

Servants' NEWS

Vol. 4, No. 8

A newsletter for servants of the Almighty Eternal Creator, wherever they may be

November 1998

Herbert W. Armstrong: How Do We Regard His Teaching?

Servants' News has received many letters and calls asking the above question. Was Herbert Armstrong the prophesied Elijah to come and restore all things? (Matt 17:11.) Was he **the apostle** of the twentieth century? Was he a "phony", using religion as a way to live the good life? Or, was he a teacher used by the Eternal who made a number of significant mistakes?

The purpose of this and the next *Servants' News* issue **is not** to eternally judge Herbert Armstrong. Christ will do that (John 5:22). However, believers are commanded to judge their apostles, teachers and prophets to see if their

words are true (Deut 18:22; Matt 7:15-23; 1Cor 14:29; 1Jn 4:1; Rev 2:2). We need to evaluate Armstrong's teachings from a biblical perspective **not** so we can judge him, **but so we can know what we should believe of his teaching and what we should do now!**

This issue is not so important for many of Armstrong's basic teachings such as the Sabbath and the millennial reign of Christ. These doctrines can be demonstrated from the Scripture almost as easily as they can be from Armstrong's writings (Armstrong did do a good job of putting many of the related scriptures in one place and

explaining them). The difficulty comes with more obscure doctrines and prophetic interpretation. For example, Herbert Armstrong taught that there were three resurrections based on his understanding of Revelation 20, but there is no Scripture that specifically mentions "three resurrections" or a "third resurrection". Also, there are other scriptures that indicate that good and evil unbelievers will be raised at the same time (Matt 3:12; 25:32-33). Should believers today believe and teach three resurrections only because Armstrong taught it, even if they cannot

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Why This Issue?

If you ask a doctrinal question to a friend and he or she answers by quoting the teaching of Martin Luther, Dwight Moody, Ellen G. White or some other deceased theologian, are you impressed? Or, do you think: "I would rather hear their understanding of the Bible than a quote from a human whom I can no longer question"? Why then, should we expect others to treat us differently if we respond to their questions by quoting the teachings of Herbert Armstrong?

If we cannot explain a doctrine from the Bible without citing the teachings of Armstrong, should we teach that doctrine at all? Mr. Armstrong did not have even a near-perfect record in prophecy and doctrine. If we repeat his teachings rather than those which Christ leads us to prove from the Scripture, then **are not we following a man, rather than Christ?**

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HWA Research Tools Now Available to All

We would like to thank Don Tiger and the small group of brethren who work with him for making these writings of Herbert Armstrong available on computer CD-ROM. These are clearly the best facilities available for researching the writings of Mr. Armstrong. The three most useful CD-ROMs are photo images of the 1951-1969 *Good News*, photo images of the 1934-1960 *Plain Truth*, and computer searchable text of all of Mr. Armstrong's books and coworker letters.

You may obtain a set of these CD-ROMs free of charge from the Website www.herbertwarmstrong.org or by writing Don Tiger, 1163 E Ogden No 705-261, Naperville Illinois, 60563.

(See also Oct 30, p. 1 story in *The Journal, News of the Churches of God.*)

Trucker's Bible Study

Oak Grove, Mo., Part 8



The Trucker's Bible Study is conducted weekly at the Texaco truck stop on I-70, Oak Grove, Missouri by Arlo Gieselman, often assisted by Lenny Cacchio.

November 1, 1998: Today's study was a "keeper". Both truckers who attended had embarked on a project of reading the entire Bible. The first man was in the book of Hosea and had some questions about it. Hosea is a wonderful book because it shows clearly the mercy of the God of the Old Testament—that He was not the vengeful, angry God as so many assume.

The discussion lead naturally to God's plan for all mankind and how only a very few will likely be condemned to the lake of fire. He believed that those who are not converted in this life will be judged based on what they do know—which is more merciful than the common teaching of an ever-burning hell. We explored the judgment in Revelation 20 and he seemed to be glad to hear it. He asked for a copy of the "Second Chance" study from CEM and Lesson 1 of their correspondence course.

We spent some time on spiritual gifts. The man said he had a terrible time trying to show people what he understands about scripture, as sometimes it is met by hostility. He wants desperately to share what he understands, but, first, does not know how, and secondly, does not want to have his ego swell at any success—a very humble and gentle attitude. He wonders where his gifts are, and wonders if he has a gift to lead him to the ministry.

I believe that God gave great favor to this morning's study. These men have humbled themselves before God and walk in His way as best they understand it. I came home with ideas for sermons. Truly a blessing for all involved.

November 22, 1998: Wow! These studies have some of the highest highs and lowest lows, but today's surpassed them all. We had five men today, one of whom was a repeat customer who came specifically looking for us.

The first gentleman to arrive today wanted some personal help in connecting with God not only for himself but, also for his "daughter" (not really his daughter but his son's girlfriend). The other men were able to contribute to this discussion. Much of helping others come to God is in living a life worthy of our calling and setting the right example, not by arguing them into it. Some people (such as Job) follow God just by their nature, while others (such as Jacob) need a significant emotional experience before they begin to seek God. Two of the men today were able to relate addiction problems that they were able to overcome, and they attributed the strength to overcome to the power of God—but they had to hit bottom first.

We read Luke 4, where Jesus stood up in the synagogue in Nazareth and read from Isaiah, and how the gospel is about healing the brokenhearted and setting people free. That is the good news that we can offer people looking for answers.

The current situation in Washington is on people's minds these days, and even though the polls show that people are tired of hearing about it, we should not interpret that to mean that people don't care about it and what it portends.

Oops! Not all people who claim Christianity come down on the same side of the issue, as was evident today. I pointed out that the bottom line for our society is to relate what has happened to the nation's concept of right and wrong. Sure, there has been questionable moral behavior in times past. Today, however, we have no moral certainty. In days gone by, the people recognized standards, and while everyone didn't come up to standards, at least people knew

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Servants' News is a ministry to help others understand the Creator's will, obey Him, and teach others. We believe that the Bible contains the foundation of knowledge about our Creator and that He is actively working through people today. Our focus is to help the Sabbath-keeping brethren who believe Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah, but we realize that the Eternal works with many groups and individuals.

We believe the gospel should be given freely—you may copy this newsletter and give it to others. *Servants' News* has nothing to sell and has no financial ties with other organizations, but is supported by those who personally decide to help this ministry. We do not have IRS tax exempt status, but the IRS accepts some charitable deductions without such status (see IRS Publication 557, p. 16, col. 1).

Editor & Publisher: Norman S. Edwards

Associate Editors: Tim & Jeanice Davis, Marleen Edwards, Missi Lara, Lee Lisman, Jon D. Pike, Anne Wibbelsmann

Technical Services: George Dewey

Office Administrator: Pam Dewey

Contributors: Many! Thanks to everyone!

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Servants' News

PO Box 220

Charlotte, Michigan 48813-0220

Phone: 517-543-5544

Fax: 517-543-8899

E-Mail: 75260.1603@CompuServe.com

Internet: <http://www.best.com/~oasis7/sn/>

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Australia: Dale Heslin, 9 Alice Jackson Crescent, Gilmore, ACT 2905

Canada: Cherie Zimmerman, 268 Pennswood Way SE, Calgary, AB T2A 4T3

Europe: *Servants' News*, Gulpen 122, 4852 Hombourg, Belgium

U.K.: Jenny Whiteman, 2 Warren Rd, Narborough, Leicester, LE9 5DR

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Local Congregations



Building Bridges in Phoenix

Everyone is invited to hear the Building Bridges guest speaker **Norman Edwards** at 10:30 A.M. on the Sabbath of **January 23, 1999**. The meeting will be followed by a question & answer session, a potluck, and evening fellowship.

Building Bridges is not a church. Its goal is to book speakers that people in the **Phoenix, Arizona** area would like to hear. It holds meetings once per month and is intended only as a supplement to Sabbath services. The organizers represent a variety of corporate and independent congregations. Previous speakers have been Ron Weinland, Dave Havir and Ray Wooten. Ron Dart is scheduled for February 6 and Jim Rector for some time in March.

Location: North Town Meeting Hall, 2202 Waltann Ln, Phoenix. For overnight housing or more information, call Wayne Speed at 602-465-0418 or Jon Pike at 602-759-6606. —Claudia Speed

Ontario Midwinter Weekend

The Canadian Church of God is orga-

nizing a midwinter spiritual refreshing weekend on January 23 and 24, 1999, to be held at a resort on a 300-acre farm near Hamilton, Ontario.

The price is a very reasonable \$12.50 per person per day, and this includes one night sleep over. Each person will bring his/her own bed linens and towels. Meals are available, or you can bring your own. For more information, call Dennis Horlick at 905-831-6308 in evenings, or the CCG office at 416-531-9701.

Sponsor: Canadian Church of God; PO Box 476; Don Mills Station; Don Mills, Ontario M3C 2T4; Canada.

Dave Havir Speaks on Sabbath

On a pleasant sunny Sabbath, Dec. 12, 1998, 75 to 80 people from several fellowships in central Illinois, the Chicago area, and Wisconsin gathered in suburban Oak Brook to hear guest speaker Dave Havir, pastor of the United Church of God, Big Sandy. After a brief description of the outreach work the Big Sandy congregation is performing, Mr. Havir gave a sermon on the topic of "Two

Pillars of Truth". The first pillar involves the understanding of what the church is, a spiritual organism, not any one corporate organization. All who have God's Spirit are part of Christ's body. The second pillar is an understanding of what a minister is. He emphasized that a minister is a helper of our joy, not one who has dominion over our faith. The rank system is not Biblical, he added, and we don't need to ask a minister's permission to serve God or our fellow man. Mr. Havir also said that he has no desire to build an empire, publish a magazine, or get involved in televangelism.

Following services, most of the group adjourned to the home of local pastor Ken Svehla and his wife Trisha for several hours of feasting and fellowship. This brings to mind the words of Psalms 133:1—"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." —Larry Evans

Seventh Day Christian Assembly

The Seventh Day Christian Assembly of the Church of God in Knoxville, Tennessee would like to let you know of our new web site. The address is:

<http://www.kornet.org/sdca>

Our group is composed of believers from the east Tennessee area, although we can count on guests from more distant places on a fairly frequent basis. The group is not affiliated with any organization, conference, etc. Our belief is that the Eternal works through independent bodies of believers with Jesus Christ as our head. We seek continued growth in truth, spirit, and grace and welcome all who diligently seek the face of God.

We strive to get along with those called out by God, despite our differences, with the belief that He will lead us to truth if we earnestly contend for the faith.

We invite the readers of *Servant's News* to stop by our site and browse. It has just been started, but we hope to add much more information, especially in the next month. So check back often. Of

"Trucker's Study" from page 2

what the standards were. Today we don't recognize any standards at all. That is the problem. We looked at Isaiah 5, where God says: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!"

I suggested that they read the prophets. Their writings can be lifted word for word, published in the editorial page of a newspaper, and they would describe our nation's condition to a "T". Having said that, I told them something we hear too little of today. We went through several passages in Isaiah where

God's warning about a nation's sins is often followed by a millennial picture of God's blessings. The point: God assures us that in the end we win. So don't get too discouraged if things look bleak in our country. God never leaves us without hope, and the light of the Gospel is that Christ is going to return and bring the world peace, and all the world will one day seek God. That message of hope seemed to strike a vibrant chord. I believe that this is the best way in today's society to present the wonderful message of the Kingdom of God.

What happened next surprised me. We closed with prayer, and the men came forward and started handing me money (a fairly substantial amount), which I'll put in the account to buy more Bibles.

—Lenny Cacchio

705 NE Bryant Dr, Lees Summit, MO 64086

lenny_cacchio@hotmail.com

course, we would love to hear your comments or answer any questions. The site has ways to get in touch with us whether it be by mail, e-mail, phone, or our favorite...a visit to our congregation during a Sabbath.

We feel that it is a blessing from the Eternal that we have been provided this new way of offering the gospel message. It has cost us no money at all, just some time. And so we encourage all brethren everywhere to look for ways to express their views in a positive, productive, and efficient way, so that people can access information that will help them in their daily walk. We truly believe that this spreading of information will strengthen the faith of the saints. Information that is open to the public and not hidden in secret in a file cabinet at headquarters, or in the minds of a few "qualified" leaders will be subjected to thought and discussion and the truth will emerge just as iron sharpens iron. —Brad Dunn

BSA Needs Part-time Editors

The Bible Sabbath Association is looking for part-time editors for its Sabbath Sentinel magazine. It has a continuous 50-year existence with many fine articles by various Sabbatharians on a range of topics. It has had a subscription price in the past, but will soon be offered free of charge. If you would like to help, even if it is just working on one or two issues per year, please contact Richard Nickels; 3316 Alberta Dr; Gillette, WY 82718-6217; phone 307-686-5191.

Preaching Prophecy Not Unique

Decades ago, almost any TV ministry that preached prophecy would attract an audience. Prophecy preaching was rare in the days when many people looked to science to solve the problems of the world. Now, most people can read about prophecy in their local paper. Articles have appeared in many papers, big and small. We quote from an article entitled *Apocalypse Now?* from the Dallas Morning News, October 24, 1998:

Sherman Sims walked out of Prestonwood Baptist Church one night, a four-page outline called "The Future Program of God" in his hand. The topic was the end of the world.

He was one of 3,000 people who'd gone to the Far North Dallas church to hear what

some Christians believe the Bible says about the end times. Though Mr. Sims struggled to follow the discussion of tribal wars, the European Union, the stock market, and how it all fits into God's plan, the architect from Duncanville was clear about the message. "You've got to be prepared," Mr. Sims said.

For six weeks this fall, large crowds are flocking to a Bible conference sponsored by the Dallas Theological Seminary. Hand-holding young couples with children, retirees, physicians in scrubs, teenagers and business people wearing pagers—they're all here looking for answers.

In the waning days of the millennium, apocalyptic interest is at an all-time high. Christian bookstores are selling books with such titles as *End-Time Visions: The Road to Armageddon?* and *Final Dawn Over Jerusalem*. Producers of a new evangelical video called *Apocalypse* promise to shake believers and save souls. In one survey, 20 percent of Americans said the Second Coming will happen around 2000.

[large section omitted]

Since the 1970s, in part because of Mr. [Hal] Lindsey's work, these beliefs have seeped into popular books, movies and television.

According to a 1994 survey, Dr. Wojcik said, 61 percent of Americans believe Jesus will return; 44 percent believe in the Battle of Armageddon; 49 percent believe an Antichrist will arise; and 44 percent believe in the Rapture.

Such ideas are comforting, he said, because they help people believe history is following a specific path.

If Sabbatharians are going to reach the world with a prophetic message, we must stand out. We need more than a general message or the setting of dates that do not come to pass. We, like Daniel (Dan 2:28), need to ask the Eternal to reveal the meaning of prophecies to us.

—Norman S. Edwards

Ft. Walton Beach Feast Report

The Congregation of YHWH observed the Feast Of Tabernacles at Ft. Walton Beach, Florida. The weather was wonderful for the entire Feast providing plenty of time for fellowship and rejoicing before YHWH. It was so convenient to have the meeting rooms in the same hotel as many were staying allowing much more time to studying, sharing and really being "together". There were many interesting and thought provoking sermons, Bible

studies, and seminars on a wide variety of topics. On Thursday night we had a great fun show. Other events included some brethren going on a deep sea fishing expedition and bringing back a great catch. The fish were cooked just outside the meeting rooms and eaten with home cooked hush puppies and all the trimmings. There were classes and activities for the youth. Finally, one of the most exciting events was the immersion of 28 people. We watched one elder immerse his own daughter which was very special and touching.

Of special interest was a congregational presentation of calendar issues covering a culmination of much research by many men and women. The purpose and intent of the calendar study is/was to understand the scripturally defined calendar and the specific times (Feast Days, or the Hebrew word "mow'eds") YHWH commanded in Scripture by YHWH to be observed.

There was basic agreement on several key calendar items:

1. It was agreed that neither the Jews, nor any man, has ever been given the authority to set up their own calendar or to pick and choose which days are commanded to be observed, period.

2. The Postponement Rules of the Jews were rejected as non-scriptural.

3. That the only accepted authority defining a calendar is YHWH and His inspired Word.

The study material was made available, upon request, to anyone who wanted to study the issue further. This research is still available, upon request, and is totally open to scrutiny.

We believe we share in the understanding of all who worship and serve YHWH, the Father, that we **all** are to prove **all** things and live our faith. The bottom line is that our Father has given us instructions on how to live and is the final judge. These points were the basic premise for the calendar study. The entire congregation agreed to set aside a day for a voluntary fast for the purpose of asking YHWH for His guidance in understanding His will and His truth on calendar questions. An announcement was made, contingent upon any new insight, that many would be observing the Feast one month later than the Jews in 1999. Everyone was encouraged to study the issue for themselves and make their own individual choice.

—Marv & Renetta Wilson ☐

WORKS and *Fruit...* Are They The Same?

When the Bible talks of works and fruits, are the words interchangeable? When we do “works”, are we also producing fruit? The two are not interchangeable, but quite different from each other as we will see in this article.

Works are talked about far more in the Bible and especially in the New Testament than are fruits and it seems quite easy for us to understand works. Let’s examine some verses that describe works and tell us about works to make sure that we all understand the importance of works before we go on to see what the Bible has to say about fruit.

In the Greek, works comes from Strong’s #2041 (ergon) which is translated: to work, toil, an act, deed, doing, labor or work. Jesus had the most to say about works so we will look at some of those scriptures and then at some from the rest of the apostles’ writings.

First, in Matthew 5:16 Jesus tells us to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Our works are to glorify God, not to be done for people to say good things about us or that we would get “a raise in rank or stature,” but our works should be done in such a manner as to bring glory to God and Jesus, not ourselves. After doing many works that glorified God in several cities, Jesus turned to rebuke the people of those cities for not repenting.

Then He (Jesus) began to upbraid the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day (Matt 11:20-23).

What were the “mighty works” that

Jesus had performed? He had performed many miracles, cast out demons and healed the multitudes that came. These were the works that Jesus was talking about: the work that He did serving the people and teaching the people. Jesus warns us that we are not to be doing works to be seen by men, but works to glorify God:

Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments (Matt 23:3-5).

The leaders of that time, only did works that made them look good before men, to be raised in stature themselves, but would not lift a finger, according to Jesus, to truly serve the people they were to be serving.

Jesus tells us also that the works He did bore witness of Himself and therefore when we do true works they bear witness of us also that Jesus the Christ lives within us, that we are a child of God. “But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish, the very works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.” (John 5:36) One more quote about works from Jesus comes from John 14:10-12:

Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. 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.

Jesus said that He was not doing the

miracles, the healings, the teachings and all His other works on His own authority, but rather because the Father was in Him and the Father was doing the works through Him. Jesus tells us that He could do nothing of Himself, and then tells us here that all His mighty works were done by the Father. If Jesus could not do works of Himself, but only through the Father doing them through Him, how can we do good works any other way? If we are truly doing a “good work” then it will be God doing it through us, not our efforts to do a work. Jesus tells us the world’s works are evil and they hated Him because He testified of it to them (John 7:7). Jesus finishes about the Father doing works through Him by telling us that those who believe in Him will do the works He did, because God and Jesus is in us also, and greater works than He did because He went back to the Father.

Today there are many Christians, but there are not many of the works such as Jesus did being done today. We talk about our works for God and our service to mankind, but the works such as Jesus did, where are they? They are not often evident in the world today? Why?

Our works are nothing without God in them. How many of our works glorify God and how many of our supposed works glorify us or our group? We all have to ask ourselves these hard questions and then repent of our selfish desires and our sins and lack of faith, to trust God to do His works through us realizing that in our efforts our works are useless to God. If Jesus had to rely on God to do the works through Him, how much more do we?

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand that we should walk in them (Eph 2:8-10).

We should all realize that we are saved by God’s grace through our faith in His Son Jesus Christ. He tells us not to think that we are saved by our works, the deeds that we do, because then someone could boast about how good they were. Our works are nothing, but any work that we do that glorifies God and is of true service to God is done by God anyway.

