

# Servants' NEWS

Vol. 1, No. 8 A newsletter for servants of the Almighty Eternal Creator, wherever they may be December 1995

## Independence: Is it Rebellion?

When Absalom fought against David, he was seeking **independence**—he wanted to be king (2 Sam 15-18). When Jeroboam fought against Rehoboam (1Kngs 14:30), he was also seeking independence. Absalom died in his efforts, and his actions were considered a **rebellion**. Israel remained separate from Judah, so their wars were considered wars of **independence**. This concept is further illustrated by the war for **independence** between England and the thirteen American colonies or the **rebellion** of the Southern states ended by the American Civil War.

The civil and religious authorities of Israel commanded the early believers “not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:5-6,18). The Apostles **rebelled** against this command and taught anyway. By divine deliverance, they were delivered—they continued to teach **independently** from the civil and religious authorities (Acts 5:17-42). In Acts

7, Stephen also **rebelled** against the same leaders and died because of it—a righteous martyr, but spent little time as an **independent**.

Lastly, several men **rebelled** against the “authority” of the Church of God, Seventh Day. Some never did do an effective work of their own—they are considered **rebels**. Others founded other **independent** Churches of God, Seventh Day. One **independent** teacher founded the Radio Church of God, later called the Worldwide Church of God. He was Herbert W. Armstrong.

From a historical perspective, **rebels** are those who are either unsuc-

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## UCG Approves Constitution CEM Emerges From CGI Reorganization

The General Conference of Elders of the United Church of God, An International Association (UCG) met for three days in Cincinnati, Ohio. The event was attended by over 400 elders, most of whom were accompanied by their wives. Fifty-three of the attending elders are serving in international areas. The conference attendees and about 800 other UCG brethren from the surrounding area attended Sabbath services December 2 and heard messages from Burk McNair and David Hulme. These brethren, however, were not invited, even as observers, to attend the remainder of the conference on December 3, 4 and 5 (a departure from Acts 15:4, 22-23).

The conference appeared to many a paradox: a combination of a fresh new idea and a return to old ways. The official coverage from the UCG Fax Information Service and from many returning pastors was nearly all positive. The men and wives were treated very well by the UCG administration and staff. An atmosphere of friendship and cooperation prevailed. The fellowship with so many old friends was great. All the expenses were

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*“Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; But Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. And they went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches” (Acts 15:39-41).*

*“For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives” (Heb 12:6).*

When brethren have difficulty with each other or when their sin is discovered, we should not gloat or be joyful. We should pray that all brethren can live in peace, work together, and resist the temptation to sin. Nevertheless, we should not simply ignore serious doctrinal differences (Titus 1:9-11) or sins that are giving a bad reputation to the work of the Eternal (2Sam 12:14, 1Cor 5:1).

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# THE TRINITY REDEEMED

There has been some material written on the spurious nature of Matthew 28: 19-20. Most of the discussion centers around antenicene writings of Eusebius in which he quotes a different ending for the Gospel of Matthew. The Eusebian ending neither contains the trinitarian formula, nor does it contain any instruction to baptize. Only one other instance occurs in the entire Bible which even hints at the Trinity: 1 John 5:7b-8a is, however, universally dismissed by biblical scholars as a spurious addition to the text. There remains, then, only the conclusion of Matthew's account (which appears in all extant manuscripts) to support the doctrine of the Trinity.

According to the 1967 issue of the *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute*, there is an early Jewish Christian source which corroborates

Eusebius's ending for Matthew. A *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*, edited by George Howard (Mercer University Press), also lacks the trinitarian reference. For the serious student of the Bible, however, no such proof is really necessary. The Bible, itself, contains all the answers. Let's examine the evidence. Matthew 28: 19-20 (Authorized Version) reads, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Matthew 28: 19-20 (from Eusebius) reads, "Go and make all nations disciples in my name, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." [Eusebius quoting from a manu-

script of the Gospel of Matthew at the Library of Caesarea]

In what name does the Bible say to baptize? It's a simple enough thing to research. Look up every scripture concerning baptism and compare the similarities.

Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift for the Holy Ghost [Spirit].

Acts 8:15-16, "Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost [Spirit]: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)"

Acts 10:48, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry [remain] certain days."

Acts 19:5, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Rom 6:3, "Know ye not, so many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ."

Gal 3:27, "For as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"

As we can see by every New Testament example that the trinitarian formula for baptism does not appear in any except Matthew 28:19. Since this verse disagrees with the eight other scriptures cited above, we must conclude that the "Eusebian" quote is the correct one and that the trinitarian reference was added. No other explanation can be possible.

Remember, every biblical concept used to establish doctrine must be corroborated: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (Matt 18:16 & 2Cor 13:1).

—Gregory H. Richardson

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*Servants News* is published monthly by *Friends of the Brethren*. Subscriptions are free to individuals interested in obeying their Creator as described in the Bible. We believe His law is the basis for living a life that is pleasing to Him in harmony with our neighbors. We believe the holy spirit gives us the power to live such a life as long as we continually repent of our sins and accept the salvation provided through our Messiah and Savior. We believe in living "by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Deut 8:3).

We believe the gospel should be given freely: you may copy any or all of this publication and give it to others. Friends of the Brethren is financed by donations and has no ties with any of the other organizations listed in this publication.

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Most scripture quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

## Correction:

In the last issue of *Servants' News* (Vol. 1, No. 7) we mistakenly identified the author of *Thoughts Regarding UCG-IA "Draft" Constitution & Bylaws* on page 10 as "Richard E. Bodkin". The author's correct name is "**Robert E. Bodkin**". We apologize for our mistake.

For decades, the Church of God has placed a great deal of emphasis on the following scripture: "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass..." (Luke 21:36 - New King James Version quoted throughout, unless otherwise noted).

This scripture has not only been pulled out of context, but it has also been presumptuously and erroneously connected to Revelation 12:6 & 14. As a result, a false concept has arisen in the Church of God, thrusting many sincere, but DECEIVED, brethren into a mixed state of doubt and fear! We have been falsely taught that if we are not in a "Philadelphian" attitude, we will have to go through the "Great Tribulation" to be "cleansed" of our sins! While this "cleansing" is taking place, our "Philadelphian" brethren will have been whisked away to a "place of safety" because they have been "counted worthy to escape" physical harm. This false teaching has also contributed to an atmosphere of self-righteousness and suspicion as many try to determine just who is Philadelphian and who is Laodicean!

But, is that what the Bible really teaches? Are we to pray to be "counted worthy to escape" the Great Tribulation? Why would a just God allow the prophets of old, most of the original apostles, and hundreds of thousands (perhaps millions) of Christian saints during the past two thousand years to suffer persecution and tribulation to the point of death, and then, suddenly tell us that if we are worthy, we can escape this kind of trial? Is God a respecter of persons? Was John the Baptist not "counted worthy to escape?" How about James, Peter or the Apostle Paul? They were all martyrs for the gospel's sake! And what about those in Hebrews 11:36-38?

Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

How could these examples of faith not be counted worthy? Were they

# Will You Be Counted Worthy

Laodiceans? Of course not! Here is the plain and simple TRUTH about Luke 21:36!

## Key to Understanding

The key to understanding Bible difficulties is to let the Bible interpret itself. And nothing is more important than establishing context. So let's back up and examine this passage in context. We will begin in Luke 21, verse 5. (The reader is also referred to the parallel account in Matthew 24).

Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, "As for these things which you see, the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Luke 21:5-6)

Jesus begins this prophecy with a conclusion—the physical plant of the temple will be destroyed.

And they asked Him, saying, "Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign will there be when these things are about to take place?" (v. 7).

The disciples then asked when the destruction of the temple would occur, and if there would be a sign that it (the destruction of the temple) was about to occur.

## Be Not Deceived

And He said: "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them" (v. 8).

Jesus warned His disciples of deception—that many will claim to represent Him, but they DO NOT, and they should not be followed!

"But when you hear of wars and

commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately." Then He said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (vs. 9-10).

Jesus indicates, that as the end approaches, peace will be more and more evasive. This is a natural progression of the decay of human civilization.

"And there will be great earthquakes in various places,

# to Escape?

and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven" (v. 11).

Along with the decay of humanity, there will be geological disturbances which will bring about changing weather patterns resulting in crop failure. Consequently, there will be food shortages and diseases. Then, there will be cosmic events as well.

## Persecution

"But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony" (vs. 12-13).

Here, Jesus interjects and warns of inescapable persecution of His people for the purpose of witnessing and giving testimony of His Truth!

"Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they send some of you to your death" (vs. 14-16).

Jesus told His disciples that some of them would be put to death after being betrayed by their very own families. Martyrdom would be a sign of the times—not a sign of being unworthy!

And you will be hated by all for My name's sake" (v. 17).

This is Satan's world - Satan HATES God and His people.

## SERVANTS' NEWS

### "Escape" from page 3 No Physical Harm?

"But not a hair of your head shall be lost" (v. 18).

This verse has troubled many. He had just told them that some of them would die. How can this verse then promise them no physical harm? Notice the KJV: "But there shall not an hair of your head perish." Since physical death is already given as a probable result of persecution, this is obviously referring to the second death! God's people are promised ETERNAL LIFE! "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" (John 10:28).

"In your patience possess your souls" (v. 19).

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:12). Eternal life is given to "those who keep the commandments of God!"

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her" (vs. 20-21).

This is a warning for those who are "in Judea" to "flee to the mountains," and this, only when they "see Jerusalem surrounded by armies!"

### "Days of Vengeance"

"For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (v. 22).

This verse is vital to understanding verse 36! Here is the key that will open the door to the PROPER understanding of Luke 21:36! "For these are the days of vengeance." Of course!

"For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, the year of recompense for the cause of Zion" (Isa. 34:8) "For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that He may avenge Himself on His adversaries..." (Jer 46:10). "Say to those who are fearful-hearted, 'Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you'" (Isa. 35:4) "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our

Lord Jesus Christ" (2Thes. 1:8). (Also see: Deuteronomy 32:43; Ps. 58:10; Ps. 149:7-9; Jer. 11:20; Mic. 5:15; Nah. 1:2 and Romans 2:5-9).

While the Great Tribulation is obviously the period of Satan's wrath, Jesus warns, that after Jerusalem is surrounded by armies, the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled (verse 24), the Great Tribulation will conclude, and what follows the Great Tribulation are the real "days of vengeance" — the Day of the Lord, in which God Himself executes judgment on "His adversaries," the enemies of God! And notice one of the reasons that they are counted His adversaries:

"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'" (Revelation 6:9-10).

**Do you see that God will finally execute judgment and avenge all those who have lost their physical lives for the testimony of Jesus Christ?** Now notice Revelation 6:11, "And a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed."

Notice that those who were killed in the past must wait a little while longer to be avenged—until the end-time martyrdom of their "fellow" saints is completed. **No mention is made of anyone being counted unworthy to escape death; nor is there any mention of those who are martyred being Laodicean!**

"But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke 21:23-24).

With these 2 verses, Jesus' prophecy makes the transition from the events describing the Great Tribulation, to the events that follow the Great Tribulation

(see Matt 24:29) regarding the "days of vengeance," which is the period of God's wrath—the Day of the Lord. The reader is referred to the Book of Revelation for a more detailed prophecy regarding the sequence of events (the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowls, etc.).

### Direct Intervention by God

"And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. So you, likewise, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things are fulfilled. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth" (vs. 25-35).

Verses 25-33 deal expressly with the days of vengeance and the fact that this judgment from God occurs just prior to the return of Jesus Christ! The vengeance of God is the final sign that Jesus' return is imminent! Verses 34-35 are a direct warning not to be distracted by the "cares of this life" which include self preservation! Notice Luke 17:33: "Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it." "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"

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# Sabbatarian Bible Fellowship (SBF)

Sabbatarians of various 'branches' of the Church of God have been scattered and without a means to share fellowship and Bible studies between each other for a long time.

Yet, it is a fundamental aspect of Christianity that we talk often about God's Word among each other. Note the article by Dr Herman L. Hoeh in the Good News, "Talk about the Bible when you visit one another!" (January 1962). Indeed we must (Mal 3:16).

We sabbatarians need fellowship and a spirit of co-operation and harmony. We need to get to know one another in the most fundamental and basic way possible: Bible discussions. SBF provides for just such an opportunity.

## The Purpose of SBF

1. To discuss God's Word without contention.
2. Create an atmosphere of harmony and co-operation between the various sabbatarian groups at grass-roots level.
3. To be a means to spiritual growth.

## Goals of SBF

1. Gently create grass—roots inter-sabbatarian harmony.
2. Opportunities to create new friendships.
3. Increase our knowledge of God's Word.

Now that we have seen what SBF is, let us understand what it is not.

## What SBF is Not

Firstly, it is **not** a means to criticise other sabbatarian churches or be involved in any negative and demeaning behaviour. A spirit of bitterness, anger and competition is not wanted.

Nor is it a medium for anyone to 'push their barrow' or to set themselves up as preachers and leaders. The SBF also is not a place to poach members of other groups. It is there to demonstrate

love and unity, not the spirit of competition. As such, SBF encourages people to stay where they are happy and not to set out to form their own groups.

It should be understood that this 'club' is not a time for 'prayer meetings', 'music ministries', 'role playing' and such like. It has a specific Bible focus—for and by—committed Sabbatarians.

And, finally, it is not in competition with any group or to push one's scriptural understandings upon another. It is for positive, loving, caring people who wish to fellowship with God and one another.

## How SBF Operates

1. A revolving chair so that no one person dominates. This person guides the participants through the agenda.

2. The agenda has the following basic outline: chair opens; old business discussed; new business discussed; possible review of previous meeting; the talks are next presented with questions (10-15 minutes). A break with refreshments and music is enjoyed roughly half way through the meeting.

3. The next meeting's topics are chosen as well as the venue (preferably a different person's venue each time).

4. Minutes taken and distributed (optional).

5. Each person/family brings refreshments for the break.

6. The meeting lasts for approximately 2 hours but may be shorter or longer.

7. Frequency: fortnightly or monthly.

## Some Possible Topics for Discussion

1. Your favorite scripture and why.
2. A review of a piece of literature which has helped you understand God's word better.
3. Types of Prayer.
4. Research methodologies.

5. Weekend workshops.
6. Your favorite Proverb.
7. The fruits of the spirit.
8. The gifts of the spirit.
9. The Lost Tribes of Israel. Where are they today?
10. What do you understand the 'Mark of the Beast' to be?
11. Should a Christian vote?
12. Open discussion.
13. Just what do you mean 'Speaking in Tongues'?
14. Is there a market for an Inter-sabbatarian Speaker's Club?
15. Prophecy in the news: US of Europe, Germany, Japan.
16. God's true church in history.
17. Man's incredible destiny!
18. Ideas for Inter-sabbatarian fellowship and harmony (e.g., dinners, outings, joint activities, visiting each other's churches, etc.)
19. The New Testament—Complement to the Old Testament.
20. The christian and co-operation with the ministry.
21. Philippians 4:8—a discussion.

