

Welcome, everybody, to this particular Sabbath day. Thanks for making the effort to come here. I know it's a little bit different than normal today having the recording.

The purpose of this particular sermon is to explore an aspect of God's will and purpose in the truth. God has revealed truth to His Church, but why? That's what we're going to look at today: Why has God revealed truth? We're going to look at some particular truths so that we can explore that in a little bit more detail because it's something we don't think about. Normally we just hear the truth, we believe it, and accept it, but why does God progressively reveal truth to the Church?

Truth is our spiritual strength. The truth is what gives us spiritual courage, because without the truth, what do we have? We've got the same as everybody else, error, and lies. When you look at what Satan has done, and he's known as the "prince and power of the air," but he is the deceiver. So prior to being called we were deceived, very deceived. Now, we understand there's a lot out there that would say we're still deceived, but the truth is we're not. We're not as deceived as we used to be. Another way to put it is there is always a level of deception with us because of our natural, carnal mind. We have certain deceptions or lack of knowledge in certain things, therefore, we believe certain things that may not necessarily be in line with what God is. He may not have revealed that aspect to us yet.

So God's way is pure and holy. His word is truth. So the only way that we can have the truth is through God's word. So if you just analyze that. The comparison is we've got God who is truth and reveals truth to His Church and we, by nature, have error. We're riddled with it. In so many different areas where we live in sin, we operate in sin, we believe (with our own understanding) that we are true, we're right; we're exact in everything we believe.

Just watching TV programs is a classic example. Everybody has an opinion. "This is what I believe." "This is what I believe." Listening to radio broadcasts is a good example. People ring in and have a view or an opinion. Now, they think they're accurate, they're right. You can't argue with them. There's no point. They believe what they are and they believe who they are. They believe everything that they believe. It's in their mind. It's in their thinking.

We, by nature, are in error. So, what is a calling? If you look at that, what's a calling? A calling really is a call from error into truth. So God has a purpose in revealing truth. We're going to look at some of those truths, and one in particular, that underpins all truth. Future truth that will be revealed to us and to God's Church is going to be impacted by this one particular truth that we have and nobody else has. It's quite remarkable.

God's will and purpose for all things that He is doing within His creation is motivated by love. So there's a love that we think we understand, but really we only see very dimly what God's real love is because we understand aspects of it. Mankind can't. Mankind can't understand that God loves a part of a creation so much that He will destroy it for a time only to give it another opportunity. Mankind can't understand that. We can't even begin to explain it because they can't hear. They don't have God's spirit.

All His creation and everything that He does is benefitted by God's thinking and mankind just doesn't accept that. We can. Now, the comparison is that we don't have a will and purpose the same. We have what's called motive and intent. Now, by nature our motive and intent is selfish. Every single aspect of it by nature is selfish. Now, we can't go up to people and say, "You're selfish!" They can't see it, but we've been called to identify it. We only see it because God reveals it to us; we see ourselves. We see our own love as selfish. It's my child. It's my wife. It's my family. It's my house. Well, that's not how God thinks about it. God is motivated differently. He's motivated by this love that's outgoing to benefit on a spiritual level. So we have a different attitude, we have a different—I won't say "purpose"—it's really motive and intent that we have. We place self first. That's just the way we are. We may not even understand it. Mankind doesn't understand it. Before we're called we don't understand that everything, everything we do is motivated by putting self first. It's to benefit us and in our minds we don't even see it. We don't even consider it, that that's what we're like. But we are, and being called God shows it to us.

Now, we can see God's will and purpose in the truths that He has revealed to His Church. We are the called out ones. We're the Body of Christ. We are the Church. We are the Temple of God. So what is God doing? So if we just analyze what God is doing - God who's pure and has what is called will and purpose for His creation. We're not pure. We are riddled with sin. So God calls us and that calling is where He places His spirit in our mind so that now we can see, we can see differently. Because when we see differently we think differently, which is we repent. So that comparison is it's a gradual process. So as truth is revealed to us we begin to change the way we think. So truth, a lot of the truth, is about this transformation of the mind that God is achieving within us. We're so blessed to be called now to be part of this transition of the transformation of the mind. God has an outcome in it. So we're benefitted.

Mankind hasn't yet seen the opportunity or knows the opportunity of the truth, but we do. We have 57 Truths and over time that will grow and the depth of understanding or knowledge we have of those varies within each and every one of us because it is all to do with the power of God's holy spirit. We don't see the truth unless we have God's holy spirit. Now, people can have knowledge of the truth, but they don't have understanding. They might have knowledge, they might be able to rattle them off, but do they really understand them? And to understand them means we implement them into our life, which requires God's spirit. It is only by the power of God's holy spirit that we can see God's will and purpose within the truth. We're going to look at some of that today.

Once called we are required by God, by the power of His holy spirit, to look at our true motives and compare them with what God has revealed in truth and when we do we'll get a bit of a shock now and again about what we really are and the way we think compared to the way God thinks.

The title of this sermon today is *The Truth - Why*. Because we're going to look at why God is revealing truth progressively to His Church and why we have the truth.

We have been called to believe the truth because, really, what is believing the truth? Well, when you believe it we believe God. So as the truth comes to us and God reveals it through an apostle to His Church we as called out ones are required to believe it. And why do people leave the Church? They do not believe the truth, yet God's word is truth. So what they're really doing, they no longer believe God. They no longer believe God. That's an incredible thing, but it can happen to us as well. We shouldn't be too sure that we stand in the truth because as truth is revealed it can affect the way we think.

For example, in one of the truths that was revealed about the rightful role of women, well, not everybody within the Body of Christ can naturally just say, "Oh, yes, I agree." It requires God's spirit, and if a person becomes slack in that and God has withdrawn the spirit from them because of unrepented sin, because they refuse to repent about something else, a truth like that can really affect a person because they no longer can see the truth because of sin. Therefore, as truth is revealed we need to be on guard all the time that we believe the truth and the moment we start to question or doubt or not believe the truth we know we've got a spiritual problem, and it's called unrepented sin.

Truth is a spiritual matter, something that we only see because of the power of God's holy spirit. We will start our exploration where we're going to explore this and look at some of the truths about what God has revealed. We're going to look at some of the truths about why God did it and how He did it. So the first things that we'll consider is truth #6. We will turn to Hebrews 2:10 in a moment. I'm going to read it because this truth is so powerful and only God's Church, or those that have an association with God's Church in a point of time, have been called and given God's spirit at a point in time, understand or see this truth.

6 (3) God's purpose for mankind.

Mankind doesn't understand it. Only those that have been part of the Church of God at some point in time have had knowledge of this truth and when we understand this all other truth fits within this. This is God's will and purpose.

God is reproducing Himself and no other church knows and preaches this truth.

All churches of the world have no understanding that God is reproducing Himself. Now, why I say others do know of this is because there are churches that are scattered that have knowledge of this. They have lost an aspect of this. They don't see the spiritual component of what we're

talking about today, but they do have knowledge of this. They think they understand it but a lot of that's been lost because you have to have God's spirit to continue to grow, to see.

We are to be born of God and become God [we're to become Elohim]—in the God Family.

Now, people would say you're crazy, but this is an incredible truth, and when we see this, now we'll look at other truths, and we'll be able to pin it back to this, always back to this very point. God is reproducing Himself.

So this one truth underpins God's purpose behind the truths. So why the truths? It's all about creating a family. God reveals truth to us for an outcome, to have a family, a spirit being family. It's incredible, a family of spirit beings.

So let's look at Hebrews 2:12. We'll look at verse 10, actually. **Hebrews 2:10—For it was fitting for Him, talking about God, for/through whom are all things, because He created everything and it's His plan, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory.** This is God's purpose. The reason mankind exists is because God is creating a spiritual family, a family from humans.

