to God's people.

But because of all that we've been through, I'm going to read a couple of Scriptures to give a brief review of what it means to fear God. ***Fearing God with our whole being will enable us to participate in God's Plan for this world and for all mankind!***

Genesis 22:10: "And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, 'Abraham! Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' And He said, 'Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, **for now I know that you fear God**, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me'" (vs 10-12).

- What did God mean when he said, "**for now I know that you fear God**..."?
- What did God ask Abraham to do?

Genesis 22:1: "And it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' And He said, 'Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains, which I will tell you'" (vs 1-2).

Abraham was asked to do something by God. The angel saw that Abraham had complied

with God's request, and he used the term *fear* to describe Abraham's obedience. So, ***fear equals obedience to God!***

We show our fear by the way we conduct ourselves and our behavior, the things that we do. We follow God and live by every Word of God. That's fearing God in the right way.

When Jethro was telling Moses to select the captains of ten, hundreds, and a thousand, he told him to select men who fear God, love Truth, and hate covetousness. Concerning the poor, you're not to take any interest or profit from him, but rather ***fear your God or obey your God!***

Deuteronomy 5:29—*we can't get away from the word fear*. "Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!"

So here we see the result of fearing God that He wants us to have. We need to hold Him up high in such reverence, such awe, and respect that we will voluntarily measure:

- every action
- everything that we do
- our attitude
- our feelings
- our thoughts

*has to be measured against His Law and His teaching! **This is what fear is!***

Now this Feast of Tabernacles is a wonderful place to be able to put fear into practice. Most of us have been separated throughout this past year. Many are home by themselves throughout the year, and now we're here together again. We can take the time to exhibit the fear of God by:

- showing forgiveness
- showing love
- showing kindness
- showing consideration
- showing thoughtfulness

We've come so far to be together. We can also exhibit these things to the people here at the Stone Castle and the local community. We can be an example.

Zechariah 14:1: "Behold, the Day of the LORD comes, and your spoil shall be divided in your midst, 'For I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem; and the city shall be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women raped. And half of the city shall go into exile, and the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city.' And the

LORD shall go out and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle” (vs 1-3).

God steps in and He begins to save His people. You’ve heard that whatever you do, what example you do, that it always comes back to you. What you sow comes back.

So, when the fruit of the way Israel and this world has lived is totally eaten, and whatever they have sown, they’re reaping, they’re eating that fruit, but one day it’s coming to an end. When the Day of the Lord is completed, we see something wonderful that begins to happen. That’s what this Feast time pictures.

Verse 4: “And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall split in two, from the east and to the west, and make a very great valley. And half of the mountain shall move toward the north, and half of it toward the south. ‘And you shall flee to the valley of My mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.’ And the LORD my God shall come, and **all the saints** with You” (vs 4-5)—*that’s US!*

Jesus Christ comes with all the saints, and we have to learn to fear God, so we will be part of that. All of those who have loved and learned to fear God will be there.

Revelation 1:7: “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

Every eye will see Jesus Christ coming, and they will be afraid. This is the event we’ve waited for, for generations, and it’s coming to pass, and we will be there and we will be part of it.

Zechariah 14:8<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>: “And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them shall go toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea. In summer and in winter it shall be.”

This living water shall flow forever, picturing God’s Holy Spirit. Here we see both physical and spiritual healing. God is going to repair all of this. Wherever this river goes, marvelous vegetation will spring up and bear fruit. Trees will bear fruit each in their season.

It’s going to be a wonderful time as the earth starts to heal from all the abuse that mankind has heaped upon this earth. When Jesus Christ returns, He’s going to establish His Throne.

Isaiah 2:1: “The Word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass, in the last days the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it” (vs 1-2).

The House of the Lord is going to be a marvelous structure, the most impressive, awesome thing this earth has ever seen, and it’s going to be exalted above the surrounding countryside.

It’s going to be exalted above all other governments; all other nations shall flow to it. This indicates it’s going to flow like a river to Jerusalem. Then God begins to redeem His people out of this shattered world, His people will start to come.

Finally, individuals who had infirmities of any sort will be put into perfect condition. All sickness of mind and body will be healed. A wonderful time to look forward to.

Lev. 19 tells us that God greatly is against putting any stumbling block against anyone who has any infirmity. Can we begin to see what it will be like for those who’ve had infirmities all their lives? Maybe they’ve lost limbs in the wars, loss of hearing, loss of sight. They cannot hear a bird chirp or a symphony. There are those that you have to describe the color red to, and they cannot fathom what that color looks like. They cannot see the beauty of God.

But God will take care of these changes. It will be different. What else will God accomplish during this time?

Isaiah 11:6: “Also the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the cub lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the viper’s den. ‘They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My Holy mountain; for the earth **shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD**, as the waters cover the sea” (vs 6-9).

