

We're continuing today in the series *God's Tithes and Offerings*, with this being *Part 3*.

Once again, this series is addressing our attitude, our spirit concerning how we think about God or think toward God. And this is one of the areas that sometimes tests that or tries that in people as they're coming along and have to come to a point where they realize we don't work seven days a week anymore, if someone is, and they have to pare down their budget accordingly. And then when they find that God says we are to tithe then that affects the budget as well. So, those are the kinds of things that can sometimes test and try people as to how they think and as to whether or not God's going to be first.

And so, as you go all the way back to Abel, Cain and Abel, talked about the offering that was offered up. Cain's was rejected, Abel's was received, and the story behind that one there is something that a lot of people just don't understand, is that it was about attitude and the thinking toward God. Cain's and Abel's were totally different and God points that out in several places.

But we come to a time later on concerning Abraham, which we're going to go into again today here because I believe all of you have missed *Part 2* and will catch it later. But in *Part 2* we ended last week going through some things in Hebrews, which we're going to go back to now to start up and to refresh ourselves just a little bit here so you can catch the concept of what's being said.

But another occasion when patriarch Abraham made it very clear that God was first in his life and that he was giving Him the tithes and the offerings.

Anyway, beginning in **Hebrews 6:13—For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could give oath by no one greater, He gave oath according to Himself.** So, it's starting out here about God and about an oath that He gave to, if you will here, Abraham and **saying, Surely in blessing, I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you.** And that's been going on for hundreds and hundreds of years in an awesome way, if we comprehend and understand what that's about.

Saying, Surely in blessing, I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply you. So, after he had patiently endured ("persevered" is the word) **he obtained the promise. For men indeed give oath by what is greater.** So, showing here that mankind oftentimes use God or whatever god's they believe in and give oath by that when they swear or give oath/their word to someone. And so, that's what it's covering here. So, it's always about someone greater than themselves.

Men indeed give oaths by what is greater, for an oath given by them for confirmation end of all disputes. And so, it's a custom of mankind oftentimes to do that kind of thing, that they're going to tell the truth. Which we know that very often they don't. But again, it's about an oath.

Verse 17—Wherein God, desiring to more greatly show the heirs of promise.... So again here, all through time, and Abraham, starting with Abraham, but recording it that He's going to show something here in a very powerful way by His word. **...to more greatly show the heirs of promise the immutability** or "the unchangeableness" is what the word means, "the unalterableness," if you will, **of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath.**

So again here, He's saying, God, is saying, recording here that He is doing something in the sense of those who are heirs of the promises of Him, of God, and that He's confirming those promises in a very powerful way by an oath, **that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie...** So that's one of those things. The other is that God gave an oath. So, even though that's mentioned earlier those are the two things being referred to here: God gave oath. Unlike with mankind, with God, it is impossible for Him to lie.

So again here, showing this by two immutable things the heirs of promise have been given this, **we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.** So again here, a confidence that God says we're to have, that we're able to have because of this in understanding God Almighty, learning about God as God begins to open up our minds and helps us to understand Him, and giving us these things concerning a hope.

And this has a lot to do with the subject of tithing, to understand what God has told us we're to have, why we're called, the opportunity to begin to see things that it's impossible for human beings to see unless God works with the mind, unless God opens up the mind and begins to give us things that there is no other way to understand, to comprehend. Because God communicates through the power of His holy spirit to that spirit essence to all human beings, in that regard, but to those who are baptized even more so as we come to understand about that spirit essence that God gives in the human thinking, in the human mind.

And He communicates those truths as He begins to draw us and call us; we begin to see things that we've never understood before. We begin to grasp them. We begin to, which is an awesome thing, it's just something you know. It wasn't... it isn't by the ability to prove something in the sense of going through scriptures and the ability to use a Strong's Concordance, or the ability in Greek and Hebrew to come to those truths. Because mankind has had those things and isn't able to come to the truth of what God is doing.

And yet God calls us, begins to draw us, and shows us things that very few have ever understood. And then what an awesome thing, you just know it. It's in the mind. There is no way to explain it. You can't explain it to others that there is that which you just know in the mind. It's awesome. Things about the Sabbath, things about God, things about the creation.

We have a place very close to where we live where they have built or reconstructed their idea of the size of the ark. It's advertised. I think it's only about fifteen miles away, thirty kilometers, whatever. And

people can take tours of it, pay to go through to see the thing. And they also have not too far away, the same organization, has what they call a creation museum. But what's kind of odd taking that tour, they have the different levels of the ark, of how they think it was built and so forth, and the different animals that are on it. And then you come to one point and there are little, baby dinosaurs. It's like...?

And in their creation museum, they go through these things in a different belief about how that there were dinosaurs on the earth at the same time as mankind. And I don't know if it was because of the flood or whatever, the ideas that they have, but anyway, where they disappeared, I don't know how they deal with all that because I haven't bothered to look into it. Because we know the truth, we know what happened a long, long time ago.

But indeed, the earth was created, things were put on it, life was put on it, incredible things that nowadays people can go out and discover whether it be dinosaurs, or as I used to do as a kid in Kansas, go out in certain areas where you could even see the areas where the shoreline used to be in Kansas – which is the middle of the U.S. – and here it was covered by seas and oceans. And you can see where the plateau was higher up. And then down farther you could go down there, you could go out there and we would, after a hard rain, go out there and find shark's teeth. Incredible!