Now, the way that that is done, it requires a calling. A person is called and given God's holy spirit. Then they can see the truth, and therefore, truth is revealed progressively because the transformation of the mind is a progression. It doesn't happen overnight. We're first called, we often think we know a lot when we're first called and we get excited and try to tell others and they can't see because they don't have God's spirit, they're not interested after a while. In actual fact they turn on us because they can see you're really going too far with this. You would not tell people this truth because they can't comprehend it: "God is reproducing Himself and I have been called. You haven't, but I have." Don't go there. It's not going to be able to be seen. But we can all smile and think, "Yep. That's true. God called you. God called me." It's incredible, fascinating, for the purpose of having a family. We have an opportunity now to begin this process. This process of growth only happens in God's Church and only through the truth. Only through the truth. There is no spiritual growth without the truth. It can't be done. That's why the world's out there, and it doesn't have the truth, it can't grow. A person cannot grow on a spiritual level if they're not called to grow. We've been called to grow.

So this one truth underpins everything. God has revealed to us the spiritual purpose for life, why we exist, why others exist. I know when a person has a child families get excited about it, and it's understandable because it's their child, but we also can get excited because we see it differently. We see it as somebody that has the potential to be in the God family. They have the potential of every human. Isn't that a marvelous, wonderful thing when a child is born, given that opportunity? Because unless a child is born and given life, to so speak, they can never enter Elohim. And at some point after 7,100 years it's over. So we have life and we are so blessed to have been called to know why we actually have life.

So let's look at the very first truth that God has revealed to His Church, which was one of the three truths that was left when Mr. Armstrong was called to come into an era. There was an era of Sardis that was left and they only had three truths left. Well we're going to look at them and say, "Well, why the Sabbath?"

1 (1) The seventh day Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath has remained one of the most basic signs of God's true Church. God's people have always obeyed the seventh day Sabbath.

So we look at that and say, "Well, why did God reveal the Sabbath?" So why are we here today is another question. Why are we here today? Spiritual growth. Without the Sabbath there is no spiritual growth. Now, people have got excited and said, "Oh, I know somebody and they're starting to listen." You know they've heard about God's Church and they're excited. We as members always get excited. "Well, this is good," because we enjoy when God calls another person, but deep down over time when we come to understand this I've generally paused because to me it's all about the Sabbath because they haven't hid the hurdle yet, this first truth. This is the first truth that God has kept in His Church, the seventh day Sabbath and unless they are willing to keep the seventh day Sabbath there is no spiritual growth. It is absolutely impossible. So we're going to look at that.

Genesis 2:1-3. We're going to do a quick overview of some of those things that God has set up from the creation because it's important from the point of view of understanding "why the Sabbath." It's like, why the truth? Well, what is the Sabbath really all about? Well, we do know that God created the Sabbath by resting.

In **Genesis 2:1—Thus the heavens, around the earth, and the earth, and the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God (Elohim) created His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.** Six days creation, seventh day a rest. God wasn't tired, but He rested. So why did He rest? Well, there is a spiritual purpose in it and it's all about truth 6, the creation of a family, a spirit family, and without the Sabbath there is no creation of the spirit family, because it's about a spiritual matter.

Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, He set it aside as holy, because in it He rested from all His work which He had created. So we can see from that that God created the Sabbath by resting. We're here resting. Why are we resting? The reason we are here is for spiritual growth. So God now sets an example. He did something for a spiritual reason. It has nothing to do with physical. It's all for a spiritual reason.

Let's look at the timing of that in Genesis 1:3, which I know Ron has gone over this, about the timing of it. Well, we go back to **Genesis 1:3-5—Then God said, Let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, and it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness, because there was darkness first. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning are the first day.** That's how we know time.

Mankind's gone and made it differently. They say it starts at 12 o'clock and ends at 12 o'clock. It's manmade. It's man's concept. It's all to do with man's thinking. God makes it very clear, "So the evening and the morning were the first day." That's how we count time. So we know now that Sabbath starts with an evening. The sun goes down; it's dark, then it's light. It's a 24 hour period, basically, sunset to sunset. We understand it. The world doesn't.

So a person has to come to understand this first. If they do not see this and understand this they don't know why they're keeping the Sabbath. Now, there are a lot of people out there that keep sunset to sunset that aren't of God and do not know the truth, a lot of people from a particular tribe.

Let's look at Mark 2:27. No new scriptures, just background so that we can see why God did what He did. It's not about a physical rest. It was given to mankind in the beginning as a physical rest, but it has a spiritual tendency for us, or it has a spiritual meaning for us is a better way to put it because without the Sabbath, without resting on the Sabbath there is no spiritual growth.

Mark 2:27— And he (Christ) said to them, The Sabbath, the seventh day rest, was made, which we just looked at and we know the timing of it, for man, and not man for the Sabbath. So the Sabbath was created for us. We're mankind. It was created for us. But why? Why was it created for us? Well, this is a day of learning. This is a day of spiritual growth. Once we're called and we have God's holy spirit God requires growth. God's spirit demands growth. How do we keep it? How do we get it? How do we grow? Spiritually through the truth. Where is God? God is in us. God is in the Sabbath day. So we grow by keeping the Sabbath. There's another way to put it. Therefore, if somebody is not willing to keep the seventh day Sabbath they cannot grow spiritually. That's the purpose of the Sabbath.

Why is the Sabbath? What is the meaning of the Sabbath? Spiritual growth. Why? Truth 6 - to enter Elohim. It's a process.

So if someone is not willing to rest on the seventh day, to listen to God, because that's what the Sabbath is about, the Sabbath is about listening to God. Because remember, we're on this transformation of the mind, this thinking differently. So if a person doesn't keep the Sabbath they can't think differently because it's a spiritual matter. We rest because we rest to hear God, what God has got for us. That's why the Sabbath exists. We listen to God and by listening to God we hear the truth, and therefore, our minds start to change. We start to think differently, which is a process of repentance.

The truth is how we think differently. We see the Sabbath; we understand the Sabbath.

Exodus 20. We know these scriptures. Exodus 20:8, which God gave to Israel for physical reasons, but there is a spiritual meaning behind it for us. **Exodus 20:8—Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, to keep it separate.** So we are required on this day to keep it separate. Six days we're to do other things, but we're to set this day aside for a spiritual purpose and that spiritual

purpose really is God's purpose. God's purpose for the Sabbath is to communicate to His people on a spiritual level. So that's how God does it. He does it on this day. The Sabbath is holy time because God makes it holy. So we're here today because God commanded it on a physical level for Israel, for mankind, for a benefit for him, to rejuvenate him, but this is much more important for us because this is the day of spiritual education, spiritual instruction, spiritual rejuvenation for us, to hear the truth, to be believing the truth. Our intent on this day must be to rest and listen to God.

Now, if a person just rests, they break the Sabbath. If you just rest, if you just stop, it's breaking the Sabbath because it's listening to God that is the important part, stopping all the physical things, not thinking about all the physical things we're going to do tomorrow or that we should have done last week, other than maybe looking or examining our self for sin, but to stop and listen to God. This is the day of growth. This is the day or the opportunity for us to grow. The choice of growth is ours, really, what we're going to do with what we hear. We have to learn to think like God. We have to learn to love. Now, this is a long process.

Now, there is one scripture that mankind rejects, and it's Hebrews 4:9. Yet in the New Testament it's very clear about this process of listening to God and we know why. Now we understand fully why the Sabbath. Hebrews 4:9, which was mistranslated in different ways, but the word is "Sabbatismos," which is talking about a Sabbath. **Hebrews 4:9—There remains, so it hasn't been done away, there remains, therefore, a rest for the people of God.** We're God's people, there remains a Sabbath, which is there remains a keeping of the Sabbath. So it really should read, "a keeping of a Sabbath." It is, therefore, our duty as God's people to keep the Sabbath because there remains a keeping of the Sabbath. Why? People say, "Why do you keep the Sabbath?" Well, we know. Spiritual growth. It's about the truth, hearing God, listening to God. So if people don't keep the Sabbath, and are not willing to keep the Sabbath, they're not willing to listen to God. It's something that going forward we're going to see.