The good works that we do are not our own, but rather the works that we allow God to do through us. We are

rewarded for the works that we allow God to do through us. (Matt 16:27) But we are saved from our sins and given eternal life by grace alone, not by any work that we do. The true works that we do, God did through us anyway, we did not do them on our own. God tells us that we were created in Jesus Christ to do good works and that we should walk in them. But we are not saved by any work that we do or do not do.

In Galatians 5:19-21, Paul under inspiration listed the works of the flesh, they are not pretty, but we are all familiar with many of them. They have been parts of our lives at certain points, and we have had to turn from them and put our faith in Jesus Christ to come out of that way of life. The works of the flesh are all things that we can see in people and too often in ourselves, they happen everyday and we see the results of these actions. Unhappiness and misery, not the results that all people want, yet they and we continue to do the works of the flesh, these are the things we can do.

Now the works of the flesh are evident [we can see them], which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness [means the disregard for accepted rules or standards], idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies ["factions" in NIV and others—dividing up into competing sects], envy, murders, drunkenness, revelleries [means noisy merry making, or boisterous festivities], and the like, ... (Gal 5:19-21).

These are the works that we are able to do, and most of us know this too well, we see ourselves mentioned too often in this list. These are not the works that God did through Jesus, that Jesus said we would do and more. Good works can only be done by allowing God to work through us, our efforts produce the works in the list above. "Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began." (2Tim 1:9) None of us were or can do good works, and God saved us by His grace anyway, not by our works.

We can understand from these scriptures that works, good or bad, are things that we can see, they happen and they affect us, either good or bad. But we see that the works that we are able to do

apart from God are all going to affect us and all those around us in quite negative and harmful ways. They are the works or deeds of the flesh. But when we allow God to do His works through us, then people see the glory of God and they glorify God for the things that He did through us. Naturally, these are the works that we want to be allowing to be done through us, without doing the works of the flesh also.

The works of the flesh destroy our witness for God, the good works we allow God to do through us bolster His kingdom and the work He is doing on this earth. Jesus tells us what God's work on earth is.

Then they (the disciples) said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent" (John 6:28-29).

What is the work of God? That we allow God to do works through us that will bring others to believe, put their faith and trust in, Jesus Christ the Son of God. That is the work of God and that is why God works through us. Do people see Jesus Christ in you by your works? If not, repent and give God place to do works through you. People see our works and they should glorify God. Can people see fruits?

The fruits of the Spirit come right after the works of the flesh in Galatians 5. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law." (Gal 5:22-23) Are any of these things that can be touched or things that you can do? These are all things that you see in people, they are not things that they have done. Let's take an example of a scene we see and a work that was done.

We look out our window of our office and we see a blind man standing on the corner ready to cross the street. We see a well-dressed, nice looking man come up beside the blind man. As the walk sign appears, the well dressed man puts an arm around the blind man and leads him across the street to the other side. You see the blind man thank the other and they part. What have you seen? You would guess you had just seen a good work done by this nice man. But did you? You saw a work done, that we know, but you can not know why the man helped the blind man.

There are several scenarios that could have taken place. First, the man really cared about the blind man and wanted to help him, to serve him in just this little way. Second, the man could have known that his boss was behind and he wanted the boss to see what a good guy he was. Third, he could have felt sorry for the blind man and helped him out of pity for him. Fourth, he could have been a pick-pocket and by wrapping his arm around the blind man, to supposedly help him, he robbed the blind man unknowingly. Fifth, the man could have been the blind man's son who had just had a fight with him, but loved him enough that he helped him across the street, but then just left him immediately on the other side.

The point is that we can see works done, but we do not know if they represent fruits of the Spirit or not. We can only know this if we spend time with and get to know the person well enough to see their character. **You can not know if someone displays a fruit of the Spirit by seeing a work that they do.** It is only through works that are done, that we can see the fruits displayed, but every human being has the capacity to do what looks like a good work, for the wrong reason, to get something for themselves. Hindus, Buddhists, atheists or anyone can do a work that appears to be good on the surface. But we learned before that true good works glorify God and are done through us by God. God can do a good work through a Buddhist and receive glory from a Christian, but the fruits of the Spirit are only possible if you have the Holy Spirit. Someone who does not believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, does not have the Holy Spirit and therefore the work did not show a fruit of the Spirit. They are not the same.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them (Matt 7:15-20).

Jesus tells us that when there are false prophets around that we will know them, not by the lack of works they do, but by

their lack of fruit. They can still do the works that look good, that people tend to like, but He tells us we can not discern from the works, because they look like sheep. But we can discern by their fruits, or in this case lack of fruits. A good prophet or teacher will have fruits that we can see produced in him, but a false teacher will not have fruits as we can not produce of ourselves the fruits of the Spirit, they are from God alone. In order to discern if someone has fruit we have to know them personally and **see their character, the reasons that they are doing the things they do.** We can not tell by their works; their works can look good, but the fruit is not there.

Today, unfortunately, fruit seems to be very lacking in the church. People are judging and condemning by the works or lack of works, and Jesus said you could not tell a false teacher by their works, but their fruits. Who do you know in your Christian life that God is producing fruit in? For most of us, it is probably hard to come up with names of really "fruitful trees". The fruit just is not there. Many have works that appear good, but we do not see the fruit in them. Can we produce the fruit? We have seen that God does any true good work through us, but can we produce fruit? Can we learn and grow in love, joy, peace, etc.?

It is a good experience for us to decide that we are going to be more loving to everyone around us from now on. Try it. Try to love everyone unconditionally around you, in every situation. How long does it last before someone upsets you and you do not show them love? Maybe about as long as it takes to get to work the next morning when the first person cuts you off in traffic and causes you to have to slam on your brakes to keep from hitting him. We of ourselves cannot grow in unconditional love as that of the Holy Spirit, but rather we have to **submit ourselves to God and allow Him to display His love through us.** An outburst of wrath at the "ignorant" driver that cut you off is not the fruit of love, or joy, or peace, or self-control, or kindness, or patience, or gentleness, or meekness, or goodness, or faithfulness to God. Does that mean if we do this that there is no fruit of the Spirit in us? Absolutely not! It simply means we have failed, sinned and fallen short of what we should have done. Our focus was on ourselves, not of our Lord Jesus Christ and God and the things of

God. Jesus tells us how fruit is produced:

¹ I am the vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. **As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.** ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned up. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples (John 15:1-8)

Jesus said He was the vine and His Father the vinedresser and we are the branches. If we (the branches) abide in Him (the vine) then we will be bear fruit. And if we bear fruit, God (the vinedresser) will prune (test and try) us that we bear more fruit. Do the branches produce fruit? They are a part of fruit production, but they can do nothing without the nourishment from the vine! **Only by abiding in Jesus can we produce fruit.**

Verse 6 indicates that those who do not abide in Christ will be cast out. Verse 2 in nearly every translation seems to say that those not bearing fruit, even though they may be abiding in Christ, are also "taken away". The problem here may be in the translation of "takes away." According to Strong's it comes from word #142, *airo*, which means "to lift, to take up or away, to raise, away with, bear (up), carry, lift up, loose, make to doubt, put away, remove, take (away, up)". By looking at other uses of this word in the Bible (Matt 16:24; Mark 8:3; 10:21; Luke 9:23 are some), it is possible that Jesus was not talking about cutting the branch off and casting it away as with the branches that did not abide in Him, but was rather talking about lifting it up, or raising it up, bearing it up so that it would bear fruit. The passage is about bearing fruit, much fruit and more fruit. If a branch of a grape vine is lying on the ground it will not bear fruit, it has to be

lifted up off the ground and then it will be able to produce fruit. There are times in our lives that we are not bearing fruit and God lifts us up, encourages us that we may bear fruit. But these branches were abiding in the vine, they were not like the branches that were cast into the fire that were not abiding in the vine. We know that those branches have no capacity to produce fruit, by themselves they can do nothing. Therefore they are cast into the fire and destroyed.

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." (Phil 1:11) We are to bear fruit and that fruit is displayed through our works, but true good works and true fruits of the Spirit both come from God, we are unable to do either. He does the works and Jesus bears the fruit through us. But the fruits of the Spirit are the characteristics of God that we should be allowing God to develop and bear in us. The good works are the deeds that we should allow God to do through us, that glorify Him. **Our fruit can be displayed by the works that we do, but the works are not the same as fruit.** The fruit we bear should help people see Jesus and God in us, but it needs to be our character, just like the fruits of the Spirit are the characteristics of God. People should see God in us by the fruits that Christ bears through us. If we have true fruit we will also have good works, but you can have "good works" and not have fruit. That is why we have to **discern false teachers by their fruits, not by their works, we can be deceived by the works.** But to discern the fruit we have to know the person well enough to know their character.

Let's all allow Jesus to bear fruit in us. If we are a branch that needs lifting up, we know that God will lift us up and encourage us that we can allow Jesus to bear fruit in us, and if we are bearing fruit, then we also know that God will prune us that we allow Jesus to bear even more fruit through us. We also have to be willing to allow God to do good works through us, to have the faith to allow Him control of our lives and to take ourselves and our desires out of the works that we are doing and truly allow them to be good works.

—Ron Wilson

This article was reprinted from the free newsletter: *Learning Together*, 7807 North Illinois, Caseyville, IL 62232; LRNTOG@aol.com Or, ask *Servants' News* for a free sample.

UCG-IA Rejects Christians?

by Alan Ruth

No doubt the title of this article sounds pretty provocative. The answer is, “no,” you may say, “I cannot believe that a group such as the United Church of God-International Association would **reject** Christians that have the same essential beliefs as they do.” Strange as it may seem, it has happened!

Since my 1994 research paper on the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) splits, I have stood on the sidelines and not commented much in writing about the situation in the Church of God. Though tempted many times to write, I openly wondered whether such comments would be beneficial or would fall on deaf ears. Something recently happened, however, that so illustrates the major unresolved problem UCG-IA and a host of other splits possess that I was compelled to comment.

Here’s the situation that got my blood boiling. Ron Dart, founder of Christian Educational Ministries, was asked to speak at a UCG-IA seminar in Cincinnati to be held December 25-27. Mr. Dart was approached to speak before the Feast by a local UCG-IA organizer and had purchased a non-refundable airline ticket. Mr. Les McCullough, president of UCG-IA, initially approved of his talk at the family weekend.

As time drew closer to the meeting, some elders in UCG-IA did not like Ron speaking at the seminar. In late November, Mr. Dart was informed he was rejected as a speaker. Why, you may ask? Was it because Ron was going to preach heresy? Or was it because he would actively try to suck out members and money from UCG-IA? Or that he would criticize and lambaste their leadership? CEM’s Web site and letter to their mailing list states that Ron was asked not to speak because “The organizers (of the event) requested that Mr. Dart not participate, due to objections from some members of the UCG-IA Council of Elders and Ministerial services.” That’s a fine statement, but what is the **real** reason Ron was rejected?

The REAL Reason

After Ron mentioned in October he would speak in Cincinnati, I offered to give a seminar on preparing for the Year 2000 computer bug at this family week-

end. Initially, the local organizer seemed happy to try and include this type of discussion on the schedule. This person seemed to sincerely desire to have something of a Church of God “family reunion” that last December weekend. Unfortunately, his best intention aside, the organizer would soon learn that one cannot assume your leaders will act at least as Christian as you do.

In late November an E-mail arrived stating that the seminar weekend was restricted and that the Y2K discussion would not be held. Was it because the Year 2000 bug is some great heresy? No. The invitation to all *non-United* speakers at this family weekend was unacceptable to some UCG-IA leaders. The organizer was told that the speakers would be restricted to only UCG-IA elders! It became painfully apparent that to the UCG-IA, a person’s corporate affiliation is far **superior** to the Christianity they practice.

Carnality reigns supreme

Someone once told me that under the canopy of truth carnality reigns supreme. How true! Out of the more than 150 WCG splits, Mr. Dart is one of the *least* controversial or obnoxious speakers you will find. He is a “safe” speaker, someone who has a gift for preaching God’s word and tries to do so with integrity. To reject Ron simply because he’s not one of “us”, not in our organizational clan is ridiculous, foolish and downright carnal.

For the record I consider myself an “independent”, one who is independent of organizations but fully dependent on God. I am not a “member” of CEM. Ron is discussed here because he happens to be a recent example of what, sadly, goes on on a regular basis in the Church of God!

As if to add vinegar to this unpleasant situation, as of the middle of December, Mr. Dart had not been offered an apology by either Mr. McCullough or any UCG elders. No apology has been delivered in spite of the fact that Ron planned

and prepared for this meeting weeks in advance **and** paid for a *non-refundable* ticket to Cincinnati!

Further Evidence of The Mindset

Barnabas Ministries has a large Web site on the Internet at www.biblestudy.org that has articles and audio messages by a large selection of WCG split groups. Late in 1997 we exchanged “links” (a link is a referral to another person’s Web site) with someone on the UCG’s Council of Elders who has a Web site. He was initially happy to both receive referrals and to refer people to the Bible study site. However, in a short time, overzealous UCG people (some of whom would later go with David Hulme’s split group from UCG) began to lambaste this council member for having non-UCG links on his Web site. As the pressure to be “100% United” built, the link to the Bible study site (and others) was taken off.

The link was removed under the umbrella of “maintaining unity” and (quoting directly from the E-mail sent on the link removal) “We (UCG-IA) are still, as an organization, trying to find our way as to how we work with *other Christians*.” Other Christians? Is this talking about working with Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans or even the Worldwide Church of God? No! It has to do with working with those who, like them, left the WCG and who share **many** common beliefs!

My jaw dropped when I got this e-mail. Can you imagine a church elder, someone who has been a Christian for many years, needing some kind of *organizational policy* to know how to treat other Christians—to know how to be a Christian? Is corporate obedience more important than a person’s conversion? What good is it to be a council member, one who is supposedly spiritually mature enough to help guide thousands of people, if you easily cave into the unbiblical requests of others?

The Conclusion

Why are there splits in the Church of God? Why are people leaving the bigger groups to form the fastest growing and largest part of the church known as home fellowships?

It is because brethren are fed up with the silliness and immaturity of the organizations they attend and the “lead-

Continued on page 9

“We (UCG-IA) are still, as an organization, trying to find our way as to how we work with *other Christians*.”

You Can Contact Scattered Brethren!

Are you interested in finding scattered brethren, home fellowships or other believers who live near you? You can do these things by requesting our **Scattered Brethren Contact List**. *Servants' News* will send you a list of the cities where all of our subscribers live. You decide which cities are near enough to you that you might want to establish a friendship. You can then write as many cards or letters as will be required for the number of people in the cities of your interest. When you send them to *Servants' News*, we will add the complete name and address to your cards or envelopes, and mail them for you. This allows people to receive your correspondence without us giving away anyone's name and address. Most brethren respond to a sincere letter—then you will have their address, phone number or whatever else they send you.

In previous years, *Servants' News* printed the list of cities in a regular issue. Now, the list is 7 pages long. Since less than 100 people typically write Scattered Brethren Contact Letters, it seems more efficient to send the information only to those who need it.

If you are interested (we have over 200 international cities), please ask for the **Scattered Brethren Contact List**. Phone: 517-543-5544, fax: 517-543-8899, e-mail: 75260.1603@compuserve.com, or write: PO Box 220, Charlotte, Michigan 48813-0220 USA.

“UCG-IA Rejects” from page 8 ers” that say they represent God. They have borne with the clueless ministry long enough. They are weary of the spiritual food fight going on between those who say they are shepherds in God's flock. The power-hungriness, zest to be “in-charge” and rule, arrogance and vanity of quite a few Church of God ministers is a marvel to behold. It is under the canopy of Christianity that those who say they are mature have committed the most carnal actions. Do **you** need permission from someone or something *before* you act Christian? Our challenge is not to repeat the mistakes of our leaders. Are we up to the task?

Norman Edwards' Comments

Most of the UCG-IA members I have met do not reject other Christians. I feel more welcome in the local Lansing UCG-IA congregation than I have in some home-fellowships. I would guess that the UCG-IA leaders do not want to reject other Christians, but they are not sure how to go about it. When men have worked in a hierarchical corporation for years and have a problem, they ask for an organizational policy rather than going to the Bible. If a minister tells his headquarters, “this is what I understand from the Bible so

this is what I am doing,” he will be in trouble if his organization has a different policy.

So why doesn't UCG-IA have a policy for dealing with “other Christians”? Because any such policy they would write would be clearly contrary to scripture. Paul clearly instructs believers not to form factions (1Cor 1 & 3) around individual leaders. Furthermore, the clear acknowledgment that true believers need not be in their organization greatly diminishes the authority which they think the UCG-IA has. If there are Christians outside of the UCG-IA, how can they fault UCG-IA members for attending other services, sending money to other ministries, or discussing doctrines held by other groups? How can their headquarters assert authority over a local minister or congregation if he or they can resign from the UCG-IA and still be considered Christian by everyone?

Nearly all of the leaders of Church of God organizations were “trained” in the Worldwide Church of God, which claimed to be the one and only true church. Much of its doctrine and practice utterly relied on this claim. Most of these leaders have not really thought through all that is involved when they admit that there are “other Christians”. 

Today's “Church of God” Groups Use HWA's Authority

Since Herbert Armstrong is dead and most of his writing is not being printed, why do we need to dig up his mistakes? It probably would be better if all of the groups just “let him be”, but many groups still base their operations directly on Armstrong. If they do not understand his errors, they will probably repeat them. Notice:

Les McCullough, UCG Ministerial letter of 6/19/98:

I am not Mr. Armstrong nor do I in any way consider myself in that category. I do however have the responsibility to inform all of you and the brethren of the problems we face. To help keep a focus, I am going to quote part of an article from the 1968 Good News: “How often just in the course of this past year have we had to read such words as ‘delay,’ ‘postpone,’ ‘fail,’ ‘go backward,’ and ‘MOUNTAINOUS SETBACK’ in the Member and Co-worker letters? Time and again Mr. Armstrong has been forced to use such words to describe the lack of progress in God's work...”

How I wish this letter wasn't needed. Perhaps we need to remember Mr. Armstrong's cocking of the gun for the greater push forward.

Rod Meredith letter of November, 1998:

Remember, the Bible NEVER speaks of “Government by Committee.” Rather, as Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong explained again and again, God has ALWAYS worked primarily through one man—Moses, David, Peter, Paul, etc....

However, brethren, I know personally that thousands of you DO CARE about the Church governmental structure. You do want to have and to follow a strong, dedicated leader. You do want that leader to basically follow in the footsteps of God's apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong.

A Personal Perspective on Governance. David Hulme, August 1998:

They wanted to see strong central direction and a continuation of the work on the pattern established through Herbert W. Armstrong, with use of mass media including printing and broadcasting....

I would like to quote some comments from a man whom I have come to respect even more highly in recent months. Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Volume 1, pp. 411-412:..

Press release from Garner Ted Armstrong giving his background, March 1998:

Armstrong, 68, is the son of the late Herbert W. Armstrong, founder of the “Worldwide Church of God” of Pasadena, California, and Ambassador Colleges, with three campuses: Pasadena, California; Big Sandy, Texas, and Bricket Wood, St. Albans, Herts., England. The elder Armstrong died at age 93 in 1986.

If we included every small group whose “work” is based on Herbert Armstrong's, we would need many more pages. 

If Participating in a Church Group Is Not the Main Part of a Christian Life, *What Is?*

To many people, it seems pointless to try to make a significant impact on the world by themselves. If they are going to accomplish something for Christ, they believe they need to join with many others so they can preach the Gospel effectively in a “big work”. But this is completely contrary to New Testament teaching! None of the New Testament writers talk about “getting enough believers together to preach the Gospel effectively”. Those who preached were those who were called to preach, and they did it whether the people supported them or not. When the number of believers increased, they rejoiced because there were more people living the right way of life—not because they would now be able to “do a work”.

What can an individual do if he or she is alone or in a small group? Everyone should do the following things:

1. Love the Eternal with all your heart. Treat others as you would want to be treated. These are the greatest commands.
2. Study the Bible and pray frequently. Practice those things that you understand from the Scripture.
3. Be ready to explain your life in Christ to anyone who asks.

