

# Video Sermon by Tkach to Worldwide Church of God Members, January 1995

## Pt 1

The transcript WCG posted on their website differed from this one, because they **left out** major statements of blame made by Joseph W. Tkach. Their transcript was from the January 10, 1995 (VOL. XXIII. NO 1) Worldwide News.(1) In comparing the WN article with the audio portion of the video one can easily see the word changes they made and/or left out. This is just one more incident of their duplicity and history revision. The WCG has since removed from their website their transcript of this video after we made a notice of these discrepancies. This video has now been mysteriously "misplaced" from their church library.

The following transcript consists of excerpts from the three-hour sermon given by Joseph W. Tkach, Sr.(2) to the members of the Worldwide Church of God to present "the changes." This is the sermon that Joseph W. Tkach, Jr. has called "the Christmas Eve sermon."(3) The truth is that the video was delivered to all congregations on January 7, 1995. This transcript will show the manner in which the new changes were first delivered to the members, with confusion, double messages, shouting and blaming (which are mind control techniques). Also notice how many times the word "we" is used, instead of the leadership taking responsibility for what they had taught the members. There are many subtle messages in this sermon. (**Note:** Contradictory statements and inappropriate usage of grammar is the speaker's error. Bolding for emphasis is ours.)

**UPDATE:** In April 2009 WCG changed their name in the United States to Grace Communion International. (Some local church areas and countries may still carry the former name or a different one.) They have since gone on to embrace New Age teachers and philosophies.

---

Part one of sermon:

**Tkach, Sr. (reading):**

God is granting us greater understanding to the Sabbath--we gain greater spiritual insight in this matter.

Greetings and a pleasant afternoon to everyone. Shabbat Shalom.

I'm sure most of you have heard about the recent trip to Atlanta Georgia [where Earl Williams was speaking], where I felt I was put between a rock and a hard place, because I have received, prior to going there a number of anonymous letters, now supposedly by people who consider themselves good Christians, solid Christians. I would like to have hoped they were, but by their actions something was considerably lacking, because they posed a threat to me. That is hardly the actions of someone who is deeply converted and who has internalized Jesus Christ in their character. Because they threatened that

if I came to Atlanta Georgia and spoke about the Ten Commandments that they were going to stage a walk out. Then on the other hand I received other letters saying that if I spoke about grace the other 50% were going to walk out. So I was given a choice to take sides. I didn't take sides with either group. I took rather the choice of Jesus Christ. That is the side we should be on. These people got themselves all worked up emotionally due to a number of circumstances and it makes you wonder because God says out of the abundance of the heart the mouth does speak.

This is going to be a long afternoon...It's the Sabbath and contrary to any other rumor you might have heard about that we are going to do away with the Sabbath, pray tell what day are we here on today? Is this Monday? Friday? This is the Sabbath, the seventh day, the example that Christ established for us. We're not here to do away with the Sabbath, we're here to gain a better understanding of what God does require of us. Because today there is growing concern for many that want to know if we are an old covenant church or New Covenant church? Is our relationship with God based on the old covenant or the New Covenant? How long will we work in ignorance?

[Discusses ignorance and excuses]

Mr. Armstrong addressed it in 1978 in his article, "The Plain Truth About the Covenant." Much of what he wrote in that article was right. Mr. Armstrong wrote for example that the old covenant is ended. Finished! Mr. Armstrong wrote that Christians today, in that article, live according to the conditions of the New Covenant. Now we have often overlooked the implications of the New Covenant and that is what I wish to address today. Now some have said that is like reinventing the wheel all over again...

[Talks about balancing the wheel and getting into perfect alignment]

We are Christ's ambassadors; hopefully we can all take that to heart.

[Talks about definition of covenant--formal agreement]

The simple terms, as Mr. Armstrong liked to bring down to its most common denominator, the simple term is a formal agreement, or like a contract which is binding on the people who agreed to keep it and all of us made that agreement with God at the time when He brought us to the cross-roads of life and He said, "I set before you life and death, therefore choose life," and we agreed with all the terms that we understood at that time.

We are concerned with the relationship with God and His people. Hopefully, we'll put to rest a lot of the nonsense that is flying around with all the rumors that are going on.

[Talks about types of covenants God made in the past with others]

Three types of covenants. The first is what God made with Abraham, second made with Israel at Mount Sinai, and thirdly the New Covenant that is mediated with Jesus Christ. That is the most important one we are concerned about.

[Talks about the unconditional promise with the covenant of Abraham]

...I'd like to digress here for a minute and go to an article that appeared in the publication that was put out by Global. I think we're all familiar with Global.

**[Holds up the magazine for Global Church of God, founder Roderick C. Meredith, 1992]**

Now if we would put a cover like that on our magazine, we would be criticized to the third heavens. The point I want to bring out is because of Abraham's faith it was imputed or accounted or accredited to him for righteousness. It didn't make him righteous he was not righteous; there was only one who was righteous.

[Reads the *Global* article--points out the contradicting parts to the article relating to the commandments.]

They [Global Church of God] like to take pot shots at us for the very things we are teaching.

Abraham was counted righteous on the basis of faith and nothing else. Romans 4 and Galatians 3

God made some dramatic promises to Abraham, which were unconditional promises. He believed God and therefore counted as righteousness.

[Reads Genesis 16 and 17]

Here we see that the circumcision was the everlasting covenant between God and Abraham and his descendants. The covenant was renewed and expanded. Cutting the foreskin was a reminder that God had cut a covenant with the children of Abraham.... let's skip now to the book of Exodus and see God's covenant with the twelve tribes of Israel...Exodus 19 vs.5

Moses became mediator of the covenant of Mt. Sinai. Read Chapters 22-23. Notice Exodus 24.

[Reads these chapters and explained the obedience of the people in relationship to the covenant]

Exodus 31--the Sabbath was the sign of the covenant. Leviticus 24--in the NIV, the bread of presence.

[Continues Lev.26 and Duet 28, the renewing of the covenants and disobedience.]

Hebrews 8 vs.5 [Hebrew 13] I will never leave you or forsake you. That's God's promise. Do we have faith in that? Do we believe it? I don't care what we do, **unless you commit the unpardonable sin**. We're not preaching once saved, always saved, but I am saved, and, as a result of being saved. I'm walking with God as perfectly as I can. I'm striving to be obedient to God and all of the Commandments of Jesus Christ. We either believe that or we don't. In all the errors that were not manifested deliberately, God did not forsake us. He saw that it was in our hearts and it was our desire to walk with God as accurately as we could. But humanly it was impossible. God continued to bless the work, financially and otherwise. We continued to grow as we applied the principals that were given to us individually and collectively. So the New Covenant is going to be different than the old one and as different as night and day. Under the old covenant you could not be made righteous. Impossible! God established that system for the purpose of making them know how to respond; hit them in the pocketbook. Because every time they sinned they

had to sacrifice an animal. That became an expensive proposition. But it didn't make them righteous. It just reminded them of their sins and that's all they could do, and under the New Covenant He can.