In answering a lot of the emails over time that come through the Church website this is one of the things that we look for. You look for and say, what is the person doing? Because people can go on about lots of different commandments and they say, "Oh look. I'm not doing this, and I'm no longer doing that. I'm not doing that," but how are you keeping the Sabbath? And if they're not willing to keep the Sabbath there is no growth. It's going to stop. They might see certain things - because when a person's called God gives an aspect of His, God's, spirit to us so that we can see, to bring us to repentance so that we can be baptized for the remission of sins then receive God's holy spirit. So there's an aspect of it there. There's part of it there that's given to us for the purpose of growing to a point. That growing to the point is about the seventh day Sabbath.

So you look at various parables about the sower throwing the seed out and where it gets on stony ground, they have a beginning, they start off, but they get to this point. You have to address, you have to live the truth. Because, really, hearing the truth and knowing the truth is wonderful, living it is totally different because this is really a test commandment because a person has to do

something. Firstly, we have to be convicted in our minds. We have to believe God about the seventh day Sabbath: "There remains a Sabbath for God's people." Then we have to do something. We've got to now implement it into our life, which is a change. It could affect our employment. Could affect anything - family relationships, all types of things. So it has an impact, but this is the only way for growth, the keeping of the Sabbath. And generally the first thing that goes over time is people if they start to leave God and God leaves them this is what gets eroded. Other than tithing, this is it. The seventh day Sabbath is no longer special. God's no longer in it. They're no longer growing. They're no longer learning. They're no longer listening to God so you can't grow. If we don't listen to God we can't grow.

So the Sabbath is for spiritual growth. It's God communicating to His people. It is holy time because God pours out His holy spirit at this time so that we can comprehend the truth. We must learn to stop and listen to God.

So why is it that we would listen to God? Well, this goes back to being about obedience. Without obedience to the seventh day Sabbath a person cannot grow spiritually because we have to obey God. Let's look at truth 14 because it's still tying in with the Sabbath.

14 (11) The Millennium. The Kingdom of God will rule the nations on the earth during this 1,000 year period called the Millennium. Jesus Christ and the 144,000 who are resurrected to become kings and priests will rule and bring prosperity to this entire earth.

Now, we understand six days of the week, 6,000 years is for mankind. The seventh day is a rest. Well, the Millennium is a rest, a type of rest because when we remove Satan from mankind there's a rest. The deceiver, deception is removed. So we see six days is left for man, and that's what we see. This is what we're living in. We're living in this period where mankind is left in deception. Well, we're coming very quickly now to a period called a rest, the seventh day Sabbath.

Now, we understand why we keep the Sabbath - to listen to God. What's the Millennium about? Listening to God. Spiritual growth. It's the same thing. So the seventh day Sabbath points to something. It points to a millennial reign of Jesus Christ and 144,000 for the purpose of a spiritual rest. The removal of Satan has taken place; now people can listen to God. They have a choice, just like people that are called by God have a choice. They can listen or they don't have to. It's up to them. God forces nothing from us. God doesn't force us or make us do anything. It's our choice whether we want to rest on the Sabbath.

Well, during the Millennium mankind's going to have a choice. It's hard to believe sometimes, it's hard to understand that there are going to be some that will not stop and listen to God. They won't grow spiritually. They might start off, but just not within themselves and they're not going to do it.

For the first time in the history of mankind, since Adam sinned and God closed the way of the tree of life [which is symbolic of God's holy spirit], salvation will finally be opened to all.

So it's open to them but it doesn't mean to say they're going to listen to God. It doesn't mean to say that they're necessarily going to accept and listen to the truth and the very first thing that mankind's going to have to do is start to keep the seventh day Sabbath because it's the only way for spiritual growth. Real rest will take place once Satan is removed, as far as a rest from the temptation, but we still have the natural carnal mind. We still have selfishness in us, and that's something that we have to fight against.

So first truth that we know, the Sabbath, is really about listening to God. That's the reason for the Sabbath, to listen to God and to grow spiritually. That's God's purpose for the Sabbath.

Another one we'll look at, truth #2, because this is all about spiritual growth.

2 (2) The name of God's Church – the "Church of God." God's Church bears His name, as it belongs to Him.

It's incredible, really. This is something that in the world people don't comprehend and they've got all these names that clearly identify them as not being God's Church, because that's what they do. When a person starts up a Church and calls it the whatever, "Fred Jones" or "Tom Smith's Church," it's got nothing to do with God. God's Church, because it's God's Church, and it's a Sabbath keeping Church because it's a way of growth to end up in Elohim, well, therefore, God's called out ones. It's called God's people, God's Church, the Body of Christ. It belongs to God. We belong to God.

God's will and purpose is for the gathering of His called out ones, which we are, that carry His name, which we do, because God lives and dwells in us. God lives and dwells in us. His spirit is in us; we bear His name. We represent the Church of God. PKG - Preparing for the Kingdom of God. That's what we do. Now, it's something that we often forget.

There was an email from somebody, and they asked a particular question. I won't go a lot into it, but it was in Australia. They'll probably know. But that question really pointed to something, and they asked the question, "Well, should 'this' happen, or should 'that' happen," basically with regards to consuming alcohol. The best way to answer that is by saying we carry God's name, therefore, we represent God and Jesus Christ in every single thing we do. We're examples. Because we very easily can blaspheme God's name without knowing it just by our conduct, because if we had maybe just a bad example to someone else, they turn around and say, "Oh, they reckon their God's people and look at them! Look at them! Look at them going for that drink." That's blaspheme. We're bringing something on God's name that we represent. So all the more reason to pull back and be more cautious when we're around other people because we carry God's name. We do not want to do anything or say anything that might trigger somebody else to talk negatively about God's name because it's His Church. It's not our Church. It's not Ron Weinland's Church. It's God's Church. We are the called out ones for a reason, and we're called out, we know, for spiritual growth.

God can only be identified by the name "Church of God." They are in a relationship with Him, which is us. We are in a relationship with Yahweh Elohim. Now, these are things that we wouldn't go out and tell people because they're never going to understand it when we turn around and say, "Yes, I'm called. And I keep the Sabbath and I've got a relationship with God and I can talk to Him any time I want to." "Sure! That sounds fantastic!" People are just not going to comprehend it. But this is all true for us. Isn't it incredible? This is true for us. Any time we choose we can talk to God. Any time. It's our choice.

God's people are in His name because we belong to Him. God lives and dwells within them by the power of His holy spirit. So we have an opportunity to grow spiritually through the truth because of the power of God's holy spirit. Now, when we look back it's a rather fascinating thing to realize that God inspired His apostle to come up with a name, PKG - Preparing for the Kingdom of God. Now, people can't comprehend what's really going on, not really. They'd say, "Well, you're preparing for the Kingdom of God, so what are you doing? You're storing up food?" Because they can only think physically, they can't think spiritually. "So you've got extra water? So when the power goes you've got a generator?" That's all irrelevant stuff, really, when you think about it because God can do anything at any time and provide anything. So all of those things are not a concern to us.

We're preparing spiritually. We're preparing spiritually. So God keeps us in His name because we here are preparing spiritually. Now, whether we're going to be changed or not it's all irrelevant because the reality is our life is one of preparing for the Kingdom of God. It's something that's coming. We are ahead of the rest at this point in time because of God's mercy because we've had an opportunity to prepare through the Sabbath because we've been called to listen to God. So we're preparing. How? By believing the truth and listening to God. We are God's spiritual house—it's not physical—the temple of God, where God dwells. We are spiritual Israel. So these are things that people can't comprehend and we shouldn't expect them to comprehend or believe it.

