

In Search Of A Clear World View (Part Seven)

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I am going to continue following up on the theme that I began at the recent Feast of Tabernacles which I titled, "Searching For A Clear World View". I gave you four elements that I believe are needful for continuous progress toward the greatest growth on our pilgrimage to the Kingdom of God.

Before this sermon is over I will begin adding a fifth element to these four, each of these elements is drawn from what Jesus Himself said, combined with the example that He showed. Add to this that we are charged by Peter to walk in Jesus steps; we are to follow closely right behind Jesus, doing what He did, imitating what He did.

The first element that Jesus Himself gave is the value that we individually place on what we seek for. If we are going to grow, this has to be in place. I am going to ask you a series of questions here.

Is this calling that you have received from God your personal pearl of great price? Something that you would give all for? It has so much value for you that you would give all for the accomplishment of possessing that as yours? Is our calling our treasure? Do we highly esteem what we have had opened before us? Is it so significant to us that we spend much time seeking what it offers? Does it possess qualities for us that we absolutely do not want to lose? Are we willing to sacrifice for it? I ask these things because only we, as an individual, can set our callings importance. Nobody can set it for us; we have to do that if it is going to be a motivation for us to grow.

The second, is understanding the churches primary overall responsibility to God of which we are a vital part and gifted to perform it. We covered those things thoroughly as we were going through it.

The church is a teaching institution, and we must both support it and grow within it, with our prayers and other spiritual activities that we have been gifted to perform. This is our responsibility; it is our duty; it is our obligation. That job which we are personally accountable for and answerable to God for performing. We were called to participate in the church's preparation for the arrival of the Kingdom of God. So our responsibility is get ready and to go as far as we can in the time that God has allowed us.

The third, is firmly believing that we are part of the true church. We cannot be uncertain

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about this. The proofs are clear that it is. It keeps the commandments of God, it has the testimony of Jesus Christ, and before that knowing with no uncertainty that God's word continues forever, God's word never fails. The church believes that.

Jesus stated clearly that none of God's instruction book provided us by Him has any parts that are done away. So many other religious organizations calling themselves Christian promote that some parts of it are done away and we do not have to keep them. The true church holds that instruction as its constitution, the whole counsel of God, not just part of it.

The fourth is directly tied to the fact that Jesus warns that even though Satan and his demons are our most dangerous individual enemy, it is the world, the system that Satan and his demons have created, that presents a daily negative influence seeking to lure us back into its slavery that is our most constant danger.

Part of the danger for us is that we have been born into a deceptive spiritual situation similar to that which confronted Jesus and the apostles. They faced a false religious system that appeared on the surface to be sourced from the Bible. In their time, the false spiritual sources were from the Scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees who had filled the teaching with the leaven of their false doctrine.

These doctrines were easily passed off to the public as being true because the Pharisees and the Sadducees were viewed as having a spiritual connection to the scriptures. They pawned themselves off as that so their false teachings were easily accepted. But the exceedingly more knowledgeable and totally accurate, Jesus, blew that scam that they were promoting right out of the water by directly exposing those religious leaders stating that those accusations were false.

I am going to give you this right from His word in Mark 7:6-8.

Mark 7:6-8 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written; This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me, and in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men, for laying aside the commandments of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups and many other such things you do." And He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition."

This was going on in Jesus day. The spiritual misdirection of our time originated in and

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has continued right on into our time by false Christianity. It is no longer the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees that are responsible. Now it is the religion that has attached itself, supposedly, to Jesus Christ and even bears His name.

This false teaching creates a major hindrance to true conversion because it is so easily believed. It is similar to what the Pharisees and Sadducees did, and it also appears on the surface to be Biblical based. They quote the Bible; they claim that they are getting their teachings from the Bible; they have been around in the United States since its founding and even before, so they have that going for them as well.

Satan is at his peak of his destructive abilities when he is deceiving. He has persuaded the leadership of this nation from its very founding into false concepts regarding Christianity, and the entire nation has believed itself Christian from that time on.

That apparent reality is actually a façade. This false Christianity has not been taught the truth from the beginning, and it is not the true religion to this day. At this time, this nation is following the same moral and ethical paths as Israel and Judah, but somewhat different doctrine nonetheless. It is still just as wrong as it was in Jesus day. In the previous sermon, we were just about ready to step into Ezekiel 34 when we ran out of time, so I want you to turn there.