[Jeremiah 31--read the chapter]

Each person will have his own relationship with God that Jeremiah predicted. Each person will want to obey God, not because of some list of rules that were written down somewhere, but because he or she has an obedient attitude. God first conditioned us before we said, yes Lord, your will be done, and not mine. And we submitted as we made that agreement and covenant with God at Baptism. God calls it the circumcision of the heart. Laws will be internalized; people will keep the spirit of the law which goes infinitely beyond the letter of the Law as I will explain in more detail later on. Not only that the ritualistic sacrifices of the old covenant will no longer be needed. We imposed burdens on people which we the ministry were not part of ourselves, and did not feel that burden. God will forgive His people without the need for sacrifices. All He needs to see is a repentant attitude and spirit as He said in Isaiah, a humble and contrite spirit and one who trembles and has reverence for my word and my laws.

[SHOUTS the following:] And yet we're being accused that we're doing away with God's Laws! We keep God's Laws because we **are** saved! We see that in vs. 12 for I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more. In vs. 13 it plainly tells us the old covenant is obsolete, or as **Mr. Armstrong** wrote it, is ended! It's history.....**of course, not every law in the old covenant is done away.** Here is where it requires some clarification. Many of the laws are repeated in the New Testament. The old covenant itself as a package is obsolete. The fault of the old covenant is with the people. The blood of bull and goats could not change their hearts. It could not improve their conscience to want to obey God; instead it made them bitter, because it cost them money. It took away from their livelihood, it took away from their profits; God knew how to deal with them. God knew what He was doing even if we don't. They had to keep sacrificing animals; they were never done. They could never do enough. So the profits predicted a New Covenant. Isaiah 42 vs. 6--Christ is the covenant that God makes to His people.

John 14 vs.6--the New Covenant involves the Holy Spirit. A down payment guaranteeing their future inheritance. The Holy Spirit changes their heart; they are transformed as the Apostle Paul makes reference to in Romans the 12th Chapter. [SHOUTS:] Be you not conformed to this world now that we have been enlightened and delivered from the bondage of sin but be you transformed by the renewing of the mind by a **brainwashing program** that God instituted in a spiritual sense, removing that ugly baggage that we carried around for years and years and then become more and more like Christ! Well are we? Are we striving to become more like Christ? The old saying I've emphasized, it's about time we stop emphasizing that we are followers of Christ. We are Christ-like individuals because He resides in us through His Spirit because we are a reflection of Him. We are an extension of Jesus Christ. Eph. 2vs.5--we all should have the same mind, in line, running true to form as what Christians are supposed to be, **ambassadors** of Christ. And so we are transformed and become more and more like Christ. The **Messenger**, the Mediator of the New Covenant. It is the spiritual relationship that we enjoy in Christ. The matter of the heart and conscious and faith. Jesus fulfilled all these prophecies, He brought the New Covenant. We are familiar with the words of the last supper. Some people would get all bent out of shape and their nose would be hooked off in the wrong direction if you use the word "Lord's supper." Lord's supper, the Passover, what is the difference? Christ died for our sins. He shed His blood for our remission of sin.

[**Note:** Joseph Tkach, Sr. also mentioned "brainwashing" at the 1993 FOT.]

The Lord's Supper is a reminder of that covenant... The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us.... Sets us aside for a holy purpose. We are called a kingdom of priests, doing **God's Work** in this world, that's part of the New Covenant and part of our relationship with God. How actively have we been involved in times past that would assuredly discourage God to the point that He would turn away from ancient Israel.

All that our Lord has said we ought to do. Baptize, make disciples, bring people to Christ. Teach others all things I taught you to observe. To bring people to Christ. Go make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Everything that Christ has commanded us is **LAW**. When we say Lord, Lord, we have duty to obey what the Lord says. We are going to want to obey Him, if we really believe. The promises we have are infinitely far greater than those given to Israel.

We will want to live for Him. Our conduct, our **performance**, our actions should be to His glory...

We are His people in His service willing to do His work. Before it was more or less, pray and pay. Don't worry about anything else. All you were required to do is send your tithes in, read the literature and shut up. It goes beyond that. Faith is also required. Belief entails action...

If we believe, it's because God has called us. God has called us because God has already begun to change our hearts. We are given the Holy Spirit and promise of eternal life in the Kingdom of God,. This is an eternal covenant guaranteed by Jesus Christ Himself... **We do not believe once saved always saved**. I believe that I am saved as long as I continue to **strive** to walk with God. We have confidence that He's interceding for us everyday...

Do we believe.... sometimes our actions belie us. Your faith, our faith can be computed as righteousness, just as Abraham was. Salvation is a gift and it means you cannot earn it in any way, shape or form. And that was one of the major discussions that came from **Mr. Armstrong**. When I began to share with him, and I don't know why God inspired those conversations going back into the fifties and how circumstances were and what was being taught, he said that didn't come from him. When I began to explain what a new convert would go through before he was invited to attend church for the first time. It was like an inquisition. Given the third degree and, you know, maybe it was sincere on the part of the ministry but also they were doing what they were informed to do from headquarters. Mr. Armstrong said, that is not his. He went on to prove to me that I [HWA] went on to baptize people that were still smoking, drunkards and everything you can think of, even teenagers. In other words you're saying that we were expecting people to perform and act like Christians before they could become a Christian. I said I guess that's it. He says, that the reason I baptized these people so that they will receive God's Spirit so that with it they will have the conviction, the desire and inspiration to accomplish and overcome the physical handicaps that we had. He says, I never espoused that. If you will read Acts 5 vs.32, you'll see in context that it's not talking about God giving His Spirit to those who obey Him. **HOW DUMB CAN WE BE?!!** God gives His Spirit to those who obey Him. Without that you cannot be a Christian, you cannot obey God. You can walk in the letter of the Law and that's about the extent of it. Mr. Armstrong made that very plain. I believe God inspired some of our conversations when I told him what was required or imposed, and to add insult to injury, after waiting a year, six months, I said, now when they requested to be baptized they had to wait for an already ordained evangelist.

Terms of the New Covenant. Romans 8-- Old covenant--It's history. What do you think I'm doing away with the Law? I'm trying to help us understand the covenant.

Hebrews 10 vs. 8---vs. 9.