—Craig White

The author sent this article with the following note attached to it:

Dear Norman,

I would like feedback by/from you on my ideas for establishing in-home Bible discussions. Following are some guidelines I have [written] up for feedback. Feel free to reprint it.

Craig White  
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Sydney, Australia 2001  
Email:  
craigwh1@pop.ozononline.com.au

We, at SN, strongly encourage what is suggested here as well as any who have ideas or suggestions to please forward them to the author or to us here at SN. As an aid to those of you who wish to attempt to put together an SBF-type of group, we are printing a list of cities where people currently subscribe to SN. See page 6 for more details.

# You Can Contact Scattered Brethren!

Scattered brethren continually ask if there are others on our mailing list with which they could correspond, fellowship, or study. We have responded to some of these requests, but it is time consuming. This month we are giving everyone a chance to get to know Servants News subscribers near themselves.

The following list contains the countries, states and cities where Servants' News subscribers live. If more than one person lives in a city, the list tells you how many households are there. We do not give out subscriber addresses, but if you will send us letters or postcards, we will forward them to the people living in the cities of your choice. For example, if you live in Dallas and would like to contact others in Dallas, Ft. Worth and Denton, send us five letters or postcards: 2 for the 3 households in Dallas (you don't need to write to yourself), 2 for Ft. Worth and 1 for Denton.

Please make sure you include the following on each letter or postcard:

1. Your return address.
2. First class postage.
3. The words "Scattered Brethren Contact" near the top of the address area.
4. The city name and state near the bottom of the address area (leave us room to write the name and address between the city and "Scattered Brethren Contact").

We will not send items that do not correspond to the above guidelines, that are commercial solicitations or that are from people not on our mailing list. If we receive such items, we will simply mail them without an address and they will be "returned to sender."

**Brethren using this service need to realize that that Servants' News readers have a great variety of backgrounds.** They attend a variety of organizations and hold a variety of doctrines. Some people on our list may not be interested in responding at all. We recommend that your cards or letters contain a brief description of your interests and beliefs. If you receive a response, then you can say more. We hope both writers and readers of this mail will keep in mind the principles of Romans 14. This is an opportunity to befriend, encourage, and share knowledge, not a chance to force your ideas or your organization on others.

<b>Australia</b>			Nakuru	1	Montgomery	AL	1
Gilmore	ACT	1	Nyeri	1	Orange Beach	AL	1
Woden	ACT	1	<b>Mau</b>		Pelham	AL	1
Artarmon	NSW	1	Croisee, New-Grove	1	Semmes	AL	1
Sydney	NSW	1	<b>Mexico</b>		Springville	AL	1
Woodridge	QLD	1	Monterrey	NL	Bentonville	AR	1
N. Geelong	VIC	1	<b>Republic of South Africa</b>		Casa	AR	1
<b>Canada</b>			Halfway House	1	Clarksville	AR	1
Calgary	AB	1	Port Elizabeth	1	Fort Smith	AR	1
Chilliwack	BC	1	<b>Scotland</b>		Gravette	AR	1
North Vancouver	BC	1	Kilmarnock	1	Jacksonville	AR	1
Port Coquitlam	BC	1	West Lothian	1	Kensett	AR	1
Sardis	BC	1	<b>United Kingdom</b>		Lamar	AR	1
Tumbler Ridge	BC	1	Carlisle	1	Lincoln	AR	1
Vancouver	BC	1	Gwynedd	1	Morrilton	AR	2
Brantford	ON	1	Lancs	1	Mountainburg	AR	1
Caledonia	ON	1	London	1	Mt Home	AR	1
Concord	ON	1	Merseyside	1	Omaha	AR	1
Etobicoke	ON	1	Northants	1	Ozark	AR	1
Fenelon Falls	ON	1	Wales	1	Russellville	AR	4
Hampton	ON	1	Wiltshire	1	Springdale	AR	2
Hastings	ON	1	Yelverton, Devon	1	Ward	AR	1
Indian River	ON	1	<b>USA</b>		Cordes Lakes	AZ	1
Peterborough	ON	1	Wasilla	AK	Cottonwood	AZ	1
Toronto	ON	2	Beaverton	AL	Gilbert	AZ	1
Willowdale	ON	1	Birmingham	AL	Glendale	AZ	1
Charlottetown	PEI	1	Gardendale	AL	Kingman	AZ	1
Summerside	PEI	1	Haleyville	AL	Mesa	AZ	1
Saskatoon	SK	1	Lillian	AL	Morenci	AZ	1
Shaunavon	SK	1	Mobile	AL	Peoria	AZ	1
<b>Kenya</b>			Montevallo	AL	Phoenix	AZ	4

Prescott	AZ	2
Prescott valley	AZ	1
Red Rock	AZ	1
Scottsdale	AZ	1
Sun City	AZ	1
Tucson	AZ	3
Altadena	CA	1
Anaheim	CA	1
Arcadia	CA	1
Bakersfield	CA	1
Clements	CA	1
Coarsegold	CA	1
Compton	CA	1
Concord	CA	1
Corona	CA	2
Cupertino	CA	1
El Monte	CA	1
Escondido	CA	1
Esparto	CA	1
Garden Grove	CA	1
Gardena	CA	1
Greenbrae	CA	1
Huntingtn Bch	CA	1
Indian Wells	CA	1
Irvine	CA	1
Keene	CA	1
La Verne	CA	1
Laguna Hills	CA	2
Laguna Niguel	CA	1
Los Alamitos	CA	1
Menifee	CA	1
Mentone	CA	1
Monrovia	CA	1
Morro Bay	CA	1
Napa	CA	1
Norwalk	CA	1
Oakley	CA	1
Orange	CA	1
Palmdale	CA	1
Pasadena	CA	6
Perris	CA	1
Placerville	CA	1
Ramona	CA	1
Riverside	CA	3
S Pasadena	CA	1
Sacramento	CA	2
Salinas	CA	2
San Diego	CA	1
San Jose	CA	1
Saugus	CA	1
Seal Beach	CA	1
Sierra Madre	CA	1
Sun City	CA	1
Tehachapi	CA	1
Turlock	CA	1
Alamosa	CO	1
Colorado Springs	CO	1
Golden	CO	1
Grand Junction	CO	3
Littleton	CO	1
Loveland	CO	1

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## SERVANTS' NEWS

<b>"List" from page 6</b>			Pocatello	ID	1	Madison Hts.	MI	1	Apex	NC	1
Fairfield	CT	1	Post Falls	ID	1	Mr Morris	MI	1	Ashboro	NC	2
Milford	CT	2	Shelley	ID	1	Owosso	MI	2	Durham	NC	1
New Britain	CT	1	Batavia	IL	1	Perry	MI	2	Flat Rock	NC	1
New London	CT	1	Berwyn	IL	1	Petal	MI	1	Franklin	NC	1
Newington	CT	1	Bradley	IL	1	Sterling	MI	1	Grifton	NC	1
North Haven	CT	1	Bunker Hill	IL	1	Troy	MI	1	Kenly	NC	1
S Norwalk	CT	1	Byron	IL	1	Walled Lake	MI	1	Murphy	NC	1
Simsbury	CT	1	E St Louis	IL	1	Waynesboro	MI	1	Raleigh	NC	1
Thomaston	CT	1	Fulton	IL	1	Westland	MI	1	Thomasville	NC	1
Vernon	CT	1	Glen Carbon	IL	1	Williamston	MI	1	Bismark	ND	1
Watertown	CT	1	Kankakee	IL	1	Aurora	MN	1	Bellevue	NE	1
Westhaven	CT	2	Marissa	IL	1	Baudette	MN	1	Dannebrog	NE	1
New Castle	DE	1	Ofallon	IL	1	Farmington	MN	1	Plattsmouth	NE	1
Boca Raton	FL	1	Onarga	IL	1	Foley	MN	1	Bradford	NH	1
Bronson	FL	1	Madison	IN	1	Hoyt Lakes	MN	1	Chester	NH	1
Del Ray Beach	FL	1	Muncie	IN	1	Saint Paul	MN	1	Goffstown	NH	1
Gulf Breeze	FL	1	Colwich	KS	1	Blue Eye	MO	1	Penacock	NH	1
Kathleen	FL	1	Fort Scott	KS	1	Blue Springs	MO	4	Somersworth	NH	1
Lake Worth	FL	2	Manhattan	KS	1	Bruner	MO	1	Bound Brook	NJ	1
Lakeland	FL	1	Mulvane	KS	1	California	MO	1	Chester	NJ	1
Lantana	FL	1	Salina	KS	1	Cp Girardeau	MO	1	Colonia	NJ	1
Largo	FL	1	Springhill	KS	1	Crocker	MO	1	Edison	NJ	2
Merritt island	FL	1	Wichita	KS	4	Eldon	MO	1	Egg Harbor	NJ	1
Miami	FL	1	Bowling Green	KY	1	Golden City	MO	1	Elizabeth	NJ	1
Milton	FL	1	Covington	KY	1	Grassy	MO	1	Hackettstown	NJ	1
N. Miami Beach	FL	1	Nicholasville	KY	1	Houston	MO	1	Hazlet	NJ	1
Ocala	FL	3	Pewpee Valley	KY	1	Independence	MO	4	Manville	NJ	1
Palm Bay	FL	2	Shepherdsvl	KY	1	Jefferson City	MO	1	Millville	NJ	1
Reddick	FL	1	Baton Rouge	LA	2	Kansas City	MO	4	Morristown	NJ	1
Shalimar	FL	1	Breaux Bridge	LA	1	LaBelle	MO	1	Trenton	NJ	1
Spring Hill	FL	1	Houma	LA	1	Lake Lota Wana	MO	1	Alamogordo	NM	1
Titusville	FL	1	Holyoke	MA	1	Lebanon	MO	1	Albuquerque	NM	4
Vero Beach	FL	1	Natick	MA	1	Lees Summit	MO	3	Chaparral	NM	1
Augusta	GA	1	Westport	MA	1	Marchfield	MO	1	Edgewood	NM	3
Blue Ridge	GA	1	Worcester	MA	1	Mountain View	MO	1	Las Cruces	NM	2
Conyeers	GA	1	Crofton	MD	1	Neck City	MO	1	Las Vegas	NM	1
Covington	GA	1	Elkton	MD	1	Oak Grove	MO	1	Lincoln	NM	1
Douglasville	GA	1	Frederick	MD	2	Plattsburg	MO	1	Los Alamos	NM	2
Gainesville	GA	1	Gaithersburg	MD	1	Republic	MO	1	Moriarty	NM	1
Hogansville	GA	1	Hagerstown	MD	1	Rodgerville	MO	1	Rio Rancho	NM	4
Kennesaw	GA	1	Laurel	MD	1	Salem	MO	1	Roswell	NM	2
Lawrenceville	GA	1	Myersville	MD	1	Schell City	MO	1	Carson City	NV	1
Lebanon	GA	1	Odenton	MD	1	Scott City	MO	1	Las Vegas	NV	2
Lithia Springs	GA	1	Alfred	ME	1	Seymour	MO	1	North Las Vegas	NV	1
Mineral Bluff	GA	1	Palmyra	ME	1	Smithville	MO	1	Reno	NV	2
Murrayville	GA	1	Rockport	ME	1	Springfield	MO	1	Buffalo	NY	3
Rossville	GA	1	Clawson	MI	1	St Charles	MO	1	Cheektowaga	NY	1
Sharpsburg	GA	1	Clio	MI	1	St Joseph	MO	1	Corona	NY	1
Sewanee	GA	1	Collinsville	MI	1	Stockton	MO	3	Elmont	NY	1
West Point	GA	1	De Witt	MI	1	Carrollton	MS	1	Endwell	NY	1
Willochee	GA	1	Detroit	MI	2	Columbia	MS	2	Francher	NY	1
Derby	IA	1	Dowagaic	MI	1	Hattiesburg	MS	1	Garden City	NY	1
Fort Dodge	IA	1	East Lansing	MI	1	Lumberton	MS	1	Holmes	NY	1
Westfield	IA	1	Farmington Hills	MI	1	Quitman	MS	1	Kendall	NY	1
Blackfoot	ID	1	Flint	MI	2	Dillon	MT	1	Oakdale	NY	1
Boise	ID	6	Gobles	MI	2	Dixon	MT	1	Porter Cors	NY	1
Caldwell	ID	1	Haslett	MI	1	Great Falls	MT	1	Preble	NY	1
Hayden Lake	ID	1	Hattiesburg	MI	1	Paradise	MT	1	Rochester	NY	1
Heyburn	ID	1	Jackson	MI	1	Silverbow	MT	1	South Wales	NY	1
Idaho Falls	ID	1	Lansing	MI	1	St Ignatius	MT	1	Akron	OH	2
Orofino	ID	1	Madison Heights	MI	1	Andrews	NC	1	<b>Continued next page</b>		