Martin's commentary was drawing from things that Jeremiah faced. Ezekiel lived at the same time as Jeremiah whenever God scattered Judah. Ezekiel went with the Judeans to the land of Babylon, whereas Jeremiah stayed behind and continued the work of God there; they were contemporaries of one another.

Ezekiel 34 is written a bit later than the book of Jeremiah. In this chapter, God lays the blame for where things went wrong in Judah. I believe what He charges can be justly applied to this nation just as well.

Ezekiel 34:1-6 And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds; "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves, should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost, but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they

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were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.”

What we have here is God's accusing judgment regarding a major cause of Israel, most specifically Judas's, evil culture and what its future holds because of the evil. We will more clearly understand what God through Ezekiel is describing here. Shepherding provides some metaphors that illustrate what was happening in human areas of life. Shepherding was a major work responsibility in ancient Israel because it was an agricultural nation and virtually every family either sheep or goats, or both, and maybe oxen besides. But, here, in this chapter the concentration is on shepherding.

The Bible's writers made metaphorical use of shepherds and sheep to make the responsibilities of the leaders of people clear. In their word picture the leaders are identified as the shepherd, and the citizens become the sheep. The writers thus had clear examples to draw from what were easily understandable characters when applied to human life.

Historical characters were Moses, David, and others besides, but Moses and David were primary ones, because both were literally shepherds over literal sheep before they became rulers. In addition, Moses directly charged Joshua to shepherd the congregation of Israel. The highest shepherd of all is God Himself, the Supreme Ruler of all creation, and He is referred to as leading His people Israel like a flock through the hand of Moses and Aaron.

We have quite a background here for using shepherd and sheep as metaphors for describing what is very important to the way this culture is right now. He is using Israel as His example to us. In my memory banks of listening to sermons preached in the Church of God, they used this chapter on occasion. They used the term shepherd most frequently when applied to the ministry. That was not wrong, but at the same time that application was really only partly correct in this chapter 34 context.

It is not until the New Testament that the church and its members are referred to as a flock and the ministry as shepherds. This is because the church did not exist until Jesus came and started it. We are not talking about a church here in Ezekiel 34. Ezekiel is an Old Testament times writing and the direct connection between governmental leaders and citizenry was the common application at the time.

I also believe that God broadly intends the term shepherd to be more generally

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understood as applying to all positions of leadership. This brings the application right down to the family. In this chapter, Ezekiel 34, God is pointing the finger of Judah's problem at poor leadership, wherever and at whatever level it occurs for Israel. It produces religious and cultural decline.

He is holding the leadership accountable for their failure because of the 'sheep follow their shepherd principle.' People follow those that they consider appointed or have some kind of leadership role over them. So overall I believe that if any group of people at this time are in view (Ezekiel 34 time in that context that is focused upon), it is not the ministry. Rather the focus is far more general and applies to those in governmental, judicial, banking, academic, and corporate, positions, in addition to the religious leadership.

We will see as we go along that Judah failed thoroughly. God is accusing all of the leadership, and that comes right down to you and me; it comes right down to the family. In the United States, we say all the way to the President, through the congress, through the supreme court, down through the state governments, down through the county government, down through the city and right into the family. All the way top to bottom leadership.

The overwhelming number of leaders affected by this picture are not the ministry; they are certainly responsible for failing to do their part, but leadership failed everywhere so we cannot excuse ourselves either.

When we transfer this to the United States of America, Britain, France, Germany, or wherever Israel is today, and we follow the picture that is given here, we have to understand that leadership failed everywhere in these modern nations as well.

If we apply the principle here to our nations today in our time, then we have to take where God is pointing at as the value that He sees. Judah failed thoroughly; we will look at something that is very important to you and me. Please turn to the book of Genesis so that we can understand this failure that we have all had before God.

Genesis 18:17-19 And the Lord said, "shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, [Notice this was in progress; he was already involved in it.] since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For [he makes a concluding statement, that is a summary of what he is involved in] I have known him in order [the very reason God is saying I have known Abraham] that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord,

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to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him.”

Genesis 18:19 [Revised English Bible] “I have singled him out of all the people on the earth that God could have called to this position [he singled out one man], I have singled him out so that he may charge his sons and family after him to conform to the way of the Lord and do what is right and just and thus I shall fulfill for him all that I have promised”

This issue is important to the well-being of the Church of God just as surely as it is important to the nations of Israel, to all the descendants of Abraham. It is most important of all to the church. The church did not exist until the time of Jesus Christ. So we now come down to the end time and we find we are in a situation in our nation where there is a religion, of lots of religions, that are calling themselves Christians, but ninety-nine percent of them are telling lies. They are deceived.