We had been made holy by the body of Jesus Christ, once and for all. We have been sanctified and made holy. Now I'd like to notice some of the laws of the old covenant that are still enforced. Some are changed and some are obsolete, some continuity and some discontinuity.

[Talks about adultery.]

Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan...[????]

Luke 12th Chapter. Parable of the fool....

Exodus 22 vs. 19-- Another law we can apply in a different way. Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death. The principal of the Law is still enforced. The principal of the Law. We do not enforce the penalty that the Old Testament required, but what do we do today, pray tell. We disfellowship someone! We would remove such a person from our fellowship until there was real repentance. Or if the individual came to us on his own, strictly voluntarily, because no one else knew about the sin except he and God. And he came to us, in tears and in a repentant frame of mind and attitude, I have this weakness, this obsession, I don't know why, I need your help! Then maybe in that case we wouldn't disfellowship him. But we would work with him, we would be patient, we would extend love toward that individual. Boy, in times past we were--woo--quick to put people out of the church. And **Mr. Armstrong** said the main reasons only were for division and secondly for untold sex acts. But we put people out for every kind of thing imaginable under the heavens. It wasn't right. That's why I have been emphasizing for years that we become shepherds and not sheriffs. Too many were very fast, quick on the draw with their spiritual guns to shoot people down, instead of offering a helping hand. No we'd remove anyone like that, because anyone who does such a thing is obviously not in the right relationship with God. And sometimes it might have to be done to wake them up. They are violating the New Covenant. Now let's notice some laws that are completely obsolete.

Exodus 20 vs.20, for example [altar of the Earth] If God told us to do it, we'd do it. You know just like when I made reference to what the importance of personal evangelism, a lot of people got upset, because in their minds that meant to many this crazy Russian wants them to walk around with a placard. You know, we've seen them. "Are you saved? Accept Christ! Repent!" I always like to think, now if God required us to carry placards, would we do it? [This *same statement was made by JWT at Feast of Tabernacles '94*] You have to be the judge of that. We do not keep that law in any way, shape, or form. How about Ex. 29 vs.30, you must give me the first born of your sons...

[Talks about this verse being obsolete]

So you see that some of the laws are still good, and others are changed and others are done away with. We just need to have the spiritual sense and discernment and understanding to know how to apply all of these principals. The old covenant has a package of laws between God and His people that is obsolete. We can't assume that any part of the Law of the old covenant is binding on us simply on the basis of it being the old package of laws. We need additional biblical reasons. You see we inherit the promises of Aaron on the basis of faith. The laws given to Moses simply cannot take away those promises. Galatians 3 vs. 17. Legalistic heresy.

[Talks about Abraham and faith]

You see all we're doing is getting rid of unnecessary burdens but increasing the responsibility and placing it on the shoulders where it belongs, on each one of us. **The responsibility is greater** and if we're in it for personal salvation as Mr. Armstrong used to thunder out, it's not acceptable. It's a selfish motivation because it is a change that takes place in us through God and Christ residing in us by His Spirit. But if we rely on keeping the Law we will be condemned because we fall short every day of our lives. But Christ saves us from that, He died for us. Notice vs. 14. He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the gentiles from Jesus Christ. So that by faith we might receive the promises through the Spirit.

[Vs.15-16 is read. The point the Paul is making here is that the Galatians and Christians do also and we do today, if we have faith in Christ we are Abraham's children we inherit the promises through Jesus Christ who is the seed.

Vs. 17, the Law introduced 430 years later does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and do away with the promise. The Law given at Mount Sinai cannot set aside the Abraham covenant based on the faith in God's promise. That's the point that Paul is making that's the confidence we can have in the promise. Christians have a relationship with God, based on faith and not on Law. **Because of the faith, our desire is to obey the Law**, that's putting the cart before the horse otherwise. Paul explains that we have to be obedient in Chat 5 and 6. That's our desire. We are obedient because we are saved. It's our desire. We want to be obedient. His point here is that the Law of Moses, his old covenant was temporary. It was added only until Christ came. What was the purpose of the Law Paul says? It was added because of transgressions until the seed until the promise referred to had come. And Jesus Christ is the seed and the old covenant is now obsolete. The New Covenant has a new set of laws, we're no longer under those burdens, that doesn't allow out to sin in any shape, or form. Garbage! **The New Covenant has a new set of laws**, though many or the same and our relationship with God is on a different foundation now based on a different agreement. Vs. 24, the Law was put in charge to lead us to Christ....

These scriptures are very clear; I hope they are to you. We are not under the old covenant except of course those that are also a part of the New Covenant. Is that clear, is that plain. vs. 29 If you belong to Christ then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. The point is that Christians are giving the Holy Spirit on the basis of faith that comes from God in the first place. We are justified by faith, we are declared right by faith, we are saved by faith. Not on law-keeping and on the bases of the old covenant.

If we believe God's promise through Jesus Christ, we have a right relationship with God, and if we have a right relationship with God our walk will be more accurate with God. That's the whole purpose for our growing in grace and in knowledge and why **Mr. Armstrong** emphasized the importance. I hope that the church does not stop growing upon my death like the Methodist church did when John Wesley died. And he brought up another interesting point, especially when we had the comment when we said there are Christians elsewhere in this world. Oh---but if they don't have the Sabbath as a sign how could they be Christians? Well we don't have the Sabbath as a sign either. **Does that mean I'm minimizing the importance of the Sabbath? Absolutely not!** Our sign is faith in Jesus Christ. Romans 8. [contradictory statement]

[Reviews the above]

All the Jews have the Sabbath for a sign. They are none of His, not yet. They will be, when they eat crow and are willing to accept Christ as their personal Savior.

Romans 4, physical circumcision is not required for Christians today. Paul said that circumcision is now a matter of the heart in Roman 2 vs.29. Getting back to the statement made that there are Christians out in this world, **Mr. Armstrong** didn't agree with that. You know he went on to tell a story...there is a moral to this whole thing. Talking about this very point, he was saying at the time, he used John Wesley as the whole moral of the issue. **When he died, God allowed him to first go down to hell so that he could observe to see what was going down there.** He was shocked.

[tells a joke about other denominations]

## Part two of sermon:

The moral of the story is "Christians" means those who have accepted Christ through faith as their personal Savior. But oh, we're so quick to condemn anyone that breathes. Yet God said we shouldn't be judging one another. How do we know what's in their hearts? Most cases they are better Christians than we are. That's a travesty. We think that since we send our tithes in it makes us perfect with God. I'll show you that **God expects more than a tithe**, and if you think you've been doing so good, and that's what God expects of all of us as Christians based on what He has blessed us with and our natural talents and gifts we have received...