But is that all there is to it? Are we only to quietly develop the fruit of the Spirit and then just hope someone notices? No, there is more. What we do will depend upon the spiritual and physical gifts that we have, and our position in life. Obviously, you should pray and ask the Eternal to show you. But to help you, we have included some ideas below:

Teen Years

Many teens see the adult problems of the world—wars, disease, divorce, lying, hypocrisy, etc.—but feel powerless to do much about them because “they are not adults yet”. This is generally true with one big exception: a teenager has a greater opportunity to influence his or her **own** life than people in almost any other age group. Choices in these years can make the difference between a loving life or a miserable mess.

Excelling at school work, sports, music, or other interests is solid preparation for the future. Teens can seek opportunities to travel and meet new people. Try to get **any kind** of real work experience, even if it is just “training” without pay—stores, offices, construction, day-care, landscaping, restaurants, janitorial, etc. Most people spend their lives working for someone else—it is good to start learning to work early in life, rather than later.

At this age, establishing habits of regular prayer, Bible study, good diet, sufficient sleep and respect for others will be invaluable throughout life. Learn to pray through trouble rather than fight—especially when others are mistreating you. Spend time with people of the opposite sex, but remain sexually pure to avoid the diseases and divorces that plague so many people today. Learn not to be ashamed of God and being different in order to live His way. Talk about Him to those who ask.

Around the end of the teen years, each person should repent, accept Christ’s sacrifice for their sins, and be baptized—commit their entire life to serving the Eternal.

Young Single Adults

The teen-year goals should continue into the young adult years, but now work or full-time school is “for real”. It is always good to better oneself at a current job, or prepare for a more advanced one. Money should not be the ultimate goal in life, but it is very helpful for raising a family or serving the Eternal. Young adult years are a good time to fulfill travel and other goals that will be much more difficult with a family.

This is also a good time for each person to think and pray about which spiritual gifts they have and what they can do to serve. If someone has dedicated their life to God, they should be doing something more significant for Him than attending a service or study for a few hours per week. At this age, you will probably be “doing things” more than organizing, managing or teaching, but follow where the Eternal leads. Older people are often hesitant to ask younger people, not knowing their desire or skill. If a fellowship is holding a public meeting, a younger person can **volunteer** to help with the advertising mailing, setup the chairs, clean the hall when it is over, prepare refreshments for the meeting—according to your abilities. If your volunteer offer is rejected, do not give up, keep trying.

Those who are not able to serve the Eternal with a significant portion of their time, can do so with their money. Be sure that any ministry you contribute to is doing the kind of work that you believe the Eternal wants done.

Married Adults

Married adults must continue in the

above aspects, and take time to make a good marriage, also. Numerous scriptures mention a successful family life as the requirement for congregational leadership positions. It is a mistake to “serve God so much” that family life is destroyed.

Married people have many service opportunities that are simply not available to others. Most people will be comfortable if invited to their homes, they can encourage or counsel others about marriage and child-rearing problems, and they will naturally interact with the community as their children make friends. Married people have the built-in evangelistic responsibility of teaching their children—the principles of which can sometimes be extended to the outside world.

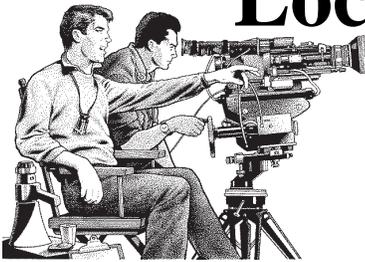
Older and/or Single Adults

As people grow older, their gifts change. They often are less able to do physical work, and better able to lead and guide others. After children leave home, and especially after retirement, older adults often have a lot of discretionary time. Long-time single adults also sometimes have a lot of discretionary time—they do not have a family to care for, and their job and dwelling place is often efficiently managed.

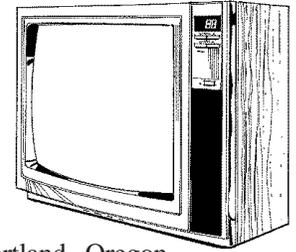
Many use this time to devote to study, hobbies, or entertainment. This is a good time to seek the Eternal’s will and see if there is some kind of ministry that He wants you to perform. It may be helping the poor, teaching the young, or conducting a Bible study.

Each person will be rewarded according to their works. We need to work for our Father, before our bodies are too frail to work. —Norman S. Edwards

Local TV Production Works!



This report was not written specifically for *Servants' News*, but we feel it is of benefit to believers everywhere. This group of Sabbath-keepers has had success with locally originated TV through two different organizations, the WCG and now the UCG-IA. Their emphasis is on using the spiritual gifts of all involved, not on making a name for a very few individuals.



***America Tomorrow* Community Television Continues Success**

by Howard Davis

Originating in Portland, Oregon, *America Tomorrow* television achieves remarkable results while airing on only a few of the 1,000 cable television access stations using free or low-cost air times in U.S. communities. With exposure in about one percent of cable-connected households in the United States, *America Tomorrow* has been blessed with 2,400 calls requesting *Good News* subscriptions, plus approximately 4,500 pieces of literature since the first *Good News* was published in November 1995. Thirty-five people have attended services in Olympia and Spokane, Washington; Portland, Oregon; and Idaho Falls, Idaho. There have been two baptisms.

The quality of response is very good, because when people call for advertised literature within the program they have watched a program with already heavy biblical content. They already know what sort of publication or booklet they will receive. Some say they have watched several hours of programming by their first call to our toll-free line. Remarkably, many more scores of people have asked for specific information about how to attend church services, although only a small proportion of these have actually attended.

Providential Circumstances

Portland has more advanced facilities for creation and airing of free community television than any other city in the United States. Multnomah Community Television (MCTV), where members of the United Church of God produce *America Tomorrow*, has had annual budgets of \$1,000,000 for many years and offers elaborate studio and technical facilities for producing outstanding television. Since only God can provide the truly "open doors" like He promised the church in Philadelphia

(Revelation 3:10), we have had one significant criteria, beside the abundant talent of Church members and ministry: God would have to provide, at minimal cost, airtime, as well the technical facilities with free training and support.

Behold, use of these facilities are free! The three-camera studio and control room have been recently converted to digital format. And to our astonishment, MCTV has just purchased three of the most advanced digital non-linear post production editing systems appropriate for our kind of programming in the world, worth \$250,000. These brand new Sony ES-7 systems are being installed this month and our brethren are now being trained. No other free facilities currently exist in the United States, or the world, with these capabilities. We will be able to continuously produce the most advanced graphics like PBS, CNN, and the major American networks do, which would cost hundreds of dollars per hour if purchased commercially.

But it is apparent that *America Tomorrow* has developed with providential guidance from the beginning. In my first experience with producing television I filmed and wrote a documentary in 1993, *And Still Climbing*, about autism, to help parents and professionals with lessons we had learned with our son Benjamin. After being aired many times in Portland, it was awarded first place in the American Film Institute's national award for locally-originated documentary television. After I attended the award ceremony with Benjamin in Hollywood, California, in February 1994, I suggested to Victor Kubik, then assistant director of Church Administration, that community television could offer Christ's ministry an opportunity to preach the gospel. It would be a way for God to reach more people as the cost of commercial television skyrocketed in the early 1990s. Victor Kubik, now chairman of the Communications Committee of the Council of Elders, obtained permission for us to use cable

access in Portland, Oregon one year before United's founding.

Our experience under Worldwide Church of God was a preparation to God's work with *America Tomorrow* now. Although no doctrinal heresy was allowed, as I functioned as executive producer, we then had a vast array of literature to offer and our responses on free cable access channels outperformed the CBS network affiliate airing *The World Tomorrow* in it's last year. Under United we are only now developing a significant literature base which generates greater responses as our internal television ads develop within *America Tomorrow* programming.

Contemporary Style Presenting New Testament Approach

With a backdrop of the history of *The World Tomorrow* program for 50 years, *America Tomorrow* is a weekly one-hour PBS/CNN Charlie Rose and Crossfire interview-format television program used to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God in a 1990s style. Each hour has six segments of seven minutes each, with advertising of *The Good News* and booklets between segments. We also have 30-minute programs produced from the one hour content and format. Typically, programs will have a topical opening and segment montages to heighten and maintain interest.

The outstanding volunteer production staff of 25 church members from the Portland and Olympia congregations work together with the pastoral ministry from various church areas in an approach to challenge the public with Christ's original New Testament gospel. We intentionally use the same current events, biblical doctrine, prophecy, and Christian living approach toward content that Jesus Christ and the apostles used in their ministry.

Taking our cues from Christ's example in using a variety of Christ-trained individuals with the calling and gifts to preach the gospel in the New Testament, I and several ministers,

including fellow UCGIA pastors Randy Stiver and Noel Hornor, met to develop program content and approach along with brethren in Portland. Since the program's beginning, many pastors in United have appeared as guests of *America Tomorrow* including Bill Bradford, Bill Jacobs, Glen White, Melvin Rhodes, Matthew Fenchel, David Treybig, Dr. Donald Ward, Robert Dick, Larry Walker and John Cafourek. John Cafourek and Randy Stiver often serve as hosts as well as guests of the program.

Program content is developed, delivered and evaluated by a team of ministers, with an annual plan for programming. We use seasonal emphasis and **quick response** to major news stories which dominate public awareness to keep the topics regarding the kingdom of God relevant in a way similar to *The Good News* magazine editorial approach. Pastors develop working discussion outlines by e-mail before the programs and deliver them in a spontaneous, but highly planned, discussion delivery formula. Content is now periodically reviewed by the Media Committee of the Council of Elders.

Internet Broadcasting

Recently, computer professional and Portland deacon, Chip Chuprinko, implemented *America Tomorrow* to be seen on the Worldwide Web via the Internet. Our full programming can be viewed anywhere in the world on the Web, in video and audio, at this site:

www.tomorrow-ucg.org

Media Committee Oversight

America Tomorrow has never been asked by the United Church of God home office and the Council of Elders to disband, as has been rumored. It has encouraged the Council to develop collaborative oversight and this has now been achieved through the Media Committee under Dr. Donald Ward's chairmanship and Victor Kubik's co-chairmanship. Program input from the United Council of Elders is facilitated through this means.

The design of the program is based on an "open architecture" format, **allowing Christ's ministry with the talents to preach to the public, and ministers from throughout the United States, to participate.** The quality standards have always been high within the context of older equipment and newly

trained volunteers. Standards are now going to get much higher as the facilities and experience now allow.

As part of God's work, the program has aired in a few cities in the Northwest, Michigan and the Southwest. For a short time it aired in the San Francisco area with good results. The Media Committee of the Council of Elders has asked *America Tomorrow* and a group of mid-west ministers to develop a common "wrap-around" identity for United, which will introduce locally produced programming. This programming can then be disseminated throughout the United States under Media Committee oversight. The "wrap-around" will be presented in the November Council of Elders meeting.

Local Distribution

Local distribution and airing of *America Tomorrow*, like other locally originated programming anywhere in the United States, is possible through the modest local sponsorship by individuals and congregations within communities with free community television airtime.

Beloit, Wisconsin, is now developing locally originated programming. Although some other areas could begin locally originated programming, it takes a certain level of production talent and ministerial coordination to use television effectively. Many areas do not have facilities or large enough congregations to support production. **We ask the brethren to pray that we will be effective in using these open doors Christ has given.**

Comments by Norman Edwards:

I was very happy to see the history and production approach of these TV programs. They certainly seem to be centered around the direction of Christ, individual gifts and service to people. This is so much different than organizations that are continually telling their members what a great work could be done if they only had more money.

Several times, I have heard church leaders say that community access television could never amount to anything because the studios have inferior equipment. I am a father with three sons who play a drum set. I started them with the least expensive, but real set that I could find. When they showed a good attitude and worked hard, I improved the set. When finances allow, I hope to get a

*much better set for them. Might our Father be most interested in what kind of attitude His children have when producing a TV program? Would He let them start on cheaper equipment and then provide better if He liked their attitude? What would He think of someone who insisted on having the best equipment before even beginning to do any work? As is evident from Howard Davis' report, the Eternal has provided them with the best equipment, without cost. **He can do it!***

*I was happy to see that the dedicated brethren in Oregon have continued producing their program even though they had to change organizations (WCG to UCG-IA). Some Servants' News readers might question the wisdom of exclusively associating the current program with the UCG-IA, it's congregations and its literature. If more organizational changes rock the UCG-IA, might they find themselves unable to use their own programs? (This just happened to Rod Meredith, see article on page 13). This is not too much of a danger as *America Tomorrow* is primarily a news program and reruns are of less value. The main value built up is in the experience of the team producing the programs. I spoke with Howard Davis for over an hour by phone and he assured me that he and the Oregon team are committed to following where Christ leads in spite of what happens to organizations. Mr. Davis said:*

"God will use any truly called minister and member of the spiritual Church of God as long as they remember and honor His preeminence in all things as the Head of the Church. At this time, God's converted ministry and membership are scattered in various settings. It is our challenge of the future to retain Christ's lordship and also work towards spiritual unity. The apostle Paul is very clear in his teaching that 'there is one body and one Spirit,... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all' (Eph 4:4-6)."

"Non-UCG groups may sponsor the 58-minute program by sending \$500 per year to the Portland church to pay for 52 SVHS video masters to be sent each week of the year. At his time, there is no provision for any alteration—the UCG literature and 800-number promotion must be aired as is. For more information call 800-466-7556 or access: www.tomorrow-ucg.org." 

Learn Lessons About Church Organizations from the Global Church of God

or What Happens When Protecting "the Work" is More Important than Living by the Bible

During the latter half of 1998, Roderick C. Meredith and the Board members of the Global Church of God traveled to many congregations and Feast sites to assure the GCG members that there was unity at headquarters and that "the work" was going forward. Rod Meredith gave a sermon on the Sabbath of August 1 to the GCG Tulsa congregation (see *The Journal, News of the Churches of God*, Aug 31, 1998, p.1). In that sermon, Meredith assured his listeners that there was no takeover threatening the GCG. According to *The Journal*, "But liars don't enter the Kingdom of God he said, and he's not lying when he says that no conspiracy to remove him is afoot and that rumors people are spreading to that effect are 'silly'." Later Meredith said: "No one has hinted such a thing [a takeover], even in the last couple or three months since we've had all these discussions. We've been in total harmony."

Yet in his November 21 "emergency letter" to GCG brethren, Rod Meredith wrote (underscoring by *SN* editor):

But, other men came on [Meredith appointed them] the Board and the Council—men I have now come to realize had a great deal of personal ambition and a completely different view of how we should conduct the Work of God. So trouble began to brew. For over the last year or two, some of these men have tried to "push" me into going completely off WGN—our **only** major television outlet in the United States! They have directly pushed for a completely different approach to doing the Work—

planning to concentrate our efforts on turning inward—not striving first of all to go through the "open doors" that Christ shows Philadelphians will do. I can tell you very definitely, brethren, that this approach would **destroy** the Work of God as we have known it, and would slowly but surely turn us into a kind of "social club," thinking only of ourselves.... You would have to experience the atmosphere of profound disrespect, envy, jealousy and open hostility displayed in some of our Council and Board meetings to really grasp the impact of what I am talking about.

No, the GCG **has not had total harmony** for the last two years, they just claimed they had harmony to "protect the work." Similarly, the WCG never really had total harmony during the many years that Herbert Armstrong claimed it. People who worked at "headquarters" knew that. This writer worked at the WCG headquarters for 13 years and the GCG headquarters for two years. The leaders wanted true unity, but often would not live by the commands of Scripture which would produce it. Sometimes, headquarters brethren would seek Christ's will above all and submit one to another to resolve disagreements, but other times, leaders did not want to go to their brother, admit their own mistakes, punish the guilty, and clear the righteous. They often picked the quickest and most convenient solution and told anyone who disagreed that they were defying "church government." They stayed unified, but it was a false unity.

What is False Unity?

Long ago, human dictatorships mastered the art of generating an apparent unity. They controlled the press and all other news media. They controlled public gatherings and speaking. Humble people with valid complaints must be quietly silenced so that others do not learn that the government is really doing something wrong. Unlikeable people or people with wrong or foolish disagreements were eliminated publicly—so

people would know that it is only "yucky" people who oppose the government. Hitler, Stalin, and Saddam Hussein all used these tactics in their governments. We are not saying that church leaders of today are bad in all the ways that worldly dictators are, but their method of approaching unity is very similar: declare the organization to be in unity, never publicly talk about difficulties, and remove people who openly disagree. These leaders do not mean to do evil when they try to enforce unity—indeed they think they are "protecting the work" by not mentioning problems to the brethren.

But the result of this kind of false unity is exactly the cause of the difficulty in transition of leadership in both dictatorships and Church of God organizations. As one example, V. I. Lenin was the founder of communism in Russia. His close comrades were Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin. They worked together for thousands of days. When Lenin died, did Trotsky and Stalin continue to work closely together to run the country? No, Stalin quickly seized control and Trotsky fled to Mexico, where he was later assassinated. They had differences all along which they suppressed while Lenin was alive.

Similarly, there are many differences among leaders of the Church of God that are kept suppressed for years because these men believe in the appearance of unity. (If they do not appear unified, the "sheep" might not believe that their's is the "true church".) Numerous ministers and members have been made into "non-persons" in Church of God groups because they began to teach or practice some doctrine slightly different than their headquarters—the correctness of the doctrine was often never discussed. Members often heard that a certain minister (or member) who was in good standing last week is now marked and disfellowshipped and loyal members should not communicate with him.

Herbert Armstrong appointed Joseph Tkach as his successor. Tkach taught Armstrong's doctrines for nearly 30 years, then reversed himself on many

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doctrines in just a few years, bewildering most of the members of the WCG (including myself at the time). In November of 1997 David Hulme signed a unity statement with other leaders of the UCG-IA and presented it to the brethren. Five months later he started his own church organization. There have been many sudden changes in leadership among the smaller "Church of God" groups—too numerous to mention here. And now, after years of "unity", Rod Meredith and the GCG Board of Directors have separated and disfellowshipped each other.

The "Church of God" pattern is much like the dictatorships: apparent unity followed by small and large "explosions" when differences erupt. Is this the way of the New Testament?

Unity in the New Testament

Most Church of God leaders would like the kind of unity that we see in the New Testament. Many people worked together cheerfully with a common purpose. There were very few "orders" given by men, and not one case where one leader said to another, "follow this order or you are fired—or out of the church."

Christ prayed that his followers might be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:11). When Christ prayed to "take this cup from me" (Mark 14:6) did the Father threaten to fire Christ if He didn't finish the job? When Paul urged the Corinthians to all "speak the same thing", did he threaten to disfellowship anyone who didn't speak the same thing? Or did he recognize in the same letter that the Eternal sometimes allows differences and sometimes uses them to show who is really seeking Him and who is not? "For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you" (1Cor 11:19).

Actually, there are many cases in the New Testament where members and leaders let their differences be known. The meeting between men from Antioch and Jerusalem in Acts 15 was a doctrinal question about the need to circumcise Gentiles. It was open to all believers (v 4,22)—not just elders—all of which heard the "much disputing" (v. 7). Even after the decision was made, did they disfellowship those who did not agree? No. There were still people "in the church" of the "circumcision group" many years

later (Gal 2:12; Titus 1:10, NIV). Not much later, Paul and Barnabas had an administrative dispute about whether or not to take John Mark with them (Acts 15:36-39). They never did agree, so they went their separate ways—but still regarded each other as brethren. Apparently, they did not believe that "one man" had to be in charge to make such decisions. When Paul strongly urged Apollos to come at a certain time, Apollos declined, and was not "put out of the Ministry". Even when Paul was on trial for his life, and none of the brethren stood with Him, he did not disfellowship them, but said "May it not be charged against them" (2Tim 4:16).

In Romans 14, we see an excellent example where Paul deliberately does not try to solve a problem among brethren, but teaches them not to offend each other. The issue at hand was whether or not believers should eat meat. Obviously, Paul and the other apostles knew both the Old Testament teaching on this subject, and the practices of Christ. He could have told them what was right. But he said: "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way... for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom 14:13,17).