## SERVANTS' NEWS

"List" from page 7			Easton	PA	4	Conroe	TX	1	Chesapeake	VA	1
Bexley	OH	1	Elizabeth	PA	1	Coppell	TX	1	Farmville	VA	1
Brookville	OH	1	Mattawana	PA	1	Crp Christi	TX	1	Forset	VA	1
Brunswick	OH	1	Mifflinburg	PA	1	Cypress	TX	1	Lynchburg	VA	1
Chillicothe	OH	2	Mt Bethel	PA	1	Dallas	TX	3	Madison Hts	VA	1
Cleveland	OH	1	Newtown	PA	1	Denison	TX	1	Richmond	VA	1
Columbus	OH	1	Philadelphia	PA	1	Denton	TX	1	Virginia Beach	VA	1
Dayton	OH	1	Towanda	PA	1	El Paso	TX	6	Auburn	WA	2
Freeport	OH	1	West Grove	PA	1	Flint	TX	1	Bellevue	WA	1
Hamilton	OH	1	Providence	RI	1	Frankston	TX	1	Bonney Lake	WA	1
Kent	OH	1	Beech Island	SC	1	Ft Davis	TX	1	Bothell	WA	2
Louisville	OH	2	Chappells	SC	1	Ft Worth	TX	2	Cashmere	WA	1
Massillon	OH	1	Columbia	SC	2	Garland	TX	1	Colville	WA	2
McArthur	OH	1	Greenwood	SC	1	Gatesville	TX	1	Enumclaw	WA	1
Medina	OH	1	Kingston	SC	1	Gilmer	TX	1	Freeland	WA	1
Miamisburg	OH	1	Laurens	SC	1	Harleton	TX	1	Gig Harbor	WA	2
New Plymouth	OH	1	Pickens	SC	1	Hawkins	TX	1	Kennewick	WA	1
Orrville	OH	1	Rock Hill	SC	1	Houston	TX	9	Kirkland	WA	1
Powell	OH	1	Santee	SC	1	Huntsville	TX	1	North Bend	WA	1
Quaker City	OH	1	Summerton	SC	1	Irving	TX	1	Ocean Shores	WA	1
Ray	OH	1	Sumter	SC	1	Katy	TX	1	Seattle	WA	2
Somerset	OH	1	Tega Cay	SC	1	Kilgore	TX	1	Sedro-Woolley	WA	1
South Solon	OH	1	Brandon	SD	1	Lorena	TX	1	Sequim	WA	1
Tipp City	OH	1	Letcher	SD	2	Lubbock	TX	1	Tacoma	WA	3
Troy	OH	1	Miller	SD	1	Midland	TX	1	Vancouver	WA	1
Warren	OH	1	Rapid City	SD	1	Montgomery	TX	1	Wenatchee	WA	1
Waterville	OH	1	Sioux Falls	SD	4	Plano	TX	2	Algoma	WI	1
Anadarko	OK	1	Clarksville	TN	1	Pollok	TX	1	Appleton	WI	1
Elmwood	OK	1	Columbia	TN	1	Queen City	TX	1	Argonne	WI	1
Enid	OK	1	Decatur	TN	1	Round Rock	TX	1	Ashland	WI	1
Glenpool	OK	1	Goodlettsville	TN	1	San Angelo	TX	1	Gleason	WI	1
Locust Grove	OK	1	Hendersonville	TN	2	Spring	TX	2	Little Chute	WI	1
Stillwater	OK	1	Hermitage	TN	3	Stanton	TX	2	Marshall	WI	1
Tulsa	OK	1	Jackson	TN	1	Strawn	TX	1	Menomonee FlsWI	WI	1
Azalea	OR	1	Kingsport	TN	1	Sulphur Springs	TX	1	Merrill	WI	1
Central Point	OR	1	Knoxville	TN	6	Texarkana	TX	1	Milwaukee	WI	1
Condon	OR	1	Lenoir City	TN	1	The Colony	TX	1	Rhineland	WI	1
Eugene	OR	1	Lexington	TN	1	The Woodlands	TX	1	Sullivan	WI	1
Hillsboro	OR	1	Madison	TN	3	White Oak	TX	1	Watertown	WI	1
Huntington	OR	1	Memphis	TN	1	Winnsboro	TX	1	Waukesha	WI	1
Keizer	OR	1	Nashville	TN	2	Deweyville	UT	1	Wis Dells	WI	1
Portland	OR	3	Rockwood	TN	1	East Carbon	UT	1	Chester	WV	1
Rogue River	OR	1	Waynesboro	TN	1	Kaysville	UT	1	Morgantown	WV	1
Roseburg	OR	1	Alvin	TX	1	Ogden	UT	1	Nito	WV	1
Talent	OR	1	Atlanta	TX	1	Salt Lake City	UT	2	Parkersburg	WV	1
Waldport	OR	1	Austin	TX	3	Sandy	UT	1	Wheeling	WV	1
Allentown	PA	4	Big Sandy	TX	11	Tooele	UT	1	Casper	WY	1
Blossburg	PA	1	Celina	TX	1	West Jordan	UT	3	Gillette	WY	1
Broomall	PA	1	Coldsping	TX	1	Alexandria	VA	2			

### "UCG" from page 1

prepaid. The accommodations, food, and meeting facilities were excellent. The home office seemed to have thought out everything in advance—including the results of the conference!

While we do not like to be a bearer of bad news, those who do not learn the lessons of history are destined to repeat them. "The simple believes every word, but the prudent man considers well his steps" (Prv 14:15).

A year ago, nearly every conference member had been a member of the Worldwide Church of God. The formation of the UCG became necessary, because the old teaching of "God governs from the top down and corrects the men at the top if they are wrong" was proven untrue. These people came to Cincinnati to form, through the guidance of the holy spirit, a new organization that would have checks and balances so that a few men could not gain control for their own purposes—

leaving most of the brethren to start anew. Few of the elders were there to push some private agenda—they wanted to cooperate and produce a structure that would do the Eternal's will. While they felt a part of the process and were able to contribute some new ideas, it seemed that if the holy spirit was going to inspire any changes at the meeting, it would have to work through a few "top men."

**Continued page 21**

# Is Santa Claus a Christmas Idol?

**Santa Claus is taught to children as a grand old fictitious being, having special power of bringing good and blessing children.** Webster's Dictionary defines an idol as an image, object or being that is greatly or excessively loved and admired. This word picture of man describes Santa Claus as an idol. God explains and describes an idol in His Word, Ex. 20:4 as either a graven (carved-out) object, or a being of the mind's creation of any likeness (characteristic) of God in heaven. Doesn't Santa Claus fit an idol's description, that has God-like power to serve all children of the world at Christmas? Society has even clothed its Santa idol to appear like the likeness of God, as Christ in heaven appeared to John in vision, that has a golden or (black) girdle girt about the body with the head and hairs appearing white like wool, white as snow and having a deep voice. Read it in Rev. 1:13-15. God says in Ex. 20:5 "...Don't worship nor serve them—any of man's created God-like idols or gods," and in the last part of verse 5, "this sin depicts hatred-hostility against God." God says He is a jealous God for His people and the creating of idols, as in Santa, shows not love as many professed Christians believe it does, but hatred and rebellion against God-Christ, Ex. 20:5.

**Society and professed Christianity would have all to believe that observing Christmas and teaching about Santa is done in the name of Christ to remember his unknown birthday.** Is observing Christmas Christ's will or the will of another spirit being, posing as the Christ? People literally raise up Santa and put him on a throne at the Christmas season and exalt him in conjunction with all the sun-god customs and practices of Christmas, as in setting up a tree with all the lights, candles, yule logs, and songs that seem so joyous and wonderful, but oh so deceiving! Jesus Christ said there would be false Christs, false imaginations, creations and images of Him worshipped by the many people and showing great wonders like as at the

Christmas season, and if possible would deceive even the elect, Mat. 24:5, 24. Why not the elect, because they are not deceived about the requirements for salvation and understand what is idolatry and have repented of this sin, a sin God greatly hates, Deut. 7:25-26; 8:19-20.

**Can a confessed Christian, who has repented of the sins of idolatry and the worship of idols in his life, join in and be a part of the Christmas season?** Christmas was founded in idolatry and still carries with it the worship of the Santa idol and all of the idolatrous, sun worship practices and symbols, but because Christ's name has been added to it, people reason erroneously that Christmas and Santa Claus has been Christianized. Oh what a deception! This is not only idolatry, but taking Christ's name in vain as well, and joining His Holy Righteous Name to idols and idolatry, and doing despite against His spirit of grace, (Heb. 10:28-31). Also study II Cor. 6:14-17. This is works of unholiness and will reap the wages of sin! Jesus Christ has given no one—preacher, church or whatever, permission and authority to use His name in conjunction with the season's symbols of sun-god worship, and the extolling of Santa Claus. Then who has given churches permission? It is Satan, who has deceived the whole world, Rev. 12:9, and set up false, Christ worship in all the churches, II Cor. 4:4 and study II Cor. 11:13-15.

**The Christmas season, with the extolling of the Santa Claus idol, is the fruit of man's living from the "tree of good and evil."** Man, as a self-appointed god, Gen. 3:5, justifies his decision to observe Christmas in its spirit, as his own choice, and to follow his own, and his church's standard of what is "good and evil" even if it is contrary to God's law and God's spirit. However, and whenever, a man is converted to God's way and desires to choose the "tree of life," he comes to see from this choice, that only God knows what is good and evil, and it is God's standard of measurement—His

Ten Commandments, that man must acknowledge as the only way of love and real joy. The excuse Satan's preachers teach that no one can keep Christ's Ten Commandments by denying God's power, will not protect anyone from God's judgment. God's Word still stands—the wages of sin is death, not life. (Rom.6:23, II Pet.2:2, II Tim.3:5).

**The man-gods of professed Christianity reason from their church, the family "tree of good and evil" that Rom. 14:3-6 gives them their justification in choosing and esteeming any day for the Sabbath or holy day, such as Christmas, Sunday and Easter, with no remorse or guilt of commandment transgression.** Is this Paul's teaching? Do these verses give a believer permission to cast off, denounce and forget God's commanded 7th day Sabbath, and His Holy Days—making light of why Christ died, Heb. 10:26-29? Of course not! That would be ridiculous! These verses are teaching that no one is to judge a believer that esteems a certain day for fasting and prayer to praise and draw close to his Master—Christ, and its meaning was in no way meant to forget His Master's weekly 7th day Sabbath or His annual Holy Days, Mark 2:28, Ex. 20:8. Professed Christianity uses Rom.14:3-6 to justify their sins and of exercising their self-imposed right as "gods" to choose the Sabbath and holidays they choose, and not what Sabbath and Holy Days the Master of the Bible says are to be holy!

**Santa Claus is a greatly admired idol at Christmas that parents lie about and teach to their children that takes the place of God.** Santa Claus is raised up in Christmas parades, at parties and brought into American homes against the will of Jesus Christ, and is an abomination to God. Christ says, "Come out of it and be ye separate," II Cor. 6:16-18, I Cor.6:9-10, Gal.5:19-21.

—Don Young  
Church of God of Jessamine  
PO Box 1216  
Nicholasville, KY 40340-1216

## SERVANTS' NEWS

### "CEM" from page 1

Ronald L. Dart has played a major role in the development of the Church of God International (CGI) since its earliest days. He directed the ministry and other activities; many of the organization's tapes and literature bear his name. He is widely respected by many as a long-time Bible student and teacher. Below, we reprint the entire text of his resignation letter dated October 29, 1995:

To all my friends and brethren in CGI:

After much prayer and soul searching, I have come to see that it is God's will for me to make a change in the direction of my ministry. I will try to explain.

A couple of weeks ago I had another episode of cardiac arrhythmia. I saw my doctor, had an EKG, and discussed a change in medication with him. His conclusion was that the episode had been brought on by stress. This episode made me think very seriously about my future effectiveness to God and the church. I know He will sustain me, but He also expects me to use common sense.

At the same time, the church at large (we in the CGI do not believe we are all there is to the church) has suffered shattering blows. I have called this the age of confusion, and the church has lamentably not been immune. The number of hurt, confused and bewildered refugees seems to grow by the hour. Some have come to the CGI, or gone to one of the splinter groups (which show signs of splintering again). Most, however, have not. They do not trust any of the existing church organizations. Many have decided that they are through with organized religion for good.

I believe it is God's will for me to step out of the administration of the CGI and to reach out to these people as a non-aligned minister whose objective is to serve. At the same time, I want to stay in touch with all our friends in the CGI, and I intend to be available for counseling, for prayer, or for any other individual spiritual need. It may be that I can personally be more effective even with the CGI by stepping outside the organization itself.

I love the CGI, the brethren and all the ministers. We have come a long way together, and much has been

accomplished. There is still more to do.

In 1978, Garner Ted Armstrong promised that we would all walk shoulder to shoulder. I want to go on record that he has kept that promise to me. I am grateful for the freedom I have enjoyed in the CGI for the past 17 years—freedom to grow and freedom to study and think.

I sincerely hope to maintain a warm and friendly relationship with the CGI in the years to come, but (and I do not use this expression lightly) God has shown me it is time to move on.

With great love and hope for the future,

—Ronald L. Dart

Ronald Dart has come to see what thousands of other brethren have seen and are seeing: (1) there is no guarantee that the Eternal will correct the leaders of church organizations—He seems to let them, like the kings of Israel, do what they want. (2) Each individual is responsible for understanding the Bible, being corrected by it (2Ti 3:16) and working out their own salvation (Phlp 2:12). We are very happy to see Ron Dart step out in faith like this. There is much work to be done. (3)

### The presence of the holy spirit in power is more important than a large group or a lot of money.

The people that started Friends of the Brethren came to this realization about a year ago, but there were thousands of others before us, and there will be many thousands more in the future. We should not judge each other concerning "who understood it first," but be happy that others are understanding it.

While Ron Dart's letter contains few hints about trouble in CGI, the religion pages of the Internet had frequent stories about Garner Ted Armstrong and a video tape made of his activities during one of his visits to a massage parlor. We contacted Garner Ted Armstrong via E-mail and received a reply indicating that indeed an incident occurred that was video taped. He told us: "the actual tape is in the hands of the FBI, and I hesitate to go into detail, since it is supposedly a 'covert' investigation, and of course with the federal offense such as extortion, some rather lengthy prison sentences could be handed down, and the last thing in the world I want to do, is the extortionist's work for them."

On Wednesday, November 20, Suerae

Robertson sued Garner Ted Armstrong and the Church of God International in Tyler state court seeking unspecified damages. She alleges that she was sexually assaulted by Garner Ted Armstrong and has suffered so much that she is unable to work. Without the biblically required witnesses, we cannot judge who is guilty of what. However, if the video tape only shows a "Joseph" fleeing a seductress (Gen 39:7-12) there would be no reason for a lawsuit or for the following events:

Even though no criminal charges have been filed and it is months before the suit will come to trial, Garner Ted Armstrong has resigned from the office of President and the Board of Directors of the Church of God, International and its affiliated corporations. He is being retained to produce a telecast and write letters and literature, but no longer has any official management responsibilities. The Church of God, International continues to operate as normally as possible, being run by an executive team consisting of Guy Carnes, Charles Groce, Ian Hufton, Benny Sharp and Vance Stinson. We pray that all these men will have the wisdom to make wise decisions and strengthen their brethren during these difficult times.

Before anyone stands up to say "why do these people associate with a sinner?" we all ought to look at our own lives. What have you and I done in this past year that fortunately no one has discovered? Our Father in heaven sees everything! Do you attend a church organization that degrades other teachers or that inflates its own attendance to make itself look better? "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1Jn 3:15). "...all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Rev 21:8). **While we must all make decisions about where we will fellowship and what kind of work we will help do, we have enough work removing our own sin without taking too much time to condemn others.**

### Christian Educational Ministries is Born

Meanwhile, on November 14, 1995, Ronald Dart, Allie Dart and Larry Watkins (former CGI business manager) were mailing the first letter from Christian Educational Ministries (CEM), PO Box

**Continued page 11**

## SERVANTS' NEWS

### "CEM" from page 10

560, Whitehouse, Texas 75791. The text of that letter was as follows:

Dear Friends and Brethren,

I am pleased to announce that I am alive and well--contrary to some of the wild rumors going around. I went into the hospital for observation during a change in heart medication. The only ill effect from the change was a little stomach upset which they tell me will pass shortly.

It is really encouraging at a time like this to find out how many friends you have. I can recall no time in my life when I have been told "I love you" so many times from people other than Allie. At times the fervency of the feeling expressed is almost startling--it is surely humbling. Your concern and prayers are sincerely appreciated.