Romans 4: The Law cannot give us salvation. It can help us to see what our needs are. It cannot emancipate us from sin. All it can do is condemn us. Helps us to see our righteousness must be a gift and not something we have earned.

When the judgment day comes and the judge asks us why He should let us into His kingdom, how do you think we're going to answer? "Oh, I have a perfect Sabbath attendance record. I have kept all of the laws flawlessly." You say that, you made one big blunder, because you didn't. And He will be quick to point it out to you. "I've interceded for you every day, **you DUMMY!!**" ...

We can't say we are good enough to keep the Law. All we can do is plead for mercy. We have faith in Christ that He died to redeem us from all sin. He died to rescue us from the penalty of the Law and that's our only basis for salvation. Our course our faith does not do away with obedience. Faith leads us to obedience. **The New Covenant has many laws of its own. Jesus made many demands on our time, our hearts, and our money.** We know that Jesus did away with many laws but He also reaffirmed many laws and made them more demanding. Just as we read in His Sermon on the Mount, the greatest sermon that was preached by anybody.

If a man looks at a woman with lust in his eyes, he's already guilty. There's not a man in here that can say he's not guilty of one of those laws, that we've kept and observed them perfectly. He's made them **more demanding** since they have to be kept in the spirit and not just superficially. You must look to Jesus' teaching and His entire apostles to see the way Christian faith is expected to work in our lives in the New Covenant. Christ died for us so we might live for Him.

We probably have **another hour**, so hopefully your backside will endure!



Anyway, we are saved from the slavery of sin so we might become the **slaves** of righteousness. That's what He expects from us. Not just praying and paying. Christ demands **everything we have**--everything we are. We are **expected to obey**, but we are also saved by faith. Romans 3--Paul points out the plan of salvation. vs.20 No man will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the Law. Is that plain enough? Through the Law we become conscious of sin.

[Reads vs.22--23--24]

Because Christ died for us we can be declared righteous and because of that, our desire is to walk with God. It's to draw closer to God--to get inside Him if we could. vs. 28.

[talks about Paul's word on faith]

We have works because we are saved. [Reads vs.22.] We are the friends of God, not enemies...

Romans 8.

[Reviews the above about faith in Jesus Christ.]

We are going to gain the victory. Christ is the one to give us the victory.

2nd Cor.3 vs.6-7 [reads]

The old covenant was good but the New Covenant is so much better. The old one doesn't compare. We are privileged to have a relationship with God based on the New Covenant. Hebrews 8.

Hebrew 9-10, 14.... So all those rituals were temporary works, not the new order, now that the new order has come the old one is obsolete. The rituals could make people outwardly clean, we are told but the New Covenant is better. vs. 14 How much more then will the blood of Christ who through the Spirit offered Himself unblemished before God. Cleanses our conscious from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God--**So that we may serve the living God--So that we may serve the living God!** That doesn't entail just having a perfect Sabbath attendance record. Our desire should be to be here. Our desire should be to have fellowship with one another, fellowship with God on the Sabbath. WE should be that way everyday of our lives **with emphasis on the Sabbath.**

Chapter 10 vs. 1-14 Because one sacrifice He has made perfect forever are those who are being made holy. This is already being to us out of the New Covenant. To those who have responded, this is already being done.. We have been declared righteous. We are being made perfect and being made holy. We have been forgiven. Does it make any difference in how we live? You bet it does. It ought to; we have an **obligation** to serve our Lord and master. We were called to serve and not to be served. We have an obligation toward Him and toward one another. We are no longer the servants of sin. We have a new master and are to give all of out allegiance to Him. vs.19-23. Because we were forgiven we should have a better relationship with God. We should draw near to Him knowing that He accepts us as righteous because **we are the children of Abraham and the heirs of promise given to Him.**

Vs. 24 Let us consider how we can spur one another on toward love and good deeds. vs. 25 Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing. Does it sound like I'm trying to discourage

anyone from attending Sabbath services? Rather let us encourage one another, as we see the day approaching, as we see the circumstances of this word and our society. We are to encourage one another in faith--in works of service.

It's high time we took Christ out of the Church, into the community, our place of employment, our schools. We are called to worship and glorify God and Jesus Christ. Nothing could be more important and we can't do it when we're all accusing and back biting one another. One Spirit, one attitude and that is the Spirit of Christ. Even if we don't see or understand these things, there's a positive attitude and negative attitude. That negative comes from the influence of Satan.

[SHOUTS loudly:] **BECAUSE YOU WANT TO DIG YOUR HEELS IN AND THAT'S IT!! I DON'T AGREE WITH IT AND THAT'S IT! THAT'S A WRONG ATTITUDE AND SPIRIT AND DOESN'T BELONG IN HERE! AND IT WON'T LAST IN HERE!!**

[SHOUTS about what a real Christian is regarding a positive attitude:]

**NOW TO THOSE WHO WANT TO DIG IN THEIR HEELS AND SAY, I DON'T AGREE WITH IT! [Enter commercial for Global Church of God] WELL, YOU CAN DO THAT WITH THE GLOBAL IF YOU WANT!! WANT TO GO BACK TO LEGALISM?? FINE!! I WOULD WISH THAT YOU DIDN'T. BUT IF THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU NEED TO LEARN AND GET YOUR NOSE REALLY RUBBED INTO IT AND YOU'VE NOT REALLY LEARNED ABOUT LEGALISM, THAT YOU WANT TO PUT IT OUT OF YOUR LIFE, THEN---GO AHEAD!!!**

## **Video Sermon by Joseph W. Tkach to Worldwide Church of God Members**

### **Pt. 2**

What about the old covenant practices like tithing, avoiding unclean meats, keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days. Global is constantly accusing we're going to do away with the Sabbath, Holy Days, unclean meats, and start observing Christmas, Easter and everything else. Have I said anything about no longer meeting on the Sabbath?? **Our desire ought to be greater to meet on the Sabbath because Christ sets the example and we shouldn't condemn the Sunday keepers, if this is all they understand. We're not their judge. And in all reality they might be better Christians than some of us, because that day does not make that much difference.**

Each of these points that I just mentioned is a separate example needing separate treatment, which you will be receiving. Each has a different history. The Sabbath for example is sanctified at creation long before the covenant began.

[Talks about unclean meats, circumcision, Passover, sacrifices]

Now all of these can be clarified if we are patient. Am I encouraging anyone to eating unclean foods now? I couldn't even if Christ came down and told me like Peter. And I don't think any of you would either. I look at that lobster. I never had a lobster even before I was converted. I had certain standards

as far as my rearing was concerned. **Who the heck could eat a lobster???** And if they're happy, God bless them.

We'll be discusses those in future articles. Today I want to comment on tithing and more on the Sabbath.