We could find other examples where diversity of opinions were tolerated in the New Testament. But the ultimate example is Jesus Christ. Was He afraid to admit that his congregations did not have perfect unity? No! Revelation 2 & 3 detail differences between seven congregations in Asia Minor—some have major doctrinal problems. Every congregation was told to read the letters to every other congregation. John was told to write down the problems for millions to read! Christ did not instruct John or any other leader to disfellowship anyone for these problems. Rather, he commanded all individuals hearing these letters to repent.

If leaders of church organizations could acknowledge a diversity of views inside and outside of their organization, serious believers would study their Bibles and try to find which things were true (Acts 17:11). With the common system of false unity, it pays little to study one's Bible because if a person does discover something that disagrees with their organization's doctrinal statement,

they will have to either reject their new knowledge or leave their organization.

The Bible mentions no secret laws or knowledge given only to leaders. The Old Testament Law—even that pertaining only to the priests—was written for everyone to read. Each person is responsible for obeying it, whether their leaders teach it or not.

What Happened to the GCG

The Global Church of God began with Rod Meredith, his wife and Don Davis as the Board of Directors. This writer was a member of the GCG board during most of 1993 and 1994 and remembers that nearly all board votes were simply a "rubber stamp" after the decision was already made by Mr. Meredith. (He usually did listen to the opinions of others, but nothing was ever decided by taking a vote.) Over the years, Mr. Meredith appointed other long-time ministers to the board, and Don Davis, then Mrs. Meredith were removed for apparently reasonable reasons—Rod Meredith voted for their removal. During the last few years, Board members Raymond McNair, Edwin Pope and Larry Salyer began to see some issues differently than Mr. Meredith and they sometimes had the votes required to make some of their decisions binding according to the corporate bylaws.

On November 25th, the Board terminated Rod Meredith from employment at the GCG, and eventually disfellowshipped him. Their reason was Meredith's unauthorized use of the corporate mailing list and his solicitation of the brethren for funds to be sent to his new organization, now officially named **the Living Church of God**.

Both Rod Meredith, and the GCG Board of Directors have written several letters explaining the correctness of their position and the error of the others. Global field ministers have written letters favoring each side of the split. By now, there are over 50 pages in circulation—too much for *Servants' News* to print in a regular issue. Those interested in the letters may obtain them directly from the church organizations: The Global Church of God, PO Box 501111, San Diego, Calif 92150 and The Living Church of God, Box 501304, San Diego, Calif 92150.

The letters contain mostly truth pre-

sented from a specific point of view, but some of the presentation is designed to stir up emotion rather than deal with the facts. For example, Mr Meredith on more than one occasion identified a man recently added to the GCG board only as "a lawyer"—with no indication that he was even a GCG member. Readers had to wait for a letter from Larry Salyer to find out that the "lawyer" was Norbert Link, a GCG minister and head of its "German Work". There are other similar problems on both sides. All in all, it is rather depressing to read—are these the Christian leaders of the world?

This writer makes no effort to try to determine which side was "right" or "wrong". Each side is doing what they believe is vital to preserve "the work" as they see it. Numerous times, both Meredith and the Board refer to the GCG corporation as "the Church" (with a capital "C"). Now that Meredith is out of the GCG and now that the GCG Board has some fraction of the members that it did a month ago, we would hope that they would realize that the GCG is **not "the Church"**, but one of **many** church organizations. This writer sees little chance that these problems will subside until these similar church organizations see themselves for what they are—similar church organizations!

Even though nearly all the men involved in this split worked together for years in the WCG and the GCG, the split appears now to be beyond any possible resolution. Each side is quickly adding members to their own boards and councils, and insisting that ministers either support one side or the other.

The **Global Church of God** added Board of Directors member Norbert Link just before Meredith left, and has since added Rex Sexton, Harold Smith and Warren Zehring. (Raymond McNair, Edwin Pope and Larry Salyer are still on the board, bringing the total to 7). The GCG **Council** still has members Raymond McNair (Chairman), Jean Carion, George Meeker, David Pack (now reinstated), Edwin Pope and Larry Salyer, plus new appointees Norbert Link, Rex Sexton, Harold Smith and Warren Zehring. Other ministers still in the Global Church of God include Eric Evans, Jack Hendren, Frank McCrady Jr. and Bill Swanson. Most of the non-ministerial headquarters employees continue to work for the GCG.

Meredith's new **Living Church of God** has regional pastors consisting of: Charles Bryce, Southeastern U.S.; Lambert Greer, Northeast; John Ogwyn, South Central; Gerald Weston, North Central; Douglas Winnail, Western region. The LCG Council consists of all the above men plus Richard Ames, Dibar Apartian, Don Davis, Jeff Fall, Mario Hernandez, Carl McNair and Rod Meredith. Other "notable" former Global ministers publically aligning themselves with Meredith include: Karl Beyersdorfer, Syd Hull (South Africa), Bob Letham and Bob Storrier (Scotland), Jonathan McNair; Rod McNair (Philippines), Laurie Nyhus (Canada), Kinnear Penman (New Zealand) and Bruce Tyler (Australia).

What is the Effect of This Split?

About 70% to 80% of the ministry and brethren seemed to have joined the Living Church of God. The GCG fired all of the field ministers who would not commit to staying with them. The LCG hopes to hire most of the fired GCG ministers as funds are available. Most of the brethren seem to be going (or staying) in the same group as their local minister. This is logical, since this split is not about any significant doctrine, but about administrative decisions primarily known only to the ministry. (Some doctrinal issues were raised, one example being whether there are 3 or 5 resurrections. But since neither number appears in the Bible, and since there are several "limited" resurrections—Christ's and the other saints (Matt 27:52)—with no standard way to count them, this and the other doctrines are hardly issues to divide a church over.)

So, it is a benefit to local congregations to stay together as many are very small already. However, this manner of splitting has created a "swiss cheese effect" for both organizations. There are now major sections of the country (and the world) where they do not have any ministers or members. If they receive requests to attend services resulting from their mass-evangelism in an area where they have no corporate ministers or members, will they refer them to another organization, or will they simply tell them that there is no place to attend nearby?

It is still not clear at this time exactly how much money will be available to

each group. The GCG owns all of the assets of the corporation—equipment, computers, office furniture, etc. They have efficient systems in place for magazine production mailing, subscription maintenance, field-church assistance, etc. The GCG technically owns most of the song books, sound equipment and other property in local church areas—will they ask for all of that back from the new LCG congregations? The problem is, they only need a fraction of these things for their own greatly-decreased numbers.

The GCG also still "owns" all of the debt that it had before. There are many outstanding loans to members which are now LCG members. There is a long-term lease to pay on the Headquarters building which is much larger than they need. The GCG owns all of the copyrights to *The World Ahead Magazine*, their booklets, their TV programs, etc. Will they have enough money to continue producing all of these at the current level? Will LCG members still write to the GCG for the old free literature, but never send the GCG another dime? Will new people who were attracted to Meredith's telecast and magazine be willing to accept Harold Smith, the new GCG TV presenter? (Or might they like him better?) The biggest problem for the GCG will be continuing to pay the existing staff salaries, minister salaries, rental contracts, and other obligations.

The LCG, on the other hand, has very few expenses right now, and apparently substantial contributions are coming in. Unfortunately, they have no literature to offer, and no systems in place. Mr. Meredith cannot even air reruns of his old programs or reprint his old booklets—he does not own them. Writings and systems that were set up over a period of years cannot be redone in days, especially with nearly all different employees. It would seem beneficial to both groups if the LCG would pay some reasonable amount to the GCG for some of the equipment they no longer need, and for the right to use some of the literature, programs, internal systems, etc. The LCG could purchase these things that they are familiar with more cheaply than they could redevelop them on their own, and the GCG probably needs the money. But practical cooperation of this type does not seem to be on the minds of any of the leaders.

Before the split occurred, Meredith

was trying to spend more money on evangelism, and the Board was trying to be financially more conservative in order to assure the long-term continuance of the organization. Now, it appears that both groups are much further away from meeting these goals than they were before the split. **The split was a major setback for the preaching of the Gospel and for the local brethren.** Now, the LCG has money but little literature or capability to send it; the GCG has the literature and capability, but not enough money. Would not it have been better for either side to “give in” to the other and take the issue to the Eternal in prayer and ask Him to restore whom He wants?

Would it be a sin to have the local congregations vote on paper for the leadership they wanted, rather than forcing them to vote with their feet and wallets for one split or the other? Are the politics of church splits somehow superior to the politics of fair elections? The only thing that this split helped was the ego of the leaders.

Why Did This Happen?

This writer believes it is **most important that all “Church of God” believers understand why this has happened.** Nearly all of the various “Church of God” groups are continuing to get smaller and smaller. They are splitting faster than they are growing. After each split, there are more people who leave all of the “Church of God” groups for good. Each of these groups believes that it is the main instrument of God to warn the world and preach the Gospel before the “end” comes. But because these leaders have such a strong belief that “they are doing the Work” and that they must do whatever necessary to “protect their Work”, they continue to operate in the same way. Yet, these actions are putting these groups in the position where they may be unable to effectively evangelize at all.

Can you imagine the bewilderment of a new convert who has just begun attending the Global Church of God as the result of their TV program? Maybe they attended the Feast for the first time this year, and heard the concluding remark of Meredith’s Last Great Day video sermon: “Thank you for supporting the Global Church of God.” Now, the same man is asking them to

leave the Global Church of God and pay no attention to his former heads of ministry (Salyer), editorial (McNair), and finance (Pope). Similarly, these men are writing to this new member asking them to pay no attention to Meredith, the former Presiding Evangelist of the GCG.

“If Christian leaders get along like this, why should I be a Christian?” the new convert might ask. “They are not preaching any greatly differing doctrines. Furthermore, I met people at the Feast who also attend yet other Sabbath-keeping congregations that teach nearly the same thing. Why do they discourage me from fellowshiping with them?”

The “Church of God” organizations of today have no good answers to these questions. If they realized their similarity in doctrine, and realized that they were simply degenerating into the factions that Paul condemned (1Cor 1 & 3), then they would tell their new believers that there are many groups who teach the same basic truths. But these leaders are still working with the mentality of years ago, when the WCG was the only group known to them that preached these doctrines, and when they could tell members that they had to “like it” or “leave the one true Church”. Most leaders believe that “running the work” at the top is the highest priority, even if it means proclaiming great things about “the work” that they know are not true, and lying about problems so the members will not find out.

Church Organizations, In Bible?

Does God work through Church Organizations? Does the Bible say anything about church organizations? Do Peter or Paul ever talk about spending “church money”, building a church building, or administering “church policy”? No. The Bible uses the term *ekklesia* sometimes for all believers and sometimes for believers in a specific geographic location. The term used for an organization of *some* brethren with distinct leaders or doctrines is called a “faction” or “sect” (*hairesis*). Christians were considered a “sect” of the Jews by some, but “sects” within the Church were condemned in the New Testament (see 1Cor 11:19; Gal 5:20; 2 Pet. 2:1 NRSV of NASB; all other uses of *hairesis*: Acts 5:17; 15:5; 24:5; 24:14; 26:5; 28:22).

People claim that in this modern age corporations are necessary to preach the

Gospel, but that is not so. The first century Church could have incorporated, but they did not. The Romans had corporations, some of which paid workers and bought and sold merchandise throughout the empire. But Christ and his apostles were not interested in that. They were teaching about a way of life, **not** about an organization to join or an administration to set up.

Today, as soon as people with common goals get together to form a “church group”, they usually want to form a corporation and set up a governing structure for it—sometimes before they have one service or do one good work in Christ’s name. They believe they need a corporation for at least these reasons:

1. To make contributions tax deductible.
2. To collect money in a central place to purchase things and to pay men to preach the Gospel and feed the flock.
3. To allow the organization to continue on after the death of its current leader(s)—also called “perpetuity”
4. To limit the liability of those running the corporation—if the corporation goes bankrupt or injures people, the personal wealth of the corporate leaders is protected (unless it can be proved that the board was negligent or broke laws).

At first glance, these might seem like good things. But if we look at these items in detail and see what has happened with the GCG, LCG and other church groups, we find a number of things that would work much better without corporations.

1. Tax deductibility and tax exemption are possible without a corporation. As an example the Bible Sabbath Association is not a corporation, but has “tax exempt status”. According to IRS publication 557, churches are tax exempt without applying for any such status. The details of these matters exceed the scope of this article, but actual practice shows that a variety of small groups are tax deductible without incorporation.

2. Collecting money in a central place to do a big work sounds like a great idea until someone with different ideas gets control of a corporation and uses its assets for his own purpose. A court appointed receiver spent WCG funds his way in 1979—corporations are creations of the state so states have the right to investigate them. (The Constitution protects churches, not church corporations.

The WCG case was not ended on constitutional merit, but by a California law passed preventing the Attorney General from investigating church corporations.) After Mr. Armstrong's death, Joseph Tkach Sr & Jr were able to use the assets of the WCG corporation to proclaim many doctrines nearly opposite to those that Armstrong taught. Similarly, Rod Meredith lost to the GCG board all of the assets that he built up, even though he and a high percentage of GCG members would have preferred to keep them.

Corporations also separate writings from those who want to use them. The WCG eventually stopped printing all of Armstrong's writings, and challenged in court those who wanted to print them. David Hulme wrote a TV program script before joining the UCG-IA, then UCG-IA spent the money to produce it. Therefore, the script belongs to Hulme but the produced video belongs to the UCG-IA. Hulme, having left that group, is not allowed to use it—he will have to produce it again. The UCG-IA will not use a video by someone no longer in their corporation. After hundreds of hours of work and many thousands of dollars, neither group is close to airing their first TV program. Lastly, the GCG will probably prevent Meredith (LCG) from using his own writings. None of these things would have happened if those writings would have been placed in the public domain. Anyone could have access to the writings without any court fights. Yes, it would be possible that other groups could take these public domain writings and use them to promote their own church group and doctrines. But cannot we rejoice that Christ is preached, even if it is out of selfish ambition? (Phil 1:16-18.) Is it not good that at least the KJV Bible is public domain, and no-one can stop anyone from printing it!

If local congregations took care of their own needs, arranged for their own halls, paid their own ministers if necessary, bought their own equipment, and sponsored their own gospel preaching efforts, the entire "Church of God" picture would be so much more stable. Local groups could continue serving new converts and long-time believers no matter what happened to the various national organizations. They could use teaching materials and associate with brethren from several or all organizations, rather than just one. Actually, national organizations that are not really serving the

brethren would simply disappear—few individuals or local groups would send money to a national organization that was not producing something of value.

But how can any nation-wide work be done unless a large group of people send their money to one place? Christ certainly knows how to do it! Modern technology has made small operations possible. There are numerous Sabbatarian publications today, some very good ones are produced by one congregation or just a few people. There are dozens of tape ministries. Ron Dart's radio program has tremendous coverage—and many of his stations are paid for by individuals or small groups. Yes, even a high-quality television program is being produced with no full-time people by UCG-IA minister Howard Davis in Oregon. (see article on page 11).

How would anyone even recognize national or worldwide church leaders unless they are the head of a large corporation? Remember that Herbert Armstrong's followers stayed with him through the WCG, to the HWA Corporation Sole based in Arizona, back to the WCG, and then left to a variety of "HWA-following" organizations when the WCG repudiated his writings. Those who liked Ron Dart went with him from the CGI to CEM; those who liked GTA went with him from the CGI to the ICG. Most of Meredith's followers followed him from the GCG to the LCG. People will stay with a leader they support in spite of corporations.

There is no doubt that without strong central leadership, some local congregations would experience the disharmony associated with self-serving local leaders. But it is much better for a few individual congregations to have this trouble, than it is for entire groups of churches to have it when a headquarters goes awry.

3. The ability of a church corporation to continue on after its founder dies is not always a good thing. Those who rise in corporations tend to be those who do whatever they are told. Often, they do not make good leaders. Or, rely upon the advice of someone with a completely different orientation than the founders. Not one leader in the New Testament ever named a successor, even though some knew they were about to die! How much better off would the WCG brethren have been if various TV, printed media and other resources were each owned by dif-

ferent responsible individuals? Each would have been able to decide how to continue to use the resources to teach what they believed to be right, rather than allow one person to channel all of these resources to his own ends. Furthermore, locally self-supporting congregations would refuse to send money to or read literature from national organizations that they believed to be preaching heresy.

4. Does anyone believe that Paul or the other apostles were worried about "limited liability"? Were they concerned that they might lose their personal fortunes because someone sued them for what they were preaching? Of course not. They knew that they could be killed almost at any time for what they were preaching. They had faith that the Eternal would provide their needs. Do church leaders today need to be legally protected from lawsuits? Or are the courts of the land sometimes the place where the Eternal chooses to send his servants to witness to governments and leaders? The apostle Paul spent several years as a prisoner due to false charges (Acts chapters 22-28).

Conclusion

This writer believes it should be obvious to anyone that neither the LCG, the GCG, nor any other "CG" is anywhere close to doing a "work" like Herbert Armstrong did. After reading the rest of this issue and the next *Servants' News* issue, we think you will see why the Eternal does not want the "work" of Herbert Armstrong repeated.

We need to realize that no man or organization either *is* or *owns* the Work of God. Christ's Body is the Church and He is in charge of the Work. He certainly has worked with individuals who were members or leaders in corporations. But if He is not now emphasizing that kind of work, it is the duty of all believers to find out **how** He is working. Christ can get the attention of the world in a few minutes with a few miracles. Will he grant those miracles to men who will "do anything" to protect their view of "their work" in spite of its impact on the brethren? Or will He grant miracles to those who live the way that He says to live, even though doing so means working in small groups with an atmosphere of true brotherly love, but with little money and only a little strength?

—Norman S. Edwards

Are We Setting an Example for Christmas-Keeper?

I have been a "non-Christmas-observer" since 1965. I have written on the subject as well as shared the truth of its origins with others many times. But I am a little puzzled at the attitude that many anti-Christmas sermons and articles seem to have. Rather than expose the history, or condemn the "system" or the "deception of Satan", they condemn the **people** who are involved in the practice. As far as I can tell, most of the people who observe this celebration (including myself in my "unconverted days") do not do so out of "willful rebellion" against God, nor out of conscious disrespect for our Savior, nor out of an attitude of defiance—but out of ignorance. They were born into a world and society where these things had been ignorantly perpetuated for generations. The vast majority do not know any better.

So why the frequent **anger**, condemnation and ridicule by so many toward the ignorant masses? Can we remember when we were one of those in the ignorant masses ourselves? Most of us probably were, unless we were born into a family that attended with a "Church of God", the Jehovah's Witnesses or other group that rejects Christmas observance. Most WCG folks were always taught that "only God could open a mind" to understand the truth on this, as well as many other issues. I certainly know that, at least in **my** case, He didn't open my mind because I was seeking Him at the start, nor because I was a deep student of the Bible, or any such thing. It was His sovereign act of reaching out to me in my ignorance.

From what I can tell in the Old Testament scriptures, the reason for severe condemnation by God toward the backsliding Israelites who went to "mixing" true worship with Baal worship... was that they **had** the truth right in front of them! **Their** nation's and society's traditions for many years were based on the truth. They **had** the Tabernacle or Temple. They had the priesthood. They had the annual Holy Days. And yet they craved the other. Thus it was the fact that they **willfully**, with full knowledge of what they were doing, turned from the truth to a heathen system, that brought the wrath of God on them.

This is **not** to indicate that Christmas celebration is acceptable to God. Of course it is not. It is just to indicate that

I'm not all that convinced that God's "greatest disappointment" is that the ignorant masses don't worship Him in spirit and in truth. He reveals His truth **not** because of our own righteousness but because of His plans, His grace and His mercy. The vast majority of Sabbatarian Holy Day keepers, who **have** been given the blessing of being called to be witnesses of His truth have all too often **not** been a "light on the hill" for His truth. For they have either been secluded by their own exclusivism ("hiding their light under a bushel"), or they have been obnoxiously arrogant rather than lovingly reaching out to others. Some do shine their light for the world, but when the world comes to look they are repelled by the smell of infighting amongst the Sabbatarians over minor points of doctrine—treating each other not as brethren but as enemies! A few have given a rotten name (an "evil report" to those "outside") to the "ways" of God by the scandalous behavior of some in their leadership. How are all these ignorant masses to hear a clear witness about Christmas and other issues when those who bring the message have such an "uncertain sound"?