And there were dinosaurs found in the same area, skeletons that are in museums now. And yet people don't understand the timing involved in all this because it becomes important. That's why a lot of people poopah, make fun of the fact that mankind...when it's stated that mankind has only been here for about six thousand years. And they can't put all that together. Well, we know that dinosaurs existed. And as a whole traditional Christianity can't answer all that, what happened.

What an awesome thing to understand it, and that when Genesis starts it's so clear the earth was already here. When you start reading in that context, it was already here, and God started remolding and refashioning to place life again on the earth, awesome.

And so again here, **A hope that we have**, as it says, **as an anchor to our life**. This is what, if we'll respond to God in a right way, spurs us on. We continue to live and to do what God has given us to accomplish, and look forward to those things that are ahead. **We have an anchor to our life both sure and steadfast**. Why? Because God promised it by an oath. It's absolute. It's sure. It's steadfast. It's not going to move; it's there.

...sure and steadfast which enters the presence behind the veil. And so, it's even showing more here because it's about Christ and it's showing here why we're able to have this. Because everything is through Christ and the power that God has given to us through the Passover. He fulfilled the Passover. The fact that he's our High Priest and what that means. And so again, those are the things that give us the ability to do what we do.

...where the forerunner has entered in, even Joshua, having become High Priest forever according to the order, or as the word means, “the arranging” or “the manner” of Melchizedek. So, whatever this manner of or this arranging of Melchizedek is all about, he fulfilled it. He became our High Priest.

Hebrews 7:1—For this Melchizedek, King of Salem, King of Peace, priest of the Most High God. Again, these are a little bit awkward in translation but again, continuing on... **who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.** So, we understand the story of how God Almighty revealed Himself in different ways to Abraham and to others in Old Testament times and spoke to them at different times, or communicated to them. In this particular case it was as a matter of Melchizedek, the High Priest. And it doesn't give much of the story, but Abraham knew who it was and had great respect to Him because to him this is from God. Whether he grasped more than that is doubtful because God was presenting Himself in a physical form to Abraham to see Himself as Melchizedek, to see God as Melchizedek.

And it says here, then, this was **when Abraham was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him.** So, again, we know the story in the Old Testament of how that Lot had been taken and different ones had been taken in the region there and swarms came down, army came down and took people away, in essence, and Abraham and others got together and went out after them and God gave them favor in being able to bring everyone back and to be able to take everything then of the armies that they conquered if you will.

And it says, **the kings and blessed him, in whom Abraham gave a tenth of all, first being translated King of Righteousness,** again, speaking of Melchizedek, who it was, **and then the King of Salem, meaning King of Peace, without father, without mother, without genealogy.** And there is only one who can fulfill that. No father, no mother, no genealogy. He wasn't of mankind, yet He manifested Himself in that manner to Abraham.

...having neither beginning of days nor end of life. God Almighty. So again here, God is setting up something to begin a process of revealing part of His plan of what God was going to do later on through His Son Joshua, that Joshua was to become the High Priest forever and forever, and that this was only a revelation of in part, of the beginning of the process of what God intended, that there would be a High Priest forever.

...without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, made like unto the Son of God. So again here, revealing part of His plan, “Made like unto the Son of God.” That's who was going to fulfill it, His Son. He was going to accomplish it. He was going to do it.

...made like unto the Son of God, remains/abides a priest continually forever. Now consider how great this to whom... It doesn't say “man.” Again here, sometimes because translators don't understand what was taking place they insert words according to their thinking, according to their understanding rather

than translating according to what is specifically in Greek or in Hebrew in many cases as we find out. And this is one of those occasions.

Now consider how great this to whom even the patriarch Abraham, so this One, if you will, **to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils**, the best of his spoils. Gave that tenth to God Almighty, or to Melchizedek, if you will.

Then indeed those who are of the sons of Levi... So, Paul is — again, this is to the Hebrews and Paul is explaining to them because his job was, again, to go to the Gentiles. But this was written, in essence, to his own people, to the Hebrews, to explain to them something that had taken place, especially within the Church now because the Church had been well established at this point and he was going to show a change that had taken place from what the Jews understood at that time concerning the temple, concerning tithing, concerning the giving of offerings and so forth, and the work of the high priest going all the way back to when it began with Aaron.

And so, Paul is explaining to them something in basic terms that they could understand, though they didn't comprehend it, we understand that. They couldn't see it all because of God's spirit. It takes God's spirit to comprehend those things fully and completely on a spiritual plane.

So, it's going through here and telling the story about the sons of Levi. Why Levi? Because they made up the priesthood. There was the high priest and then all those who were a part of the tribe of Levi and the different jobs they had throughout the Old Testament in the work of the temple and the functioning of the temple. And they became so large that after a time some of their routines and jobs would only be something that would consist of a couple weeks in an entire year because they had to rotate to fulfill the job that God had given to them as a people. So, they'd grown so large, especially by the time of Christ, that this is part of what was taking place.

So, it's telling the story about the sons of Levi, **those who are the sons of Levi who received the priesthood**. Because God gave that to them, made them priests. We understand they didn't have an inheritance in the land like the other tribes were given. Instead, God says, "I am your inheritance," and that's where the tithe came in. That's where it was to be used, first tithe.

...who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law. So, the children of Levi who consist of, make up the priesthood, they have a charge from God, a command for all of Israel. They were to pay the tithes and give it to the Levites. And the Levites had the command then to receive it. That was their inheritance.

...received tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, although they have come from the loins of Abraham. So, he's showing something here because so often when talking to the Jewish people at that time, or even up to now, because of the things they read in the Old Testament and cling to in that respect, he's making a point here of something they don't grasp. Because they will always

go back to, and even in the time of Christ and to the apostles, go back to Moses or to Abraham, and use those arguments.