[Talks about Abraham and tithing--Mount Sinai]

It was strictly a volunteering thing that reflects the character of Abraham. He wanted to glorify God. God blessed him for his attitude. Later it was a requirement. Tithing was a requirement as a support for the old covenant ministers. The hardhearted Israelites were required to give 10% just for a physical blessing. If they were willing to abide by the requirement of giving 10% for a physical blessing, think for a minute, **how much more** should we be willing to give to God because of our attitude, our understanding and most of all along with the additional blessing that God gives us that far surpasses the physical that they received. We who are in the New Covenant have better blessings. How much more willingly do you think we should be able to give in thankfulness for the spiritual eternal blessings we have in Jesus Christ? [repeats similar context] We're living by the spirit of the law. No longer by the old covenant by 10%. You're all on your honor before God, **we don't check tithing records anyway unless we plan to ordain someone**--that was started long ago by Mr. Armstrong--or other specific reasons; that's the only time.

Under the New Covenant the tithe is voluntary. I can't help it if people are planning to hold back their tithes. There is a large group planning on holding back their tithes. Luke 17.

We are obligated to go **above and beyond the call of duty**. Don't be ashamed to bring your friends to services.

We had a zeal and a desire to share that goodness that God was giving us but we didn't know how to go about doing it. **We stood in horror when relatives would come and visit with us.** Can we come to church with you? No you can't come to church with us. **Like if we were come kind of exclusive club that they... you could imagine what they thought of us. That we're a cult!** And we used to think we're unique. When you're **ignorant**, you don't know that. Hundreds of people have done this, based on the way they have interpreted from sermons, from articles and other things, which in many cases were eliminated but, nevertheless, no one did anything to rectify it either. [NO ONE????? Read: Worldwide Church of God History] We used to preach that it was a lack of faith if you had insurance. And we had many of God's people driving automobiles without insurance. I didn't do that, **I had enough sense.**

That didn't take much.

So how much more should we be willing to give freely and generously to the work of God to be done, not by holding back your tithes. Under the New Covenant the tithe is voluntary and you're just as guilty of stealing if you don't give anything voluntarily, as you were under the old covenant where you were commanded to give a tithe. So under the New Covenant the tithe is voluntary done out of love and allegiance to Jesus Christ. And isn't that appropriate? Shouldn't our giving be done with the vision of God in our hearts? That's what separates us from the men from the boys. The New Covenant expresses generosity more then the old did. It doesn't set a percentage but **requires greater sacrifice**. A person

who has faith in Jesus is not worried about whether tithing is commanded in New Testament or not, simply because Christ made reference to it in Matt., 23.

A person who has faith in Jesus Christ does not worry if tithing is commanded. A person who has faith wants to give all he can to Christ, within his means of course. Christians should give generously to the church, but then again, giving is a result of the relationship with God and not a basis for it.

God can't be bought off, but shouldn't our attitude be willingness to **give more than the minimum?**

Some people think that Christ liberates us from the Law **so that we could be more selfish**. That's the way they respond? That's false. He liberates us from the penalty of the Law so that we can be free to serve him **more**.

When it comes to tithing the real question is, are your hearts in the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Are you putting your money where your heart is? Or maybe I could state it as a fact. You can tell where your treasure is by where you're putting your money. Where your treasure is there will your heart be also, Matthew, 6 vs. 21.

Now let's move onto the topic of the Sabbath! Is the Sabbath an old covenant Law? Absolutely! It is part of the Ten Commandments and the Ten Commandments form the core of the old covenant. **But so far have I said we are no longer required to observe the Sabbath? No! Did I say we aren't going to? No!** The question is, is the Sabbath required in the New Covenant, or as another possibility is transformed, to be kept in a different way, no longer saddled with those burdens that we had before? We know the Bible doesn't say it was changed to Sunday, but is it possible that Jesus Christ changed the way we ought to observe the Sabbath? Absolutely, He did it by personal example and left the rest for us to be able to understand through His Spirit that would enable us to come to a greater understanding. **So the question is how does the Sabbath fit into the New Covenant?** The New Covenant is based on faith and not on law. We know that faith produces good works; faith leads us to love God. Faith leads us to love out neighbors. **Tithing again is an expression of love to God and love to our neighbors** and all those who have not had a chance of hearing about God's plan of salvation, or about Jesus Christ. All who hear the gospel that our tithes help to support. Faith leads us to love God and spend **more time** with him in prayer and in study.

One time Mr. Armstrong asked me, "Mr. Tkach, If God gave you the gift of healing, what would you do with it?" Another one of those times I said, "God, help!" That's all I said because I didn't understand the question, let alone the answer. Certainly not the answer he wanted. So I was stalling, which he was well aware of. I said, "What do you mean, gift of healing and what would I do with it?" Praying that God would put my brain in gear, what little I got there. Then boom, an answer came to me. I said, "Well Mr. Armstrong..." (I spoke like an individual with confidence like he knew what he was doing and what he was saying.) "If God gave me the gift of healing, I would come to you." Boom, he stops for me right there. He says, "Well, why would you come to me, He gave you the gift?" I said, "Well, God is not the author of confusion," I says, "and it could be conceivably that, ah, since He gave me the gift, I might think that He intended for me to establish a separate ministry, a ministry of healing. And therefore in some respects it would come in conflict of where Christ is leading you," I says, "and therefore I'd come to you and say, how would you direct me to use the gift that God is giving me so we can work [SHOUTS LOUDLY:] **IN HARMONY!!!!**"

He told me that flesh and blood did not reveal that answer to me. I told him I knew that more than he did. But apparently it was the right answer. It is the same thing that Paul did with the matter of circumcision.

[talks briefly about Paul's dealing with circumcision]

So the question is, how does the Sabbath fit into the New Covenant? The New Covenant is based on faith and not on law. But we know that faith produces good works, faith leads us to God, love God, love our neighbors-- **tithing again is an expression of love to God** and love to all who hear the Gospel that our tithes support. Faith leads us to love God. Faith should want us to spend **more time** with him in prayer and in study. Faith and love leads us to want to spend more time with one another, **not forsaking the assembling of ourselves** but exhorting and encouraging one another in love and in good works. Does the Sabbath give us spiritual benefits? Hello! Yes? You all agree with that? You bet it does! The Sabbath gives us spiritual benefits, absolutely. Not only do we benefit physically from the weekly rest, but we benefit spiritually. From time to time, if devoted to God, should we forsake this spiritual benefit? That's ridiculous! Should we use all our time for our own pleasures simply because now we don't find the Sabbath under the New Covenant. No! A Christian should want **more time devoted to God**, not less. So you see where the spiritual implication is required. The Sabbath is a blessing, we rejoice in it. **We don't want to give up a good thing**. But we do need to understand that there are changes in the way the Sabbath is presented in the New Testament from the role that it played in the old, that's all. We're unshackling ourselves from some of the burdens that were required from the old covenant.