During the years from 1988 through 1995, our family was "in the wilderness"—totally cut off from my brethren in the COG movement. (We were rejected from one group for mailing one person one piece of literature, and from another for refusing to say its leader was the Ezekiel watchman.) Many times I spoke with others about the observance of the Holy Days, Feast of Tabernacles, and so on. These were sincere folks wanting to know more. They have often shown fascination—not disgust—at my beliefs and wanted to know more. But it was always puzzling to them when they got around to commenting, "Wow, that sounds really neat. So **where** will you be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles this year?" And I had to tell them that my family **could not** go to a Feast site where there were **any** other folks of "like mind" on these observances. We were not welcome at any of them—not because of some sin, but because of "church poli-

tics". It was even more puzzling for my friends to discover that many of the groups who **were** observing the Holy

Days would have nothing to do with one another. These groups would hold "rival" feast sites within miles of one another and punish or disfellowship members caught attending the other group!

I sincerely believe that it is **this** situation that is of more concern to our Father than what those who have "never known" the truth about His ways and days are doing. No, there will be no Christmas in the Kingdom. But neither will there be the internecine squabbles and foolishness that there have been for so long among those who **claim** the name of Yashua the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. And neither will there be any "honor" for the kind of carnal men whom "Church of God" members seem to keep **wanting** to put on pedestals as "God's Anointed". Amos 5:21-26 (NIV) speaks of idolatry on Feast days. Is it possible that these verses are more of a warning about idolizing "church leaders" than they are about keeping Christmas?

I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! "Did you bring me sacrifices and offerings forty years in the desert, O house of Israel? You have lifted up the shrine of your king, the pedestal of your idols, the star of your god—which you made for yourselves.

It may be that the "star"—the idolizing of human church leaders by people—is more repulsive to God than the ones folks ignorantly put on the tops of fir trees in their houses each December!

—Pam Dewey

To help someone understand the errors of Christmas, write *Servant's News* for our free article *The Reason for the Season* or read it on-line at Alan Ruth's website: www.biblestudy.org. 



Did Herbert Armstrong Plagiarize J.H. Allen's *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright* in *The US&BC* in Prophecy?

An evaluation by Dave Medici, February, 1996

What Is Plagiarism?

First, I wish to restate the definition of plagiarism from Black's Law Dictionary, 5th edition, page 1035:

Plagiarism: The act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts or passages of his writings, or the ideas or language of the same, and passing them off as the product of one's own mind. To be liable for plagiarism it is not necessary to exactly duplicate another's literary work, it being sufficient if unfair use of such work is made by lifting of substantial portion thereof, but even an exact counterpart of another's work does not constitute plagiarism if such counterpart was arrived at independently.

Please reread that definition. Since I am in the publishing industry (employed by the world's third largest publisher of textbooks), that is the definition I had in mind when I made this analysis of Armstrong's work.

How to Prove Plagiarism

To demonstrate that Herbert plagiarized J. H. Allen's "Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright" in writing his book, *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* (hereafter *US&BC*), I must demonstrate:

(1) that HWA never cited Allen as a source;

(2) that HWA had knowledge of Allen's book and thus did not arrive at his opinions independently;

(3) that parts, passages or the language of Allen's work is duplicated by HWA even if not quoted verbatim (the popular conception of plagiarism).

In regard to **point (1)**, an examination of the *US&BC*. Allen is nowhere mentioned as a source.

It is not enough for an author to orally reveal a source for a significant portion of his own book. The acknowledgment must accompany the author's book so that his **readers** are informed of the source. Since a book may enjoy a printing of thousands or even millions of copies, and since an author could in no way orally reveal his source to that many people, it is immediately appar-

ent why the source must be referenced in the author's own book. The *US&BC* enjoyed a distribution of several million copies (15 million if I remember correctly). If HWA had orally informed every member of the WCG of his use of Allen that would only amount to 1% of his reading public. **Point (1) is proved.**

As to **point (2)**, please consult the Jan-Feb 1996 issue of the Global Church News. In the text box on page 11, an unnamed author writes:

In the late 1920s, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong became acquainted with Allen's book and subsequently incorporated some of Allen's ideas in a book which he later published. It is, however, quite untrue that Mr. Armstrong in any way plagiarized material from Allen's book. I possess copies of Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright, as well as various versions of Mr. Armstrong's U.S. and Britain in Prophecy. But I have never seen so much as a single instance in any of the numerous versions of Mr. Armstrong's work that plagiarized even one sentence from Allen's book. On numerous occasions, Mr. Armstrong freely acknowledged his indebtedness to Allen for having clearly explained the biblical identity of the Anglo-American peoples—ideas which later helped inspire him to write his own 300-page paper on 'Anglo-Israelism'.

Therefore, HWA **did have prior knowledge of Allen's book** before he wrote the *US&BC* and one cannot argue that HWA arrived at his ideas independent of Allen. **Point (2) is proved.**

Incidentally, we shall see that the writer of the above quote obviously has not examined Armstrong and Allen closely, for if he did he would not have written "I have never seen so much as a single instance in any of the numerous version of Mr. Armstrong's work that plagiarized even one sentence from Allen's book." We shall find that statement to be entirely untrue and quite unfortunate.

As to **point (3)**, consider the following: According to the legal definition of

plagiarism provided at the beginning of this post, plagiarism consists of an unfair use of a substantial portion another's work, even if not exactly duplicated, passing another's work off as one's own. How do we determine if indeed an author used a substantial portion of another's work when there is no exact duplication of text?

I put that question to the legal department of the publisher for whom I work.

They replied that in such a case plagiarism is proved by demonstrating that the work in question evidences a remarkable similarity to another work's arrangement of material, development of argument, proofs adduced and, if possible, use of peculiar phraseology. The arrangement of material is considered not at the level of the entire book but at the level of a section or subsection. Since there are innumerable ways to present a subject, and it is assumed that different authors will naturally have different modes of presentation, the development of the argument is examined to determine if one author's argument proceeds substantially as another's. Examination of proofs adduced to support an argument proceeds along similar lines. The nature of the subject must be considered when examining development of argument and proof's adduced, for discussions of hard science (mathematics, physics, chemistry) will, by their very nature, proceed similarly; such is not the case with soft sciences or philosophy.

As to peculiar phraseology, I was told that only significant words are examined. Where an author is found to have used an uncommon word or phrase, and where that word or phrase can be shown to be within a section of text whose arrangement and development of argument are substantially that of another author, it is considered to be presumptive evidence of 'prior knowledge' and hence plagiarism.

A final point made by the legal department was this: plagiarism is proved by the cumulative weight of evidence, not by the individual proofs adduced.

That is, it could be remotely possi-

ble that two authors coincidentally demonstrate similarity in a handful of expressions, ideas or presentations, but as the number of coincidences grow so does the likelihood of plagiarism.

It is **very important** for the reader to keep in the forefront of his mind the definition of legal plagiarism and the criteria for its determination as the reader progresses through this post. The reader will not see the plagiarism if the reader loses sight of what plagiarism is and how to recognize it.

Text Used in Analysis

For my texts I am using the 1967 edition of the *US&BC* and the 19th edition of Allen's 1917 work (available from Destiny Publishers, Merrimac, Massachusetts). I am comfortable using the 1967 edition for two reasons: (1) it was one of the most widely circulated editions and is still in the possession of many members and (2) it is an edition which I read and immediately saw the remarkable similarity to Allen's book.

I have also read editions of the *US&BC* subsequent to the 1967 edition.

Notation Convention

So that the reader may prove the plagiarism for himself, I shall adhere to the following notation: References will cite the author (HWA: Herbert W. Armstrong, JHA: J. H. Allen), page and paragraph upon the indicated page, including paragraphs carried over from a preceding page. Hence,

HWA 57:3 means Armstrong's 1967 *US&BC*, page 57, paragraph 3 as one counts whole or partial paragraphs from the top of page 57.

In some instances I will cite section or chapter headings, such as HWA 22 'How much land? / What size nations'.

I cannot state too emphatically that for the reader to fully appreciate the evidence brought forward below he **must** read Armstrong and then read Allen. The few notes I will provide with the references will not convey to the reader's mind the evidence of plagiarism as dramatically as will the reading.

General Comments

I will proceed now to examine Armstrong and Allen's books. I will work methodically through Armstrong, referencing Allen, and the reader should note that as we move through Armstrong we also move naturally through the relevant

sections in Allen. Watch how the page numbers for each author advance forward in all cases with but a few exceptions. When reading Armstrong, we will find the same subject presented in Allen, albeit with perhaps more detail. We will see that as Armstrong is writing *US&BC* he is reading Allen. It will be quite evident.

To begin with, I would point out that Armstrong's illustrated book runs for roughly 212 pages, whereas Allen's non-illustrated book runs for roughly 377 pages. Hence we can immediately deduce that whether or not there is plagiarism Armstrong will omit quite a lot of Allen's material, and where there is an identity of subject Armstrong's work will exhibit considerable compression. Thus, we should not expect to find long excerpts from Allen. By the same token, however, such compression will render the similarities between Armstrong and Allen that much more conspicuous.

US&BC Chapter 1

(1) HWA 3:1-3, 4:1-2, 6-7 = JHA 79:1

Armstrong and Allen cite Israel identity as a 'key' to correct understanding of the Scripture. Armstrong writes that prophecy is 'closed' without it, and Allen writes the Scripture is 'shut' to one's understanding.

US&BC Chapter 3

(2) HWA 20:5-6 = JHA chapter 2

Armstrong's famous 'race vs. grace' or 'race and grace' concept is taken directly from Allen, who more fully develops the idea.

(3) HWA 22 'How much land?—What size nations??' = JHA 23:2–24:1

Armstrong argues that Israel would spread around the world, eventually becoming 'heir of the world,' 30:2. Allen argues that the bounds of the nations were set from the foundation of the world according to God's foreknowledge of Israel's multitudinous size, and that Israel was fated to embrace the entire world.

US&BC Chapter 4

(4) HWA chapter 4 = JHA chapter 3

Armstrong and Allen devote a chapter to distinguishing between the Scepter and Birthright promises.

(5) HWA 35:11

Armstrong's famous 'all Jews are Israelites, most Israelites are not Jews.' See (27) below.

(6) HWA 39-41 = JHA 28:4–29:2,

37:2-3

Armstrong discusses the promises in relation to Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob. Allen discusses the promises in relation to Abraham, Isaac, Esau and Jacob, omitting mention of Ishmael.

(7) HWA 45:3 = JHA 41:2

Armstrong and Allen discuss the meaning of the name Israel.

(8) HWA 45:5ff = JHA 41:3–42:3

The rejection of Rueben.

(9) HWA 48:8 = JHA 43:4

Armstrong: "At the time of Jacob's death, he and his sons were living in Egypt."

Allen: "At the time of Jacob's death, all Israel was in Egypt living in the land of Goshen."

As we move through Armstrong this pattern will repeat; Armstrong will follow Allen's argument and proofs, and then quote directly from Allen. This demonstrates that as Armstrong was writing, he was reading Allen.

(10) HWA 49:2ff = JHA 43:4-44:1

Armstrong: "It was reported to Joseph that Jacob, his father, was ill. He took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, sons of an Egyptian mother, and hastened to the dying patriarch's bedside."

Allen: "When it was reported to Joseph that his father was dying, he took with him his two sons, and hastened to the bedside of the dying patriarch."

(11) HWA 49:5 = JHA 44:1

Armstrong quotes Genesis 48:2-4; Allen references it.

(12) HWA 49:9 = JHA 44:2

Jacob adopts Joseph's sons

(13) HWA 49:9–52:1 = JHA 44:3

Ephraim is put before Manasseh. Armstrong writes 'supernatural guidance,' whereas Allen writes 'Holy Ghost.' Coincidence? The Scripture makes **no** mention of supernatural guidance by the Holy Ghost—it is Jacob that does the guiding. Armstrong borrowed from Allen.

(14) HWA 52:3-10 = JHA 45:2–46:1

Jacob says, 'Bless the lads,' guiding his hands wittingly by crossing them.

Note that Armstrong and Allen labor upon the detailed actions of both Joseph and Jacob. Armstrong and Allen take great pains to point out these actions.

Armstrong refers to the blessing as being 'jointly' received; Allen says the

blessing is 'collective.' Same thought.

(15) HWA 53:11 = JHA 46:1

Armstrong and Allen: "collective blessings".

(16) HWA 53:12 = JHA 46:2

Armstrong: "But at this juncture Joseph noticed that Jacob's right hand was not resting upon the head of the firstborn. He endeavored to remove it."

Notice Allen: "At this juncture Joseph noticed that Jacob's right hand was not resting on Manasseh's head, and he wanted to remove it..."

(17) HWA 56:1 = JHA 46:6

Armstrong and Allen both say: "separate blessings".

(18) HWA 57:3 = JHA 47:3

Armstrong: "While still in the spirit of prophecy, Jacob called his twelve sons together to tell them what their posterity should become *in the last days*."

Allen: "While the spirit of prophecy was still upon Jacob, he called all his sons together to tell them what their posterity should become *in the last days*."

US&BC Chapter 6

(19) HWA 76:1-79:4 = JHA 49:1-55:3

Armstrong and Allen relate the story of what preceded the rupture between Israel and Judah.

(20) HWA 78:5 = JHA 54:1

Armstrong and Allen call Jeroboam northern Israel's "spokesman".

(21) HWA 79:2 = JHA 55:1

Armstrong: "The challenge to the royal family was, 'Now see to thine own house!'"

Allen: "The challenge to the royal family was, 'Now see to thy own house!'"

(22) HWA 79:3-4 = JHA 55:3

Israel rebels from David; God says, 'This is of Me.' Armstrong compresses Allen.

(23) HWA 79:5-6 = JHA 56:2

Armstrong and Allen emphasize the distinction between 'House of Israel' and 'House of Judah.'

(24) HWA 79:5-82:2 = JHA 56:3-61:1

Armstrong and Allen labor to emphasize that Israel and Judah are separate and distinct.

(25) HWA 82:2-83:9 = JHA 62:1-78:2

Armstrong and Allen labor to emphasize that Israel and Judah are separate and distinct, and both authors

bring forth the different names by which each kingdom was known.

(26) HWA 83:6 = JHA 67:6-69:3

Armstrong and Allen emphasize that the two kingdoms are referred to sometimes by their respective capitols.

(27) HWA 82:5 = JHA 71:2

Armstrong: "Jews are Israelites, just as Californians are Americans. But MOST Israelites are not Jews, just as most Americans are not Californians."

Allen: "Understand us: we do not say that the Jews are not Israelites; they belong to the posterity of Jacob, who was called Israel; hence they are Israelites. But the great bulk of Israelites are not the Jews, just as the great bulk of Americans are not Californians, and yet all Californians are Americans..."

This similarity is important for I cannot recall any other British-Israel author making the analogy between Jew-Israelite and Californian-American (although my memory may err) before Allen. Allen borrowed this idea from Rev. W. H. Poole who wrote in his 1880's *Anglo-Israel; or the Saxon Race Proved to be the Lost Tribes of Israel in Nine Lectures* the following: "All Jews are Israelites but not all Israelites are Jews, just as all Englishmen are Britons but not all Britons are Englishmen." Allen Americanized Poole.

US&BC Chapter 7

(28) HWA 94:7 = JHA 164:3

Armstrong and Allen point out that Jeremiah was one of only three men the Scripture declares to have been sanctified before their births.

(29) HWA 94:8-95:2 = JHA 165:3-6

Armstrong and Allen describe Jeremiah's calling.

(30) HWA 95:3 = JHA 166:1

Armstrong and Allen state that Jeremiah was placed over "nations".

(31) HWA 95:6-96:7 = JHA 166:2-167:1

Armstrong and Allen state that it is "well known" that Jeremiah was used to pull down the Davidic throne and replant it in Israel.

(32) HWA 100:5-9 = JHA 190:3-191:1

Armstrong and Allen relate that Jeremiah was freed from prison and went to Mizpah. Notice: "Where did he go?"

(33) HWA 100:10 = JHA 191:2

Armstrong: "Now this Gedeliah..."

Allen: "This Gedeliah..."

(34) HWA 100:10-101:1 = JHA 191:2-193:1

Armstrong and Allen relate the assassination of Gedeliah and the carrying away of the people of Mizpah by Ishmael. Special note is made of Jeremiah and the king's daughters.

(35) HWA 101:5-102:5 = JHA 193:4-195:2

Armstrong and Allen relate Johanan's flight to Egypt.

(36) HWA 102:6 = JHA 195:3

Armstrong and Allen relate how Baruch's life is safeguarded by God.

(37) HWA 102:9 = JHA 197:4

Armstrong and Allen refer to the daughters of Zedekiah as "royal material."

US&BC Chapter 9

(38) HWA 112:1 = JHA 223:3

Armstrong and Allen relate that Israel was to abide many days without a king.

(39) HWA 112:2 = JHA 223:2

Armstrong and Allen quote the prophecy in 2 Samuel 7:10 saying, "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them..."

(40) HWA 113:4 = JHA 225:3

Armstrong and Allen refer to Hosea 12:1, "Ephraim... follows after an east wind."

(41) HWA 113:5 = JHA 226:2

Armstrong and Allen quote Psalm 89:25

(42) HWA 114:4 = JHA 227:1-2

Armstrong and Allen refer to Isaiah 49:3, 6, 12

(43) HWA 114:7 = JHA 226:3

Armstrong and Allen refer to Isaiah 49:1-3.

(44) HWA 114:8 = JHA 226:2

Armstrong and Allen refer to Jeremiah 31:9.

(45) HWA 114:9 = JHA 227:3

Armstrong and Allen refer to Isaiah 41:1.

(46) HWA 116 "Dan A Serpent's Trail" = JHA 250 "Dan—The Serpent's Trail"

Armstrong and Allen use a similar chapter/section heading

(47) HWA 116:9 = JHA 250:2

Armstrong and Allen quote Genesis 49:17

(48) HWA 117:2 = JHA 250:3

Armstrong and Allen discuss Dan's allotted territory in Palestine

(49) HWA 117:2 = JHA 260:2

Armstrong and Allen mention how Dan took Mahaneh-dan.

(50) HWA 117:3 = JHA 260:3

Armstrong and Allen mention how 600 Danites took Laish and called it Dan.

(51) HWA 118:34 = JHA 263:3

Armstrong and Allen give lists of Dan-type place names.

Allen's list: **Armstrong's list:**

Danube	
Dniester	Dniester
Don	
Danau	Danau
Dan-inn	Dan-inn
Dan-aster	Dan-aster
Dan-dari	Dan-dari
Dan-ez	Dan-ez
Daci	
Davi	
Don	Dan
Dan	Don
Udon	Udon
Eridon	Eridon
Danes	Danes
Denmark	Dan-emerke

This list of place names is very important for it clearly demonstrates that Armstrong was copying out of Allen. Notice that the lists differ only in what Armstrong **omits!** This is quite important, for the argument that both authors are making is that Europe and the British Isles are literally filled with Dan-type place names which mark the movement of the tribe of Dan. Yet Armstrong does not add any new Dan-type place name to his list despite the alleged abundance from which to choose.

(52) HWA 117:8 = JHA 266:1

Armstrong and Allen discuss the Tuatha de Danaan.

(53) HWA 117:8–118:1 = JHA 266:4–267:2

More Dan-type place names.

Allen's list: **Armstrong's list:**

Dan Laugh	Dans-Lough
San Sower	Dan Sower
Dan Monism	
Dan dalke	Dan Dalke
Dun drum	Dun drum
Don-egal Bay	Don-egal Bay
Don-egal City	Don-egal City
Dun-glow	Dun-glow
Lon-don-derry	Lon-don-derry
Dingle	Dingle
Dun-garven	
Duns-more	Duns-more

Again, Armstrong only subtracts from the list—does not add any new names in spite of the declared abundance. Note also that both authors relate that Duns-more means 'More Dans' without explaining the meaning of any

other Dan placename.

(54) HWA 118:1 = JHA 267:1

Armstrong and Allen relate that Dunn in Irish means judge, just as Dan in Hebrew means judge.