So, he's using the reality here of what God did through Abraham. But sometimes they'd go back to and talk about the law of Moses and what God had established for them as a priesthood. And so, he's showing them something here that's far, far greater. Awesome story.

...from their brethren, although they have come from the loins of Abraham. But He whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham. So, around about way to try to help... not even to help them but to make a point of something of a change that was taking place as far as the priesthood was concerned and the giving of tithes was concerned.

But he says here, "But He whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham." So, it's God Almighty. Everything belongs to God. What an incredible thing here. Here Abraham gives tithes to Melchizedek, who is the manifestation of God Almighty in the first place, but it's about a relationship. It's about Abraham's attitude toward the things that God gave him in the different ways He manifested Himself.

This isn't the only way He manifested Himself to Abraham. There is the occasion when He came there, visited with him for a time, angelic beings with Him as well, God Almighty, in a physical human form, ate with Abraham. Incredible stories. And then this occasion here revealing Himself as Melchizedek.

And so, it was with the people that God was going to use in a very powerful way. His choice, His decision as to whom He would call, whom He would mold and fashion, whom He would tell to get up from his family and travel to a totally different region. And he did. He obeyed God. It says he went. He had this attitude, this mind of serving God. And God molded and fashioned these things within him, worked with him. Incredible stories as we go back and read some of those things as we have in times past.

So, he's talking here about a genealogy, is not derived from them, received tithes from Abraham, **and blessed him who had the promises.** So, Abraham, making the point Abraham was long before Moses. Long before. Because the children of Israel had to be brought out of Egypt. And so, he's making a point here there's something taking place that is very important for them to grasp and comprehend and not cling to their own ideas about what was given through Moses or what was given to the Levites because he's revealing here this is all changing now as far as the Church is concerned.

Verse 7—Now beyond all contradiction, beyond all dispute, the lesser is blessed by the better. Here mortal men receive tithes, but there He receives them, of whom it is testified that He lives. Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak.

So again, he's showing this all goes back to Abraham because this is where it started. This is where it started with a people with whom God was working because Levi, the tribes of Israel, in time their lineage

all comes from Abraham. And he's showing here there's something far, far greater that they needed to understand.

For he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. So, kind of a humorous way of stating some of this, like, Levi wasn't even around. Moses wasn't around. The rest of Israel that had to be taken out of Egypt; they weren't around. It started with Abraham. So, he's going back in time showing when it all began.

Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood... So, in other words, the tabernacle, all that the priests do, the high priest, and so forth, if perfection came that way... He's making a point here perfection doesn't come through physical routine and the things that were given to them through Moses in the wilderness. No one can be perfected. Nothing happens. A change doesn't take place that God intends for human beings to go through. It was purely physical. Everything was physical routine, rituals, and so forth. And he said, he's making a point here, perfection, change, growth doesn't come that way.

Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law)... So much for the Hebrews was "It's the law, and whatever law is given through Moses, that's what we have to do and no change can take place." He's showing here, "Yes, there is. There's a big change taking place and you need to understand some of your history better and what took place and what God is doing with you."

So, the people did receive the law, **what further need was there that another priest should rise up according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?** So, posing the question, "Why is there a need that there would be another that would rise up and not be after Aaron?" Because this goes back to Abraham. That's what he's pointing out here.

For the priesthood being changed... So, he's told them (we've gone through some of this), making it very clear here that there's someone who's fulfilled Melchizedek, the order of Melchizedek, and it's Joshua the Christ. He is the High Priest. Not a physical high priest anymore over the Levites or over Israel but now a spiritual one that lives forever.

"...that another should rise up according to the order of Melchizedek." In other words, of God, from God, the first in the God Family, if you will, the first to become part of Elohim. That's why he's referred to as the first of the firstfruits, the first one to be resurrected to be given life everlasting.

So again here, **after the order of Melchizedek and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed of necessity there is also a change in the law.** In the sense of the administration of how this is to be done, the tithes, and so forth. That's what he's talking about here.

So again here, the administration of the law had to be changed. There would no longer be a Levitical system, obviously a priest who offered sacrifices or collected tithes. And that's the point he's making. There would be no more offering of sacrifices, obviously, and the Church of course was taught that, they

were learning that. But still, the Jewish people were very difficult to work with because these things were so etched into their minds.

I think of the Church as God has given growth to it over time, going back to Herbert Armstrong and various things that had to be addressed in time as God began to reveal greater truth. Things like Pentecost, when He hadn't given to Herbert Armstrong to understand that no, it's not on a Monday, it's on Sunday. That was a huge change for the Church back in 1974.

And it was God's choice when to give that to him. He could have given it to him from the very beginning when they began to in the late 30's and early 40's began to keep the Holy Days on their own, him and Loma. And they did that for seven years before he started teaching it to the Church because in his mind he had to know this is of God and this is what is to be given to His people.

And so, God at that time could have given to him at that time very easily. He gave him the understanding of all the Holy Days. Passover, beginning with Passover and going into the Holy Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Atonement, Trumpets, all the way through Feast of Tabernacles, Last Great Day. Had a basic outline and understanding of those things. But didn't know the day that Pentecost was to be kept.

And then when that was changed hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people left God's Church over it, turned against because to them he did not have the right to change that. "You can't..." Because in their mind it was law.