We are a house of prayer. So we live our life based on prayer. We have this relationship with God that's personal. We can tell Him anything. We can ask Him anything and it will be done according to His will and purpose. Now, because we're still natural a lot of what we ask is going to be selfishly motivated, even in our prayers. We don't see it that way, but that's the way we are by nature. So we have to be careful. Prayer is a spiritual sacrifice. So whenever people say, "Well, what's your purpose in life? What's the purpose of being called?" Well, it's spiritual growth. We're called to spiritual sacrificing. Sacrifices still continue - not physical, spiritual ones. The more we sacrifice spiritually, which is about our prayer life, in part, the better the growth will be, the stronger the growth will be, because we're sacrificing our self. There are other ways that that can happen, of course, which are physical things that we can do to sacrifice.

Let's look at **Ephesians 2:19-22—Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints.** So we're no longer strangers in this. We've been called out. Before we were. This is talking, if you look at it, with the Ephesians, they were considered a

gentile nation; that they were strangers. But we're not. We've been called. It makes no difference what nationality we are because we're now fellow citizens with the saints, the called out ones of God, **and members of the household of God.** Yes, we are part of the Body of Christ. We're part of the Church of God. Color, nationality means absolutely nothing. This is a spiritual matter and being called is a spiritual matter. **...having been built/are being built on the foundations of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom, which is talking about Christ, the whole building, which we're part of, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the LORD,** in God. We're in the Church for spiritual growth. We are growing spiritually if we believe the truth. If we do not believe the truth we are not growing spiritually.

Verse 22—in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the spirit. Why are we in the Church? Because we've been called to it, to listen to God. We're in the Church because of God's holy spirit and if we don't have God's holy spirit we can't be in God's Church, because God's Church is a spiritual temple.

There's often been letters that come through from different places, or emails come through and they say, "I want to join God's Church." Now, when you think about it, "Join God's Church." Well, it's not a football club. You can join the Catholic Church. You can join a Protestant Church. You cannot join God's Church. There's no such thing as joining. This is about being a member of the Body of Christ. So to be part of God's true Church one has to be called. You can't just join and sign up and say, "Yep. I'm now part. I'm joined." You can't. You have to be called. You have to be a Sabbath keeper. You have to listen to God. You've got to believe the truth. The end result is you have to have God's holy spirit. So without God's holy spirit you're not a member of the Body of Christ. You're not part of the Temple of God. It's just a physical thing, and people (some) comprehend it. Some don't comprehend it. The fact is they just want to join. They don't understand. It's normally very young in their days of their calling that they say, "Well, I want to join." Well, it doesn't quite work like that. We know that this is about a spiritual matter. It's about God living and dwelling in us. God lives in His people. We are called the Church of God because we are God's people and God lives and dwells in us. That makes us a spiritual house.

1 Peter 2:4—Coming to him a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, talking about Jesus Christ, you then, talking about us, brethren, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house. Why? What's that all about? Well, that's about truth 6. We're built up a spiritual house for the purpose of spiritual growth, that we will believe God and at a point in time we'll be changed to spirit. That's the purpose of life. That's the purpose of being in the Church. There's no use being part of the Body of Christ unless there's growth. We're either growing or going back the other way. So we're being built up a spiritual house, a family, you know, in creation, that's being created through the Church, **a holy priesthood.** Now, a lot of people say, "A priesthood? What's a priesthood?" Well, really, when you look at it, priests are servants. That's what they did. If you look at the Levitical system priests were servants. So we are holy priests because God lives and dwells in us, makes us holy, but as a priesthood we are

servants of God. What do servants do? They serve. They sacrifice to benefit others. If you look at the Levitical priesthood they were priests; they sacrificed because that's the Levitical system. We are a holy priesthood for the purpose of sacrificing ourselves, sacrificing for the benefit of others, sacrificing in prayer.

It goes on here to say why this has happened: **to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.** So God requires us to sacrifice ourselves for the benefit of others. That's what God requires. God requires us to sacrifice ourselves through prayer. That's what God requires. So that's why we're in the Body of Christ and if we're in the Body of Christ we should be sacrificing. This is a time to stop, look at this truth about sacrificing, and say, "Well, am I sacrificing enough? Am I really a spiritual temple? Am I really a spiritual priesthood, servants who sacrifice?"

10 (7) The Church is only the first fruits.

Because we're still on this topic of the Church as far as a truth, why the Church. God has created a Church called the Church of God—PKG for spiritual growth so that there can be a family. All goes back to that one truth, truth 6. That's why the truth exists because if we understand what the Church is about it changes the way we think. If we really understand what this is. We are just so blessed to be part of God's true Church. Just amazing.

I was reflecting the other day with Chris and going back and looking where we came from, Western Australia. We were called out of Western Australia. There was, at that time, in Worldwide, over a thousand people in Western Australia. Sometimes it's very humbling to realize that God called us out of that in Worldwide days and we came to Melbourne, Victoria, and we were the only ones that God has awakened through all that, out of all those thousands of people. It's just so humbling. And what separates us from them? It's God's mercy in awakening. And what really separates us? Why are we different, brethren? Why are we different? The truth. We're different because of the truth. We believe God. That's the difference. They no longer believe God because they don't have the power to do it. But we do. We have been given the power to do it, so we believe God. That's what separates us. The truth—it says in scripture—the truth will set you free. We're free. We really are free in comparison to what we were.

I look back at times and wonder if I didn't have God's spirit and was never called what would have happened to me? What would have happened to Chris? What would have happened in our relationships? What would have happened in lots of things? My mind doesn't want to ever go there because I'm just so blessed that we were actually called and that we were awakened is even greater in many a way. We are just so blessed that that's happened. But we are free! We look at the news and see things and we're free. We're free in the mind. Now, we're not free when it comes to the government taxes and GST and all the rules and regulations about what you can and can't do. That's man's rules and man's bondage. Yes, we're subject to that bondage. That's just

life. That's the way it is, but we are free. We watch things and see things and we're free from it. We're no longer held in our minds, the captivity of the mind. God through truth has made us free.

Refer again to the rightful role of women. What a freedom! What a freedom! You look at that truth, for example. Why that truth? Well, it goes back to why, it's heading to the Millennium where true freedom is going to be, true rest is going to be, spiritual rest for people. They're going to listen to God and pride will take a big hit. Satan is going to take a hit, but pride within humans is going to take a hit, especially in men, I think. Pride in men is going to take a big hit through that truth. It's a wonderful thing. But what's it doing? Freeing us, freeing the mind so that at a point in time we can enter God's family. Truth 6. Incredible. So we have the truth for spiritual growth. We have that spiritual growth.

Now, we have these things that we see and we understand and we know in the truth and the world doesn't. There is no point talking to them about it. There just isn't. They're not interested anyway, but we have a freedom and we can rejoice to God for that freedom, be thankful to God for that very freedom.

10 (7) The Church is only the first fruits. The Church is only the first fruits for the beginning of God's plan of salvation.

So that's why the Church exists. It's about salvation. So mankind has not been offered salvation, but us sitting here today have been offered salvation. We've been offered salvation. It's a time process. How does it happen? By believing the truth and a transformation of the mind, which is spiritual growth. So we've been offered it. We're either going to believe God or we won't.

God is not yet trying to save the whole world.

Because six days, 6,000 years. God moves to save mankind when? On the Sabbath, the rest, which points to the thousand years.

The first fruits are those who have been tried and trained to become part of God's government, in His Kingdom [which is referring to the 144,000, which have been developed over time].

Now, none of them had it easy. No one had it easy. This path of salvation is not easy and it's not going to be that easy in the Millennium or the Hundred-years. There will be difficulties, but it'll be easier because the first 6,000 years, you can understand under Satan's rule with the thought processes and the transmitting of Satan's thinking to mankind and influencing mankind, it is more difficult. We can go back to the Sabbath. Over the history of mankind when we look at what's happened from 31 A.D., God's people have been tried and tested in ways that we don't understand.