(55) HWA 118:5 = JHA 267:2

More Dan-type place names.

Allen's list: **Armstrong's list:**

Dundee	Dundee
Dunkirk	
Dunbar	
Dunraven	Dunraven

See comment for (51) and (53).

(56) HWA 121:1 = JHA 228:4

In relating how Jeremiah came to Ireland, both authors give the different names by which Baruch is known in various histories.

Armstrong: "Simon Brach, Breck, Berech, Brach, Berach"

Allen: "Simon Brach, Breck, Brack, Barech, Berach"

(57) HWA 121:3 = JHA 228:4

Armstrong: "Jeremiah brought with them some remarkable things, including a harp, an ark, and a wonderful stone called 'lia-fail' or 'stone of destiny.'"

Allen: "This royal party brought with them many remarkable things. Among these was the harp, an ark, and the wonderful stone called Lia-fail, or stone of destiny..."

Conclusion

I must admit that at this point in the analysis I thoroughly lost interest in continuing. While it might be possible that one or two of the previous 57 points could be attributed to coincidence, it is unbelievable that all of the parallels of arguments and the numerous exact wordings could be coincidence.

The conclusion I reach, as I think the reader shall also reach, is that significant portions of Armstrong's work were taken from Allen's work. Armstrong follows Allen's arrangement of material, development of argument and, occasionally, even Allen's wording. Armstrong omits most of the historical material in Allen.

But is this plagiarism? Former member of *The Beatles*, George Harrison, was sued for plagiarism because his song *My Sweet Lord* closely resembled the much earlier song *He's So Fine*. To determine if Harrison plagiarized the earlier song, *My Sweet Lord* was compared to other songs that appeared to sound like *He's So Fine*. It was determined that although there may have been a surface similarity, the

underlying musical forms were substantially different for the other songs, and only Harrison's song demonstrated such a close affinity to *He's So Fine*. The composer prevailed against Harrison.

Therefore, to settle the question as to Armstrong's plagiarism of Allen, in addition to the material presented above we must ask ourselves one final question: Does any other British-Israel writing demonstrate as close a relationship with Allen as does Armstrong? I have about 30 British-Israel books in my private library, and I have read an additional 50 or so other works at various libraries around the country. I have **never** found one book that demonstrates such a remarkable similarity to Allen as does Armstrong. I challenge anyone to find another British-Israel book that so closely resembles Allen.

In my opinion, **point (3)**, from the beginning of this article, **is proved**. The only honest conclusion is that Armstrong plagiarized Allen.

What Does It Matter?

Now for the obvious question: does the plagiarism matter?

My answer is, "no". Armstrong's plagiarism does not diminish the truth of what he wrote. It does not affect our responsibility to that truth. It does not alter our work. It does not change the fact, in my opinion, that God used him to restore many vital truths to His Church.

Did Armstrong intentionally plagiarize? Yes. Armstrong may have had a limited formal education, but it is inconceivable that a man who was capable of running his own advertising business, and who later ran a \$200-million-a-year church, was too dull to know what he was doing. Mr. Armstrong was quite intelligent and very capable.

Moreover, we are all familiar with his "six-month, intensive, day and night study" at the Portland library while he was trying to disprove several doctrines. Surely during that six month study he encountered things known as footnotes and bibliographies. But perhaps citing sources was not as critical then as now, someone will argue. That is simply not true—literary conventions regarding recognition of another's work and appropriate citation have not changed that dramatically in 60 years, and if they had Armstrong had opportunity to properly cite Allen with each new edition of the *US&BC*. ☞

Has Time Been Lost? & Found?

In 1965, an attorney representing Ambassador College wrote a letter to the Church of God (Seventh Day) asking them to stop publishing the booklet, *Has Time Been Lost*, since Ambassador College had a copyright on a booklet of the same name and subject. The Church of God (Seventh Day) dug into their files and found that they had a copy of the booklet dating back into the early 1930s. **A literature list in the February 10, 1925 Bible Advocate included *Has Time Been Lost*.** It was clearly written before Herbert Armstrong ever began his ministry. LeRoy Dais, a young man working for the Church of God (Seventh Day) sent a letter with copies of this documentation to Ambassador College.

That was the end of the dispute. The Church of God (Seventh Day) did not put copyright notices in their literature as they were happy for their teaching to be copied and published in any manner. They were not interested in preventing

Ambassador College from publishing the booklet, as long as AC did not try to stop them from publishing their own booklet. Although this information is not well-known, LeRoy Dais, still a member of the Church of God (Seventh Day) remembers it quite well. (If anyone would like documentation, *Servants' News* will provide copies of the *Bible Advocate* literature list and the associated letters.)

The two booklets are word-for-word identical in about half of the places. Armstrong did add some things, but in many places he simply dropped out information—such as the 1910 dates of encyclopedias which, if included, would make the booklet look “old” (see p. 24). Herbert Armstrong never gave credit to the Church of God (Seventh Day) or changed the booklet to more correctly say “edited by Herbert Armstrong”. The original author of the booklet never filed a suit, so Mr Armstrong had no legal problems. But was his practice honest?

If a person claims to be the author of a book, it is valid to assume that he did the research required to write the book, and that he has a larger knowledge of the subject—the book being derived from that larger body of knowledge. He should be able to answer questions about the subject. A person who copies a book, and just changes some words here and there may not have near the understanding—they may not even understand what they copied.

This issue is particularly important because Herbert Armstrong often claimed to be “the one” whom God was using to restore most truth at the end time. The extent of his writings was sometimes used as evidence that he was “God’s apostle”. How can these things be evidence of such, if some of the writings were simply borrowed from other Bible teachers? Furthermore, since Mr. Armstrong has never publicly acknowledged (as far as we know) either this plagiarism or that of *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy*, **we have no way to know how many other of his teachings were also borrowed from somewhere else.**

Continued on page 24

Title page of Herbert Armstrong’s version (reduced 20%). Note copyright date.

Has TIME Been Lost?

Is it possible to *know*? YES!—you can be *sure*—you can *PROVE*—which day of the week today is the *same* seventh day God rested on, blessed, and set apart *at Creation!* Here is the PLAIN TRUTH—seven separate proofs—each *conclusive* and irrefutable. YES, *you can be SURE!*

by Herbert W. Armstrong

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Title page the of Church of God (Seventh Day) version (reduced 10%) from the mid-1960s, little-changed since the 1930s. No copyright date.

Has Time Been Lost?

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To say that "we would certainly know" if he copied doctrines from others is not true. Most WCG members do not know about these two instances of plagiarism, even though they have been written about for 30 years. If Mr. Armstrong borrowed teachings from lesser-known teachers, their original writings or lectures may be completely lost. Before modern photo-copiers, printing a hundred copies of a document was prohibitively expensive. Many Bible teachers simply gave lectures and encouraged hearers to take notes—thus producing a number of copies of their teaching.

G.G. Rupert taught many of the same doctrines as Herbert Armstrong in Pasadena, California from 1915 to 1929 (for more on Rupert, write us for the paper, *The Remnant of Israel*). While we know of no specific proof that Mr. Armstrong borrowed from Mr. Rupert, it is likely that Armstrong borrowed from those who heard Rupert and outlived him. (The *Servants' News* staff would appreciate hearing from anyone who has

access to Herbert Armstrong's archives and knows of any other writings from which he borrowed.)

Whether or not a truth is borrowed does not make it any less true. It is better to copy the truth than it is to copy a lie—the world already has enough lies. **However, this copying without giving credit does tell us something about the character of Herbert Armstrong.** With the exception of Nehemiah in a few places, nearly all of the Bible writers are very humble—they say that they are conveying a message because they were told to, or because they know that it needs to be done. Many do not even put their name on their work. But Herbert Armstrong made frequent claims about the greatness of what he was doing. It is not our place to eternally condemn him. But we need to realize that if he stretched the truth to benefit himself in one area, he may have done it in others. We should not believe a doctrine only because Armstrong taught it.

—Norman S. Edwards

HAS TIME BEEN LOST?

Is it possible to know—to prove today—which day of the week is the same seventh day that God blessed and set apart at creation?

Has time been lost? Has the calendar been changed? Were not ten days dropped out of the calendar at one time?

And, how about living on a round earth? Does not one either gain a day or lose a day in traveling around the world?

And, too, how about Joshua's long day? Did not that change the weekly cycle?

How can we know that the name *Saturday*, the present seventh day of the week, was placed on the seventh day of the week according to the Hebrew calendar?

To all these questions there are definite answers and many lines of **POSITIVE PROOF!** God's Word says, "Prove all things . . ." Let us investigate and find the *truth*.

Past Calendar Changes

The calendar now in use, a Roman calendar, has been changed, but no change ever broke the weekly cycle. The present calendar was first called the *Julian* calendar because it had its origin at the time of Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.—several years before the birth of Christ. Later it was changed at the order of Pope Gregory, and since then it has been called the *Gregorian* calendar.

3

Although the introductory paragraph is different, the first page of Herbert Armstrong's book, below, is largely the same as the two pages at right.

GRANTED, the Bible says the SEVENTH day is the SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD. Granted, that God did, at creation, make the seventh day HOLY TIME, and that He has commanded us to KEEP it holy.

The Questions

But how can we know, today, WHICH day is the true seventh day God blessed and made holy AT CREATION?

Has time been lost? Has the calendar been CHANGED? Were not ten days dropped out of it at one time?

And how about living on a round earth? Does not one either "gain a day," or "lose a day" in traveling around the world?

And how about JOSHUA'S LONG DAY? Did that change the weekly cycle?

How can we know that the name "Saturday," which is a pagan name, was placed on the seventh day of the week according to the Hebrew calendar?

To all these questions, there is a definite answer—and many lines of POSITIVE PROOF! God's Word says "Prove all things." Let us banish all prejudice. Let us throw out preconceived or past opinions. Let us investigate and find the TRUTH.

Past Calendar Changes

The calendar now in use, a Roman calendar, has been changed, but that change did not break the weekly cycle.

Prior to its change, it was called the Julian calendar, because it originated at the time of Julius Caesar; 45 B.C.—

several years before the birth of Christ. The one change was ordered by Pope Gregory, and since then it has been called the Gregorian calendar.

The Julian calendar was imperfect—it inserted leap years too frequently. Back in 45 B.C. they supposed the year was exactly 365¼ days long, and to take care of the extra one-fourth day each year, added a day to the month of February every four years. But it was found later the year was 12 minutes and 14 seconds shorter than this. Consequently, by the time of Pope Gregory, the calendar had drifted TEN DAYS away from the seasons. The Spring equinox, consequently, fell on March 11th, instead of March 21st.

To correct this, ten days were dropped from the calendar. But they were dropped only from the number of days in the MONTH, not from the number of days in the WEEK. A man named Lilius proposed the method which was adopted in making the change. In the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, p. 251, under article "Lilius," explaining this change, we read: "Thus, every imaginable proposition was made, only one idea was never mentioned, viz., the abandonment of the seven-day week."

In the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. III, p. 740, article "Chronology," we read: "It is to be noted that in the Christian period, the order of days in the week has never been interrupted. Thus, when Gregory XIII reformed the calendar in 1582, Thursday, 4 October was followed by Friday, 15 October. So in England, in 1752, Wednesday, 2 September, was followed by Thursday, 14 September."

Above and below, pages from *Has Time Been Lost*, Church of God (Seventh Day) version.

The Julian calendar was imperfect—it inserted leap years too frequently. Back when this calendar was designed it was supposed that the year was exactly 365¼ days long. To take care of the extra one-fourth day each year, a day was added to the month of February every four years. It was later learned that the year is 12 minutes and 14 seconds shorter than this. Consequently, by the time of Pope Gregory, the calendar had drifted TEN DAYS away from the seasons. The spring equinox, therefore, fell on March 11 instead of March 21.

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So that the reader may clearly understand it

4

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.

Is GCG Start-Up Story True?

LETTER: December 1, 1998
Are you the same Norm Edwards that helped start the Global Church of God? Is it true that Mr. Meredith would have stayed in the WCG if he was made a writer, elder or a youth coordinator?

Thanks for your help.

—DPA

Yes, I am the Norm Edwards that helped Rod Meredith start Global. I am not aware of a request on the part of Rod Meredith to be a “writer, elder, or youth coordinator” in order to stay in the WCG. He never mentioned that to me.

However, from 1989 to 1992 he essentially worked at home as a writer, and gave a few senior citizens Bible studies. During this time, others were encouraging him to leave the WCG and start a new group. John Ritenbaugh was one of them—but he did not wait and started the Church of the Great God on his own. It was not until the fall of 1992 when the Leona McNair trial was settled out of court that the WCG gave Mr. Meredith two choices:

1. Preach the new “Tkach” doctrines or
2. Move away from headquarters and no longer be an elder of any kind.

It was then that he began his new group. How long he “would have stayed” if he were given more opportunities in the WCG is a question that will never be answered—he did not stay. I have a 20-page document that describes my relationship with the Global Church of God. It is copies of letters that we exchanged. I do not have it in e-mail format, but would be glad to send it to you.

—NSE

Is Global God's Exclusive Church?

LETTER: October 30, 1998
Dear *Servants' News*,

My family and I attended the Pigeon

Forge, Tennessee Global Feast site this year and were amazed by the hypocrisy and distortions on the Feast video of Rod Meredith. He completely distorted the real situation about the former WCG members, those not with him in the Global Church of God.

Meredith presented these splinter groups in an overly, negative light by saying that people in these groups are “isolated, confused, and in rebellion against God”. He said that there are “tens of thousands out there” who have given up their faith and hope and are hopelessly “lost”. Meredith said we must get them back under the “umbrella of the real church and the real government”. Was he manipulating his members by putting fear into their minds? (They will be fearful to leave Global and become one of these “lost”. They don't know of anywhere else to go). It may seem scary to leave your familiar church. However, many have experienced a new sense of peace and freedom, including a whole world of new experiences and knowledge that they never realized was out there before. Do the GCG members (and others) really believe that God is exclusively involved with Global (or their particular church)? Can we all honestly admit that we can't put God in a box?

In reality, these thousands of people are all in various and diverse situations. Some of them are in United Church of God (which Meredith never mentioned in the video, perhaps because United is Global's biggest rival?). Some members attend with the many off-shoots of the WCG. Some people glean spiritual food from audio tapes provided by the many available ministries. Many people are thriving and growing in understanding via home fellowships. Jesus Christ, our High Priest and Intermediary is our captain and He has put His people where He wants them. Can some of these “leaders” be jealous of this? How can they condemn what Christ is doing and also claim they represent Him?

The point is God is providing, as He always has, for the individuals who truly seek Him. He has not abandoned His followers.

No, not all the thousands who are “non-Global” people are lost, in confusion and in rebellion as Meredith says. Many are growing and thriving in the freedom of Christ.

Many are free to study and believe as the Holy Spirit guides them—free from the pressure and intimidation to conform to “a religion of man”.

—A Reader

RESPONSE: Having worked with Rod Meredith, I know that he believes that the only way to “do a work” is to try to do what Mr. Armstrong did. When difficult questions come up, he has a hard time going to the scripture to see what it says—he often said “Herbert Armstrong did it this way, and look at what a big work he had”. I would hope that he would look at the big split which just occurred in his own group and realize that he is in as much confusion as almost any other group. But since he starts with the premise that his is the group that God is using, he seems to interpret everything that goes wrong with it as Satan's attack or the sins of others. He just never seems to acknowledge that problems are a result of his variance from the scriptures.

—NSE

Seeks Likeminded Friends

LETTER: September 3, 1998

Dear Norm,

Thank you so much for the *Servants' News*. I appreciate the answer to my letter. The article How Does God Govern Through Humans was helpful.

I had been very disturbed and heartbroken over my past experiences going to Sabbath meetings expecting to be joyful in the Lord, then leaving with an emptiness beyond belief. Maybe I wanted too much. I needed to hear brethren talking about different points of the Bible.

People that are fortunate enough to live close to one another should really take it as a great blessing. They should use every opportunity to get together. I've seen the ones that live close together huddle together to catch up on the latest of what happened last week, when they were a local phone call away from each other.

At various services there would be brethren there that have driven two or more hours to hear God's word and to fellowship about God (and discuss the service exclusively). I am hungry for God's word, spirit, and fellowship with likeminded brethren.

I continually pray for the groups that send me literature and tapes and I pray that I may never become lukewarm. I love all the brethren and can hardly wait for the kingdom so we can finally be together, as one.

—SM, Mississippi

RESPONSE: The problem you mention is the difficulty of most religion. People get too comfortable and their religion becomes

more like a social club. The Eternal sometimes has to bring persecution or some other difficulty in order to shake people up. The Jerusalem church was so persecuted that they all had to flee—and “went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:1,4).

Those who feel “on fire for God” should continue to talk to others about it. You may stir others in your fellowship or they may ask you to attend somewhere else. Either result is good for you. If the people you are with now are not edifying, the Eternal will eventually provide others. People earnestly seeking the Eternal, even though they presently have significant doctrinal differences can often fellowship better together than those who are closer in doctrine, but not stirred to action.

—NSE

Questions on HWA and JWT

LETTER: August 28, 1996

Dear Sir,

Hello, my name is Ed George, a former member of the WCG. I would like to request your help in my understanding of certain things in regard to the man HWA.

There are different sides to the issue of the projects or specific activities instituted by HWA. The same activities that were supported by the church funds, which was actually the tithes of the members that paid for such activities as the creation and operation of the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, and the archeological projects that had helped open the meetings of HWA's world travels to leaders of foreign nations. This was claimed to be deceptively done under the guise of preaching the gospel as the last phase of the **work**.

Could you give me your opinion to whether this was a legitimate practice HWA was involved in. Also who was Stanley Rader, and his involvement with the financial affairs of the WCG and HWA?

I am asking for the sake of getting all the facts before believing another person's views on a particular issue. I would truly be grateful for your assistance in this matter.

One last issue is the situation of the wife of the late Mr. Joseph Tkach. I have been told that Mrs. Tkach had a mental breakdown and that it was the result of the stress in the WCG during the 1970's. I just would like to know the truth of the matter instead of rumors.

I only ask because I don't know what is true data or not, in regard to the specific issues.

Sincerely, in the humility of Christ,
—Ed George, Michigan

RESPONSE: In the earlier years of his

work, Herbert Armstrong furnished few details of how he spent the money he received. Millions of dollars were spent on real estate, art, and other things that had little direct bearing on “the Work”. However, Mr. Armstrong was not deceptive if one believes what he said about contributions. He continually taught that once money was “given to God”, the believer's obligation was over—God would supervise how the money was used. Gerald Waterhouse went as far as saying that Herbert Armstrong could just burn the money if he wanted to, and it was still the member's job to give it. This idea is clearly unbiblical. When a collection was made to help poor brethren, Paul encouraged those who gave to send someone with the collection to make sure that it was used properly (2Cor 8:16-21).

Stanley Rader was an attorney for the WCG for many years, and also served in many other financial capacities. He was “ordained” an “evangelist” for some brief period of time before he left the WCG. He has been accused of all manner of impropriety by many people—some of which accusations are probably false and most of which would be difficult to prove true. The idea that he completely controlled Herbert Armstrong is obviously false because Mr. Armstrong ultimately did fire him. Calling him an “evangelist” was obviously a mistake, as I do not know of one time when he publicly taught salvation or any basic doctrine to unconverted people. (The WCG had other evangelists in that category.) We find little need to try to evaluate Stanley Rader's fruits or motives as we know of nobody who regards him as a religious leader today.

Elaine Tkach definitely had mental problems. She never participated in any church activities during the 80s or 90s, but I and numerous friends would see her wandering the campus and streets of Pasadena. I've heard numerous reasons how it happened, several attributed directly to her husband, but nothing that can be proved.

—NSE

Was HWA a Plagiarist?

LETTER: June 12, 1997

Dear *Servants' News*,

I have been keenly interested in the US and Britain Manasseh/Ephraim in prophecy subject since 1966 when I first became attracted to God's truth. It was not the sole attraction, but it was a big one.

I distinctly remember within the first several years I was in the Worldwide Church of God (attended 1967-95) that a notice went out to the Church counteracting a rumor that Mr. Herbert Armstrong had

plagiarized some of his material in his *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* booklet from another source. I recall that the alleged source was the work by J. H. Allen (which I have never seen myself).