And that's very much what the Hebrews were like. Even though they were being called into the Church they still had this attitude and this mind of this connection they had, or felt they had with the Levitical system and with the priesthood and with the law. And so, Paul is telling them "Things have changed. You have a High Priest now, no longer physical. Eternal in the heavens," as he states it in various places here.

So again, he's showing here that there will no longer be a Levitical system of sacrifices and the like, no longer priests that will receive tithes from God or what they considered to be from God from the rest of Israel. The sacrificial system had ended because Christ fulfilled it. Fulfilled all. Everything to do with the sacrificial system, in that respect, he fulfilled, starting with Passover and the lamb of God and starting with all the sacrifices that were given, in essence.

When you see some of those things about the various Holy Days and what were offered up there are things about Christ and what the High Priest did. I think of Leviticus 16 when it goes through and talks about those things having to do with the Day of Atonement and it spells everything out in great detail. They took it physically; we understand it as things that Christ fulfilled all the way through from the beginning to the end of it.

So again here, he's making it clear that that tithing system hadn't ended, it wasn't being ended, but the administration of it and how it was to be handled, that was changing because now there's a High Priest, Joshua the Christ, who fulfilled, fulfills, is Melchizedek, fulfills the role of Melchizedek.

Verse 13—For he of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe. Who? Joshua. He's of the tribe of Judah. He's not a Levite. So, it's not by inheritance through the Levitical system that this is happening, he's making it clear he's of a totally different tribe. He's of Judah.

For he of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. So, he's making it clear here never was anyone of Judah ever to officiate in the Levitical system at the altar.

For it is evident that our Lord was made to arise from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. So, if you want to look at all the law that God gave to Moses, nothing was ever said and given to Moses that the tribe of Judah would have anything to do with the priesthood.

So, it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there rises up another priest. So, he's making it very clear here this is far more important than what was ever given to the children of Israel, to the Levites, if you will, after they had come out of Egypt. Goes back to Abraham. It goes back till Melchizedek and who He was.

So, it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek there arises another priest, who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. Awesome! From God Almighty and that which God gave to Joshua after being resurrected from the dead. Elohim. In the Family. Now age lasting life, eternal life, if you will.

Verse 17—For He testifies (God Almighty does): You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. So, there is that which was spoken by God Almighty that far exceeds what was given in a fleshly way or a physical lineage to the Levitical system or to the Levites.

For on the one hand, there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness. So, something we all learn through time, the sacrificial system doesn't give perfection, the law, because it's there doesn't give perfection. Not of itself. **...for the law made nothing perfect.** Just because it exists, just because it's there, if you will, even the ten commandments or any of the rest of the law given throughout the Old Testament or given to Moses, through Moses, saying these things do not give you perfection. Why? Well, what a blessing that we understand that, that God shows us the spirit of the law.

And that's what we're to live. It has to come out of the mind. The mind has to change. That's why it says in Romans 12 that the mind has to be transformed. That's why I love the word "repent." Because it means "to think differently." That's what it literally means in the Greek language. And so, God calls us to think differently, and we have that awesome blessing to do so through the power of God's spirit. Not through our own will or ability or power, because we don't have it.

That's why we've gone through the series recently about fasting, about prayer life, and so forth with God. Because not one of us has the ability to keep God's law and God's way of life without His help,

without His holy spirit. What an incredible thing to understand why Joshua died for us. It's not just to be forgiven of sin but it's for the greater purpose as it reveals there in John 13, 14, 15, and 16 as we read on Passover there, is the reason that was given so that God the Father and so that Joshua the Christ could dwell in us. Receive the holy spirit that gives us the ability then to begin thinking differently, to be able to come into agreement with God Almighty, and to begin then to be motivated by His holy spirit to live differently.

Just having the law doesn't do that. Israel is proof of that. Israel is great proof that just because you have the law and you're hard-hearted Israelites, as it brought out, that didn't change. They were that way all the time except for the few with whom God worked and called out of that to work with separately because He gave them His holy spirit. But the rest of Israel, absolute proof.

It doesn't matter what nation it was that God would have worked with, what group of people. The proof was you didn't live His way of life, not the way it was supposed to be in that respect, because it's the mind, it's the attitude, it's the thinking toward God, that you're motivated by that to not sin, to not live what is wrong. And when you do you want to be forgiven of that, you want to change. You don't want that to be a part of your life, so you ask God for the help to change, to change the way you think.

This is where to get a hold of it, up here, not just in the actions that come out of us that so often takes place, but eventually to get to where you fight it up here in the mind.

For on the one hand, there is an annulling of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope through which we draw near to God. A hope. What? That God will dwell in us. Very few on earth have ever had that opportunity and that blessing. The last two thousand years not that many have had that opportunity.

...through which we draw near to God. We have the ability to do it because we can be forgiven of sin. Only when you're forgiven of sin will God have part with us. That's why Christ died, so our sins can be forgiven. Because God will not dwell in sin.

And we know these things. But to live it up here? Just because we know it doesn't mean we're on the right track. Just because we're able to see it doesn't mean we're on the right track. The choice to live it, the desire to live it is what it's all about.

Even so, it is not made without an oath. For they become priests without an oath, but he with an oath by Him who said to him... So, he's making a point here about an oath if you will, and how much greater if you will Joshua is, Melchizedek, who's fulfilling the role of High Priest, how much greater he truly is.

So again here, "Even so, it is not made without an oath. For they became priests without an oath, but he with an oath." They did it because God said to the Levites, in essence, gave to the Levites an inheritance and jobs, responsibilities in the care of the priesthood, the temple, and so forth, the rituals they went through. And yet he's saying Joshua has an oath that was given by God Almighty. The Levites never had

that. Theirs wasn't meant to be everlasting and continuing. Not at all. But Joshua's was being the Son of God.