Now let's look how Jesus taught us about the Sabbath by example. First we note that Jesus kept the Sabbath. He Himself was born under the old covenant, He kept the Law. He never sinned. When Jesus lived, the old covenant was still in force, and so He lived by the terms of the old covenant. That meant He did old covenant things like killing lambs at Passover time, supporting temple activities with His time, telling cleansed leprosy patients to make offerings according to the Law of Moses. He kept the Feast of Dedication and other Jewish customs and He was circumcised. In other words He was perfect in all the laws of the old covenant, even the laws that the apostles came to see that were no longer binding after Jesus was crucified and was resurrected. A New Covenant came in after Jesus' death and resurrection and not before it. Jesus did not argue with the Pharisees about whether to keep the Sabbath but He certainly argued about *how* to keep it or *how* to observe it. It should not be a yoke of bondage due to our misunderstanding. Compared to the Pharisees, Jesus was an extreme liberal. The Pharisees had rules against healing on the Sabbath, but Jesus made a point of healing on the Sabbath specifically and for a specific purpose. He could have easily have done His healing in any other way and could have easily promised the people they could be healed at sundown. He didn't chose to do it that way. He healed them on the Sabbath for our benefit because that was a great day for liberating people from bondage, whether it was spiritual sin or physical bondage. The old covenant told people not to collect food on the Sabbath, based on Exodus 20 vs.10, under Sabbath work under threat of being stoned to death. Where do we see that under the New Covenant? It's not there. But Jesus defended the right of His disciples to pick grain on the Sabbath. Mark 2 vs. 23 [reads verse]

Jesus did not deny that His apostles were working on the Sabbath. Jesus did not deny that the disciples were working on the Sabbath. He didn't deny it; He didn't make excuses. Instead He pointed out that David himself had broken one of God's holiness laws and that it was okay to do it under certain circumstances. Taking care of hunger was more important than keeping strict taboos that were forced on us due to our lack of understanding and spiritual ignorance. The letter of the Law was broken, but that was okay because a more important principal of the Law was being kept, that's what Christ was

concerned about. There was a more important human need. David had an emergency but the disciples didn't seem to have any such emergency. His disciples were just a little hungry and that's all, but the point was--is--that they didn't need to make a fetish about avoiding activity on the Sabbath. Vs. 27, the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. So the son of man is the Lord even of the Sabbath. Jesus as God in the flesh had authority over the Sabbath. He had the right to interpret what it meant and how it should be kept and observed. And again, it imposes an awesome responsibility on the self, to see how we're going to justify our excuses rather than legitimate reasons. Here He said the Sabbath was given to benefit human beings, absolutely. So we see this principal in action. Humanitarian needs are more important than sticking to a strict interpretation of rules. Just like one of our former ministers is preaching a sermon--and many of these sorts of sermons were given over the years in different church areas. I JUST COULDN'T BELIEVE IT!!! Giving a sermon on how the Sabbath is supposed to be observed, he said, "If someone has an accident in front of your house and is in need of emergency help and they come to your door, **you should tell them politely that this is your Sabbath and go next door but if no one is home you can come back.**" What individual in his right mind is going to go back to that door? Huh?

Jesus often healed on the Sabbath. There again the humanitarian need was more important than Sabbath rules. That's what He is showing us. But we should know the difference and not justify our excuses. They should be bona fide legitimate reasons and purposes. In the past we have been too strict with this, sometimes we wouldn't even allow someone to work on into the Sabbath as they were performing service toward other human beings. There again, you need to evaluate the difference and you shouldn't feel guilty to offer that kind of help and remain working. They had to give up their jobs if they wanted to be members of the church. That's not what God commanded, that's not what He requires of us. They aren't healing like Jesus was but they are taking care of humanitarian needs. That is greater in the eyes of God, an expression of real loving concern and service for your fellow human being. Needs, that in many cases are more urgent than even hunger. I know that our motives were good in what we did in the past. **We learned from these things. Even in spite of the hardships.** All things worked for the good. I'm not condemning anything, but I'm saying that we should use these as stepping stones to increase our understanding and our walk with God. We want to uphold the importance of obeying God. I'm not saying we're looking for loopholes and excuses. That puts every one of us on our honor before God, in a much greater way. We took His commands seriously and that is good, but sometimes it seems that the Sabbath is more important than human lives. Or the Sabbath was more important than expressing love and faith in Christ. We looked at the external instead of the internal. We meant well, but now we can change because God has led us to a deeper understanding of the covenant. Have I said so far that we should make excuses to justify why we can't be at Sabbath services? We have church members who because of circumstances in some cases beyond our control other times because of negligence, carelessness of their part, and everything else, are so far in debt, that **the church had to bail them out to the tune of 30 - 40 - 50 thousand dollars** that they had charged up on their credit cards. Had been out of work for two years. Came to the church for financial assistance, received some and then was told this is far as you're going to go. If that man has to work on the Sabbath temporarily, to such a time to keep a roof over his family's head, is that what God wants? That shows how great a Christian we are, we allow our families to suffer needlessly and be kicked out from their homes? The Sabbath was an old sign of the old covenant of Israel, faith in Christ and the Spirit of God, if you're looking for a sign, is the sign between the servants of God today? It is not the sign of the New Covenant of the blood of Christ. The sign of the New Covenant is faith in Christ and the bread in wine, which are the symbols of that covenant. Consequently, the way the Sabbath is to be observed under the New Covenant differs from the way it was to be observed under the old.

**We're not doing away with it.** The Lord of the Sabbath has come and the reality has replaced the shadow. Col 3 vs.17. The new testament Sabbath, the Sabbath rest that remains for the people of God. Hebrews 4. It's the new life in Christ. The life of faith in him and the life of the Spirit. The way we observed the Sabbath in the past has been to apply the old covenant rules to the New Covenant Sabbath. Like oil and water and thereby binding unnecessary burdens which like I said earlier [speaks softly] that the ministry did not have to experience. We should respect and honor the Sabbath. [SHOUTS LOUDLY:] **AM I DEGRADING IT IN ANY WAY DELIBERATELY?!! NO!!!** It is the celebration of the new life in Christ. That's what the Sabbath means for us. Of redemption, of sanctification, we have been given by God. It's an opportunity to devote time to God, especially for doing things He would have us do. Worship services, acts of charity, service for the poor or the sick, personal and family study, prayer and so on. But it is not correct to say that God demands a breadwinner to lose his job over the Sabbath. But listen carefully. Nevertheless, he should work toward devoting the Sabbath to God eventually. Using the noodle. But for the church to demand that a person under all circumstances not work on the Sabbath ? period - is to miss the point, and to apply old covenant rules to what is now a part of the New Covenant. It doesn't pass. Jesus talked about the ox and the ditch. We can take care of emergencies. We recognize that emergencies come up on the Sabbath and it is not a sin to work on the Sabbath and to take care of those things. We can light fires perhaps for bad weather, take care of unexpected guests, etc. To do otherwise as we have in the past is pharisaical and otherwise righteousness exceeds theirs, because the faith in Christ. What one person calls an emergency may not be the same as what another person calls an emergency. That's going to happen, so we need to avoid judging one another, that's not our responsibility. Even today, we condemn one another the way we observe the Sabbath.