The notice said without equivocation that Mr. Armstrong denied any plagiarism. The notice said that Mr. Herbert Armstrong denied ever seeing or reading the book by the author.

Was somebody lying here?

I mention this above to you because of the “For Further Study” inset on page 12 of May 1997 issue of *Servants' News*. Judah's Scepter & Joseph's Birthright by J. H. Allen (1902 version) is listed. Immediately after that, *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* (1945 version) offered by the Philadelphia Church of God, has a note in parentheses saying: “Note the many paragraphs of this book that were copied from J.H. Allen's book above.”

Was Herbert W. Armstrong both a plagiarist and a liar?

—Bruce Lyon, California

RESPONSE: We were in error when we stated that there were many paragraphs that were identical between the 1945 Gerald Flurry version and J. H. Allen's book. The content of numerous paragraphs are largely the same. This falls within the legal definition of plagiarism (see article on page 19 of this issue). Others have told us that there was a version of *The US&BC in Prophecy* prior to 1945 that does contain numerous duplicate paragraphs, but we have not seen it. We “back-burnered” our research on this project after receiving David Medici's article showing that even the common 1960's versions of the book would still be considered plagiarism.

We do not have a copy of the notice which you mention, but we have heard about it from others. If Mr. Armstrong ever denied reading J. H. Allen, it is either a lie, or Armstrong should have claimed that it was a miracle that God inspired him to write his own book so similar to Allen's that he could have been sued for it.

—NSE

Was HWA the End-time Elijah?

LETTER: August 19, 1997

Dear Mr. Edwards,

I would like to be put on your mailing list for *Servants' News*. I was given some back issues by a friend of mine and have really enjoyed reading them.

I was never in the WCG, but three years ago I became a member of one of the break off groups. I joined because I had heard of Mr. Armstrong and had read many

of his books and magazines. I have studied his teaching for quite some time and find most of them to be the truth. However after being in the group, I learned that I am supposed to know that HWA was the end-time Elijah. My "salvation depends on it!"

He may have been the end-time Elijah, I don't know for sure, I do believe the things he taught, but I don't base my salvation on whether he was or not. I would like to hear your thoughts on this. Is there a scripture to that effect? I know God said he would send an end-time Elijah, but does our salvation depend on whether or not we recognize him as such?

I am enclosing my tithes for this week as I'm no longer attending services anywhere. (I can't until I begin to see things different). I miss fellowshiping with the brethren. I am only getting "fed" by reading God's word and your newspaper. Thanks.

—BG, Tennessee

RESPONSE: I do not believe that Herbert Armstrong was the end time Elijah. (We are sending you a copy of an article by Richard Nickels on this subject). But in summary, I believe that Mr. Armstrong did not restore all things--he taught errors on government and other doctrines. I do not believe he turned the hearts of children to fathers and fathers to children. The last eight years of his life he spent estranged from his own family and his church family—he rarely ever saw them.

The only scripture that I have ever seen used to support the idea that we must believe in a man to be saved is John 6:29: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.'" The context of this scripture is obviously Christ referring to himself. No human leaders were mentioned in this chapter at all. Later, Paul clearly condemns people looking to human leaders rather than Christ (1Cor 1:13). Numerous scriptures tell us belief in Christ is required for salvation, none say we need to believe in a human leader for salvation (though we should obviously cooperate with those leaders whom the Eternal sets up).

We will send you other literature that will help you find a local congregation.

—NSE

"Warned" About HWA Years Ago

LETTER: December 2, 1998

I first contacted you via e-mail several months ago (perhaps a year!!) regarding the Sabbath and have been receiving the *Servants' News* ever since. I'd set aside the envelope last issue to remind me to send something to defray costs--which I

still intend to do.

As a child growing up, I was warned by my grandmother about Herbert Armstrong--not to ever get involved with that church. I had heard the church had changed, and was somewhat surprised to read in *Servants' News* so much about the breakup of the church. Add to that the following: I have cousins who are Foursquare pastors. One wrote me months ago about the Church of God, that there had been a big change, and that they were actually planning to attend a large gathering of this group.

Who could have ever thought such a thing would happen? Nothing is impossible.

I have enjoyed the *Servant's News*. I'm writing with a question: I'm interested in finding a more New Testament type of church situation, particularly house church. I have been on the lookout for such a group in my area--then read the *Servant's News* today and wonder if your group might have home meetings in my area. If you know of any in the Palm Bay, Florida area, and would let me know, I'd appreciate it. That would mean Palm Bay, Malabar, Valkaria, Grant, Micco, Little Hollywood, Roseland, Sebastian, and Fellsmere. I'm not interested in a group meeting in a home while planning to build an institutional organization--but would be interested in a group that was just gathering around Jesus and fellowship.

Thanks again for the newsletter. I agree with those who write you saying you're doing a good job. And please ignore those who would like to silence you regarding our national leadership. It was godly men who gave us the wonderful freedom that we have enjoyed for over 200 years--and if it is to be saved at all, it will be through the same. God bless you!

Sincerely,

—Arlean Kelley, Akelleycom@aol.com

RESPONSE: We will send you our Scattered Brethren Contact List, and you can write the *Servants' News* subscribers in your area. If you ask each of them which groups they know about in your area, you will get far more information than you would from any directory. Small groups change frequently and some make no effort to list themselves in directories.

While the Worldwide Church of God left a positive influence upon many thousands of people (not its members) through their TV and radio programs and printed literature, they also left thousands like you who have a negative impression. Some of these negative impressions are due to WCG doctrine, but it seems that the majority of non-WCG-members whom I have met with a negative view of the WCG got that view because of someone whom they knew who was mistreated or

from the apparent greed of the organization. While it may be popular today in some "church of God" groups to closely identify oneself with Herbert Armstrong, many do not realize that his name can be a liability when trying to reach the world.

Thank you for your comment on our founding national leaders. While they were not perfect, they seemed to have far more respect for the Bible and the Golden Rule than most of our leaders today. Certainly the Eternal has taken notice.

—NSE

My Experience With WCG

LETTER: October 2, 1998
Dear Friends at *Servants' News*,

Yes, please continue my subscription. I am sorry it took me so long to write and let you know what a blessing your publication is to me, and what a positive impact it has been on my life. I look forward to receiving each issue, and read it all.

I was a member of WCG for 18 years, until 1994 when I left the fellowship of that organization because of what it had become after the death of Herbert Armstrong. There were certain attitudes and practices that I privately didn't agree with, but I never doubted that it was "God's true church", until my last few years as a member.

Then for the next year or so, I was affiliated with the CGI, which I felt was a big improvement over WCG in many ways. Until I found out that that, too, was an illusion.

I felt so stunned that something I could believe in with all my being turned out to be a lie. As the picture became clearer of just exactly what it was that I had been involved in, I felt so hurt at the way I had been used. All those years I sacrificed financially in tithes and offerings from my meager income, feeling privileged to do my small part for "God's work", only to realize that most of the money collected went to finance a luxurious lifestyle for the "elite" minority (ministers, etc.). Coming from a poor family, I was awestruck at the fabulous home our local minister lived in when I first saw it. It was so much more than most of the congregation could ever hope to live in. And the shiny, new car he drove was impressive, too. I remember him telling us that the reason for the ministers to have such nice things was to set the right example to the world, so that God's church would be respected, because God is a "God of quality".

It was such a shock to realize how I had been controlled and manipulated by that organization. A lot of things began to make sense.

I was left wondering if anyone could be trusted, and whether the Bible really was God's Word, or even if there was a God, at all.

Mercifully, our Father never gave up on me, but led me through some of the darkest times of my life. Through this whole experience, I have come to know what a wonderful, merciful, and loving God I worship. I feel closer to Him than I ever have before, and the fruits are beginning to show in my life. I see everything so differently than I previously did. I feel so much more a part of what God is doing on earth, now that I have the freedom to use the spiritual gifts that He has given me.

Servants' News has been, for me, a bright light shining in the darkness to help me find the way out of pain and confusion. You have been an important source of information to help me understand what I've been through, and what the COG's are all about; also, the value of small groups of equals in Home Fellowships (of which I am now a part).

I know that some would rather not hear about happenings in the COG's (past and present), but this information is essential to others who are looking for answers that they may not be able to find elsewhere. Many of us were in the dark about a great many things for many years. It seemed that unless one had friends in Pasadena, much of what was going on behind the scenes was unknown.

Thank you so much for all you do, and God bless you always. You are in my prayers. Here is a small donation. God willing, I will send more later.

Sincerely,

—Marilyn Cushman, Michigan

RESPONSE: Thanks for your encouraging letter. We are making an effort to make the provable truth (not unprovable accusations) known to people who want to know how the WCG actually operated. There is more and more interest in this subject as the WCG splinter groups become smaller and more numerous.

—NSE

Misapplies Rev 3 to HWA

LETTER:

June 19, 1998

Dear Norman Edwards,

I respectfully take offense to your list of "errors" of HWA. Yes, the church is not ready for new members and none of any significance will be provided.

We were told on many occasions that we need to become ready to be teachers. We didn't listen. Your list of "errors" is inaccurate. Apparently you didn't listen. Be careful when you speak ill of dignitaries.

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(Jude 8), and no longer receive the words of the man God sent (Jn 13:20).

Look back in history where God was blessing the church. Who was in charge? What did he teach? We honor him with our lips, but we don't believe what he told us. He was the Elijah to come. How else can you explain the admonition in Rev 3:11? People are not holding to what was given and are letting men take their crowns.

None of these efforts will be blessed and we will continue to splinter till not one stone will be left upon another.

—DK, Arizona

RESPONSE: I agree that the efforts of these groups are not being blessed, though some will probably continue until the return of Christ. There are hundreds of little religious groups that consider themselves the successor of some "great teacher" of the past. The main thing they do is preserve his memory, they rarely do the same works that the "great teacher" did.

How do we judge the time when "God was blessing the Church" (which means the WCG to you, I assume). Do we judge it by leaders who were full of the Holy Spirit and dealt fairly with the brethren? Do we look for a time when the leaders sacrificed and went without physical needs in order to help the poor brethren (Acts 20:33-35). Do we look for a time when brethren were encouraged to study the scriptures, even though they may have found things different than the WCG doctrine? Do we look for a time when Herbert Armstrong told the truth about his sources for all of his writings? I am not sure when I can find a time when those things were true. Though material wealth is not a sin, I do not believe that it is the sign that God was blessing the Church. Numerous religions of today have had great material wealth, the early apostles never did.

Herbert Armstrong taught that those in his congregations would be teachers in the Millennium, but he refused to let anyone teach outside of his hierarchical structure. People were **discouraged** even from teaching their neighbors about Christ. There was no effort from headquarters to recognize or use spiritual gifts which Christ placed among the believers (Eph 4:11).

We make no effort to judge Mr. Armstrong—to determine if errors he made were intentional, mistakes or a simple lack of paying attention to what was important. However, the brethren in Revelation 2:2 found some apostles to be liars, so we must examine the works and fruits of those today who claim to be apostles and see if they were telling the truth.

—NSE

HWA Followers: You Chose Him

LETTER:

May 31, 1998

Dear Norman Edwards,

We must tell you how delighted we were with the two lead articles in the March/April 98 *Servants' News*. Finally, someone who dares tell the truth about HWA (even though you did it very carefully.) That's good and OK. We like those putting out information to be very careful.

We have a question that we wish someone would address. You might be the person. In our many years in Worldwide and now the Churches of God, we never heard anyone do a clear cut sermon or article on "the difference between a Wolf and a Shepherd." It seems to us the Bible is clear-cut on this. It also seems you can't be one part of the time and cross over a line and be the other part of the time. We, as a Church, have hashed over the What-happened and "Whys". The reasons for divorce and remarriage rules of the church while we were in Pasadena in the 60's that devastated **many** families. We saw Steuben Crystal, Egrets at the fountain, very, very expensive bottles of wine, and heard the brethren referred to as "nobodies" and worse. All this while we, with most of the brethren went to the Good Will for things we or our children needed. We always got used to hand me down furniture and thankful to do so. Many times if not most of the time there was not enough food to get through the month.

As you said in your article, we found pearls of truth which were sprinkled from HWA teachings despite his lifestyle. But when he stood up and told us he was taking 99% of the songs about Jesus Christ out of the Hymnal because they were too worldly, I wanted to cry. Yet, I allowed myself to be weaned away from Jesus Christ and my allegiance was transferred to the **Organization**. It seemed the Holy Days with other truth took the place of Our Savior. Oh, of course, Jesus was given lip-service and we did have sermons out of the New Testament once in a while. Now we **do not** hold HWA totally responsible for us "getting away" from Jesus Christ. We know by the word of God that we made choices. We could choose to follow a Shepherd or a Wolf.

We hope someone is brave enough to make the lines "clear-cut" so all the folks we are helping, and trying to lead to Jesus Christ in these last days, will not make some of our time wasting mistakes and painful lessons we've had to live through.

So, Norm, keep leading the damaged and injured world and "World-widers" to

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Jesus Christ. After all, isn't that the commission? Isn't that what a deep faith is all about?

—Barbara Morris, Texas

RESPONSE: I do not believe that Herbert Armstrong was a "wolf"—a wolf never pretends to help the sheep, nor will a wolf raise sheep (even so he could eat them later). Mr. Armstrong certainly helped some brethren and usually pretended to be helping them. However, the scripture does talk about a "foolish shepherd":

And the LORD said to me, "Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd. For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither, And his right eye shall be totally blinded (Zech 11:15-17).

Herbert Armstrong was always seeking a bigger flock, but the most common complaint against him was that he dealt harshly with those who were having trouble, and that he used those who were loyal to him. For the last half of his ministry, he spent virtually no time with "his flock" In his early days, Herbert Armstrong would hold his arm up and say "his name was Armstrong" and talk about "the strength of his arm"—He lost nearly all strength in the last ten years of his ministry and stopped saying that. Finally, he was blind in his right eye for the last 20 years of his ministry (see coworker letter, July 25, 1967).

—NSE

Is Feast Keeping Mandatory?

LETTER: September 23, 1998
Dear Norman,

I would like to respond to a letter from one of your readers and your response to it.

Jean Colgrove made some observations concerning the festivals that I agree with. (SN June 1998) She is right that the festivals—all of them—were pilgrimage feasts (to Jerusalem). She commented that if one could be kept locally, then all could be. She is absolutely right. Why is it that no one thinks it odd that WCG under HWA okayed keeping some locally, but made it mandatory (if at all possible—regardless of hardships such as risking our livelihoods and disrupting our children in school) for us to "go up" to some place

where HWA chose to place God's name.

Worship in Spirit

Jesus stated that the time was coming and was already there, that true believers would not go up to Jerusalem to worship God, but would worship in spirit.

As we know, the festivals centered around temple sacrifices and offerings of which the participants were to feast (eat). Jesus' sacrifice eradicated all of that.

There was only one place God chose to place His name. The command for Israel was for them to go up to this **one** place to keep three appointments with God. They were to go up to His dwelling, His habitation. They were to bring lots of food and drink and feast.

Jesus knew that His Father would soon make His dwelling place in the individuals, no longer requiring them to make these pilgrimages. Rather, He would come to them.

It has been stated by "church leaders", that when we go to "church", we are coming into the very presence of God. I beg to differ. We go nowhere to meet with God. His very presence has come to us. Truly our worship is in the spirit.

Is Feast Keeping Commanded?

Your response to her comments concerning the feasts locally was also of interest to me. And I quote, "I agree with you that the early Apostles and brethren did not always keep the Feast in Jerusalem every year. As far as I know, there was no Jewish tradition of getting together in regional areas—they either went to Jerusalem or they stayed home. If the Apostles implemented something radically different, we would expect to find something of it in the NT...there is no command for any kind of regional Feast gathering."

At this point, I'd like to add a thought you may or may not have considered. The modern day "church" under HWA has indeed done something that the early believers, including the Apostles, did not do. WCG did implement something "radically different" all under the guise of "binding and loosing authority".

Was it not HWA, instead of scripture, that chose the place (places-many of them) where God chose to place His name? Was it not HWA who chose to instill the second tithe and the tithe of the tithe? Not scripture! Was it not HWA that decided two or more of the feasts were to be done locally whereas the One (Tabernacles) was to be kept off somewhere? Was it not HWA who decided all of the details concerning the festivals, none of which were scriptural, all because he was the one man in charge under Jesus and had "authority" to do so? Was it not HWA who decided what each feast meant?

There are absolutely no instructions at all from God to "keep" these feasts in any way other than the way they were instituted. We find no scriptural evidence that the apostles or brethren changed them at all.

So, if the early church did not implement anything "radically different" and God surely didn't and they did not always go up to Jerusalem (as is evident in the case of Paul and others), then how can we claim the right to implement something different—i.e. local assembly and going up where we choose—and claim it is mandatory?

Good and Bad Fruits of Feast Keeping

I agree in part, that there were good fruits in our festival gatherings, good fun. Yet, there were some not so good fruits as well. People lost their livelihoods, children had to spend months catching up in their school work. Much money was spent to try to capture the 1,000 year reign of Christ. Much money was handed over to a ruling class of people to spend however they wished. The main focus of the sermons was government.

The main question: Is what we have done of God? Has He given us instructions to assemble three times a year anywhere we desire? Are we to bring offerings so as not to appear before Him empty?

Since when have the offerings of the sacrificial altar, which pictured many aspects of Christ's sacrifice, been turned into money given at festivals?

Ancient Feast Keeping

In ancient Israel, when someone lived far from the tabernacle, they could sell their 10% and offering items and take the money to the feast. But once they were there, what would they have done with the money? Run around to all the fine restaurants and places of entertainment in the area? Well, what did those people do with their sacrificial items of animals and grain and vegetables if they lived close and did not turn theirs into money? They sacrificed these items and ate. They feasted.

Those who lived a long distance were to sell theirs, so as to not have the burden of carrying everything up. Once there, they would surely have brought back items equivalent to their original items so they could continue their sacrificing and feasting. How else would they have kept them as God instructed?

Do We Obey God or Man?

I do believe that people who do observe the festivals as it has been done believe they are obeying God and those who don't, are disobeying Him. But, **what we do and teach others as mandatory, should be scriptural. Anything other than this, boils down to it being personal choice**

which should be respected.

It bothers me when I hear judgmental statements such as "those who do not keep the feasts somewhere, somehow are trying to do as little as they have to in obeying God". This has been said of those who have studied the subject of the festivals and don't see God in these assemblages, (at least, no more than any other assemblage of believers).

Summary

To summarize: In today's churches, we decide which days to observe, by what calendar we choose. We decide what constitutes a new moon or new month. We decide where God chooses to place His name (His habitation) and we decide what to do when we get there. We decide what these days actually mean and that they are mandatory to assemble upon. We decide money replaces Jesus' sacrifice of which the sacrificial offerings represented. And we must not appear before God without this money to give to someone else. Certainly God isn't getting it.

It is my estimation that these assemblages of ours are neither commanded nor are they wrong necessarily. Some fruits are good, some are not so good.

HWA made a statement years ago concerning the Sabbath command in relation to Sunday assemblage. "You can't keep cold water hot". So it is with all the different days that WCG'ers have proclaimed to be holy. They can't be kept in any way other than the way God instituted them. We find no instructions from God, where they were changed from temple worship in Jerusalem to merely assembling. We find no evidence that the early church changed them either.

This should give pause for thought. Maybe this letter will help those who still believe, to one degree or another, with the way HWA taught, not to be so quick to judge others who have also studied the issue and believe differently.

Thanks for being our sounding board.

—Tawanda Ray, Alabama

RESPONSE: I don't think that any believer has the right to tell another believer that anything is mandatory. One can explain his or her reason to the other, and then the other is responsible to the Eternal. I have not said that the Feasts are mandatory, only that the fruit of them has been good. Most of the "bad fruit" you mention should not occur at the feasts:

1. If people will lose their job at the Feast and do not believe that the Eternal will provide them another one, they should work during the Feast. We do not have our own land as ancient Israel did—we are in some ways, slaves. Paul did not say that

slaves had to run away from their masters and risk death in order to keep the Feasts.