But he with an oath, Joshua's with an oath, by Him who said to him, The Eternal has sworn and will not change, You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. It's beautiful. ...**by so much more Joshua has become a surety,** which is the word "a guarantee" of a better covenant. Because the old covenant couldn't save anyone. Didn't have the ability to.

Just because they were given the law and the rituals, and the sacrificial system God made it very clear over a long, long period of time people aren't changed by that. They go through ritual and that's it. That's all it means. It doesn't change the mind, the heart, the thinking of an individual. With God's spirit, we can.

So anyway, at this point, we're going to focus a little more closely on the matter of first tithe and how it's to be administered in our lives now. We understand that in a very good way as a whole. We did address this three years ago and addressed some specific things of some minor changes in one respect concerning retirement age and so forth. But I want to go through this again here and tweak it a little bit because God has helped us to do that even more so now, to see and understand a process here of what He's been giving or what He's giving.

And so again, part of this is going to be revisiting and better streamlining what was covered concerning the subject three years ago. So again, first tithe is very basic. We understand it's about ten percent, and that's after taxes. That's how it's done. It's by your actual increase. And taxes, that's not ours. It belongs to the government wherever we live on the earth. That belongs to them. But the rest we have a responsibility before God to tithe.

So again, a tithe is that which involves a person's obedience to God in giving Him His, His ten percent. Mentioned last Sabbath (which you'll receive in *Part 2* when you have it), but what an incredible thing when we're called, and we come to understand even more deeply that everything belongs to God. Everything is His. And to give to whomever He wills, wants, desires. And yet that's the very purpose He created mankind, is to give us everything.

But it is not owed to anyone. And that's where so many stumble, to where it can become a part of a person goes through the routines of those things that God has given, goes to Sabbath services, Holy Days, and so forth, gives tithes. That isn't where it ends. That isn't what fulfills what God has given to us. And again, we come to understand that through time.

But there have been a lot of people who have stumbled because that's what they have thought in essence. It's the attitude. It's the attitude, it's the thinking that something is now owed. Not thought out, not reasoned with God's spirit, but just a way that people have chosen to live oftentimes in their life, in their thinking. And that's why so many have drifted away through time.

I marvel at that sometimes, to think in the last two thousand years God makes it very clear that the majority whom He has called into His Church have left, have turned away from what they were given as they were being called. Many were called, have been called, and very few chosen out of that through time, especially in the last two thousand years.

And that's heart-wrenching. It hurts when we see that take place within the environment of the Church. Because God has given us the ability to understand what is true. He's given us the ability to see and to know Him, and to have His very spirit, His very life live within us. And to turn against that?

It's very difficult to comprehend the human mind that can do that but it's happened a lot, just a matter of choices. Because it goes back to attitude. It goes back to our thinking toward God. Is God first? Do we seek to place God first in our life in the things we do? And there are many things we're tested and tried in through time in our being within the Church.

So again here, very basic. So again here, taxes, as I mentioned, are not in our control. Christ said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's," which means give to the government what is theirs, what they claim of yours, which is taxation. And what is God's, in other words, that which is a part that you have control over... Because we don't have control over that portion that the king, as we go back in time and look at what they did, they took a certain portion of what people had, whatever that might be. Sometimes it's been very great.

Yours is greater over here than what we have in the States even. Sometimes it boggles my mind how heavily taxed you are in Europe. And don't worry, we feel like we're heavily taxed too, but not as ... We're not as heavily taxed as you are. And what is left over then, that's ours. We have control over that. We don't have control of what government takes. And so, what we have control over God says is His, "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." It's a tithe.

So, we're going to go through some of those points that were talked about three years ago. No tithing is required by God, by the Church through whom God works, no tithing is required on an inheritance, on gifts, on any insurance claim or insurance benefits. Those are not a matter of our labor. Those are not a matter of what we produced. It's not a matter of our increase. These are other areas of life that sometimes there is that which is given for a purpose.

Just as a simple thing as a gift. If it's given to you it's not because you have a business or you worked at a certain place and had a certain income that you had to decide this from.

So again, these points given. No tithing on pensions, monies that you have saved up for retirement or whatever it might be, or things that the government might have in different parts of the world. So, no tithing on pensions. Sometimes there are those programs that companies have had, that they set up which are a pension type program that money is to be paid out to them later on and over a period of time. So, you don't tithe on those.

Sometimes I think of what we call, I guess it's Social Security benefits in the States. Money has been paid in for a long time, whatever it might be, out of your income to the government, and part of it is a retirement program or referred to in that respect a Social Security or whatever to give a certain amount back to people once they have reached a certain age. What is it now? Most of it is 65-67 in through there some people choose, but some can even choose it a little earlier. And that's not to be tithed on. Money had already been paid in through the process of taxation to the government and then they give some back later on. Not enough, really, to live on in many cases, but they give a certain portion back to people.

And yet we've had people in the Church where we've had to contact and let them know, "You don't have the means and the ability to do this. You shouldn't be tithing on your social security. You barely have enough to live on as it is." And so, there's to be a balance in that kind of thing. And people are not required to give offerings... Sometimes people with very little that give too much. In those situations, in their own life, they've got the expenses of rent or whatever it might be, or a payment on a house or other kinds of costs when people are retired, food, and everything just... Inflation hits and those prices, that increase never stays up with that in the first place.