We might think that going to the boss and saying, "Listen, I'm now going to be keeping the Sabbath," that that was difficult. Nowhere near as difficult as somebody running around trying to

kill you like the apostle Paul was and others from the Roman government. That's being tried and tested. When you're fleeing from your house to somewhere else, to somewhere else trying to get away because there are people actively trying to take your life, now, that's being tried and tested! That's when we would find our true commitment to the Sabbath! So going to your boss and saying, "Oh, I can no longer work on Friday night and Saturday." How hard is that compared to what people have gone through like in 31 A.D., the persecution that went on, and all those other eras where they have had great persecution? So it makes us going to somebody rather in perspective. It's not that difficult. You wouldn't be able to stand up and say, "Oh yeah, I went to my boss and told him..." Someone would say, "You've got no idea what happened to me. I was running through the forest and people were trying to kill me because I was a Sabbath keeper because I wanted to obey God. I wanted to listen to God."

So they've all been tried and tested in a way. Not necessarily on that particular way, but in other ways, to become part of God's government (it's a wonderful plan when you look at God's plan), in His Kingdom, which is truth 6. That's what it's all about. This whole aspect of why the truth. Because they were given some of the truth, but they weren't given it all. We here today have more truth than at any other time in the history of mankind. How blessed are we? We have more truth.

...when Jesus Christ returns as King of kings in the Millennium.

That's when we're going to see more truth because God's word is truth and we're going to see God reveal truth to His Church. And will everyone listen? Sadly, it doesn't look like everybody will. We've been given the heads up, really. We've started this plan of salvation; we're on this course of the transformation of the mind taking place.

"Christ returns as King of kings in the Millennium." I want to stop there because we often don't think about what that really means - King of kings. Now, we know that the 144,000 are going to be kings and priests with God. Now, kings rule and deliver justice. And priests, what do they do? They serve. Just like Jesus Christ is the greatest servant of all because his rulership is for an outcome - truth 6 - about the development of God's family. God has handed over that responsibility to Jesus Christ through the Church. Since 31 A.D. Jesus Christ has the responsibility of developing God's spiritual family. It's an incredible thing to comprehend that's what we're in. We're in that, this process of being developed.

Those who are converted during the Millennium [during that 1,000 year period], along with the first fruits, will become kings, and priests, and teachers for the rest of the world that will be resurrected at the end of the Millennium.

So at the end of the thousand years when we have that resurrection then we see the mass resurrection of mankind where Jesus Christ, 144,000, and others then have the responsibility to teach. The first thing is the Sabbath. That's the first thing. Then it's the Church. If a person's not

in the Church, since 31 A.D., there is no growth. It's not possible because God's name is in His Church, His holy spirit is in the Church. So people say, "Where? How do you find God's Church? How do you know this is God's Church?" God is in God's Church. It's His Church. His spirit is active in God's Church. That's how we know. We should know this is God's true Church, and if we don't, we have problems, we're going to have problems.

11 (8) The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God. The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God but it is the embryo...

So that's what we are. We are being developed. We're growing within the womb, which is within the Church on the earth.

...that will become the Kingdom of God.

So that's the change that's got to take place that we will grow.

A false gospel in traditional Christianity teaches that the church on earth is the Kingdom of God.

Now, I grew up in that particular environment where it was taught that the Kingdom of God, basically, was the Catholic Church. Literally. I grew up being Catholic for a period of time until I was a teenager; I was made to do things. But unless you're called you can't see. You can't see the evil of the Catholic Church. You cannot see the evil of what Protestantism really is. You cannot see the evil of other religions. It's only by the power of God's holy spirit that we can actually see the deception that's there, the lies. There is no truth there. A lot of the leaders do know that there are certain truths that they just know that they live them out because that's what they think it's come from their mind; it's their interpretation of things. Some of them know that they're wrong, but that's how you keep people together. That's how you control people; you have uniformity. They believe, basically, that truth is there, it's in the church, and that's it, you stop. You're stopped. There's no growth, basically.

Well, that should be a fair sign that it's not God's Church because God's Church is continually growing through the truth. You know, truth is progressive, so we know there's more truth coming. Don't know when, but there is more truth coming. There's things we don't know yet, that we don't comprehend, but there is more truth coming.

It's interesting, because when we look at truth these are outlines of truth, but within them there's lots of other truths within those truths. If you understand what I mean. It's so detailed. This is just the overview of it, but within this there is a lot more.

Mr. Armstrong clearly saw that the coming literal Kingdom of God is the message Jesus Christ brought to this earth from his Father.

This is the good news of the Kingdom of God because when you go through scripture it's very clear that it was all about the good news of the Kingdom of God. What do you mean the good news of the Kingdom of God? The good news is about God's Kingdom - spirit beings that are going to rule the earth. The Kingdom of God, entering the spirit realm is the good news. This is good news for us! Because without that, what have we got? We've got nothing.

Since 31 A.D. the Church is the only place God has worked. People can't comprehend that either, but we should. This is God's Church. This is where God is working and this is truth. So we grow by the knowledge of the truth. We're only kept in the power of truth through the power of God's holy spirit because there is a power that we have in the truth and we should see it within ourselves, we should know it.

James 2:5—Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world. This is referring to that it wasn't the wealthy that were being called; it's the poor, which is us. We're the poor of the world in the sense of compared to the world and its desire for riches, we don't have much. We're the poor of the world. The reason this is being said is because there was a respector of persons going on that people were looking to other people that had wealth and were gravitating to them. Therefore, James is now saying, "Well, listen, brethren, has not God chosen the poor of the world," which is us. We're the poor of the world. **...to be rich in faith.** Well, that's true. We've been called to be rich in faith, which is the truth, to believe God. We've been called to believe God. We've been called to believe the truth. **...and heirs of the Kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?** That's our promise, a promise that God has given to us is that we are heirs of the Kingdom. We haven't inherited it yet but we are heirs to it because it's owned by somebody else, God, and He is willing to give it to us, which is the purpose of life. But in that there is a process that God has established and it's all hidden in the truth. It's all hidden in this area. I use the word "hidden" because to the world it's hidden, but to us it's not. We understand the process.

Verse 6—But you have dishonored the poor man, which is the humble. You've dishonored them because of your behaviour because you're gravitating to these rich people who, physical, carnal stuff, and you're gravitating to that trying to get something back. Well, that's bad behavior because you're a respector of persons. You should be teachable and humble. The rich are not teachable and humble. It's just the way they are. They're proud because of what they think they have as far as wealth. **But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?** That was the question. So you shouldn't be showing respector of persons because you're respecting people that persecute you.

Verse 7—Do they (the rich) not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? Yes, they do.

Verse 8—If you really fulfill *the royal law*... Well, what's that royal law? Well, it's about justice, mercy, and faith. It's the way we live because we can hear the law and understand the law, the 10

Commandments, but it means nothing unless we're living it, unless we're actually doing it. ... according to the scripture, **You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well.** So we have to have this mind of love, which is no ill will to others.

Now, it's a difficult thing when people persecute us or treat us badly. It's very difficult to get our minds in order to realize that what we're commanded to do is to do good to them and not speak evil of them. It's a big mental battle. The first thing we do on a physical level is we try to think about things and what we'd like to do to them to get even. That's natural. That's normal. It's not God's way. God's way is justice, mercy, and love. That's God's way.

Verse 9—but if you show partiality, which is a preference. If you show preference to somebody **you commit sin,** because it's the wrong attitude. Whether they're rich or poor is irrelevant. It means nothing. This is about God's spirit. ...**and are convicted (exposed) by the law as transgressors,** because we've got wrong thinking. We haven't transformed our mind at all. We're thinking wrongly about it.

For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, is guilty of all. So we might know the law and we may be keeping the Sabbath, and we may be doing all these other things, but if we have a wrong attitude and a bias towards somebody, ill will toward somebody, we may as well have broken the law because we're going to pay the same penalty. If we break the first or the tenth or the seventh or the fifth or the fourth, it's the same penalty: "The wages of sin is death." We're under the death penalty. The only way out of it for us, because we're no longer under the law, is through repentance because we're no longer under the penalty of the law, which is what it's really saying, because we can repent, therefore, we are free. Because of the truth, we're free! Because we understand the gift of repentance, we're free from the penalty of sin because we understand the Passover.