We will enjoy seeing this earth heal, lands made healthy, and we will be able to participate in something truly wonderful. The opening of a mind. The making of a member of God’s Family as we teach.

Brethren, we’re training for that time ahead here at this Feast.

In Heb. 8 God says, 'I will put My Laws in their mind and write them in their heart.' Meaning that Law-keeping will not be external, but it's going to be put in their mind and heart. It will be a wonderful time.

At last they will be taught God's principles of right living. They will be changed into a new people who now understand what is expected of them, and because of God's Spirit, they will be able to perform it.

With this comes the most awesome repentance we will ever see. Remember how excited we were when God called us and opened our mind to His Truth? We are going to be able to help God's people. How will this be done?

Zephaniah 3:9: "For then I will *give* a pure language to the people, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve Him *with* one accord." *We're all together! We're one big family!*

Verse 10: "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, My worshipers, the daughter of My scattered ones, shall bring My offering. In that day you shall not be ashamed for all your doings *in* which you have transgressed against Me; for then I will take away out of your midst those who rejoice in pride, and you shall never again be haughty in My Holy mountain. I will also leave in your midst an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity nor speak lies, and a deceitful tongue shall not be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make *them* afraid" (vs 10-13).

A wonderful time to look forward to! The gift that God has waited 6,000 years for, for His people to fear Him, and finally that gift will be given. We and God the Father and Jesus Christ will have a part in bringing this about. The Millennium is the time for the world to learn to fear God. Our time is now. God is showing us that now.

We may have struggles, but we can't grow weary. We can't forget that Satan is still going around as a roaring lion, and we cannot let him get a foot in the door, because it's hard to get that door shut. ***We can never give up!***

So at this Feast of Tabernacles, take the messages we hear, the experiences we go through, the lessons we learn to heart, the innermost part of our being. We've got to put it inside of us, so that we make the needed changes to be able to be the kings and priests of God, for us to be able to help our brethren.

I'd like to close by mentioning those passages that set a standard for us to work toward in achieving the office of a king or priest. That's what we're learning to be.

These are the last words of David, a man after God's own heart. David was a remarkable man, and God spoke through him. And at the end of his life, he said:

2-Samuel 23:1: "And these *are* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said: 'The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His Word *was* on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me, "He who rules over men *must be* just, ***ruling in the fear of God***"' (vs 1-3).

We can't get away from the fear of God. It's there, but we know what it means.

Verse 4: "And *he shall be* as the light of the morning as the sunrises, a morning without clouds. The tender grass *springs* out of the earth through *the sun's* clear shining after a rain."

This is how pure the king is that rules in the fear of God. He rules justly. So, what about our job as priests?

Malachi 2:4: "'And you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, so that My covenant might be with Levi,' says the LORD of hosts. 'My covenant with him was *one* of life and peace, and I gave them to him *for* fear; that he might fear Me, and he was in awe before My name. The Law of Truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips. He walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and turned away many from iniquity, for the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and *the people* should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts'" (vs 4-7).

That is what a priest is; ***he's the messenger of the Lord!***

Levi turned many away from iniquity by his Godly example. What did David and Levi have in common? *They lived their lives as if they were continually in the presence of God!* That is how we are to truly fear God, and that's the way that we should live our lives. This is how God wants us to live, and with this comes:

- right decisions
- proper relationships
- many blessings

Malachi 4:1: "'For behold, the day is coming, burning like a consuming oven; and all the

proud, and every doer of wickedness, shall be stubble. And the day that comes shall burn them up,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and will leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, and healing will be in His wings. And you shall go out and grow up like calves of the stall. And you shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I *am* preparing,' says the LORD of hosts. 'Remember the Law of Moses My servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel, *with* the statutes and judgments'" (vs 1-4).

Brethren, this is one of the most wonderful and encouraging festival seasons of the year. So, please rejoice. Have a wonderful Feast of Tabernacles, and in doing so, ***let's set our heart to learn to fear God in a right way so that we may be able to participate in the restoration that is just on the horizon!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 1:26-27
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:49-53
- 3) Isaiah 65:17-19
- 4) 1 Corinthians 12:12
- 5) 2 Corinthians 1:3-5
- 6) Ephesians 4:13
- 7) Genesis 22:10-12, 1-2
- 8) Deuteronomy 5:29
- 9) Zechariah 14:1-5
- 10) Revelation 1:7
- 11) Zechariah 14:8
- 12) Isaiah 2:1-2
- 13) Isaiah 11:6-9
- 14) Zephaniah 3:9-13
- 15) 2 Samuel 23:1-4
- 16) Malachi 2:4-7
- 17) Malachi 4:1-4

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 46
- 1 John 4:18
- Leviticus 19
- Hebrews 8

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