So, I don't like it personally when I see individuals giving too much because of that situation that they're in. They've been in the Church for a long, long time, whatever it might be, they've come to that age and they're still giving a certain amount, sometimes as much as what they were giving before. You think, "You're hurting yourself. You shouldn't think that you have to do that." Sometimes people just think they have to do it.

So, we've literally had to contact different ones at different times and to have a talk with them. It's fine to give some but not that kind of a percentage-wise or whatever.

So again, no tithing on pensions, such as been paid by a company or by oneself for a retirement program. No tithing on any government assistance programs whether it be those who set up for retirement like Social Security, like I just mentioned, or an inability to work. Sometimes people come to a point where it might be an injury or some sickness or whatever, and then those same kinds of funds in different governments kick in to help people. And if that be the case and a person's not able to work and they're receiving that kind of assistance, again, it's not to be tithed on. You can barely live on it sometimes.

Nothing like Workman's Compensation or Unemployment Benefits given because of an accident or poor health conditions or whatever it might be. So, those are not to be tithed on.

So, this next point is an adjustment or a needed clarification on the spirit of the matter that was originally addressed three years ago. And I'm going to address this. It was stated then that no tithes were required to be paid for anyone who is retired and still works. That really isn't the spirit of what needed to be addressed there and that's why we're going through this again in this particular area here, to explain some of that. Because it comes down to ability, it comes down to a lot of different things, need, where

someone is. That's why we've made it very clear that individuals are not to tithe on Social Security and so forth because if that's what you're living on, you don't have a whole lot to live on.

And so, the spirit of this, again, I'm going to try to address this the best way I can. So, again here, God has shown that the spirit of this (I'm going to read some of this), what the spiritual intent of this should be, of its original purpose of why it was addressed in the first place concerning retirement or getting to a certain point in life, is not to be a blanket exemption.

You know, there are times we've contacted different ones to let them know, candidly because of the situation they're in, younger, maybe not just because a person is older, that they are exempt for a certain period of time until they're able to get certain adjustments in their life taken care of. Might be because of a sickness or whatever, the government doesn't give enough help, so sometimes we address some of those things, a blanket exemption from tithing at that point in time in their life because they're in need of help and assistance and sometimes given it.

So, not meant to be a blanket exemption. So again, we're looking at some of the spirit of this. So, all who come into retirement age, speaking of that, going to tweak this a little bit because I feel by conscience I had to address it again and understanding more of the spirit of why we're addressing it in the first place.

So, this is, again, an adjustment to what was originally stated three years ago, so this change goes into effect now. So, it's going to affect some people, okay? That's why I'm stating it this way. So, you don't go back two or three years ago and make up any difference if there is something here that affects you specifically. So, if anyone doesn't understand this they can ask later on but should be pretty clear.

If any need to make changes in how they've been applying this because of what was stated three years ago, please understand... Again, I want to read this because I want to make sure I get this out: Please understand that you do not need to go back and make up any for the adjustments of how you have been applying this within the last three years. This is something that goes into effect now when you hear it.

Rather, this will now go into effect as of this sermon. This is something that if you're not certain where you fall within the parameters of what is now being given, as you are not fully certain of how the spirit of this might apply to you, then rather than going to the ministry and as asking how it might apply to you, I'm asking you to go before God to ask that He gives you help. I'd mentioned earlier you could, but I want to state this. It's better that you go before God.

So, this is going to affect some in the States especially, that are of retirement age, and it's a matter of the spirit and the attitude and the thinking in the mind as to what was given and why it's given in the first place. There are people when they retire who barely live on the government assistance they receive. They're not able to work or don't work. Some of them have (and I may repeat some of this again here as we go through this), some of them in order to make ends meet may work part-time or they may go out and work full-time, but it's to make up the lack of what they're not receiving in the first place because

they have that pressure and that need to continue to take care of, whether it be added benefits given to insurance companies for health reasons and whatever else might be there, transportation.

Anyway, they can't make it, in other words, on the government assistance they're receiving, and they go out and work. They are exempt from tithing. That's the spirit of it. You can't live on what's being given to you. There is nothing saved. You might have a certain amount reserved for an emergency. That's a different sort of matter. Some have very large amounts that have been saved up in reserve. That's a different matter of the spirit. I hope we can understand that difference. Some barely making it, very little that won't last very long if it's needed. Others are in a totally different category.

And so, that's where each individual must go before God in that respect to determine the spirit of what's being given here today. That's all I'm going to say about it in that respect. It's between you and God.

So, in a nutshell, the best way to address this would be to primarily summarize like this: Once of retirement age you find that you must keep working because you do not have enough set aside or saved aside, weren't able to... The way the world is, the way things are, it's very common. ...along with any government assistance you might be receiving as well, then most likely, again here, not most likely, the majority of cases, you're exempt.

There are many who find themselves in such a position upon retirement because they cannot meet basic financial needs such as rent or payment on a house, the ability to pay property taxes, food, medical costs, and so forth. We run into this all the time where individuals have difficulty with that, and they need help.

If that's the case such a person is in need of help, financial assistance, to make ends meet, and so such a person is often forced into working part time or even full time, and such increase... So, in other words, there's a difference here between someone who just chooses to continue working or someone who has to work to make ends meet. I hope that... That's kind of a clarification but of the distinction between the two.

For me, just throw it out, no matter what kind of a job I had or would have in life, if it wasn't this one, I'm not the type basically that's going to retire unless I can't do anything else. I have to be doing something. We all have a different makeup, different thinking, different physical abilities. Sometimes we get to a point where we can't or whatever it might be. There are some in that category that I know of that it'd probably be good if they'd slow down a lot. But sometimes that's what keeps you going.