The past few weeks have been as hard as any in my life. The decision to resign from the CGI was heartrending, and only made after much prayer. It would have been so much easier at age 61 to just stay put and keep getting paid. I think you know us well enough to know that we would never have made that move unless we felt we absolutely had to. Larry Watkins has had to make the same decision, and we are joined together to get on with tackling the most important work any man has ever picked up.

There is for every Christian one prime directive: go into all the world and make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to observe all things Christ commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). From the day of my baptism in 1958, that commission has always been "the work."

Whenever I think of "first love," I always think of the Work. Everyone around me in those early years was filled with a vision of the Work and carried a passion for getting out the witness, the gospel, and the warning. The mission is the same. The urgency is just as great. Some of us doing the work are a little older, but we have lost none of the desire. The goal is before us. The challenge is to find the right way to do the job.

One of the things we are committed to do is to reach out to the scattered sheep of the church. Of all the things we have ever done, the "tape program," or

"extended church" has been one of the most effective. I don't know how many people have told me that it was a life saver for them. Hundreds of people have found their way back into the church because someone gave them a tape and followed it up.

For this reason, and because of the many calls we have had to request it, the first thing we are going to do (surprise) is a tape program. In a sense, it will be an "extended church," drawing a lot of us together every Sabbath, even though we are separated by time and distance. It is not surprising that many of our friends from the CGI would want this, but you might be surprised at the number of people recently flushed out of the WCG who have called me out of the blue asking that I would include them on any tape program we do. They looked me up in directory assistance to get the number, or showed up in my E-mail. If anyone wonders whether the grapevine is alive, I can assure you it is. I got a call yesterday morning from an old friend I hadn't heard from in 20 years. In spite of all the changes, disfellowships, attitudes, and differences, people still care about one another across the barriers.

When resources (time, money, people) permit, we want to expand into a newsletter and literature. The continuation of the Bible correspondence course is a high priority. We have hopes for a training program in personal evangelism, and are considering some seminars for people who have been hurt by their experiences with a church or religious organization. During all this time, Larry and I will be available for prayer, counseling, questions, and all the other things a minister is happy to do for God's people.

Without doubt, the most precious of resource in all this are people. Nothing has plagued the churches over the years as the lack of what Jesus called "laborers for the harvest." Herbert W. Armstrong founded Ambassador College to meet that challenge. It was quite successful during its golden years. Unfortunately, the fragmentation of the church that has taken place over the past several years has presented us with a new problem that is going to have to be met in new ways. The sheep are scattered, and so are the shepherds. In the age just ahead, it may be necessary

to feed sheep where they are, and to train the future shepherds in the field. It is not totally clear how this will be done, but it is clear that it must be done.

We hope to involve people from all over the churches of God in this task. There are fine writers out there among the flock who have no outlet for their work. This is a task far beyond the capabilities of a handful of people and it is too important to let organizational boundaries hinder the job. One problem, for example, is the development of Sabbath school materials. We already know that there are people out there who have the skills to achieve excellence in this. We intend to ask for their help.

This raises another of the dreams we have. We would like to pull together an alliance of ministers to help with this task. The idea in this is not to create a governing body for the church, but a band of brothers whose goal is to serve God's people wherever they find them and however they can. Their task would be to search out dedicated men and women, to teach and to train, and to provide a growing pool of people qualified to lead and to serve the people of God. Beyond that, they can help the scattered sheep find their way to a fold. One of our objectives as stated in the articles of incorporation is: "To assist churches and congregations."

There is one very important thing to understand about this: It is not our intent to encourage brethren to leave an existing fellowship or church. The fellowship and relationships we build over the years in a church are precious, and anyone who would come between brethren deserves nothing but contempt. There are seven things listed in Proverbs that God hates. One of them is the person who sows discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:19). All of us should tread very carefully in this area. We expect to serve members from all the churches of God, and wish to compete with none of them. But there are a lot of hurt, scattered people out there, and someone has to go out and try to find them.

We hope to put together a package of assistance for those who want to start a small church. There are things they need to know about the law, IRS requirements, etc., as well as some of the pit-

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### "CEM" from page 11

falls one can avoid if one knows they are there. We will be happy to offer guidance, counsel, and many of the services a small church cannot provide for itself. Larry Watkins, a dedicated minister, is worth his weight in gold in this area. We will try to support in every way without attempting to exert control. If God wills, perhaps we can put together a network of self-governed churches to cooperate in the many things a small church cannot do well alone.

We have a lot of other ideas in the works (including evangelistic outreach), but it should be plain that we are going to have our hands full with this. We will do our best to give you support, and we need your prayers and support as well. Please tell all our friends where we are and what we are doing. We have already got one taped Bible study in hand (the first), and we will be sending it to you under separate cover. Please let us know if you want to continue receiving the tapes on a weekly basis. They are free as long as we have the money. We will probably be late and slow for a little while. Larry Watkins, and Allie and I are the only laborers in this harvest for now, but that should change soon.

Meanwhile, we remember the words of Paul: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We love you. Keep in touch.

—Ronald L. Dart

P.S., A few people have asked about Academy Books and how it figures in our plans. Academy Books has turned out to be a very useful service to a lot of people. The emphasis has begun to shift from old sermon tapes to books, education and training. We plan to leave Academy Books alone to keep doing exactly what it is doing. It does not figure in our plans for the ministry. Academy Books is not a nonprofit corporation, but it is deliberately being operated without a profit. It has one half-time paid worker and a lot of unpaid volunteer effort. We inadvertently made about \$100.00 last year. We hated the necessity of paying corporate income tax on

that and will try not to let it happen again. Academy Books was formed, not to make a profit but to provide another tool in serving God's people. If you would like to see a financial statement on Academy Books, write to Academy Books at P.O. Box 1700, Whitehouse, Texas and request one. Financial statements for the ministry will be published regularly and will include salaries and compensation of all directors and officers.

This letter contains many good ideas that we hope will be put into practice. We are happy to see the holy spirit moving a man that has spent much of his life in an organization step out to simply feed the flock—to help men and women to know the Bible, to establish congregations and to teach them to teach it to others. We were a little puzzled when he wrote as if he invented the idea of an independent ministry. (Alan Ruth's paper on the WCG splits and back issues of Servants' News will show that there are dozens of small groups that accept articles from a variety of writers, tapes from a variety of speakers, and make them available to whichever brethren would like them. Gary Mercer, an individual in Birmingham, Alabama, has helped congregations incorporate; other men have shown how to run a congregation without incorporating.)

Nevertheless, as Ron Dart states, we need many more "laborers for the harvest." There is room for everyone willing to work. There are thousands of brethren that have been confined to the pray, pay, stay and obey functions for too long. We need more men and women full of faith and the holy spirit, reaching for verses like John 14:12, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." While we have not been given this kind of faith and power in our lives yet, we realize that this is how a mighty work will be done, not through physical strength and wealth (Zec 4:6).

Finally, we would like to close this article with a full reprint of Ronald Dart's letter of November 30, 1995.

Dear Friends and Brethren,

This is a strange and confusing time for all of us. Institutions we thought would last until the return of Christ are

being threatened at their very foundations, and people are asking if we are heading into the "famine of the word" (Amos 8:11). Others are asking about Daniel 12:7 where the prophet speaks of scattering the power of the holy people. Is that what is happening to us?

I don't think the famine of the word is upon us, but I do sense the hand of God in what is happening. Church organizations accumulate power over time in spite of themselves. The power comes in many forms—people, money, structure, discipline—and it is easy to begin to trust in that power. There are two kinds of power that settle upon the church. One is the power of God through the Holy Spirit. The other is the physical power we create by working together. Which is more important? Which is more dangerous?

If we get to the place where we start trusting in our own power it is not so hard to imagine God "scattering" it. God broke the pride of Israel's power because they came to trust in that power instead of trusting in Him. It is not so easy to lay power aside once you have it. But if we expect to "work the works of God," we have to do it. God will not work with people who trust in their own strength.

Not all of this was clear to me as late as a month ago. It should have been. I have preached about Gideon's 300 enough times over the years that I should not have passed over that lesson so easily. The story is worth another reading, but the central lesson is clear enough. When Gideon called his troops together, he had an army of 32,000 men. As respectable as that body of men was, God was not impressed. "The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands," God said, "lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me" (Judges 7:2).

The Lord proceeded to cut Gideon's army from 32,000 to 300—a sizeable reduction in force, but still enough to do the job. The lesson must not be forgotten. God works best with a people small in number and lacking in power of their own. If we get "too big for our britches" He may well cut us down to size. When that happens, all we can do is say, "Thank you, Lord," and get back to work.

*Continued page 13*

### "CEM" from page 12

Where is God leading us? What direction does He want us to walk? We believe the centralized church organization has had its day, and that it is time to take a fresh approach. It seems clear enough that God grants us great latitude in how we structure ourselves and our organizations to do the job He has laid before us. I believe He takes delight in letting us try things and learn from our experiences. It is for this reason that I have been reluctant to argue for a particular "doctrine" of church government.

However, it is becoming clearer with each passing day that those church structures that feature strong centralized control have been weighed in the balance and found wanting. This is not to say that centralized control does not work. It does work—sometimes too well. But it fosters a belief in and a trust of the power of the organization itself. The power of the organization can become a substitute for the power of God.

The argument about church government is, in the end, an argument about power. It has to do with where the levers of power are and who controls them. Hierarchical church government is very effective in focussing power to the top of the pyramid, but there is little that can be done to check the abuse of power once it is there.

Jesus said, "All power is given to me," and "Lo, I am with you even to the end of the age." By now it should start becoming clear that he had no intention of creating human power structures to advance His work. Rather He seems to have diffused that power among the apostles and elders and brethren (Acts 15:22, 23).

Rather than creating a new centralized church with government and power, we have concluded it is time to leave off the debate about "church government" and turn instead to service and work. What we visualize is a network of small, self-governed churches assisted and supported by a service ministry which can provide the things a small church cannot do for itself—things that will enable the church to be more effective in its own community.

We have heard from several in the past few weeks expressing concern about "going it alone." I expect it is a lit-

tle scary to think of having a little church with no organizational support. What will we do about tapes, literature, training, evangelism and festivals? Where can we go for counsel, guidance, education, help? Why can't that be provided by a service organization rather than a centralized governing body? And we don't have to go it alone if we are networked with other small churches like ourselves.

In truth, this is already beginning to happen in the churches—without anyone planning to make it so. There is already a smorgasbord of services available here and there, and the growing openness in the churches is making it easier for brethren to work and fellowship across organizational boundaries. God has his own ways of taking us where He wants us to go. We can swim against the tide or with it, but in the end we must go where He wills.

With Christian Educational Ministries (CEM), we hope to build a service agency to support a network of churches that are dedicated to doing the real work of the church. The first step was to start a weekly tape program to fill the needs of the scattered brethren for edification and a sense of belonging each Sabbath day. We now have that under way, and have developed a modest office infrastructure to keep things rolling. The next step will be the publication of a newsletter to keep everyone up to date on what we are doing and how they can be involved. With the first edition of the newsletter, we hope to include information on how to establish a local congregation or fellowship group, and how to connect to the CEM network of churches.

There is something you can do right away to help us. We do not intend to charge anything for the tape program. It is the main line of spiritual nourishment for too many people, and there are many who simply cannot afford to pay for it. That is what Christian charity is all about. But all this costs money, and we don't want to waste anything. *We need to know for sure that you want the tapes and the newsletter.* Would you please take a moment to fill in the enclosed card and let us know what you want and need?

How are we going to pay for it? I am so glad you asked. A fellow called a couple of days ago, and the first thing

out of his mouth after hello was, "do you accept tithes?" Yes, we do. And gifts, contributions and any other form of assistance we can get. We see no point in being bashful about asking God's people to give in order to carry on His work. But if we are going to ask this, we feel we owe you at least two things in return: Integrity and accountability. We know that God holds us accountable for being good stewards of the things that belong to Him. One of the ways we can be accountable to Him is to be accountable to you. CEM is committed to full disclosure of income and expenses along with the salaries of all corporate officers. (This is easy right now—no one is getting paid.) If we are honest and straightforward with you, I don't think you will mind at all being asked—even encouraged—to give.

CEM is also committed to another rare commodity—having fun doing the work of God. The Biblical word for fun is "joy." If we can't have joy in the things we do for God, it is time to back up and take another look. Truly we are excited about the opportunity before us. We are taking a fresh look at the work before us, and are looking daily for God's direction and blessing. Without a doubt, the most important thing you can do for us is to pray that God will direct our hands and our thoughts.

Thank you for the encouragement and support you have already given. We need you just as much as you need us.

With love from all of us,

—Ronald L. Dart

We are happy to see that he is offering his service free of charge and has the faith to trust our Savior to supply the resources to carry it through. The latter half of the letter is a little puzzling again—it reads as if CEM is the only organization trying to help the people "going it alone." Some people certainly have that fear. We can all help them learn that they are not "going it alone." We have fellowship with the Father and His Son (1Jn 1:3) and he will never leave us or forsake us (Heb 13:5). Our Father has promised to supply all of our need (Phlp 4:9). There is plenty of work to do. Let us all work together!

—comments by SN



# Letters & Responses

We print a representative sampling of our mail—both positive and negative. We do not include names unless we are fairly sure that the writer would not object. To avoid any difficulty, writers should specify how much of their name and address they would like us to print. We include our response to each letter in this type-style. We have selected a title for each letter for easy reference. If writers supply their own title, we will be happy to use it.

## Less Negative Letters

**LETTER:** December 4, 1995  
Dear Mr. Edwards,

Thank you for all your hard work in bringing us the Servants' News. The only negative thing I have to comment about it is the letters column, which is mostly venomous and negative, and really isn't worth wasting space on. If a letter does not point out something uplifting and encouraging, why bother to print it?...

I am enclosing a check to help out a little in the work that you are doing.

Thank you.

G.P., Tennessee

### RESPONSE:

Actually, we receive mostly short, very positive letters. However, you will notice that many of the books of the Old Testament are filled with negative examples—examples that we are to learn from and not repeat. When deeply held beliefs are challenged, people often get angry and “venomous.” Those that are well-grounded should be able to help them, not just point out their difficulty and dismiss them.

We should get used to working with upset people. We will probably need to work with many of them in the future. We need to realize that our Savior came, spent his entire life working with people much less righteous than himself and was still willing to die for them. He is our example!

—Norman S. Edwards

## Wants Back Issues of SN

**LETTER:** Oct. 15th 1995

Dear Friends of The Brethren:

We saw our first copy of Servants' News at the Feast here in Tyler Texas. We knew about In-Transition out of Monroe, Ind. 46772 (P.O. Box 450). It has helped us. Believe me, its not free. We would appreciate being added to your mailing list. Please find our check enclosed. Thank you so much for this timely and needed work.

Angel Gonzalez's letter said it all - July 95. We loved someone expressing how we also feel.

Are you able to send any back copies? This is Paul's 36 Feast. My 33 Feast. We are very thankful Christ is finding a way to feed His Sheep.