[Talks about different interpretations on how to keep the Sabbath]

Point is, we need to avoid judging one another. The attitude we need is this, I wouldn't necessarily do what that guy is doing but I'm not going to condemn him for it. ....

The Sabbath should be a spiritual blessing, but I fear some of our members don't get that much benefit out of it. Sometimes we put too much emphasis on avoiding work and not enough on keeping the Sabbath holy. Not enough on doing good. The Sabbath was made for humans and if we don't do anything at all on it, we are failing to use it for our intended purpose. Some people are too worried about avoiding work and not concerned enough about living holy lives...Even Nehemiah tells his guards to work on the Sabbath, guarding his gates. Did all these people who worked to feed you people on the Sabbath, those of you who partook of their Sabbath labors, did they commit a sin? Absolutely not! **Ridiculous and shallow mindedness and ignorance** that would draw any other conclusion. **LIFE DOESN'T STOP ON THE SABBATH. MR. ARMSTRONG SAID. WHEN THIS WAS BROUGHT TO HIS ATTENTION, HE WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS [this issue] AGAIN NOW.**

The guards were working on the Sabbath; that's okay, it was part of their job...

Now if someone wants to be larcenists, that's the way you can tell if you have any larceny left in you. Especially in a couple of months. Income tax time, how honest are you before God. You know, all these other things you want to make a fetish out of. How honest, how great of a Christian are you? **Mr. Armstrong** always told us and I took it to heart and did it. I'd rather be generous with the government and give an extra couple of percent instead of hold it all back for myself. I receive many benefits from living in this great country of ours. We have all kinds of blessings that we can't even think of and number. **HE [HWA] SAYS, DON'T TRY TO SQUEEZE IT ALL BACK!**

We see a classic example in John 5. Here is what we see Jesus did on the Sabbath. vs.3-6

[Reads John 5 vs.6]

On the surface it sounds like a stupid question, think about it!

[Talks about the Scripture]

When Christ said, do you really want to be healed, what that meant and how it has a spiritual implication for us today!! [SHOUTS LOUDLY:] **DO WE WANT TO BE HEALED OF THE STUPIDITY AND IGNORANCE WE HAD BECAUSE WE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD THE WAY WE SHOULD?!!** That meant what He was saying to that poor crippled, do you really want to be healed? Because when I heal you, your whole life is going to take on a different meaning. Now from begging and doing mediocre things, your life is going to take on real purpose. You're now going to be involved in other things. It's going to be a greater challenge in every respect. Now you want to apply that in a spiritual sense. When God converts us, our lives are transformed and they take on greater meaning and significance. **No one is trying to water down the Law of God or what God commands and expects of us.** I always said we go **above and beyond** the call of duty. We don't impose hardships on people that God didn't. Are we more righteous than God? Are we like the Pharisees which Christ took to task and said that if our righteousness doesn't exceed theirs, He says that we will in no way inherit the Kingdom of God...They had more confidence in the Law than the Lawgiver....

[interprets scriptures' meaning regarding the Law and the Sabbath and the healing]

Vs. 16. Because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath the Jews persecuted him. Jesus said to them, my Father is always at work to this very day and I too am working. So here Jesus admits He was working on the Sabbath. He was not sinning. In the New Covenant we need to take a more flexible approach with work and humanitarian needs, not selfish pursuits or desires or benefits. That's what I say, you're on your honor, you want to come up with those excuses, **they're lame excuses**, God doesn't accept them; He knows what's in your heart.

I Tim. 5 vs.8 says that those who don't provide for their families are worse than unbelievers and **common sense** says that too. If the choice is between working on the Sabbath temporarily and providing food for your family, it is not a sin to work on the Sabbath. Humanitarian needs come first, but once that's been resolved that doesn't give you the excuse to keep doing it. Like I said, you should always work and strive toward wanting to maintain a relationship with God on that day and keep it as God would have us. It's not the ideal which we should strive for, but then again, we should not apply old covenant rules to the New Covenant Sabbath. They aren't doing it for selfish benefits, but to avoid hunger and putting their families out on the streets, that's what it's being done for. Some people call it a lack of faith, but other people call it being sensible and **it's about time we became sensible Christians.** One person sees it as an ox in the ditch, or as holy bread that can be eaten by hungry people, and another person sees it differently, but I hope one person doesn't judge the other because God himself puts a great deal of emphasis, judge not, unless you be judged. Therefore we will not disfellowship a person who works to feed his family. He is not worse than an unbeliever, rather I want to encourage that person to stay in the church to continue attending **until he can devote the whole day to God's service.** Does that sound like I'm encouraging to continue a way of life of taking advantage of the Sabbath? Absolutely not! If other people want to be stricter, they can be for themselves, but they



should not judge their brother. The New Covenant simply doesn't require the Sabbath in the same way the old Covenant did. And that's why Jesus taught us by His personal example than saying anything else. We see new testament examples of Sabbath keeping, but we don't see demands like the Old Testament did...

[Repeats the above context]

If we need rules they are welcome as long as we do it to the glory of God. That's always the main thing. As long as their faith is in Christ and not in their rules. One group should not criticize the other. The conservative shouldn't condemn the actions of the others. The liberals shouldn't despise the rule keepers--and I hate to use conservative and liberals. There shouldn't be any such animal in our midst. We should all walk in each other based on faith in Christ. The point is we should not sit in judgment of others on how they observe the Sabbath. Some will be extra careful and be home by sundown; others will not. Some will work on the Sabbath because of an ox in the ditch.

Yes, it doesn't prohibit us from approaching them, but certainly not in a self-righteous way, but in a helpful way. If you see them forced to work on the Sabbath, love would demand that you go to them and say, "I notice you're having to work on the Sabbath, is there a special need? Can I help you? [This may be interpreted as peer-pressure or shepherding.] Maybe we could work something out. That puts a greater responsibility on us individually."