If someone just keeps working because they would just rather do so or would simply like to keep building up a larger nest egg, or savings, that's a choice. Keep working. That's fine. Just because you're at retirement age, whatever it might be, doesn't mean a person has to retire if they don't want to. They keep working and yet they don't really need it that much, it's just going to make things better for possibly in the future if things continue on. And we don't know so you have to be wise and plan ahead.

So, for those who don't have to because of the pressures and so forth to go out and work and they just wanted to keep doing it, that's a choice. In many cases, you should be tithing, okay? That's the attitude toward God Almighty. There is a difference between whether we're able to because of sickness and health or because of an age factor in life and we've gotten to a point where things are getting harder and it's perfectly fine to retire. But whether you're receiving enough help from the government is another matter, and you feel forced into keep working, you know, there are exemptions there that are perfectly fine and right before God. But if we have plenty and we have a lot, and we're just getting a lot more, what's God is God's.

So, I hope that makes sense. Does it? Okay. And that should be an easier thing for us to judge, each individual. So, this is kind of a different sort of area to address, but I felt conscientiously that I had to address this as far as the Church was concerned, to make sure that we understand. Because the last thing on earth we want to do is make sure we're not misusing something that God has given to us in the sense of either responsibility or the fact that no, we don't have a responsibility there any longer, we are barely surviving.

Hate it when I see people get to that condition in life, and yet it happens out here all the time.

So, the last point concerning first tithe that was addressed, again, four years ago was this. Sometimes people have asked this so I'm just going to answer today rather than different ones that send in questions once in a while. Generally, paying tithes monthly, whether we're... Sometimes people receive cheques every week or money sent to their bank account every week. Sometimes it's every two weeks. Sometimes it's once a month. Most of the time it fits in within those parameters somewhere.

Now, it's nice when it comes in once a month, because it makes extra work if you send stuff in every week, if you're being given a paycheque every week. But if that's the best way you have of regulating your own finances and so forth and you want to make sure it gets in, that's fine. But it makes much more work for the church or for someone sitting in the back row here to record all that stuff. There is a lot of work involved in keeping track of everything, keeping books, and so forth on all this in the sense of banking and everything else that takes place.

And so, what we prefer to see (we'll just call it headquarters), is once a month. That's all you need to do, once a month. But to save up for a long period of time I have found that sometimes that can be a danger to people because if you don't have exceptionally good bookkeeping you can get into trouble that way and some have through time and then get into bad habits.

And again, the reason we're addressing some of this is because the majority of people who have ever left God's Church, this is where they sin. Its other sins involved in their life but here is the one that shows up the most. Sad. Because that's why we read the scriptures earlier about what God addressed in the Old Testament and He tells us "Would you rob God?" And I think, what a horrible thing to get to a state in life where we would do that let alone lie to God.

So, it doesn't matter what sin we have, but tithing is one that's of the mind in a very strong way in the sense that it tends to try us more, seems to, within the Church. And too many have gone by the wayside there.

So, when it comes to tithes and offerings, again, our attitude toward obedience and desire to honor, honors God in such a thing that God established, it should be simple for us. And sadly, so often it's not.

And I don't like going through some of these kinds of sermons on a subject like this because it should be something that is set in our hearts and set in our minds in an attitude toward God. And yet it's one of the things that seem to test or try people so often because we want something different, we want something else in life. And that's how God oftentimes... Well, it's not a test, it's revealed to God Almighty where our heart really is. It reveals what's in our thinking and in our mind. Is God first?

And if we're on guard in this one we're on guard on a lot of other things in our life, because there are a lot of other things that pull people away – relationships, the desire for a wrong kind of relationship, so many other kinds of sins that are out there.

I'm going to throw out here another thing. I think of Herbert Armstrong and what he had to go through. He had a unique work. He understood what his work was. He understood that his was in Matthew 24, "And this gospel of the Kingdom will go into all the world, and then the end would come," the end as far as events that are concerned that would lead up to where we are in the world right here today. And he was given that to understand.

And so, his motivation, his desire, was to do everything he could, and makes it very clear to the Church of Philadelphia things that would take place, that there were doors that would be opened up that no man could close. Powerful! Because when you look at the things that took place, first with radio and how God blessed the Church through radio around the world and some of the stories of some of the ships that were off Great Britain over here, the UK, that broadcast into the UK because they had stringent laws that prohibited such things from being in the country itself, and so they had what they called, I believe they called them "pirate ships" and the broadcasts that were taking there. And that was the early stages of the Church in that particular area.

And yet God began to call people in different parts of the world like that. And then after a certain length of time, the name that was changed in the Church was the Worldwide Church of God because around the world the Church existed. And *The Plain Truth* was going out. The largest magazine in all the world as far as publication in different languages, as far as numbers were concerned, into the millions. Incredible! Month by month. Awesome, when you look back and you think... I think maybe, was it *Reader's Digest* was the closest to hitting the volume of *The Plain Truth* magazine, and you think what an incredible door that was opened up. No restrictions.

They would...people would hear it and then they would hear them talk about this free magazine you can have and sent it out free. And then others like *The Good News* magazine as well added to it later on. And then it turned to TV and more and more things were going out. The books he wrote, the articles that were written, free publications that went, and things that were being done at headquarters, the establishment of three college campuses, took a lot of money – and a lot of tithes. And yet God called those people to accomplish that work. No one was going to shut that door though people tried.