Truth 3. We're going to go into a little bit more of truth 3 because this is one of the greater tests of human reasoning, which is to do with tithes. First tithe belongs to God. Now, this is foreign for the natural mind because the natural mind thinks, "Well, I worked! It's my money," because that's just natural, the way to think, but God says He allows us to earn money, because it's a gift from Him to even have a job or to have any level of income. God allows it. He could take it away, but He allows it. We, then, have to honor God because we have to have that thinking, "Oh, it all belongs to God."

3 (3) First Tithe to God. God gave the tithing system for the purpose of doing His work on earth.

So that's the purpose of tithing. It's about God. It's about God's work. Now, if you look at it, what is God's work? Well, God's work is creating a family (from truth 6), a spirit family. How's it done? Through the Sabbath. We listen to God. So God funds His work, which is creating Elohim. He does it through physical means called a tithe. Therefore, when the tithes are given to God's Church it's God's work. Then who's accountable? Well, our responsibility after that is finished - totally and

utterly finished. If we pay first tithe and second tithe according to God's will and purpose, which is what we should do and we know, we understand that—it's on the website to understand it more fully—that's the end of the matter from our point of view. Because one of the things we have to be very careful of is that we don't elevate ourselves so high that we think, "Well, God's apostle," who's accountable at this time for the distribution of those funds. How it's done, when it's done is totally his accountability. It has nothing to do with us. The moment we think, "Oh, well, it should be spent here or it should be done over here," we're actually elevating ourselves to a role—it's called being presumptuous—we're elevating ourselves to a role that we don't have and have never been appointed to, which is we're judging.

No, when tithes are given, that's the end of it from our point of view because we've given our part according to God's will and purpose. Then it requires God's apostle to do as he sees fit, inspired by God's spirit, for the distribution of it. Now, it's something that we have to be on guard. If we ever think that God's apostle isn't concerned and worried about what he does with God's money we're deluded. It's a massive responsibility, massive! So do we ever think that he just is willy-nilly with it? That's foolish thinking. It's a responsibility. In actual fact, it's almost like a burden, to carry that around, every cent. That's God's money. It's God's work. What's God doing? Creating a family. That's what's going on. So we need to be very, very careful about the way we think. We are responsible to tithe.

Let's look at Malachi 3:6. Now, we looked at this looking at purposes because it's the truth. We've looked at the first three truths; we've looked at the Sabbath, we've looked at God's Church. We understand why - spiritual growth, creating Elohim. Well, this is exactly the same.

Malachi 3:6. This tithe is God's. First tithe is God's. It belongs to God. We do our part; it then belongs to God. How God sees it to be distributed is through God's apostle. At this time we know we're heading into a work called the third book. It's the third book that we now are going to support. So if we ever think about what's our role, well, we know Sabbath keeping, we know God's Church, but it's the way we think. Surely in our thinking everything in our thinking would be to support God's work. Surely. That's our purpose in life. So we look at why the Church - spiritual growth. Surely we would support the Creator of the universe in something He's going to do. Surely we would sacrifice for that reason? God's work. We want to be in tune with what God's doing. God's going to be doing a work through that third book and we should be in it. We should be with it. We should be driving our thinking towards supporting that in every way possible.

This tithe is God's and He has given it to the leaders of His Church to use in His work as He directs the Church through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Now, we either believe that or we don't. If we believe that we pay first tithe and we leave it at that. What God does and how He does it, it's God's problem and it's the apostle's problem. If you know what I mean. I wouldn't say it's a problem, but we understand, Australian, what we're

talking about. It's not our problem. We don't have to worry about it, in other words. It's up to God what God wants to do. God's the Creator of the universe. He can do anything He wishes.

Verse 6—For I *am* the Eternal, I do not change. So this thinking about the Sabbath that God created, has God all of a sudden changed His thinking about, "Oh, no. You don't have to rest anymore on the Sabbath. No, I'm not going to have a spiritual family anymore. I've changed My mind"? God hasn't changed His mind. Why God created the Sabbath, when you look at it, it's incredible because without it we'll never enter Elohim. If you look at God's name, God's Church at 31 A.D., the pouring out of God's holy spirit, it's all for the same outcome. God hasn't changed. He has not all of a sudden turned up and said, "Oh, no. You know, I've changed My mind. I'm no longer going to love like I do. No, I'm not going to do that anymore." God has not changed and God does not change. His will and purpose will be achieved. A lot of people forget that. God's will and purpose will be achieved. There's no use fighting it; it's going to happen. There is going to be a group of 144,000. Nothing can change it. Satan can't change it. Nothing's going to change it. There is going to be a group that comes out of the Millennium. Nothing's going to change; it's going to happen. At the end Satan will be destroyed and those that don't want God's ways, that won't listen to Him, they will be destroyed. Nothing is going to change it. There is a second death; nothing's going to change it.

So here it says, "I am the Eternal, I do not change." God's not going to change His plan. He's got a plan.

Therefore, you are not consumed, because God could just wipe them all out and say, "Oh, that's it. You're all consumed." No, that's not what God's will and purpose is. God's purpose is to have a family. So God's not going to do that. ...**O sons of Jacob. Yet from the days of your fathers you have gone away from My ordinances, or My commandments, the instructions that I have given you, and you have not kept *them*. Return to Me.** What's, "Return to Me"? Repent! Think differently than the way that you're thinking.

Return to Me and I will return to you. Isn't that interesting how that is? Because we leave God before God leaves us. That's what He's saying, "Return to Me and then I'll return to you," because it's your choice. God is there; it's our choice if we want to turn to God or not or call on God or to sacrifice ourselves for God. It's our choice. Well, if we do it God says, "I'll be there. I'm listening. I'm willing." But are we? The problem with human nature is that we tend to leave God, but God is still there waiting for us to turn back, to repent, which is what it's about.

"Return to Me and I will return to you," through the power of God's spirit to be given to us, **says the LORD of hosts. But you said, In what way shall we return?** In other words, "I haven't left. I'm not the problem." So that's really what they're saying, which is an attitude, "I haven't done anything wrong. I haven't left you, God."

Verse 8—Will a man rob God? Yes! A man will. That's the question God's saying, "Will a man rob God?" The answer is yes, he will and he does. Mankind robs God. Only in God's Church do people not rob God. Now, there are people that do tithe, but they're still robbing God, because it's a spiritual matter. It's not a physical thing, this is a spiritual matter. Because someone can give 10% in tithes and still sin within God's Church. Someone can give 10% of their money and still sin because it's the attitude. It's the spirit of it because we can give 10% and despise giving it. We can go, "Ugh, I've got to tithe." So in other words, it's being given begrudgingly. It's the wrong attitude. That is sin. So someone can be faithful in tithing and be in the church for years and be sinning because they've got the wrong attitude. They're doing it begrudgingly, not as a joy, that, "This isn't mine anyway. I'm just so blessed I have an income. And 10% belongs to God and God's going to do His work and I'm excited by that!" No, "I'm giving it because, oh, if they find me out they'll probably put me out." It's just the wrong attitude. So, yes, a person can give 10% and still sin.

Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! Says God. **But you say, In what way have we robbed You?** "Yep. I'm doing all okay. I'm giving 10%." Or "I'm giving, you know, bits and pieces here." The attitude stinks though, "but that's okay I'm still doing the right thing," because it's just the carnal mind that's doing it. God says, **In tithes and offerings.** Tithes and offerings are required by God's Church, but the attitude behind it is actually a greater key in lots of ways, the attitude behind it, the spirit of the law. Now, we can look at the 10 Commandments and Jesus Christ came and expanded on the spirit of the law because, yes, people can be Sabbath keepers and break the Sabbath, people can tithe and still sin. People can be in God's Church (so-called) and still sin because it's the spirit of the matter. It's the way they think. It's their attitude.