Somewhere in that mess of all the religions out there is the one that he is referring to, that Abraham is charged with teaching the commandments of God, in order that somebody inherits what God is doing through Abraham.

We need to pay attention to the strength of the terms. Abraham is being singled out as the leader; he must charge his family to conform. I happened to think of a scripture, Galatians 3:27

Galatians 3:27-29 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ. And if you are Christ's then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

What we are going through in Ezekiel 34 is important to the church because Abraham is tied to it prophetically, because now we have reached the end time. We know from the history that is recorded in the book of Genesis that Abraham did a bang up job with his family. He followed through with what God wanted him to do and was faithful to his responsibility. He taught his children. Ishmael kind of got away from him; there was trouble in the family which caused some of that to occur. These things that take place way back in places like Genesis; they have centuries long, millennium long, affects.

So even to this day we have the children of Ishmael who are now Islamic, and they are

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bothering the daylights out of everybody that calls themselves Christian. Ishmael did not get the teaching that Isaac did, that Jacob did, so those things did not get carried on through.

Ezekiel 34 is being pointed out to us as the reason for the failure of what God has established, so we have Ezekiel coming up about half way between Abraham and us. Please turn back to the book of Deuteronomy to impress upon our minds the importance of the principle that is contained within Ezekiel 34.

This becomes a little bit tied to the end of this sermon because of the fifth element that I am going to begin on today. It is going to have to do with the covenants that God has made with His people all the way from Genesis right on. These things have to be in our minds: what those covenants are. There is reason why they have to be in our minds and part of our world view.

The reason Deuteronomy is so important is that God says that every seven years He wants us to go through it. It is now determined by most researches that it is probably a covenant all by itself. It was a covenant made with Israel through Moses as a mediator, just before they went into the promise land.

Our mediator is Jesus Christ, and we have made a covenant with Him. We have arrived at the time just before going into our promised land.

Deuteronomy 6:4-13 “Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. And it shall be, when the Lord your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant-when you have eaten and are full- then beware, lest you forget the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. You shall fear the Lord your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.

Basically without going into any more detail, it is the responsibility of parents to set an example before their children in every part of the day from the time we get up until we go to bed at night, and besides that teach them verbally as well.

Ezekiel 34 is in the Bible because as God is reporting there, the Israelites did not follow through the way Abraham did. The leadership was horrible. Abraham led his family and provided for them the kind of example and the kind of teaching that God intended. God is describing the fruit of a system that is rotten—all up and down the ladder, all of the lines of authority, people whose offices place them in a position to accomplish far more than others and at the same time from those positions do even greater damage because their leadership was not righteousness.

What we are seeing here is that the leadership that God is describing is broadly unrighteous. In modern times, no nation had as good as an opportunity to be a true guiding beacon of Godly integrity to the world as the fledgling United States of America in 1775 to 1789 and right on through the formation of this nation.

In common terms, we have not merely blown our God-given opportunity, we have blown it every bit as badly as Judah right from the top down. It is tempting to excuse these leaders by saying they were not converted. It is true that they were not converted, but we need to understand a little bit better yet another of God's governing principles—just because people are unconverted, they are not given a pass from God as if there is no guilt.

Romans 1:18-23 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth [are men suppressing the truth about God being Creator? Their belief is in science not God.] in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them [Is God unfaithful to His word? Do you think He has not made it available to these people who are leading America to this day? He exists, and they turn their back on Him. They turn their backs on the truths that are there, and instead they say they believe in science, evolution. But God has shown it to them.]. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, [the leadership is without excuse] because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping

things.

God does not hold them as blameless simply because they are unconverted. What kind of judgment are we getting? We are converted. What kind of leadership are we giving to our family, children? Though we possess no position of rulership within our community, are we setting the right example before people in our attitudes, conduct, maybe on the job, or whatever. What is our leadership like in those areas?

Luke 12:48-49 “But he who did not know yet committed things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few for everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him the will ask the more. I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!”

There is one of Jesus' parables in Matthew 13 which touches on this same thing: that is to whom much is given much more is required so God holds mankind guilty right from the top down despite their unconversion. The higher the authority the more power they are given to fulfill their responsibilities and the greater the guilt, called or uncalled.