Sincerely,

—P.M., Texas

### RESPONSE:

Yes, we have back issues of Servants' News available and will gladly send them.

Like you, we find *In Transition* very helpful. It is not free, but we can assure you that it is not making anyone wealthy, either. It was started as an independent source of information to brethren, not as a separate “work.” They do not have a “doctrinal statement”, hold services, counsel people, etc. They do not solicit nor receive significant donations so charging a subscription price is the only way they can continue to operate.

—Norman S. Edwards

## Looking for Fellow Workers

**LETTER:** July 5, 1995

Dear Norm Edwards

I would like to introduce myself to you. I am a former member of the Worldwide Church of God out of Peterborough, Ont. I left about 2 years ago and have been keeping fellowship with Fred and Carol McGovarin, who have already called you and talked to you as to what business we are about, as well as to congratulate you on the fine work you are doing. I would also like to personally applaud your work and although not in a very good financial position at the moment, would like to at least offer you my spiritual support through prayer. What an excellent way for everyone to

keep in touch and inform each other of any new knowledge that comes to light. It reminds me of the old cliche, “You can't see the forest for the trees”. It's true, when you are looking to just one man or a handful of men for spiritual insight, you automatically ignore the hundreds of thousands of other trees, or sources of fruit, that make up the forest....

The question of church government came into sharp focus for me recently when I studied a subject in the college I am presently attending, called Group Think. It is based on a book of the same title, by an author named I.L.Janis (1982). In it he explains how groups work, and how they survive by counting on 8 basic attitudes....

My only advice to members of organized churches is to not be afraid to explore outside points of view, and to truly search and prove all things. Do not simply believe everything you are told. Remember, we are all being tested and made perfect through testing. Freedom is standing before Almighty Yahweh and his Son, Yahshua the Messiah, our eternal High Priest, on our own two feet, ready to give account for what we have done with the talents that were given to us, and I'm sure that there are many out there who have been brainwashed into believing that the only talent they have is to support the work financially.

I am willing to share my thoughts with any willing to listen as well as listen to the thoughts that any others are having. I've only had a chance to read a few articles from a couple of your publications and am very pleased with the fact that so many are making an effort to get their thoughts out in the open. What individual groups need to do now is to brainstorm about them and see if they find any agreement or not. Then write in their thoughts on the matter; either a short confirmation or as much solid scripturally based data to the contrary. We should not be afraid to kick ideas around to see if they break apart or not.

Also, we should not be afraid of being wrong and receiving negative feedback. How else can we truly analyze what we believe to be true?...

What would have happened if Paul would have been afraid to speak out about circumcision? Or if Peter had been afraid to speak out about allowing Gentiles into the body of Yahshua? Yahweh truly calls upon all men to be individual thinkers. Everyone's opinion and input is valuable; if for nothing else but to prove it wrong, so as to eliminate it

## SERVANTS' NEWS

from our long list of questions and misconceptions.

I strongly believe that this is the key to unlocking a vast storehouse of knowledge that has been locked up inside each individual member and has never been allowed to come out. Did any of the prophets go to the established priesthood for permission to preach the word of Yahweh? Did Yahshua? Did His apostles? Every single individual in the body of Yahshua is commissioned to preach the good news of the kingdom. None should be silenced.

I would like to request to be on your mailing list and to invite correspondence with any other group or individual who may wish to do so. I would also like to wish you all success in the future.

Sincerely yours in Yahshua's Name

Gary Primo  
RR3  
Fenelon Falls, Ont.  
Canada, K0M 1N0

### **RESPONSE:**

We agree with your analysis of how Yahweh works through people. He does not send His servants to human authority when He has work to accomplish. Even when Yashua (Jesus) came to the earth, He ignored the established priesthood and began to teach in Galilee. Old Testament prophets usually had to speak in spite of the kings. The prophet Agabus did not ask Paul's permission to prophecy, but spoke the words he was given to Paul (Acts 21:8-14). We hope you receive some communications from others that read your letter.

—Norman S. Edwards

## Ready for Right Kind of Gov't

**LETTER:** Nov. 3, 1995  
Dear Friends

I just wanted to let you know how much I do appreciate the "Servants News." I really feel overjoyed when I see the brown envelope in the mail. Everything written therein is so interesting. I read all of it to the finish. I have made some copies of the article on "How the Eternal Governs Through Humans." The one's I have given a copy to, feel the same way I do. They are burnt out on the Church Government that W.C.G. had, or has.

Norman, I like what you have written about Church Government. You use Greek words and let them explain what the interpretation of a certain word in the

Bible is. I can certainly see God's spirit there in your writings. You have done a lot of searching and proving & praying before the final results. It's all so evident in your writings. I like Jim Rector's articles also: I have so many of them. If you don't mind I would like to have the article "Just What does the New Covenant Do?" I think I know, but your articles explain things so well. I just can't get enough reading from each of you.

Please write more articles that we can study on, somehow I just know what you "all" are doing & saying is according to what the Eternal approves. I came into the Worldwide Church in 1970. Really I was baptized in that year. Things seemed to begin to fall apart right afterwards. I had studied the original material from Herbert Armstrong in all readiness. I couldn't get enough of it. I have it all stamped in my memory and I do not want to let it go. Yours is even better. After all the heartache and disappointment of W.C.G. I'm very much ready for the right kind of government—the one you have written about. It rings a bell in my brain. I hope you never let go of what you have started. We need "your kind." God needs you at work doing the true works.

Every one I know surely does love your works. Keep it up. We are praying for you.

Thanks

M.C., Mississippi

### **RESPONSE:**

We all need the true Biblical government. We also need to realize that it brings much more responsibility on the members rather than less. The way Satan seems to work through hierarchical governments is first establish absolute control, then gradually get the leadership off the track.

When individuals and local congregations accept their responsibility to understand the Bible for themselves, Satan sends deceivers, arguers, and sometimes deceitful demons right into their congregations. The holy spirit gives us the power to handle these problems, but we should not be surprised when they occur. It is part of our training to learn to recognize counterfeits and deal with them.

We probably will not have a chance to relax until Satan is bound.

—Norman S. Edwards

## Meeting at Home

**LETTER:** September 27, 1995  
Dear Mr. Edwards,

Please put me on your mailing list. I want to receive the Servants News. I have found it very informative and I feel that I am in contact with some of my brethren. I was in the WCG for 20 yrs. I left in April. I really miss my brethren. I hold Services here in my home with several Members. We are striving to make it into the Kingdom of God. I know God is working out His Plan. But it is very sad. I would like to hear from the brethren.

Your Sister in Christ

Lillie Braswell  
309 Harris St.  
Madison, Tenn. 37115

**RESPONSE:** Thank you for your letter. We hope that you will take advantage of our service on page 6 to send letters to the scattered brethren.

—Norman S. Edwards

## Finding the True Church

**LETTER:** December 4, 1995  
Dear Mr. Edwards,

First I'd like to say thank you so much for all your help and literature.

Ron & I are seeing many sides of the Gospel that we didn't see before. The biggest of which is love toward God and love for our fellow man. (I see how far we have yet to go. Ron & I.)

I would also like to thank you for taking time out of your busy day to speak with me on the phone. Through your patience as well as that of many others such as Ray Wooten, Fred Coulter, Lon Lasey and any others that have helped me to find my way to God & Christ our one source of the true Church, which is the body of believers, not the organization we tithe to or fellowship with. I now see that I can't church-hop for the rest of my life looking for the perfect place to do the work of God. But my first work must be with myself and my house.

Through God and his patience as I stumble often, he will now lead me to learn the true love for him and my brothers in Christ as well as all men. That I have searched for and fallen so short of for the last 11 years.

I thank you again for allowing God's spirit to lead you in his work, which has helped me find my way to that narrow road of love for God & men. I have

**Continued page 16**

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## SERVANTS' NEWS

### "Letters" from page 15

included what I hope will cover postage and paper for what you have sent so far. We look forward to helping more in the future as we are able.

Thank you again

R.B., Alabama

### **RESPONSE:**

We are glad to know that you are receiving help from a variety of sources. We hope to make information available from all of the teachers you mentioned in the future.

—Norman S. Edwards

## Bravo on "Different Drummer"

**LETTER:** September 27, 1995

### "Escape" from page 4

(Matthew 10:28).

### "Watch and Pray Always..."

Now, after all these words of warning concerning the days of God's vengeance, which culminate with the return of Jesus Christ, we come to Luke 21:36.

"Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Do you see how the focus has changed once context has been established and the scripture is quoted in its entirety? The warning is to pray to be counted worthy to escape "the days of vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!" (2Thes 1:8). ALL those who know God and obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will be counted worthy! This simple truth has eluded many in the Church of God because they have allowed men to deceive them with the spirit of FEAR and doubt in the efficacy of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for their sins. While this deception may have begun with a simple misunderstanding of the Holy Scriptures, there can be no doubt that Satan himself has perpetuated this fraud upon God's Church to instill doubt, suspicion and fear!

While it is not the intent of this article to either prove or disprove the teaching regarding "the place of safety," it is absolutely vital that we understand

Dear [Servants' News],

BRAVO! on your August '95 issue of Servant's News.

The article "The Sounds of a Different Drummer" is RIGHT ON. Robert Schimmel has hit the nail on the head. Better to be in a small parade on the right road than in a big one headed the WRONG WAY. These words are true also for several other "major" splits from WCG. When will WE WAKE up?

And you gave a well-balanced considered response to the pathetic soul who wrote to you about "TEN REASONS..." Surely, the blind do lead the blind. Folks, AUTHORITARIAN CHURCHES are not ordained of God. Where is it written that one man—or a council of ministers—runs the church and ALL MUST PAY homage to them? And by the way—A "HOME OFFICE" EQUALS "Headquarters"!

that Luke 21:36 should not be used to support anyone's arguments in favor of an escape to "the place of safety," because it is much more than a leap of faith from Luke 21:36 to Revelation 3:10 and Rev.12:6 & 14. It is a leap of the most dangerous kind—that of blind faith! Most people, who believe in an escape to a "place of safety", probably have never considered that, perhaps, the Church has been promising something that is not in its power to deliver—physical salvation. It should also now be clear that our goal is not, and should never be, physical salvation, but SPIRITUAL SALVATION. Those who are counted worthy to escape the days of God's vengeance, will have the awesome privilege to "stand before the Son of Man." That is what we are to always be praying for! Notice Revelation 6:17 "For the great day of His wrath (vengeance-KJV) has come, and who is able to stand?" Those who are counted worthy are ALL of God's people and ALL will be "able to stand!"

### Physical Comfort vs. Spiritual Life

It should now be evident, that because our goal through Jesus Christ is Eternal Life, we are NOT to be concerned about our physical comfort! Luke 21:36 simply must not be used to support the doctrine of a place of safety! The fact that some kind of physical protection is promised to a group of God's people in a specific geographic location cannot be denied (Revelation 3:10 and Rev. 12:6), but ONLY God knows who is able to bear the trial of persecution and martyrdom, and who is

God bless you all.

F. Paul Haney  
Unity Christian Fellowship  
P.O. Box 370  
Watertown, Connecticut 06795

### **RESPONSE:**

Thank you for your comments. You ask a good question asking "Where is it written...?" After posing that question to ourselves, we found that the scriptures reveal something quite different from what we had always thought.

We also applaud you for stepping out and doing a work in the Connecticut area. We recommend your small quarterly newsletter, "The Fellowship Commentator" to our readers. [Interested readers can write to the address above.]

—Norman A. Brumm

not. Notice 1 Corinthians 10:13: "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." The way of escape is not necessarily removal from a situation. God may even allow us to be tried to the point of death, but He also has promised to give us the inner-strength (FAITH) to bear or endure the trial. He has promised to bring us through for the SPIRITUAL reward, not for the physical! The escape is made when the trial or temptation is unsuccessful in separating us from God!

Could the truth be more PLAIN? Do you now see that this is not a Philadelphian VS Laodicean issue? Do you also see that what we are to be counted worthy to escape is the wrath of the Living God—not the wrath of Satan the Devil? Those who insist on instilling doubt, suspicion and fear in the hearts and minds of God's people will have to answer to Him! "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2Tim. 1:7). The Great Merciful and Eternal God has promised that ALL those who obey Him will be counted worthy to escape the days of His vengeance and they ALL will be able to stand before Jesus Christ at His return to then rule with Him over all the nations! So, the next time you read Luke 21:36, you can be confident that, if you are truly one of God's Elect, then you WILL escape the days of His vengeance.

—Donald R. Flowers

**"Independence" from page 1**

cessful or unjust in their cause. **Independents** are those that in the long term succeed in forming their own government, organization, congregation, etc. However, we never know the exact details of the future. **From a present perspective, independents are all considered rebels.**

David considered Absalom a rebel. Rehoboam considered Jeroboam a rebel (1Kngs 12:19). England considered the colonies rebels. The North considered the South rebels. The Jewish leaders considered the believers in Yeshua (Jesus) rebels. And the Church of God, Seventh Day considered Herbert Armstrong a rebel.

After the passage of time, independence is recognized and the rebel concept dies away. Friendship of the separated parties is possible if human pride and vanity does not get in the way. The nations of Israel and Judah occasionally worked together; the USA and England had a few more fights, but have often been the best of friends. Jews and Christians have fought at times, but also lived and worked together for peace. And, the various "Churches of God" have sometimes fought or ignored each other, and sometimes worked together. (Write us for Alan Ruth's free paper *The Worldwide Church of God Splits, Their Triumphs and Troubles* if you are interested in studying this subject in detail.)

Can anyone prove that there has been only one "true Sabbath-keeping church organization" through the past 2000 years? We have never seen any such claim. Today, there are over 8,000,000 Seventh Day Adventists—some who keep the holy days and/or reject the unbiblical doctrines of that organization but feel they must "stay in the church into which they were called." (Have you ever heard that before?) Today, there are between 300,000 and 500,000 members in the various branches of the Church of God, Seventh Day. These organizations tolerate a considerable amount of doctrinal diversity and there are probably individuals there with beliefs very similar to your own. There are hundreds of other organizations and groups in existence today and thousands if we go back through history. There are myriads of doctrines and teachings held by the

various organizations, and variations in belief and practice among individuals in any single organization.

Is it really possible that this vast diversity is where we find the true believers—the true Ekklesia (Church)? The first three chapters of Revelation clearly answer "Yes." They show our all-powerful Savior in the midst of the "seven churches" (Rev 1:13,20)—He is the leader. The chapters go on to describe seven organizations that all existed at the same time, but had different doctrines and practices and even variant practices within the group (Rev 2:14-15,24, 3:4). While there may be a sequential fulfillment to this prophecy as well, seven times we are all commanded to "hear what the Spirit says to the churches [plural]." These attitudes and problems all existed at one time in Asia Minor, and we can find them appearing repeatedly throughout history. We all must listen to every message and if it fits, repent!