I think of when we had the free stands offering them free in stands in supermarkets or other places. I think they even had them in some of the subways. I think even in London there in different areas. And yet there were people of different beliefs and so forth who would come by and throw them all away, and sometimes destroy stands. And yet people in the Church kept putting them back out there.

But I think of how that we were always on the edge financially because he kept putting everything he could into putting that message out to the world. Because he knew and stated many times, he understood that was his commission.

It's not ours because we understand we live in a different time. We understand we live at the end of an apostasy that took place in the Church where one came along to try to do away with every law that was established, in that respect, within God's Church. Changing the Sabbath back to Sunday. Changing the Holy Days to holidays, permitting people to go back to what they'd been called out of. And the Church was diminished, split up into over six hundred organizations. Incredible, what took place.

And look what's left? How blessed are we to be able to continue on, to have what we have, to have those things that were given to Herbert Armstrong, to recognize he was God's apostle, and for us to even build upon and grow more in what God has given to us over this period of time, and to understand we're at the end of an age.

But one thing we have not lacked in is finances. I don't even know as God's apostle where to use the funds. We try; we've been trying. There are doors that are shut, and they shut right and left. We've been on... We're on Facebook now, able to advertise, and pumping money into that because we are trying to have a message out there to the best we can, to the best of our ability, to forewarn the world of what's about ready to happen. But also, the scattered Church, tens of thousands of people out there who were once a part with us in the Body. And you know, God's going to do what God's going to do and it's very clear that we can only go so far.

We've been on Pinterest for a long time. I don't know how many people over here are familiar with Pinterest. Anybody know what that is? They've blocked us out. We've tried to get back on; they keep blocking us. X, (which used to be Twitter) used to be a very powerful tool. No longer because they don't like the content of what's being put out there concerning the end of this age, concerning a war that's about ready to begin.

That's why I marvel. That's why I've been reading so many of the articles and newspapers... Not newspapers, but in the news articles that have been coming out over the internet and the like all around the world about how governments are looking right now at what's taking place in Ukraine, what Russia and China are doing. Some of that stuff caught...

I think of Korea here, North Korea, and Russia. It says it's like people are shocked. There are governments that said, they're talking about in some of these articles how they're shocked that they have this kind of closeness now and made these agreements that they made. And it's got part of Asia bothered. It has Australia, Vietnam, some of the areas, Japan, they're worried because of what happened between, now, North Korea, just about a week ago, and Russia. And you think, we've known this for so, so long, that this was all in the works, it was all coming. Those are the nations that are going to be together.

And China? And the visits back and forth and what's taking place? And the talk of nuclear war? Every week Russia just keeps ratcheting it up more and more and so does the U.S., so how much time? We don't know. But we do know what's coming.

But where to use all the funds? I don't know. I try to put them out there where we can the best we can. What am I supposed to do? We could have the greatest Feast we ever could imagine if we wanted to, but to me, spiritually, that's not right because it's not about that. Pay everybody's way, have you picked up at the airport in limousines, but that's not what it's about, and God wouldn't be well pleased with that.

So, things for you to pray about as far as the ability to hopefully get a message out there as long as we can, as well as we can because we're basically pumping as much as we can into some of these...

Facebook right now is the main one we're using. We have two or three more that are in the works, but again, they give a lot of... A lot of the stuff today has to do with the sickness of this world that's taking place, of a control of news, of not just of news but of words that are used.

I think of Google. We quit advertising on Google because they were so controlling and all this stuff that has to be... What's the term? I can't think of the term right now. Some of the wording, you can't offend anyone. There are laws... Some countries are suing people, putting people in jail for the craziest of things, for words that people use. And you think, the world has gone nuts!

This flag thing, all the different colors on it. I think you know what I'm talking about. I hate it with all my being! They took something that was a promise from God, a rainbow, and God said, "I'll never destroy the earth again by a flood." And that was His promise. And for people to grasp and comprehend there wasn't a rainbow in the sky before that, it's like, "You've got to be nuttier than a fruitcake." But there are things that God changed on the earth at that time, whatever it was.

We don't understand how mankind could live to be nine hundred plus years old back then, and then after the flood, a few that lived in there, two or three hundred more, or had that as part of their life. But

gradually whittle down in time more and more to a hundred and twenty, and then basically three score and ten, seventy years. Something changed.

But for people to come along, shows a perversion of this world for people to come along and use that, stores that have it. There are stores... Matter of fact, there was one in Eindhoven there. I hate to even walk through it because that's all you see. Every kind of toy under the sun, every kind of thing you might want to use in life, and it's got these colors on it. Well, I'm not going to own any of that, what I'd like to call it. And it just shows the kind of thinking that's in this world today, of how perverted and distorted people's minds are.

And again, this thing like with "X," you know, they claim that they're not kicking people off because of their political beliefs or whatever, that's called Twitter before. And we know one guy that got kicked off for a long time. He started his own company (running for president), so he could get his message out there. And yet, we have a very basic, very simple message, and yet they don't want it out there because you don't want to offend people in certain areas.

So, things to pray about, especially concerning tithes as well, as to how we might be able to best use what God has given to us. Because we have been exceedingly blessed. I don't have the worries that Herbert Armstrong had. I have different ones, but I don't have those. And I think, what an incredible thing.

And if we can get it, if we can grasp it, how blessed we are because of all the truth that God has added to the Church since that time it kind of goes hand in hand with the other in a very powerful way to show how blessed we are by Almighty God.