If we would study Ezekiel 34 in more detail, we would find that God does not wink at the guilt of the common man. He holds the leaders more responsible because God equips those He gives authority to and gifts them to enable them to do their job.

Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, [God puts unconverted people into the offices they hold] and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

We are learning from the book of Ezekiel that God rules. God oversees time, and God oversees and rules all of the time. There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God: Presidents, congressmen, judges... you name it.

This is why these people do not escape God's scorn, God's judgment, because He gives them the ability to do the job they are to do, though they are unconverted. He says they are turning aside regardless of His equipping them.

I want you to understand and really take it to heart. The church is unique, the church is significant beyond our wildest dreams in many cases. It did not even exist for four thousand years of God's purpose. It did not exist until Jesus Christ started it, and we have to have a special calling to be a part of it, and that group of people is being trained to work under Jesus Christ.

The church is a unit, separate and apart from Israel, it is a unit separate and apart from Judah. Those units still exist. God is not done with them, but the church is a special significant group within His purpose. He has set aside two thousand years to put it together; we do not want to blow this.

I want to make something clear from the Old Testament times, writings, so that we can see how God describes shepherds, how they are appointed to that leadership position. I want us to see the use of the term within a particular context. Micah was being used, and he was giving an answer to Ahab in I Kings 22.

I Kings 22:17 Then he said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd" And the Lord said, " These have no master, let each return to his house in peace."

The word shepherd indicated a leader, indicated a king in this case.

Psalms 78:67 Moreover He rejected the tent of Joseph, and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which He loved, and He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He has established forever, He also chose David His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the ewes that had young He brought him, to shepherd Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance [another way of saying that God chose David to be king over Israel; he was to shepherd them]. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.

Jeremiah 23:1-6 "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the Lord. Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people; "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them, Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the Lord. "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. "I will set up shepherds

over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,” says the Lord. “Behold the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will raise to David a branch of righteousness; a king shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely; now this is His name which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Before we move away from this metaphor, I want to look at the sheep aspect. We will begin with sheep being among the most helplessly dependent of all animals. They have to have a shepherd; they are dependent upon the shepherd for protection because they cannot defend themselves very well. They are easy prey for most attackers. They are prone to wandering and are so unintelligent they become easily lost because, unlike a horse, they cannot find their way back to the barn. They forget where they came from.

The shepherd was also the sheep's authority figure. He carried the rod and a staff. The rod was often used for corrective purposes. The shepherd is their constant companion and also their healer as well. The Bible clearly shows, especially through Jesus' teachings and example, that the key word that best describes a good shepherd's attitude and actions regarding the sheep is that he not only knows his job, he is caring of them. He sees their weaknesses, and he makes sure that he does not lead them into a disaster.

Ezekiel 34:7-10 Therefore you shepherds hear the word of the Lord; “as I live,” says the Lord God, “surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, [beast meaning those other nations like Babylon and Assyria] because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock” therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God: “Behold I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths that they may no longer be food for them.”

Guess who is going to take the shepherds place: the church. God is preparing people who will care for the sheep Our job, our responsibility to God, is to learn His word and to get it into our minds and to practice it in our life so that when Jesus Christ returns there will be shepherds prepared to take care of the sheep. They know God's law; they love God; and they will love the people who are under them and recognize their weaknesses

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and make sure that the people do not fall into pits. They will do it in such a way that they will help these people build the kind of character that they need in order to govern themselves under God.

What are God's major charges against those who is in leadership positions? It is irresponsible neglect of duty. My second point was that we have to keep before our minds all the time our responsibilities before God. The church is a teaching institution.

In short, the leaders cared for themselves; and we know that is true. We see elements of it all the time. The leaders in this nation make sure that they get reelected. They are caring for themselves rather than the people. If they really loved the people and cared for the people, this nation would not be in debt like it is today. The leaders placed themselves above the citizens, thus neglecting them, so their conduct and attitude was in another metaphor: one of hirelings, not faithful shepherds. The shepherds were faithless, untrustworthy, and the fruit of that was that the people were scattered.

What happened in the Church of God? There was a break down in the leadership. Where are the people? Scattered all over the place. How many people have gone back to the world as a result of that scattering, I have no idea, but there has been some effect of that I am sure. Even for those who have already fallen away, it is a possibility that there has been a deterioration of the growth that might have occurred had that scattering not occurred. That is up to God. He is the judge.