**More Responsibility for Members**

From all the various church groups and teachers in existence today, is there a way to know which ones are short-lived "rebels," and which ones the Eternal is really using? We can go to our Bible and go to our Father in prayer. Size or wealth has nothing to do with it. After our Savior's three-year ministry, there were only 120 followers (Acts 1:15). Herbert Armstrong preached for many years before he had that many supporters. Many righteous men were poor (Heb 11:37). If we know what is right to do, we are responsible for doing it (Jms 4:17, Luke 12:41-47). If we do not know what we should do, we must study and ask (2Tim 2:15, Jms 1:5). We are His disciples; we are all responsible for bearing fruit (John 15:8, 1Cor 3:11-15).

It is only through Bible study and prayer—the belief that our Father can really guide our lives that we have any hope of bearing any fruit (John 5:30). Just being a part of, or contributing to "the right" organization means nothing (Acts 8:20).

Many of our readers were once a part of an organization that considered itself the "one and only true church." Life was simple then: as long as you did not do something bad and get "put out," you were on your way to "the place of

safety" and the Kingdom of God. We trusted that God was guiding our leader, and that it was our duty to follow him—even if the Bible apparently said something different. Our organization never mentioned that thousands were repenting, being baptized, and trying to live by "every word of God" in **other organizations**.

After the doctrinal reversal and mass exodus from the Worldwide Church of God, many are coming to see that our Father is working with more than one organization. **We have certainly seen that he does not always correct the men at the top.** Yet, some offshoot organizations still claim that individuals must obey their human leadership to receive proper guidance from the Eternal. If He can guide His people through the president of this church, the board of that church, the presiding evangelist of another church, the voting assembly of still another church, **can He not guide you?** (See Phlp 1:6, 2:13.) Is our Savior's ability to guide and coordinate limited to one or a few dozen heads of organizations? Does our Father require a certain size organization or a certain spiritual "rank" before He will take an active role? Admittedly, it is easier for us to say "I supported this church leader" than it is to say, "I always sought the power of the holy spirit to do the Father's work in my life." Yet we shall all stand "before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom 14:10, 2Cor 5:10).

Many people **chose** to leave the WCG because they, through the power of the holy spirit in them, could not accept the new teachings. Some of them **chose to attend** a similar Sabbath-keeping organization with doctrines much like those of the WCG in the 1970's or 1980's. If they had the Biblical authority to make that choice, do not they have on-going authority to choose, as guided by the holy spirit, where they will fellowship and how they will serve? **Unfortunately, some groups essentially teach that individuals have freedom to leave other groups to come to their church, but once in their church, do not have freedom to leave.** The reality is that **we personally must choose** where we will fellowship and where we will send money. These are just two of the many

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works for which we will be judged and rewarded at His return (Rev 22:1-15).

### Wanting "Freedom to Leave"—Was that the Sin of Korah?

Are people who leave a functioning congregation rebelling as Korah did to Moses? Let us read the Bible. When **Korah** stood up with his "250 leaders of the congregation," of what did he accuse Moses? Korah said, "You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" (Num 16:3).

**Dathan and Abiram** made other accusations: "Is it a small thing that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, that you should keep acting like a prince over us? Moreover you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men?" (Num 16:13-14).

Were these men simply trying to be independent or were they rebelling against the Eternal? What they said is a mixture of truth and error and if we examine it closely, their purpose is very clear. When they said the congregation is holy and "the Lord is among them," they were correct (Num 7:6, 14:2,21). However, when they said Moses acted like a prince over them, it was a lie—Moses defended himself and said that he never took anything from them nor hurt any of them (Numbers 16;15). They also accused Moses of taking too much upon himself and not bringing them into the promised land. These accusations were indeed accusations against the Eternal as He chose Moses (Ex 3:10), and it was His decision not to let the faithless generation enter the land (Num 14). This short-lived rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and the other leaders was a simple attempt to grab power for themselves.

If we want to use this story to evaluate splits in organizations of our day, we need to answer the following questions: Are those who split off essentially preaching the same doctrines and running their organization the same way as the group from which they split? In a few cases the answer seems to be

"yes"—probably another attempt by someone to have power for himself. But often, the leaders of the old organization are accused of spending too much money on themselves and unfairly treating the membership. Will these organizations do as Moses did, and show the "rebels" that they have not taken from the people and spent the money on themselves? In other words, will they reveal their financial statements, their salaries and expenses? Are these organizations as innocent as Moses was when it comes to mistreating their members? Or does the organization completely hide statistics about how many individuals were put out and the reasons why?

After all the great miracles done through Moses, the Israelites certainly should have known that the Eternal was working through him. But what about our leaders today? Can we be certain that they have been chosen by the Eternal to lead or have they put themselves in that position? Do they fit the qualifications mentioned in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1? How do you know? Most will claim that we can know they are leaders by their fruits. But how straightforward are they in telling you about the number of people they have baptized? Do they say what fraction of these people became interested in the truth from their evangelistic efforts or from the example of another member? Indeed there are many other fruits that can be born beside baptisms, some of which are very difficult to measure.

What would our opinion of Moses be if his response to Korah had been, "God put me in this position and I do not have to answer your charges of abusing the people. If God does not like what I am doing, he will remove me!" Nevertheless, this is the kind of answer many organizations give when they are accused. Korah's rebellion should be a warning to those needlessly causing division as well as a lesson on how righteous leaders should stand up to false accusations. (If the accusations are true, they ought to repent and change.)

### Does Freedom Produce Anarchy?

If all believers are free to "do what they want" will not that lead to confusion and anarchy? That is a good question. The answer is "No, members are not free to do what they want." Each

member yielding to the holy spirit will not produce anarchy. The purpose in our Savior guiding each one of our lives is not to strive with each other (though He said that would happen—Luke 12:51-53), but to be used for His collective purpose (Eph 2:19-22). The examples in the Bible are largely ones of support and cooperation with other brethren, though we do find cases where there are disagreements (Acts 15:36-41, 1Cor 16:12, Gal 2:11, etc.). Romans 14 clearly shows that we can have doctrinal differences and still fellowship and work together. We find no scriptural example of punishing a person for following his sincere understanding of scripture instead of the church leadership.

The book of Judges concludes that society was a mess because "...there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Jud 21:25). The people, under that form of government, did have great personal freedom—and they abused it. The problem was not with the form of government; it was with the people (Heb 8:8). Corrupt leaders and judges were a big part of the problem (1Sam 2:12, 8:3). We, as a people with the holy spirit, have the power to do those things which the nation of Israel could not (Eph 3:20-21, Jud 25). Our concept of "doing what is right" should be like that of our Father's.

People get in trouble when they use their freedom, not to serve, but to be contentious or to set themselves up in authority over others (Tit 3:9, 3Jn 9). Leaders jealous of "their memberships" are often not content with teaching the truth. They want to try to stop other groups from teaching doctrines with which they disagree. The Bible shows we are to do our work, and let the work of others, even though it may be false, go on (Mark 9:38-40, Phil 1:15-18).

If possible, we are to live at peace with everyone (Rom 12:8). The scriptures describe a great many spiritual gifts that the Messiah gives to men (1Cor 12-14, Eph 4, Rom 12). Some of the gifts are administrative in nature. It was the job of an overseer (rendered "bishop" in the KJV) to make sure that the functions of the congregation were carried out in an orderly manner. Nevertheless, the emphasis was not on

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commanding others but on personally serving (Mark 10:35-45). Paul indicated that righteous love for the brethren was more important than all spiritual gifts (1Cor 13). Each man realizing that he is responsible directly to his Savior (1Cor 11:3) is not a matter of "too many chiefs and not enough indians" but a matter of "one Chief and all the rest indians."

**I Corinthians 11:3** brings out another point of structure among humans that stands apart from any "church government." It states "the head of [a married] woman is man." We also find that children at home are to obey their parents (Ex 20:12, Eph 6:1, Gen 2:24). The authority and structure of a family is continually supported by the scriptures and is much stronger than any authority given to leaders of congregations. While the analogy of the family is often used to depict the assembly of believers, we find that the Eternal is the Father and our Savior is the Elder brother—there are no human "positions" of "father" or "big brother." Church leaders are treading on dangerous ground when they council one spouse against the other or when they council children against their parents.

The Father being the head of the Son, the Son being the head of every man, the man being the head of his wife, and the parents being the head of children at home **is a hierarchy that the Eternal has set up** (1Cor 11:3). Honoring of elders is commanded even after children have left home (Lev 19:32). Organizations do not do well when they take young men, give them a little training and set them over their fathers in the congregations (1Tim 3:6). We find no scripture that says the pastor (or "overseer" or "minister" or any other title) is "the head" of his congregation.

**How Can We Best Serve Today?**

Are we advocating that every person find something wrong with their congregation, point it out, and then leave it? Only if you are confident you are replacing your current service with something better. We do not want to be like the man with one talent, who felt his master was unjust so he accomplished nothing (Matt 25:25-30). The same principle is repeated with the demon possessed person who failed to

fill his mind with something good—the demon was able to return with seven others and the man's latter state was worse than the first (Luke 11:24-26). It is a mistake to leave any assembly or service to the brethren unless you have a definite plan to serve in another capacity. This writer has witnessed too many cases where individuals stopped their contributions to a "big organization" when they discovered it was wasting a large portion of its funds, but never again used their resources to do any other kind of work. The latter state is worse than the first. Just as our Messiah did not accept the excuse of the man who hid his talent in the sand, he will not accept the excuse of people who leave a position of service for "freedom" and then do nothing with their "freedom."

How do we increase our service? **We are told to earnestly desire the best spiritual gifts for the benefit of everyone** (1Cor 12:7, 31), but for which should you as an individual ask? How do we know what gifts we may already have? Prayer is the primary answer (Rom 8:26-27, Col 1:9-11, Phil 4:6-7, 19). If we feel we are not close enough to our Father to know which gifts to request, reading the Bible all the way through is an excellent way to draw much closer. Consider the areas where you have effectively served in the past and ask your Father to show you where you can serve in the future.

What do you think of when you think of serving? Do you think of an announcement being made in your worship service such as "Don Deacon is in charge of the hall, if you have questions see him," or "Elliott Elder will bring us this afternoon's message"? If so, your concept of serving is **all wrong** and you need a lot of personal prayer and study before you attempt any major service. If you would like to take care of a hall, you should be thinking about when it needs to be opened and closed, what kind of work is involved with setting up and keeping it clean, what kind of help you might need, and whether or not you have the time and ability to do the job well. If you are going to teach, you ought to think about what you can teach that would help others and about the scriptures that pronounce a greater condemnation upon those that teach (Jas 3:1).

Some people have been in the habit of letting church leaders make the important spiritual decisions in their lives. Months of study may be necessary before you have the faith to know that your Father can work directly in your life. If the congregation with which you attend allows that study and allows you to reasonably discuss it with others, staying where you are may be your best choice. If the congregation wants to tell you how to think, then you may need to find a new place to attend just so you can study. Decisions where to fellowship should not be made lightly—do not meet with a group just because they have the nicest hall, the funniest speakers, or the best after-service snacks. Our fellowship is an important part of our work and service.

Everyone must be diligent not to offend others who may not understand what we understand (Matt 18:6) Even the Apostles were not able to accept some truth right away (John 16:12, Acts 10:34). If you understand that the Eternal does work through each person that has His spirit, you do not have to feel the need for 100% doctrinal agreement with every other believer. (We are not saying that truth is non-existent or unimportant, but that we are all growing in grace and knowledge and not all at the same place at the same time.)

We do not have to agree on the understanding of every prophecy or the dating of Bible events to be able to work together to teach "... the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:1-2). Paul and Barnabas had differences, yet they both went on to preach the Gospel to the world (Acts 15:36-40).

Servants' News will continue to carry stories of how brethren are preaching the Gospel, both in large and small efforts. For further Bible study in the area of government and congregational services, write for our free articles *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans* and *Assembling on the Sabbath*. We hope and pray that the Eternal will strengthen you in the work He is doing through you, even if this is the last *Friends of the Brethren* article that you ever read.

—Norman S. Edwards

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# Praise for the UCG Conclusion

Dear sir,

I thought that I would drop you a line to thank you for the production of *Servants' News*. It is an important publication bringing news about sabbatarian groups and debating several topics. It is also an excellent way of bringing about respect between the various groups and thus inter-sabbatarian harmony and co-operation. Further, I find it complements *In Transition* newspaper and *The Sabbath Sentinel* quite well.

Thank you for printing my submission on the constitution. I know that scores of UCG members submitted ideas to the home office at Arcadia

which were prayerfully and carefully considered and the result has been a fine document approved at the General Conference of Elders. I am overwhelmingly in agreement with that document and praise the men involved with it and the amendments adopted at the Conference. There can be no doubt that it is a much superior document than the original draft.

I only have the following suggestions for improvement over the coming 12 months:

1. Be more explicit about the 'lost' tribes of Israel in clause 2.1.15.

2. We need to state openly that the true Church of God is not a denomination (this was, strangely, removed from the second version).

3. In clause 2.1.16, we need to be more explicit that we are finally born at the resurrection and that God is a Family (rather than the family of God, which even some Protestants believe in).

4. Section 3.2 was admirable, but local Church committees/ boards need to be stated as a given, where the majority of members want them.

5. A clause should be inserted that

the UCG will reach out and befriend other similar sabbatarian groups and continue to do so even if initially rejected [I look forward to the day that UCG, GCG and CGI co-operate].

6. There is a need for a clause to allow for affiliations with UCG by sabbatarian groups wishing to have closer relations.

7. A clause stating that UCG will proclaim Ezekiel's message (the captivity doctrine).

8. Clause 2.2.10 should state that the Sabbath is a sign and that Sunday is the spiritual Mark of the Beast.

9. A statement on angeology (we have one on Satan).

10. Somewhere we should state that we are picking up the baton of HWA.

Much of the above would probably be in our literature or as part of our culture anyway. One could say the same thing about member participation, code of conduct for ministers, disfellowshiping review board, grievance resolution procedures and such like - they could (and probably should) be mentioned somewhere in the constitution, but it is not essential, if they are a part of our culture and in policy documentation (see for example David Hulme's statement in the 13 November New Beginnings, page 2 on member committees and the sections on member participation in "From Ministerial Services" on page 3). All of the reports I have heard and the talks I have had suggest that most of the fear by some of a strict, centralist Church pushing the trinity etc is not coming to pass just as most of us knew it wouldn't. This does not mean we should let down our guard though. UCG is a very open Church and is striving to do everything in the open and above board (John 18:20). No doubt there is some 'middle management' resistance to this openness, but

they can only be a small minority.