Now, when we look at the spirit of the matter, like tithes and offerings, the spirit of the matter is, really, it goes back to motive, motive and intent. So the spirit of any matter is about the motive behind it. We can keep the Sabbath (so-called) but the spirit of it can be wrong because well, we have to be seen by all the other Church members to be keeping the Sabbath, and that's just the wrong motive behind it. No, the spirit of the matter of the Sabbath is to come to learn to listen to God, to learn to love. It's exciting! Truth is exciting!

The spirit of the matter in the sense of the second truth, God's Church, is to be one of the called out ones, to understand the blessing of a calling, to realize that the Creator of the universe who can do anything, knows everything, He decided to call or awaken us. Whew! I'm part of the Body of Christ? What a responsibility to all the other humans out there that I carry God's name. What a huge responsibility! That's the way we should see it.

Well, tithes and offerings are the same, the spirit of the matter. Giving an offering has to be done with the right attitude. Now, this is an incredible truth because tithes and offerings test attitudes. It's one of the greatest tests in God's Church. Tithes and offerings are a great test because if we become a bit slack we don't see the importance of it, like God commands in Deuteronomy 16:16. Let's look at that. You know these scriptures very well.

Deuteronomy 16:16. Today we're really looking at the truth from the point of view of the spirit of the matter. Because, yes, people can know the truth. You can have knowledge of it. You can get on the website and print it off and you can memorize them, but really it boils down to the spirit of the truth, why the truth exists. Well, it's about our spiritual growth.

Deuteronomy 16:16— Three times (three seasons) of the year, which we know, all the males, its baptized members, shall appear before the LORD their God (the LORD your God) in the place which He chooses. That's interesting - the place God chooses. Now, there have been times in God's Church where this has become an issue. So we're having the Feast this year in Florida. "Well, I don't want to go to Florida." Attitude. But no, but God inspired His servants to choose that location. "But I don't want to go." Can we see what's wrong with that? Because the place where God chooses is God chose the Feast sites. If we don't see that we're looking very physical, we're looking to humans.

Yes, I must say, I chose the Feast site in Australia for various reasons, and yes, there may be people that disagree with it. But I know they don't disagree with me at all, they disagree with God. Now, whether I was right or wrong it's all irrelevant. You know, absolutely irrelevant whether I was right or wrong in choosing that location. I believe its right based on all the aspects of having to choose a Feast site. In the end, outside of that, that's the choice that God has made. That's the way I see it. If people can't see that that's the choice of the Feast site and that God did it, it's that person's problem. It's definitely not mine because I believe that God inspired it for various reasons, which I don't always see. But that's where it is. It could be that it could be just testing other people's attitudes. Oh dear.

All the males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses; at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Eternal empty-handed. You know, we know, yes, people can give offerings as outlined in the Church seven times in a year. Just because somebody does it seven times a year, does that make them members of the Body of Christ or in the truth? No, it doesn't. That is a truth, but it's the attitude behind why. They can't do it begrudgingly.

Verse 17—Every man shall give as he is able. That's interesting. What does it mean by "as he is able?" Now, it's referring to baptized members here. What is it when we are "able?" Well, it's about an attitude, again because we're all able. Everybody's able. People who have nothing basically are still able. Five cents, we're still able, but it's about the attitude of the five cents. Remember the sermon, the parable that Jesus Christ gave about the Pharisee, I think it was, and the widow, and she gave little? The attitude was right. So five cents with a right attitude is better than a thousand dollars with a wrong attitude. The mind can't grasp that, you know as far as a carnal mind. It goes, "Thousand dollars versus what? Five cents?" It's the spirit of the matter, which is what we're about. We're about the spirit of the matter.

So, **every man shall give as he is able**. Everybody is able to give seven times a year. Everybody. There is no exception to that. One cent. Because it's about the way we think. Now, giving reflects an attitude towards God. That's what it really does. Giving reflects an attitude towards God when we give offerings. ...**according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you**. Now, that goes back to this thinking, "according to the blessing," because to have any type of income is a blessing because the history of mankind is there's been many of people that have had nothing. Their whole purpose in life was to get up in the morning early to go out to the field and plow or plant and to try to find something to eat. Their whole life was based about eating; eating a meal, not necessarily three. Just eating a meal was the purpose of their life. It still goes on in lots of countries today. They get up and their whole thinking is about what are we going to have for a meal today? Because there's nothing.

Now, we're so blessed in the western world in general that that's not what we do. We get up and think about the traffic or something else. We don't think about three meals because you can go down to the supermarket. We might think about our credit card, maybe. But in comparison this was their life; it was just trying to find a meal. So God says we're to give according to the blessing which He's given you. So whatever we have, we've been blessed. I want to repeat that. Whatever we have, we've been blessed. Because it's God that's allowed it. Because there's thousands and thousands of people that have nothing. So whatever we have, well, we've been blessed. Well, we give according to that blessing, the way we perceive it.

Now, some people may have a lot more and can still not be thankful for that blessing. Others may have very little and may see it as an enormous blessing... enormous blessing just to have that. So it's the way we view it. It's the spirit of the matter, whether we see God in it or not. It all boils down to our relationship with God. So tithing is about a relationship with God and it can be affected by the way we think, the spirit of the matter.

I want to look at a particular Proverb. Proverbs 21:27, because this goes back to a spirit of a matter. **Proverbs 21:27—The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination**, and we'll stop there. Why? Why is the sacrifice of the wicked an abomination? Well, they're not of God, and yet they're maybe sacrificing an animal at this point—we'll look at it two different ways. Look at it from the point of view of physical sacrifice and they go up and they sacrifice it. They're not believing God, listening to God, but they're killing animals. Well, it's an abomination to God. That's the way God sees it. The reason is that it's selfishly motivated without the person knowing it. So they may do it, just like tithing, sacrifice, we give it, but the motivation behind it is just natural, carnal. So that's an abomination to God. However, this is the other, the opposite to it: **how much more whenever he/she brings it with wicked intent!** Because now we're down to the spirit of the matter. It's knowingly doing evil to get for self. Whereas the first one, it's just an abomination before God because it's the natural mind. This is contrived. This is knowing. It's like Ananias and Sapphira with their money; it's knowing, it's willful. We're doing it for a reason. It's the spirit of the matter, the spirit of the matter of giving.

How much more? How much more of an abomination is it to God when they bring it, or he or she brings it with wicked intent? This is willful. This is deliberate. I am going to do this because of "this" particular reason (whatever it is). That reason will be to get for self because that's natural. Everything that a human does is getting for self, even though it's not perceived. So we can see that giving has big issues with it with regards to the spirit of the matter.

2 Corinthians 9. We're probably only going to get through the first three truths today. The key to this really is the truth exists for spiritual growth. That's the reason it exists. That's how we grow, by believing God and listening to God. It's the only way to grow, if we listen to God.

2 Corinthians 9:6. This is talking about attitudes, which is the spirit of the matter. So we can look at the spirit of the matter from the Sabbath. We can look at the spirit of the matter whether we're a member of the Body of Christ. We can look at the spirit of the matter when it comes to tithes and offerings.

This is Paul: **But this I say: He who sows sparingly, which is someone who's a bit mean spirited, will also reap sparingly.** Now, this is like being stingy. Well, God's saying it's connected. This physical thing's connected to something spiritual. So if we sow sparingly, we're a bit stingy, we're looking at it all physically, well there is something that's going to come back, but it's going to be very small because there's a wrong attitude in it. **And he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.** So it's about giving to God. So if we give to God with the right attitude - it's not the amount, it's the attitude that's involved - God will have an attitude back to us and God will favor us. There's blessings and cursings. So if we do it with the right attitude God will give more of His spirit, which is the greater blessing. It's not physical things. The greater blessing would be to have more spiritual knowledge, more spiritual growth. To be more like God would be the bountiful part of this.

So let each one give as he purposes in his heart... So it requires thinking. Why am I doing what I'm doing? Why am I giving it? **...not grudgingly,** "Oh no! I've got to do an offering seven times a year? You're joking! What a burden this is to me!" **...or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.** It's about the attitude or the spirit of it. **And God is also able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work,** because it's about a spiritual relationship. It's actually spiritual in nature.