[repeats the above]

There's a time when our brother's faith is weak and our job is to give encouragement like I said. Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath...

### **This is not watering down of the Sabbath.**

Some of us made sacrifices or were made to quit our jobs to attend the Feast of Tabernacles or to refrain from working on the Sabbath. Making personal sacrifices to worship God is honorable and it is an expression of dedication and love toward God. In fact this is a tremendous witness to others when we place our worship of God above our own desires.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, we are a New Covenant church. Our relationship with God is based on faith with Christ and not on the old covenant. Our faith leads us to obey God in different ways. It doesn't look for ways...it doesn't look for ways to **get out of what Christ would demand from us anyway**. Some laws remain the same, some are obsolete and some are applied in different ways. It's a New Covenant between God and His people, we have finally been liberalized, or liberated I should say, I hate the word liberalized. We've been liberated. The New Covenant is based on faith and there is nothing new...there is nothing in the New Covenant that says we keep the Sabbath according to the rules of the old covenant. There is no example. In the New Testament we see examples of people keeping the Sabbath and we see statements that tell us that the Sabbath is a shadow pointing to reality who is Christ. **That doesn't mean that the Sabbath is done away with**, but it means that the Sabbath is fulfilled in Christ. It means Christ is more important than the Sabbath. That's what it means. It means that the Sabbath rest for Christians in Hebrews 4 is the new life in Christ. Not just the day of the week. And Paul tells us in

Romans 14 that we should not be involved in arguments or disputes over days. Being Sabbath keepers does not make us more righteous than other Christians. **When we rightly observe it**, it helps us to keep focused on the true source of our salvation. And it reminds us that we have entered into the promised Sabbath rest in Hebrews 4, through faith in Jesus Christ. In other words under the New Covenant the nature of the Sabbath observance, has also become new. The new life in Christ is the true Sabbath rest. The observance of the day itself is the shadow of reality; in the WCG we believe we should respect the Sabbath, but under the New Covenant. We are not held to the identical form of observance that was required under the old covenant. **If some, even most Christians don't keep the Sabbath, then it's their loss.** They want to try and get out from having a more personal and close relationship with God, on this particular day on which Christ Himself? ah you know, established; then it's their loss. It is true that the Sabbath is not commanded in the New Covenant in the way it is under the old covenant. Not keeping it for valid reasons doesn't make them any less Christian and I try to make that plain. **But it is still their loss, nevertheless.** And they will continue, if that's their motivation and that's their desire, I think that identifies them for what they really are. [Tools of Satan'???] We know that the Sabbath has great spiritual benefits, we need special time dedicated to God, we should want to break from other jobs to worship our creator, we should want time with each other to encourage each other to love and do good works. We should want to hear sermons that challenge us to think. We should want to learn new things from the Bible, after all we're commanded to grow in the grace and knowledge and God's way. We should want time in more prayer and study, we should want time to be with our families. We should want to serve others in their physical needs. That's what the Sabbath can be for. It was made for us and not for the Sabbath. It's for our physical and spiritual blessings, it is all the more important and meaningful in this modern secular society. But it is not a yoke of bondage around our necks. God does not expect our Christians to go into poverty cycle to keep it. I am one who has put my job over the line too, just as many as you have. Just as many. God respects our willingness to sacrifice to obey him even though our understanding wasn't complete. God doesn't hold it against us. But now God has called on the church to deeper understanding, to worship Christ and not the Sabbath. The Sabbath was not made to be worshipped. Christ is to be worshipped. Let's thank God for the growth, let's not get angry over it because again you're just displaying what your attitude is. The Sabbath is the celebration of good things of God, salvation of Jesus Christ, and it is a great blessing if we understand it in the right perspective as the New Testament teaches us. We should hunger and thirst of the things of God, we should desire a better relationship with God and Jesus Christ. That's part of the law written on our hearts by the Holy Spirit under the New Covenant. But that spiritual law demands that we take a less rigid approach as to how the Sabbath is observed. It demands that we not condemn our brothers for their decisions that they make regarding their humanitarian needs and emergencies.

t's awfully easy to judge; some people will rejoice what I said today, some people will criticize. I can't let the potential for criticism prevent me from preaching and teaching about the New Covenant and understanding we have in Jesus Christ. We are saved by faith, not by rules and certainly not by judging one another. I'm sure that this is going to cause a lot of questions, and that's good, it shows that your thinking. Hopefully, it's with a positive spirit and positive attitude. I encourage you study this topic. We will be sending out study papers and it will appear in the WWN. These papers will be a more extensive look at the covenants and a more in-depth look at our **obligations** under the New Covenant. Faith causes us to be willing to obey our Lord and Savior in whatever He tells us to do. We see some clear commands to love one another, how well are we accomplishing that? There is no argument over it. There can't be. To believe in the Son, to preach the gospel, to work toward unity in the faith, to meet together as a church, to build up one another in the faith, to do good works and services and to lead pure moral lives and to live peacefully and to forgive those who wrong us. Here is where the emphasis is. **These New Covenant commands are demanding, they absorb all of our time;** all of our days are

dedicated toward serving Jesus Christ. We need to be busy doing His work always and that is not an easy task. So you have already proven to yourselves that you were willing to change, willing to believe Christ and to accept him as your Savior. I ask you to pray daily for him to continue to guide us in more truth and more understanding. I thank you for your loyalty and support and cooperation. Hopefully you will any dispel rumors that are flying around left and right that we're doing such and such, that we're no longer going to be meeting on the Sabbath, or anything else. All I did through Jesus Christ was try and make it little plainer; it will be a challenge, I'm sure.

God Bless You!!

[End]

Video transcribed by L. A. Stuhlman  
Exit & Support Network™

Pt. 1 | Pt. 2

#### **Footnotes:**

1 In Feb. 2005 *The Worldwide News* in the United States changed its name to *WCG Today*. In May 2006 it was changed to *Together*. A few years later *Together* was no longer available. Their magazine is now *Christian Odyssey*.

2 Joseph W. Tkach died September 22, 1995 of cancer at the age of 68.

3 This sermon may have been video taped on Christmas Eve, 1994, in Big Sandy, TX, but it was not played to the main WCG congregations until January 7, 1995. Read more about how Joseph W. Tkach, Jr. called this the "Christmas Eve Sermon" in *Transformed by Truth*. When Tkach, Jr. was interviewed on "Air Talk" in Dec. 1997 (broadcast to Pasadena, Los Angeles, and Orange County), he talked about the "Christmas Eve sermon." In 1999 Tkach, Jr. said "Reformation Day" was the suggested name to commemorate this day; i. e., "the re-birth of the Worldwide Church of God."