I look forward to the draft disfellowshiping review and grievance resolution procedures, which, I trust, are to be based on Matt 18:15-17 and other policy documents for close examination and critique by the ministry and membership prior to acceptance. These checks and balances will ensure that we have a fair Church, righteously eschewing the 'lording it over' which a few would like to see continue. Without checks and balances we will have sheriffs and even wolves creeping in who will tear apart people they do not like: these types callously disfellowship people for little or nothing without a proper hearing; they then spread heinous lies about such people. I know of such cases outside of the USA which have gone on. A Church government that preaches 'shepherd-leadership' but does little to implement it by having no checks and balances and proper avenues for member feedback, will make little progress to win back the hearts and minds of the membership hurt by apostasy and by abusive 'ministers' who should be sued for their actions and words.

Finally, I would like to say that I am very much for the UCG type of governance, which does not tend to the extreme of congregationalism/full local autonomy or total centralism. What we have is going to work, and work well.

Once again, thank you for a fine publication. We may not agree on everything, but we can be agreeable in our disagreements.

All the best,

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## Update

If you are interested in copies of the works of Herbert W. Armstrong (see Servants' News July 1995), David Day's new address is: 548 Havasu, Tooele, UT 84074. Telephone: 801-833-0622.

**"UCG" from page 8**

David Hulme opened the conference by delivering an address recounting the events of the original Indianapolis conference last April. He went on to speak about the need for order, cooperation and humility among the attendees and brethren. He also read the following letter dated November 16, 1995:

To the Home Office/United Church of God Board Members:

Hello. I am a member of the United Church of God since it began sometime in May. I'd previously been with the other organization since I've been a small child—about 35 years. I've also never written to either church before. But I feel the need now so strongly.

It seems to me that there are plenty of people such as myself who are not vocal. It appears to always be the vocal few who are constantly "voicing" their opinions. I'm not much of a letter writer, but I cannot be silent now. I want to say, and have you truly hear, "We are behind you!!!!" We know you are not perfect—how could you be. We desire for unity and peace and to move forward. There are so many of us out here who just want to get on with the work. Just because you may hear over and over again about this man who is not satisfied or that person who is upset over something—please, please remember—the majority of the people of the church simply want to worship God and do a Work and we do trust and believe God will work things out. Perhaps through trial and error, but not through fighting and discord of the very vocal few. It absolutely terrifies me that after we have left our former organization that things will just blow up at this upcoming conference—over what? Please, please do not let that happen. Remember us!! We are behind you.

Please keep in mind that there are people, and there are plenty of us, who just want a place to worship God and do the Work without strife and fighting.

My husband and I have 5 children and it upsets me so much to think that they will have to endure more turmoil at "church" if this conference does not go well. We are praying and fasting for this conference. But please remember, the small things can be worked out later. Don't leave us stranded out here.

I suppose that's all I have to say.

Please make this work. It must and it will with God's intervention. We do not want to be out here all by ourselves with no home office and fellow brethren around the world, that is an awful thought. Just remember, the vocal few are grumbling, not the non-vocal majority. Please hear us, and GO ON! Let's get the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God out to the world and live our lives like Christians. That's all we want. Thank you for listening. Our prayers will be with you at the conference.

David Hulme's response to the letter was as follows:

Let's not let our brethren down. The eyes of many more not yet of our fellowship, are on us. Others are anticipating that we will fall apart and they will pick up some of the pieces. This **IS** an historic moment.

**This letter shows how much work is ahead for the UCG and other Bible teachers.** The brethren need a much stronger faith in the Creator rather than in man-created organizations. They need faith that will carry them through the difficult times ahead. When the persecution became so bad in Jerusalem that everyone except the apostles fled the city, did the brethren bemoan losing their "home office" (Acts 8:1)? No! "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Many of them faced prison or death sentences, not just the transfer to another organization.

While "peaceful worship services" sound like a worthwhile goal, the Eternal did not see any need to stop the stressful break-up of hundreds of WCG congregations as doctrinal reversals came here and there like a patchwork quilt. Apparently, our Father was not interested in people that were "behind their leader all the way," but was interested in knowing who had His truth and His ways in their heart (Jer 17:10). Indeed, under our former administration, if a person was baptized, attended services, paid tithes and caused no trouble, but never asked one Bible question for the rest of their life, they would be considered a "good member." Whereas a person that asked "too many" Bible questions was often shunned or disfellowshipped. The continuing responsibility to help members to increase their personal Bible knowledge and faith directly in the Eternal is upon every organization or individual that claims to teach His Word.

Quotations in this article are from documents provided by the UCG Fax Information Service.

**Approval of Rules of Order**

After David Hulme's address, a vote was taken on the Rules of Order. The document was divided into three sections: **General Rules, Duties of the Chairman, and Duties of the Secretary.** The latter two sections gave the Chairman of the Council of Elders responsibility for running the meeting (or adjourning it if it became disorderly) and the Secretary responsibility for recording and publishing the results. The General rules were very important and are reproduced word-for-word below with some added comments in brackets [ ].

1. All meetings are to be conducted in a Godly manner. Decency and order shall always prevail (I Corinthians 14:40). [It would have been good to include other verses in the same context: 1Cor 14:29-31, 39]

2. Since God must be a part of any meeting conducted by the United Church of God, all meetings are opened with prayer.

3. All motions and articles of business to be discussed at any meeting of the General Conference must be submitted to the secretary of the General Conference in writing prior to such meeting. Such requests must comply with the requirements of the bylaws as specified in article 7.9.2. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws must conform to the procedure as defined in the bylaws. [For a member of the General Conference to place an item on the agenda, the bylaws require it must be signed by 25% of the other members **before** notice is given for the meeting. No address list is furnished. Unless the man personally knows how to reach well over 100 of the others, he has no way to place something on the conference agenda. By contrast, the president, treasurer, or secretary can simply write an item and it must be placed on the agenda. Only a majority vote of the Council of Elders can place an item on the agenda during a meeting.]

4. The agenda for each meeting must be approved by the Council of Elders.

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5. Time for review and input will be provided for all topics to be balloted at the conference. This can be accomplished in advance of the actual meeting by mail, fax, surveys, committee input, or other means adopted by the council. If no provision is made in advance, time must be provided at the conference. [For all normal items on the agenda sent with the meeting notice, input must be given in advance. Input is by the management team—there is no requirement that it even be presented to the chairman, president, or the council.]

6. Each conference will provide a slot of time for individuals who wish to address the general conference. To maintain order, each speaker must submit a written request in advance of the appointed time. Speakers are admonished to maintain proper respect and decorum at all times during these opportunities. [Do the last two sentences mean they will not be allowed to say anything that opposes the Council of Elders?]

7. The chairman of the Council of Elders will also serve as chairman for the General Conference.

8. The secretary of the Council of Elders will also serve as secretary to the General Conference.

The elders were given the choice of accepting these rules or rejecting them; there was no opportunity for changing or alteration. They were approved by a show of hands, though one of the current Council of Elders members voted against them. (How the conference would have proceeded if the Rules of Order had not been accepted was rather unclear.)

### Approval of Constitution and Bylaws

The Constitution and Bylaws were submitted for approval. The **Constitution** is a foundational document describing what the organization is all about, and the **Bylaws** deal with how the corporation is actually run. Much written input was received prior to the conference and many ideas were incorporated into the revised versions of these documents. However, there was no open discussion or debate before the voting (different than Acts 15:7). As there were no other alternatives available, 94% agreed to adopt the constitution and bylaws as presented. (One revision regarding international affiliations

had been added since the latest widely published version.). The voting was accomplished by secret ballot and supervised by Coopers & Lybrand, UCG's regular auditor.

The entire text of the constitution and bylaws are available from the UCG Fax Information Service (317-839-5002), or by writing UCG, PO Box 661780, Arcadia, CA 91066. Most of the major points are summarized below:

About half of the Constitution is Article 2, a doctrinal statement of the UCG. While it contains almost no scriptural references and a few points that some UCG Bible-students might take exception to, it is on the whole a sound summary of what the Scriptures teach. **If the WCG had such a constitution that required General Conference approval to change, the past 10 year WCG history would have been much different.**

Article 3.2, entitled "Functions within the Church" states:

There is one body, the Church that is a spiritual organism. The Church has many members, to each of whom God has bestowed a measure of faith through the Holy Spirit. Through that Spirit, our Father has made us one in the body of Christ, and individually, members one of another. He has given us gifts that differ according to His will and has entrusted His Spirit to each of us so that we might exercise those gifts with humility, gentleness and patience in submission, first to Jesus Christ, and then to one another. By the establishment of this Constitution, we acknowledge the truth of Scripture that all members have a different function within the Church, and that it is our Father who determines each member's function within the Church.

This is a fine statement about what the Bible says about the Church—it is determined by the spirit. Yet the rest of the document reads as if the UCG organization is that spiritual organism. While there is mention of other "religious organizations," the only members of the spiritual body recognized are those that are a part of the UCG organization. Also, the above accurately states that our Father gives spiritual gifts and determines each member's function. However, it appears that the Constitution has already determined that the Eternal will work only through the few men at the top. The Constitution rec-

ognizes four "administrations" as follows:

### Administration 1: The Local Congregation:

*Constitution Article 3.2.2.1: An assembly of members, wherever located, pastored by a minister recognized by the United Church of God, an International Association (UCG), and governed by the UCG's published rules of association, shall constitute a local congregation of the United Church of God, an International Association. Each local congregation is guided and shepherded by a pastor, assisted by elders, deacons and deaconesses. A congregation may establish one or more local advisory councils to assist the ministry in serving the needs of the local congregation, the Church as a whole, and as they have the opportunity, their local community. The local congregation also works in conjunction with the Council of Elders and the home office to administer the established policies and procedures of the UCG. [While this mentions local advisory councils and working together, it still leaves the local pastor in complete control of the congregation. This article and article 8.9 of the Bylaws contain the only mention of the members of the church.]*

**Bylaw 8.9 The Right of Appeal:** All lay members of the Church have the right of [sic—should be "to"] appeal disciplinary actions, or other adverse actions or decisions, to elders designated by the Council and for certain matters to the Council itself, after completing the process of appeal as developed by Ministerial Services and approved by the Council of Elders. [We also included this Bylaw 8.9 here with Constitution Article 3.2.2.1 because they are the **only two paragraphs in the entire two documents that mention the brethren**. Contrast this with the words of our Savior that were mostly directed at the common people or the New Testament letters that are primarily addressed to the brethren, not to leaders. It will be interesting to see if the appeal procedure is based on the command in Matthew 18:17 to take otherwise unresolved disputes to the *Ekklesia*—the assembly of believers. From this bylaw, it appears that the system will be much like the WCG system: Any decision will be based on the word of the member against the word the "minister," determined by a "judge" who is usually a good friend of the minister and does not

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know the member.]

### **Administration 2: General Conference of Elders**

UCG documents summarized by SN: All ordained ministers in good standing with the UCG make up the General Conference of Elders. It is their purpose to approve changes to church doctrine, the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution and the Bylaws. They also ratify the annual strategic plan, operating plan, annual budget, and any official relationships with other religious organizations. [In all the above cases, their function is to accept or reject a proposal, not to decide between alternative plans.] Finally, the purpose of the General Conference of Elders is "to nominate and elect the Council of Elders, with prayer and fasting." [We found it interesting that these men were required to pray and fast for their responsibilities, but no such requirement was placed on the Council of Elders, Officers, or Management Team in their responsibilities. Is not prayer and fasting a personal decision?]

### **Administration 3: Council of Elders**

Summarized by SN: The Council of Elders consists of twelve elders, three of which have responsibilities primarily in international areas. It is equivalent to the board of directors found in most corporations. It is established to provide oversight and direction within the UCG. Each member is elected for three years, though initially a random drawing will be held to split up the terms between two, three, and four years. This will allow four members to be elected every year rather than the entire council every three years. The Council elects a chairman from its members. He presides over the council until he is voted out by a 2/3 vote of the Council or until he is voted out by the General Conference of Elders.

The council is authorized essentially to run the corporation. Such authorization includes selecting and removing all employees, officers, and agents and determining what they will be paid, to recommend doctrinal changes or changes to foundational documents for approval by the General Conference. The council also prepares the annual strategic plan, the operational plan, the budget, and the agenda for meetings of the General Conference. Council meetings must be held every three months, but the chairman

or a majority of council members may call a meeting at any time, giving proper notice. Bylaws Article 8.7.9 does allow the council to delegate any or all of their responsibilities. It is likely that the majority of the Council's responsibilities will be delegated to the management team because (1) Most council members live far from the home office, in a variety of different time zones, (2) Bylaw 8.7.5 requires 2/3 of the council members to be present (even if by telephone) in order to transact business, (3) bylaw 8.7.4.1.b requires a minimum of 48 hours notice for a meeting. Since many day-to-day decisions need to be made with less than 48 hours notice, it is a common corporate practice for a board (or Council) to delegate most executive decision making to the management—within certain prescribed limits.

### **Administration 4: Home Office and Management Team**

*Constitution Article 3.2.2.4:* The Home Office and Management Team are established by the Council of Elders to serve the Church by administering the policies adopted and approved by the General Conference of Elders and the Council. The Management Team and Home Office Staff are selected, approved and directed by the Council.

Summarized by SN: The only specifically named members of the management team are the corporate officers: President, Secretary, and Treasurer. No person may serve in more than one office at a time. The Council of elders must vote for these officers by a 2/3 majority secret ballot. There is no term. The officers continue to serve until they are replaced by a 2/3 vote. (It takes 8 votes to put a person in office, but he or she will stay there as long as 5 council members support them.) The management team need not be members of the Council of Elders, so the only way the General Conference could possibly remove them is by collecting over 100 signatures to put the issue on the next meeting's agenda. (What might happen to those that signed the motion to remove an officer before it came to a vote?) These documents provide no recourse at all for brethren that wish to correct or remove their leaders if they recognize that the officers are going astray. How much different is that from the government we just left?

**The President** shall "have the responsibility for the general and active daily

operation of the corporation." He shall cause all the various operational systems of the corporation to be developed and "perform all duties incidental to that of the chief executive officer and such other duties as may be delegated to him by the council."

**The Secretary** keeps records, gives notices, and performs other technical functions.

**The Treasurer** manages the funds, produces accounting statements, prepares budgets, and signs corporate documents not otherwise specifically reserved for the president or other person's signature.

The head of the ministry, the head of the youth program, the head of the physical plant, the head of the editorial department, and almost every other position will fall into this "administration". They could be selected either by the Council of Elders or by the President. These positions are salaried jobs—the people stay in them until management or the council acts.

### **Items Yet To Be Approved**

It is important to note that there were five items referred to in the Constitution and Bylaws that were yet to be specified and **must be approved by the General Conference**. Some of these issues are fairly critical. Apparently they will not be resolved until the General Conference meeting next year. The references and items yet to be approved are:

**Constitution Article 4.1.6 and Bylaw 8.6.2.11:** The Rules of Association will describe how the United Church of God in the USA associates with the UCG corporate organizations in other countries and with independent congregations wherever they may be. Time was allotted to approve these rules at this conference, but the counsel decided not to present them.