The shepherds were faithless, untrustworthy, and the fruit was that the people scattered. So the self-centered faithlessness of the shepherds produced flocks that were scattered because there was no common bond of purpose to hold us together. Thus the sheep became easy prey to outsiders.

Isaiah lived about the time that Israel fell apart; he was another hundred years or so before Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Many of his prophecies, though they were done in Judea, also impacted on Israel as well.

Isaiah 1:4-6 Alas, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a brood of evildoers, children who are corrupters! They have provoked to anger the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away backward. Why should you be stricken again? You will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faints. From the soul of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment.

What has happened in ancient Israel or ancient Judah has happened here. This culture in the United States of America is being ripped to shreds. I believe that there is sufficient evidence to say when it is compared with Ezekiel 34, that it is being done from the top down. The leadership set the pace and the sheep followed what the leadership was doing.

I think that I can add something to this that I intend to bring in to sermons down the road. It is being done purposefully by Satan through men he is easily able to control, and they carry out his wishes. Of course what this leads to—I will make it plain to you—is that there are conspiracies working to destroy the United States of America, to destroy Britain, to destroy France, to destroy the other nations of Israel. It is being done purposely.

I want you to understand that at least from John Ritenbaugh's point of view, the real blame rests with Satan. He is the only one that could carry out something like this, but he is doing it through humans. And since people cannot see Satan, but they do see what humans are doing, they begin to realize that there are conspiracies working to destroy this nation.

They have a tendency to blame the people and the people are to some degree to blame because God makes that clear right in His word. Who those people are is beginning to become more and more apparent, and the reason they are doing this is just what we read from God's word: they are taking care of themselves.

There is, in this nation and I am sure in most other Israelitish nations too, what might be called a warfare actively occurring. Perhaps it might be better called and “under-war,” this war is not being fought with guns and killings, but it is a war of ideas and beliefs. It is causing inestimable cultural damage. In this nation the “under-war,” is being fought between those termed conservative and those termed liberal or progressive. Interestingly, during the Russian revolution, it was the communists who were termed progressive. They were the progressives. Look where it led Russia.

Here in our time, religion and belief in God—those of the liberal mind-set—tend to be pulled toward humanism, and those of a conservative bent tend to be more persuaded to follow Biblical teachings. But although closer to Biblical truths, they are not perfect in their understanding either. The conservative faction is losing the war and is gradually being overwhelmed by those with more political, academic, and economic power.

Judges 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

I bring this up within the context of humanism because humanism is simply a title that describes a mind set in which one's faith is in himself or other men. It is a faith without God, and therefore without God's absolutes, a faith in which each person feels free to set his own standards depending on each circumstance he finds himself in.

Remember this is all coming from the lack of leadership, and it has its most common beginning with failure to follow through on the order, charge, that God gave to Abraham. It starts right in the family. A failure within the family spreads gradually through generations of time to include ultimately the entire population; that is where we are headed.

Humanism is simply a title that describes a mind set in which one's faith is in himself or other men, and of course men do not have God's absolutes and are not founded in God at all. These perpetrators are not called Pharisees or Sadducees, but they are serving a place in the public, a function, that is similar to what the Pharisees and the Sadducees did.

Humanism is a faith that is almost totally encapsulated within the now, right now. It has no future beyond this present life. The person who is a humanist is driven or persuaded by his belief to always look out for number one. There is no fear of God, no fear of breaking His laws, and so they feed themselves constantly.

I am trying to show you the process that takes place that has brought us around to where we are right now. People who are humanistic tend to be always on the look-out for number one. They feed themselves; they look for every advantage for themselves; they are in a position of leadership where they are able to gain in many cases additional power, additional prestige, additional money, and whatever in the position they are in; they keep making every decision possible to hang on to that position and maintain their rule and authority.

There is only one way this can go. God is showing us that the citizenry of the United States will continue to scatter, just like what happened to the church. I want you answer this question for yourselves. Are we getting closer and closer to the place where virtually every part of the United States is at war with another part of the United States? Not a shooting war, a war of beliefs, a war of ideas, a war of thoughts, a war of concepts. It is happening to drive us apart because of poor leadership.

The driving force is to put as much effort into getting as much as one can. This is what a

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humanist does with little or no concern about any ripple effects upon one's own life as well as the lives of others. God shows beginning in Ezekiel 34:2 that He is critical of this way of living. It is driven by the self-centered desires of the participant. This is what we are living in and what we are living through. It is driving things within the United States of America. There will never be peace in this nation until there is a change of leadership.