I'll start to wind up. Normally I have lots of notes. I just want to go to a conclusion. You can be turning to Matthew 15:10.

God will continue to reveal truth to His Church because it enables spiritual growth. So if we look at why truth exists, truth exists for our spiritual benefit so that we can transform our thinking to be more like God. So every time truth enters the Church we should see it as an opportunity to be more like God, to think like God does, because God's word is truth, therefore, if truth is given it's

us having the potential to be more like God. Truth is our spiritual strength, which gives us courage.

Now, I know there's many a time in life where, you know, we're seen as different, but there is a courage connected to truth. I can remember many a time where people have said, "Boy, Wayne, you know, you're really bold and courageous about that." I've had to think about it; I don't take credit to self, but I knew where my courage came from. I know where my boldness came from. It was actually connected to the Sabbath and tithing. For both of those in particular I had a boldness because I really didn't care whether I got sacked. When I went up to my boss the first time, the first one I had back in '82, and he'd really thought I'd lost it. He really did. I felt sorry for him in one way, but I'm a bit zealous by nature and don't always think things through very clearly, but I went up to him and I think I'd been up to Perth and met two ministers in a hotel and I'd come back and the next day I went in to him and I said, "Guy, I'm a Sabbath keeper and I'm no longer going to be able to work Friday night, Saturday." It was like, Boom! I'm in retail, you know, 30% of all the business is Friday night and Saturday and "You're what? You're no longer going to work?" And I said, "I'm not available anymore." It shocked them.

He knew. He tried to talk me down and said, "No, next Friday..." I think it was a Wednesday maybe or something, and anyway, I just didn't turn up so they had to redo staffing levels and schedules and things like that. Anyway, after about six weeks of going through this he then went off to another country town and left as the store manager and he said, "Would you come with me?" I was only new in the Church and I said, "No. I'm going to stay here." I was very adamant about it. It was the beginning of our calling. Anyway, he went to another country town as store manager and I stayed behind and kept the Sabbath. At that time we found out that there was no church where we were, down in country town in Albany at that time in Western Australia, and therefore, we said, "You know, we need to find where the Church is." We'd written to the Church backwards and forwards and found out there was a Church in a country town called Banbury - Worldwide Church of God - and being impetuous as I am I said, "We're going to sell all the furniture and I'll get you new stuff." She learned not to believe me. "I'll get you all new stuff." We sold everything, moved up to Perth, got a caravan, put the caravan on the back of the car, drove to Banbury, and started looking for the Church. I didn't have a job because I'd left. And I backed up the caravan, put it up, with two kids, drove around all day, and couldn't find it. I couldn't find the Worldwide Church of God anywhere! We'd been to every building. There's no building. Then we find out, of course, it's out in a little hole out in the country. So we were so excited by that very point.

And over time, of course, I didn't have a job. So went to Banbury where Guy, the person I'd resigned to as a Sabbath keeper was the manager. I walked up to Guy and he said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "Oh, I moved here." I'm sure he's thinking, "I only offered you the job six weeks ago and you're here, and you wouldn't come!" So, I said, "Well, yes. Same conditions. Can't work Friday night, Saturday." He said, "Look I've got no work because the job which I was going to give you is gone." I said, "You got anything?" "I'll start you part-time." So I started off part-time because

it does give you a boldness. I believed my calling. I believe God is in charge and if God wanted me to have a job, I'd have a job. It's just the zeal that you have as that first love. Over time it worked out. It really worked out. God intervened and gave me full time employment in that store. Other people over time have shown favor. The first thing I've generally been bold about is the Sabbath. It's me. They'd say, "Would you come up to Perth and look after this particular...?" And I'd say, "Yeah. But I can't work Friday night, Saturday." Because if they say no, I don't really care. True? You're the same. If they turn around and say, "Well, sorry, there's no job for you." I'd say, "Okay. That's fine. You don't want me? That's fine." I know God has called me for a purpose, and the goal, the sixth truth is far more important than all this work and all this physical. It's far more important. If we don't have a job and don't have an income, we don't have a job and we don't have an income. Doesn't matter. The end result is what we're after. True? The end result is we want to hear from God what the truth is and we want to obey the truth. And whatever that takes is whatever that takes.

Matthew 15:10. So there is a boldness that we have, brethren, that people can't comprehend. I've had personality tests done at various companies, personality tests. I wouldn't say you'd necessarily go for them. They have computers and they sat there and went through it all and they came up with a conclusion they said they didn't understand. They couldn't understand why there was a level of humility but extreme boldness because I was honest in my tests. With most people, naturally, if you're carnal, you're not honest. When they ask you a question and you don't want them to find out about you, what do you do? You lie. They build all these programs in to try to find the lie factor in your results. Then they come in and say, "We can't find a lie factor. You're humble, but you're bold." How can you tell people? How can I explain to them it's God's spirit? It's God's spirit. It's got nothing to do with this bit of paper in your computer. It's God's spirit that makes me bold. That's what makes me bold. That's what makes you bold. And what is it all about? The truth. The truth will make you bold. If you believe it God will make you bold. You'll have this confidence in God because we believe God.

Matthew 15:10—Then he called the multitude and said to them, Hear and understand: ...but what goes out of the mouth defiles a man, which is talking about food. So it's not what goes out, but what goes into the mouth. It's not what you eat that defiles you, "But what comes out of a mouth, this defiles a man." Now, we have to look at this because people misunderstand it and say, "Oh, it's what you say." No, it's the intent of what we say. That's what defiles us on a spiritual level because someone can come up and say, "Oh, you look fantastic today. You look really healthy." In the back of the mind they're saying, "You look really bad!" See, it's the intent. Why did they? Why did the person tell me I looked good today? What are they trying to get from me? That's what my mind thinks when I'm dealing with worldly people and people throw compliments out. We have a power, true? We have a strength. We know it's the natural mind complementing an ego, what they think is an ego, but we would sit there and go, "Hmmm, don't take it to self. Do not take it to self." And, "There is something in this." Only we can do that. The world can't do it. So what defiles us is the intent of the words, not just the words.

Then his disciples came and said to him, **Do you know the Pharisees are offended when they heard this saying?** They're upset by it because they're saying, "Oh, it's not food that defiles." Because they're physical.

Verse 13—But he answered and said, Every plant which My Father in heaven has been planted will be uprooted, will be destroyed. So anything that is not in unity with God will be destroyed in the end. **But let them alone.** Leave them alone to themselves and their selfishness because they can't understand. **They are blind leaders of the blind.** They're spiritually blind. Now, we, brethren, need to be aware that the world is spiritually blind. It's only somebody who is called, who is called to hear the truth, believe the truth, keep the Sabbath, be part of the Body of Christ, and do tithes and offerings that can hear. It's simple. That's just the truth. That's the way that it is.

So these blind leaders, **if the blind lead the blind, both fall into a ditch.** That's what we see on TV every single day, and on the news, and everywhere, it's the blind leading the blind because they haven't been called or awakened to a particular point at this time. They haven't been called to it.

Then Peter answered and said to him (to Christ), **Explain this parable.** So Jesus said, **Are you also without understanding?** Because, see, we can know things, but understanding is totally different. It requires God's spirit to understand it and go, "Ah, it's the spirit of what is said, not what is said." **Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth (food, physical) goes to the stomach and is eliminated? But those things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart,** so it's from our thinking, it's the motive behind it, motive and intent, **they defile a man.** For out of a heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blaspheme. **These things which defile a man, they're sin, but to eat, which is unwashed hands, or unwashed hands, which is what they were complaining about, does not defile a man.**

So we can see, brethren, the truth is something that we have this opportunity to hear. We have the opportunity to live it. Out of all of this it requires God's holy spirit. We understand it. So why the truth? The truth is for us, for our spiritual growth, for the purpose of truth 6, which is to enter Elohim at a point in time.