**Constitution Article 4.5.2:** An appeal procedure for elders expelled or suspended from the General Conference.

**Constitution Article 5.1 and Bylaw 12.2:** Procedure for amending the Constitution, Bylaws, and Articles of Association.

**Bylaw 7.8:** A procedure for absentee balloting by the General Conference. This could be very important if a General Conference special meeting is called or if UCG elects not to pay transportation costs of the elders (the bylaws do not require

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this).

**Bylaw 8.1:** A method whereby the nominating committee of the Council of Elders can place names on the ballot for election to the Council of Elders. When it is time to elect new members of the Council of Elders, it is not clear how many nominations will come from the Council and how many from the General Conference of elders. This is another critical issue. The General Conference of Elders cannot serve as a "check and balance" on the Council of Elders if the Council of Elders has near complete control of who is on the ballot.

### Election of the Council of Elders

The General Conference of Elders was dismissed for an hour of prayer, then returned to vote on the Council of Elders. In the first round of balloting, each elder wrote the name of nine USA elders and three serving in international areas. The ballots were compiled and the 28 USA elders and the 7 international elders that received the most votes were placed on a "short list." Then, the elders were asked to vote again. This time, the 9 USA elders and 3 international elders with the most votes became the new Council of elders.

Not surprisingly, the eight of the nine existing members of the Council were re-elected: Robert Dick, Jim Franks, Roy Holladay, Doug Horchak, David Hulme, Victor Kubik, Dennis Luker, and Burk McNair. Ray Wooten, who favored more local autonomy, was not reelected. Donald Ward was the new USA Council member and Gary Antion, Peter Nathan, and Leon Walker were the new international Council members.

At no time were any of the prospective Council members allowed to communicate how they intended to serve before the voting began. The General Conference was not allowed to ask them any questions. Some men saw names on the final ballot that they did not even know. How could they apply the Biblical instruction for choosing an "overseer"—the closest Biblical equivalent of a Council member's function? (**1Tim 3:1-7.**) Could they know if the men they were voting for had one wife, were temperate, were sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach, not given to wine, not violent, **not greedy for money**, gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous, ruling there

own house well, having their children in submission with all reverence, and having a good testimony from the outside? How much about the personal lives of these men was really known? To claim all the men had all these positive characteristics is a big assumption. How many of us personally know of a case where a minister (in any congregation) was involved in adultery, drunkenness, ill-temper, lying, seeking money above the truth, etc?

The General Conference elders could vote for men that they personally knew and whom they felt sure were qualified. But how many others would know about the same outstanding men from a local area—probably not enough to be elected by the whole conference. The only reasonable choice was to vote for the "best" of the men known world-wide—mostly men that were previously on the Council of Elders. The time for prayer was appreciated, but does our Father usually answer requests when we have not done those things we could humanly do? After all, when the Council and the Management Team decide who to hire, which pastor to send where, etc., do they simply pray and do the next thing that comes to mind, or do they use their minds to ask questions and make a decision based on the available facts and the guidance of the holy spirit? Are not we told to "test the spirits" (1Jn 4:1, Rev 2:2)? Should not the General Conference receive the same kind of information to make their decisions that the Council of Elders and Management Team would want to have to make their decisions?

### Election of Officers

The Council of Elders then elected the corporate officers: Bob Dick, Chairman of the board; and David Hulme, president. The Secretary and Treasurer were not elected at the Conference but will be elected at the first Council meeting, planned for January 8-10th. The new officers officially begin their new jobs January 1, 1996. The current Secretary (Gerald Seelig) and Treasurer (Steve Andrews) will continue to serve until then.

### Events of Monday, December 4.

Steve Andrews, interim treasurer, reviewed the financial statements for 1995 and the proposed budget for 1996. UCG in the United States has taken in about \$7.5 million to date and is budgeting for

\$15.2 million for the next fiscal year. (UCG has chosen to budget on an April 1 to March 31 year.) That **\$15.2** million is budgeted like this: **\$6.6** million for salaries and benefits, **\$3.2** million to keep as reserves, **\$1.9** million for travel and lodging, **\$1.6** million to support international offices, **\$0.9** million for print media, advertising, postage and shipping, **\$0.3** million for supplies, **\$0.3** million for hall and equipment rental and **\$0.4** million for everything else. It appears that preaching the gospel is taking a back-seat in this budget. A full **21%** are retained for reserves and **12.5%** are used for travel and lodging.

Steve Andrews also delivered a heavy presentation on government accounting requirements and the accepted principles of accounting for churches. No literature or software was offered to make the contribution-accounting job of the local congregation easier. The presentation was full of complex technical terms and made the accounting task seem difficult. Some conference members felt it was more designed to encourage them to accept Steve Andrew's offer to process their local congregation's contributions at the home office. Indeed, some attendees found that a document requiring all local congregations to send contributions to headquarters had been drafted, but was not presented to the conference

Discussions of the location of a new office and of the proposed rules of association were bypassed until more input could be gathered. Some of the home office staff indicated that "where to move" guidelines are still quite vague and that a move during the next year was rather unlikely.

Later in the afternoon, David Hulme answered questions asked by members of the conference—something most found very helpful. Among other responses, Mr. Hulme stated that "an outside firm will be contacted to do a salary study comparing UCG salaries to salaries of comparable nonprofit organizations and will publish salary ranges of paid positions, the possibility of constructing local congregation buildings will be addressed by the new council, and some ministerial moves may be considered to better distribute manpower according to specific area needs."

Lastly, about 15 individual elders were "allowed to address the conference" for

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two minutes each on topics they chose and submitted in advance. It is unfortunate that these sessions were not allowed before the balloting so the elders would have a better way to know who other natural leaders might be in the conference and to hopefully discern through whom the Eternal was powerfully working.

**Events of Tuesday, December 5.**

The proposed 1996 budget was approved by a **95.8%** majority, and a statement of Moral and Ethical Principles for Financial Administration was approved by **98.7%**. The latter statement was a refreshing document. It showed how the Greek word for "household" used in Ephesians 2:19 and Galatians 6:10 is oikos, from which we derive our English word "economics." It also showed how the Greek word translated "fellowship" in Acts 2:42 is koinonia actually means "partnership." (It also referred to Phil 3:10, 1Cor 10:16, 2Cor 8:9.) It concluded the finances should be shared as if we were partners in the same household. We at Servant's News found this an exciting concept—certainly in line with the financing method commanded in Luke 10:7-8 where the people lived and ate at the same standard of the people they were serving. **Perhaps this "one big household" concept could be used to set pastor and home-office salaries at the average salary of a similar-sized family in their area.** This would end much debate about what salaries should be—they would be the closest possible to the rest of the family or household.

The same document contained several other goals of the church's financial system including: "Provide for the preaching of the gospel," and "Ensure member confidentiality in a way that precludes preferential treatment for those who give more financially" (James 2:1-13). This last point is quite important as other organizations have had a tendency to "ordain" men that contributed a lot. They rationalize that "big earners" are "good managers" but also do not mind making these men feel important so they would stay with and keep contributing to the organization.

Steve Andrews later answered questions regarding financial matters which were quite a help to some of the elders: "Local churches can collect and receipt donations even if those churches are not

incorporated; assistance funds are available from the home office if local assistance funds are exhausted; no taxes are required on local church interest income; and restricted funds (second and third tithe) cannot be spent for other purposes from either local or home office funds."

Regarding local funds, Steve Andrews stressed the need for confidentiality and control of such funds and described several methods local congregations are using for collecting and receipting local contributions. He said that no policy has been set on outside auditing of local accounts, but that the home office account will be audited by an outside accounting firm in accordance with the guidelines established at the Indianapolis conference earlier in 1995.

Four elders were again allowed to address the assembled group for two minutes each on topics of their own choosing. Topics were 1) the importance of funding annual conferences as a means of unifying the ministry and the church; 2) suggestions to improve the council of elders nomination and selection process; 3) possible ways to improve the conference; and 4) the need for programs to develop leadership among local congregations.

In response to a request by an attendee, many of the international pastors took several minutes each to give an impromptu presentation on the state of their area of the world. Many told extremely interesting and sometimes breathtaking stories. Some wished there was much more time available for this function.

David Hulme concluded the conference by outlining goals for next year. Some of them were: a publication for the ministry; continued publication of New Beginnings, possibly with a new name; continued bimonthly publication of The Good News; three new booklets: What is Your Destiny?, The Road to Eternal Life and Sunset to Sunset—God's Sabbath Rest, summer programs for the church youth; selection and institution of Sabbath school materials; and the need for ministers to continually focus on serving the membership, praying regularly and asking God for inspiration.

Mr. Hulme closed the conference by reading Romans 8:18-39, reminding elders that although the Church has been through very painful and difficult times, ministers and members must

keep an overall perspective and remember that nothing can separate them from God's great love for His people.

While that scripture says no other person or thing can separate us from "the love of God," it does not undo Isaiah 59:2: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you." If the leadership, elders or members sin and do not repent, they can be separated. Being a member of a "Church of God" is not an automatic trip to the "place of safety" or the Kingdom (Matt 16:25). This is serious business!

**CONCLUSION**

So what is the point of this article? Are we recommending that everyone give up on the UCG? No! The UCG provides a fine opportunity for many people to fellowship on the Sabbath. Much truth is being taught there. What we would hope is that the leadership be more straight-forward with how they intend to govern the congregation. The doctrinal reversal of the WCG (and the doctrinal changes in many historical Sabbath-keeping groups) shows that the Eternal often does not correct congregational leaders that go astray. The believers must withdraw from the errant organizations (2Th 3:6, 1Tim 6:5) and start a new group somewhere else. If the solution is to simply join another hierarchical organization that appears to be "doing a work," the GCG, PCG and a number of other hierarchical groups already exist. The UCG was formed, however, on the basis that the members and elders would have the ability to stop the leadership from going astray or replace it if it did. This is not a bad idea when we consider that tens of thousands of members realized the doctrinal changes and left the WCG from 1992 to 1994 where only a few dozen "paid pastors" made a move in that time. Bible-reading, spirit-filled members would seem to make fairly good watch-dogs over the leadership to see that the doctrines stay true and the positions of authority are not abused.

If the UCG management really plans to run the UCG "from the top down," it would be a lot better if they would say so now and let those that want another hierarchy be a part of it. Some UCG members would be quite happy in a hierarchy, others feel that they would be needlessly repeating an error. Now, it seems that the

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### "UCG" from page 25

UCG management is giving the appearance that the General Conference has power over the organization, but the Rules of Order, Constitution, and Bylaws make it nearly impossible for the General Conference of Elders to affect any major change without the approval of the Council. For years, members have been asked to have faith that the Eternal would guide the top-down government to take care of them. Now is it time for the leaders to have faith (as the men sent in Luke 10) that the Eternal will guide the members to take care of them?

Forming an organization of this size is a complex, time-consuming process. No-one can be expected to do it right overnight. There is much that everyone

needs to learn. **We have stated areas where we think the UCG should improve, now we need to give it time.** It takes time to unlearn old ways. When nearly everyone comes from a background of always saying, "Yes sir" to the boss, it is often hard for leaders to know exactly what others are really thinking. Once individual members realize that they are responsible for what they believe (2Tim 2:15, Acts 17:11) and for working out their own salvation (Phil 2:12), then they can serve in a congregation even if they do not believe all of its teaching. They will then realize they are a member of the one invisible spiritual organism, the Ekklesia (church), and that human organizations are just a tool to help accomplish our Savior's purpose. Brethren should fel-

lowship with the Eternal's people, contribute to Gospel preaching efforts, serve the needy, and all of the other things that many of us have done for so many years. They should try not to offend others by mentioning subjects that might offend them (Rom 14).

We hope all that read this will continue to study, learn and grow, wherever they may attend. For those studying the subject of Biblical government, we would like to offer a free copy of our articles: How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans? and Assembling on the Sabbath. We hope the UCG management is able to provide sound, honest leadership and help the brethren grow to be kings and priests in the Kingdom (Rev 1:6, 5:10).

—Norman S. Edwards

## Literature List

*Friends of the Brethren* continues to be flooded with requests for existing literature and new literature for publication. The Servants' News mailing list is now at 875. With this issue, the task of laying out Servants' News was transferred to Norman Brumm. This should free up more time for literature production.

### Mature Literature

**The Apple of God's Eye** by Jim Rector, 13 pages. God's love for us is far greater than we imagine and we often take it for granted.

**Assembling on the Sabbath** by Norman S. Edwards, 16 pages. An exposition of the scriptures regarding our need to fellowship on the Sabbath and how to do it.

**A Call to Arms** by Jim Rector, 16 pages. Lessons for today from Revelation 2-3 including the oppressive doctrine of the Nicolaitans and the doctrine of Balaam.

**Does the New Covenant Do Away with the Letter of the Law?** by Eric V. Snow. 32 pages. A "must read" for those who feel it does.

**Did Christ Reorganize the Church?** by Herbert W. Armstrong in 1939, 8 pages. Very different than his later approach: Christ never set up a hierarchical government.

**The Heart of the Matter** by Jim Rector, 31 pages. Our calling is to spiritual growth, not just attendance, socializing, politeness or legalism.

**How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans?** by Norman S. Edwards, 34 pages. How the KJV translators altered Scriptures about government to please King James and an analysis of what the Bible says about how we should govern in today's congregations.

**Just What Does the New Covenant Do?** by Joseph Chunko, 18 pages. Explanation of the difference between the law, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

**The Letter to the Galatians, a Paraphrase with Built-in Commentary** by John McCauley. 18 pages. Lively vernacular paraphrase with some notes on book of Galatians.

**The Worldwide Church of God Splits: Their Triumphs and Troubles** by Alan Ruth, 56 pages. Facts and analysis of the last 20 years of church history.

### Basic Literature

**The Bible Sabbath: Seventh Day or First Day?** (From the Bible Sabbath Association) 2 pages. Basic Sabbath tract.

**God's Purpose for Your Life** by Fred McGovarin, 40 pages, half-size booklet. A "first booklet" for people just becoming interested in the Truth. It introduces Hebrew names (Yahweh and Yashua) for God and Jesus.

**The Resurrection of Christ—Is It a Fact?** by Don Hudgel. 2 page tract for those skeptical of the Bible & resurrection.

### Study Resources and Information

**Barnabas Ministries Mission Statement** by Alan Ruth. 2 pages.

**Bible Sabbath Association Order Form**. 1 page. Sabbath books & tracts, Sabbath Sentinel Magazine.

**Commonwealth Publishing Order Form** by Kirk Gearhart. 4 pages. Religious books, including Darrell W. Condor's.

**Friends of the Brethren Statement of Income and Expenses**, 2 pages. (Automatically sent to contributors)

**Giving and Sharing Order Form** by Richard Nickels. 3 pages. Has many excellent free items, low prices on hard-to-find religious books, and fine literature on floppy disk.

**History Research Projects Order Form** by Craig White. 6 pages. Hard-to-find books on the origins of nations.

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