2. I have children and know a lot of them and have never heard of a child taking months to catch up from the Feast.

3. I do not believe that the Bible teaches that the Feast is a time of lavish spending or for organizations to collect money. The offerings mentioned in Deut 16:16 were animals to be sacrificed. Christ was our sacrifice, and we no longer do this. Collections at the Feast should be only for Feast expenses.

4. The focus of the Feast should be on sharing physical and spiritual food, not on sermons and "government".

We do not have specific commands in the scripture for how to keep the Feast away from Jerusalem. What we do today is based part on the commands to assemble and not to do unnecessary work on those days, and partly on our own understanding. If you have never been to a Feast where all the brethren participate, rather than just a few preach, I would encourage you to try it once. We would like to have you come to our Kentucky site this year. If you still believe that the Eternal does not want you to keep the Feasts away from home, then I do not think you should do it. But nor do I think you should discourage people who assemble for the Feasts and spiritually gain much from it.

—NSE

HWA and the WCG Hierarchy

LETTER: September 15, 1998
Dear Norman,

Thanks very much for SN. I really enjoy your publication, especially the letters from the readers.

I wanted to share a few thoughts with you that have been on my mind lately. Certainly, these opinions are my own and thank God for the freedom to express them.

The mentality of the old WCG and now most of the offshoot groups and individuals is that we must "preach the gospel to the world" and then the end will come and Jesus will return. There are a few aspects of this that troubles me.

Jesus gave to the apostles (those sent) the commission of taking the good news as eye-witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. He told them that when this was done, the end would come. They fulfilled this commission and Christ worked with them confirming their words with signs and wonders.

What was to happen afterwards? The end! The end of what? What end were they concerned about?

The disciples were concerned with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

This was the subject of their inquiry. They did not know when Jesus would return and they questioned Him on that as well. As Jesus knew He would not return at that time, He cautioned them not to be fooled if someone claimed He was in the desert or some other place. He then informed them that when He did come, it would be like lightning for all to see.

Matthew 24

In viewing Matthew 24 as prophecy, we have failed to understand that Jesus was talking to these people about their own time and circumstance. He was warning them about such a horrific destruction that unless God cut it short, no one would survive. He warned them to flee the country when they saw armies surrounding Jerusalem. All the warnings in Matthew 24 were for them.

Was He also telling them that after the events in Matthew 24 occurred, He would come? Was He going back and forth from their generation to ours? Or were all these things to happen to them as He warned them including "great tribulation" (trouble) such as was not from the beginning of time. Or was this part not referring to them?

Jesus told them this same destruction would occur after they had taken the good news, the eye-witness of Jesus, to the uttermost parts of the world.

They accomplished their commission and the horrible holocaust, of which He warned, did occur.

Is Matthew 24 dual, just because Jesus explained how His coming would be? We have attributed this description of destruction to our generation as there can be only one "great tribulation". If His coming was to follow the good news being taken to the world, why did He not come? What was to happen after the apostles completed their mission was the destruction Jesus warned them about.

The eyewitness of Jesus complete with signs of God's confirmation went to the uttermost parts of the world at that time. The end the disciples were concerned about, came. Yet, Jesus did not come.

Was Jesus mixing prophecy in with His warnings to them? Was He talking to us, not them?

Matthew 24 has been the focal point and the basis of the WCG and its "commission". HWA never ceased to tell the members that this was the only reason we existed as a "church".

Yet, how many times has Matthew 23 been read and studied in conjunction with Matthew 24? The generation spoken of in Matthew 23 has been jettisoned forward to our generation, yet it is pretty close as to what

generation Jesus was indicting.

I know all the arguments concerning "the great tribulation" and how there can't be more than one. I submit that this particular "great" trouble Jesus warned about was to happen and did happen to them. Otherwise, He was misleading them in their inquiries.

When Jesus told them that unless God cut short this time that no one would survive, was He not talking to them?

So, now, is Matthew 24 dual which will result in Jesus' coming? No doubt the earth will be in turmoil when Jesus returns. Revelation tells us that. Wars have ravaged the earth and will continue to do so. False prophets are plentiful (even in WCG and off-shoots). Famine and disease have been and will continue. But it is "the great tribulation" Jesus warned the early church about. Are the events of Matthew 24 going to lead up to the return of Jesus?

Will the "good news" be preached to the world as a witness by a group of "witnesses" as we have been taught? Is this the WORK of God for us to be doing today? Have we inherited the commission of the apostles at this "end" time?

Two Witnesses

The only indication of anyone "preaching" as witnesses, complete with God's power and miracles as confirmation, is the work of the two anointed ones.

Several groups and individuals today claim this commission. A lot of time and money has been spent in doing "the Work". Yet, what has really been accomplished?

HWA claimed years ago that he had taken the gospel to the whole world. Yet, there were no signs from God to confirm him. His "gospel" consisted of hobnobbing with the rich, spending money (not his own) on his many excursions and receiving many honors and awards from God-rejecting leaders all over the world. Many times, he would not even speak Jesus' name. How's that for being a witness of Jesus? Compare his "work" to the apostles' work. Compare his life to the lives of the apostles, who were actual witnesses of Jesus and were actually confirmed by Jesus.

HWA died in 1986. He claimed he had completed the mission of taking the gospel to the world. Yet Jesus has not come. His (HWA) church has split into many "churches" depleting a large revenue for any group to do a big work.

Think of what it will entail today to "preach the gospel to every creature". Many countries will not allow such preaching to their people. HWA claimed that when he spoke of the "strong unseen hand from someplace" to the leaders, he had actually

delivered the gospel to the masses. After all, it was "in God's sight, the responsibility of the leaders to teach the common people". Compare that idea with how Jesus and the disciples worked.

God's backing in great signs and power is required today to be true witnesses of Jesus and God to the whole world. It will not, and can not, be done by little church groups relying on money to spread a message.

God's Work Is In Us

So what are we to be doing? Do we have a work to do? Surely! On Ourselves! We have the responsibility to live by the words that have been preserved for us. We have the responsibility to treat our fellowman as we want to be treated. We have knowledge of salvation preserved for us through scripture. Most people have this same access. Is it our responsibility to teach others these things when they can read it for themselves?

No one in the early church era had the New Testament scriptures. Everything had to be spread by word of mouth.

Many Different Opinions

Most of what we have today is people preaching their own understandings of these preserved scriptures. Hence, we have the many differing churches that hold the many differing opinions of dos and don'ts. Are we to be teaching the world? If so, what are we to be teaching —our own interpretation of the preserved record, the Bible? Anyone, who cares to, has access to this same book. Why does God need us to "explain" it to others who can, if they will, read it themselves. Other nations who do not believe in the God of the Bible will not profit from anyone teaching it as long as the power and signs of God are not there. We have been taught that today God calls a very few to whom He gives understanding and the few must spread it merely as a "witness". Before the scriptures were compiled, this word of mouth was all they had.

If we honestly examine what is being spread today, we see confusion. We see no confirmation from God.

Bible Only Available to "The Few"?

The simplicity of Christ and His redemption is plain for anyone to read. It is when we get off on the many dos and don'ts of modern religion that it gets confusing and frustrating.

The point I am making is that the preserved witness of scripture is here for all to read. We don't need to interpret it for anyone.

If someone is studying this record, can God give them understanding necessary for their salvation or must "the few" be out there explaining it to them? I would like to stress at this point that I am not talking

about people sharing their understanding of scripture. This is very helpful and encouraging especially when we experience the freedom of the Spirit. I am convinced that this form of teaching is necessary and edifying.

I am referring to the old mentality that only "a few have this saving knowledge" and must be about the commission of telling everybody else. It is my summation that much time and money has been spent in the guise of doing God's work for Him. Sure, we have learned some truth under the regime of HWA, but would we have learned them also by studying ourselves? We also learned error from him and now, have to unlearn it through our own study.

Confirmation is Needed

I'm sure, if we had attended other groups other than HWA's, we would have learned some truths through them. Others, never having belonged to a group, have learned truths by studying on their own.

Everyone who feels they have a mission to spread the gospel, feels that God is with them (and no one else). Yet, we see confusion in and disagreements of what is taught. If Christ is leading such teaching and it is confusing and differing, then it doesn't say much for His leadership.

If there is only one group that is the true church, who has "the full truth" and has the commission of the apostles, then it would seem like Christ would "work with them and confirm their word by signs following".

Do I feel that to be a member of the body of Christ, there must be signs, wonders, and miraculous happenings? No. Do I feel that if we have inherited the special commission of the apostles to go out and witness to "every creature" that signs and wonders must be there? Yes. It can be done no other way. The two anointed ones will have that benefit. So far, none of us have.

WCG: Only True Church?

From talking to people and reading comments in publications, I glean that many of us who have stemmed from WCG, feel that we (WCG) were the one and only church (true church) of God on earth. Many still feel that now the off-shoots, however divided, are still the one and only true church with the exclusion of all other groups who have never affiliated with WCG. The main reason? Because we assembled on the seventh day. The Sabbath has long been held up as a sign today of who the real church is. Yet, there were thousands of others who also recognized the seventh day, but were readily dismissed because they were not under HWA and his "truth". Jews, Seventh Day

Adventists, Seventh Day Baptists, Sacred Name Groups, Church of God Seventh Day have also had this sign.

Yet, when we examine the commandments in light of WCG and its hierarchy, it's not hard to see how they were repeatedly broken right and left. Yet, because we recognized the seventh day and had "the truth", we were it.

Commandments 1 and 2

Take the first commandment for example. "You shall have no other gods before me". Anything we place between us and God breaks this command. Anytime we allow a man or a group (hierarchy) of men to dictate spiritually, to bind and loose at will, to control our lives (and even if they are wrong, God will back them up), we have broken the first and most important command.

If we have bowed down to the image and idol of false government (hierarchy), we will have broken the second command. This very image of false government became the central theme of HWA's "gospel". Some good news!

Commandment 3

Consider the third command. "You shall not take my name in vain". What really does this mean? Speaking the phonetic sound of God's name in an unruly manner? I submit that this command goes much deeper than this.

Consider that in every letter from HWA, the closing always read "In Jesus' Name". The pleas for more money (of which he lavishly spent) were always in Jesus' Name. Everything he did, he did stating that it was Christ doing it. Every path he traveled, he claimed Jesus was leading Him. The "work" he was involved with, he claimed was God's work. The mistakes, false and misleading prophecies, abuses of authority, creating paupers among the membership, mishandling of funds, living lavishly, controlling every aspect of people's lives (even down to make-up, hairstyles, dress and even sex between mates) were all done in Jesus' name!

The same is true for his hierarchy. Horror stories have surfaced and have been personally experienced at the hands of these "men of God". All were done in Jesus' name. Vanity of vanities! God states that He will not hold those guiltless who take His Name upon them in vain.

Commandment 4

The fourth command tells us to rest on the Sabbath. The word sabbath means rest. Yet, the corporate churches have emphasized church assembling and only in their groups. If we did not assemble before the feet of the minister to be instructed, we did not "keep the sabbath". Assembly without the benefit of the minister—a member of

the hierarchy—was forbidden. Local assembly without a member of the ruling hierarchy in charge might result in people actually thinking and asking questions. What better way to keep in control.

Any money to be given might actually do some real good, instead of being sent to a headquarters in order for them to spend it as they wish.

Did we truly rest on the seventh day as God created it to be? By the end of the Sabbath, after we were dutifully "churched", most of us were exhausted.

I have not even touched the last six commands in relation to the hierarchy of WCG, but a careful examination of the WCG under HWA and some of the splintered leaderships shows us these commands have been flagrantly broken. Yet, they claim to be the true church of God because "nobody's perfect". After all, look at David.

Use Good Judgment

Can we not see that something is terribly amiss? Are we not to judge the actions of those who say they are sent (apostles) of Christ?

One of the seven churches was commended for doing that. They did not say (to my knowledge), "well, nobody's perfect". Actions must be judged. When we see hypocrisy and lies, we must judge. When we see abuses, and dictatorships in Jesus' name, we must judge. When we see evil fruits of evil actions, we must judge.

Teaching Others

So, back to the subject of teaching others. What we teach as being from God's lips to the ears of others, will be required of us. We can claim Jesus' commission to His Apostles, whom He really did send, as our own (but Christ is not confirming it). Christ definitely will confirm His two witnesses by great power in the future. An interesting note I feel I should make here is the fact that during His earthly walk, He, at various times, sent out disciples to prepare the cities for His visits. It is interesting that prior to entering these towns, He sent "witnesses" into them by twos. They healed the sick and did wonders. They also told that the Messiah was on His way to them.

In the future, there will be the two witnesses, two anointed ones, two apostles (those sent) who will once more do great wonders and prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah. They, of course, will not be received with open arms.

The disciples were told that if the cities in which they traveled, would not receive them, they were to leave wiping the dust from their feet.

Much more will happen, in the future, to those who will not receive the two anointed

ones.

Our Job Now

In the meantime, what are we to be doing? Work on ourselves mainly. Share understandings and fellowship with our fellowman. Teach by example, lead by example. Explain our beliefs when called upon to do so.

Teaching anything "to the world" is going to require a lot more than what we have. Until God, Himself, sets in to do it, via the two He sends, it simply will not be done. It will not be done by our puny efforts. Only the power of God, complete with signs, wonders, and destruction (as seen in Revelation) will get the attention of the world.

With the vast wealth of WCG under HWA, it was not done. It will not be done through the many splinter groups.

I know you probably will not agree with everything I have written. I do not claim to have the truth in these matters. These are simply my understandings at this time which are, however, always subject to change.

I feel your publication is about sharing understandings and that is about all I desire at this point.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

—Tawanda Ray, Alabama

RESPONSE: I agree with most of what you said about the WCG and its splinter groups. I do not think that the true Church consists of only those groups. Yes, preaching the Gospel seems to be their "reason" for asking that money be sent to their headquarters. I do not think any one group needs to manage the preaching of the Gospel. However, I think each believer should ask the Eternal where and when they are to help preach the Gospel, and then let Christ manage the preaching worldwide. **Is it possible that Christ uses big organizations along with their errors because individuals and small groups with understanding are not looking to Christ to use them in preaching?**

Obviously, if we do not have miraculous spiritual gifts, we should not pretend to have them. I think the two witnesses will have them and will reach many. But I am glad that some people cared enough to teach me, even though they did not have miracles. If I were somehow allowed to get back all of the money I gave to the WCG in exchange for losing all the knowledge I obtained there, I would not do it. Certainly the Eternal can, and sometimes does reveal truth to people from the scripture alone, but there is so much "Christian tradition" that colors the truth of the Scripture in our mind that it is very helpful to have someone else point out the truth of what it says. Christ said that His faithful

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“Armstrong’s Teaching” from page 1 really prove it from the Bible? The area of prophecy is full of similar questions. Must we believe that the “mark of the Beast” is Sunday-keeping, or could it be a government identification of some kind, or something else?

The **important issue** is this: **when teachings or prophetic interpretations of Herbert Armstrong cannot be proven directly from the Bible, how should we regard them?** If Herbert Armstrong was the “Elijah to come” or “the twentieth century apostle,” then it would make sense to regard all of his teachings and interpretations as “inspired”. On the other hand, if a significant number of his teachings and interpretations are in error and/or if his life was not exemplary of a “man of God”, then it is very difficult to accept his teachings as “inspired”.

It took this writer many years to come to grips with these issues. I attended Ambassador College right after leaving high-school (1974), and then worked for the Worldwide Church of God and its affiliated corporations until 1992. I enjoyed most of this time very much. I have seen many lives changed through Christ, changes which were initiated by teaching from people in the Worldwide Church of God. I worked in various technical areas and was almost never the receiver of any direct “ministerial commands”. From time to time, people I knew would disappear from employment and church membership, and the leaders would say that “they had a problem with Church government”. I believed the leaders and avoided talking to these “mixed up” departed people. I believed (probably like most of you at that time) that if there was a problem in the church government, the Eternal would take care of it from the top.

But after Herbert Armstrong died, and new leaders began to reverse many of his doctrines, it became clear that the Eternal **does not always correct the man “at the top”**. I saw other bad and unjust decisions being made, and the Eternal just letting them happen. I looked into the Bible and discovered that most of the kings of Israel died as bad leaders, misleading the people. I began talking to others who had difficulties with “church government” in the past and found that some of them were more concerned with following the

Bible than those who were doing the “governing”. I also realized that I had almost never applied these verses though I had rendered judgments in my mind about other people:

The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor comes and examines him (Prov 18:17).

He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him (Prov 18:13).

The Worldwide Church of God nearly always printed only the facts most favorable to itself in its publications. Most other “Church of God” groups have done the same. For example, numerous letters were printed about people who began tithing and were blessed for it. None were printed about people who began tithing, lost their home, and went bankrupt. Yet this happened. Also, big headlines announced “new truth” when Herbert Armstrong corrected some of his old doctrine. Yet there was no apology or even a mention of members or ministers who had come to believe or practice that doctrine before Armstrong did and were disfellowshipped for doing it.

While this method of one-sided reporting produces a much more “peaceful” atmosphere than a free press where many people each present their view of an issue, one-sided reporting often suppresses truth. Dictatorships from Hitler, to the former U.S.S.R to Saddam Hussein have had apparent unity in their media, but at the cost of many errors reported as truth. When Christ walked the earth. He did not teach His truth by having one-sided meetings where only He was allowed to speak. Most of the Gospels consist of His answers to questions—questions from those who wanted to know more, and tricky questions from those who hoped to trap Him. Christ could answer them both, and so should his servants, today.

If anyone is going to make a personal judgment as to how he or she will regard the teachings of Herbert Armstrong, can he or she do it only based on the latest words of people who were fervent Armstrong supporters? We must be willing to hear the matter—not assume that since we already have an opinion, we already know. We must be willing to look at all of Armstrong’s writings—including the ones that he

contradicted at a later date. We must be willing to examine the testimony of credible witnesses—those with clear knowledge of situations and without a personal agenda to satisfy. Most of us simply do not have time to study everything that Mr. Armstrong wrote and everything that was written about him. But if we are not willing to consider even some of these things, we might as well admit that we are following a man and that we refuse to “try the apostles (Rev 2:2)”.

Herbert Armstrong’s Claims

For many people, the very idea of thinking anything negative about Herbert Armstrong sounds like a sin. Herbert Armstrong himself made some rather outstanding claims, and challenged his readers to either accept him or reject him. Notice his statement in his article entitled *Must God’s Ministers Be Ordained BY THE HAND OF MAN?* appearing in the January 1960 *Good News* magazine.

Either the Church of God with headquarters in Pasadena is the ONE AND ONLY true Body of Christ, thru whom Christ carries on HIS WORK, or else it is deceived, or it is a fraud. There is no other possibility. You MUST FACE IT, and DECIDE WHICH ALTERNATIVE IS TRUE. If it IS the Body thru whom Christ works in carrying on HIS WORK to the world for this time, then it is THE ONLY BODY that is being used of Christ. CHRIST IS NOT DIVIDED!

Herbert Armstrong said that either his organization was “the one and only true Body of Christ...or else it is deceived”. Do you believe that it still is? If not, do you believe some other organization has replaced it today? If so, exactly which date did it change? If people did not switch organizations on the right date, do they need to be re-baptized? If a range of “switchover” dates is possible, how long can that time be? How does one prove these lengths of time from the scriptures? Could there be converted people in the Seventh Day Adventist Church whom God is still waiting upon to switch to a Church of God group? As you can see, these questions have no simple answers, yet we are talking about the very issues of salvation itself. If we must be in a certain

organization to be a part of the body of Christ, then these obscure questions desperately need answers.

Can anyone show **from the Bible** how all converted people had to be part of Armstrong's organization during the 1930's to 1980', but that now the Eternal allows converted people to be in multiple organizations?

Notice the organization chart below. It makes a difference between the spiritual organism (the Church of God), and the various corporations that Herbert Armstrong used. But it shows Herbert Armstrong to be the head of both! This clearly shows Sabbath keepers in the Ukraine or China did not have access to Christ because they did not have access to Herbert Armstrong. It also leaves out a number of other Sabbath-keeping groups which had contact with Armstrong, but would not join his organization because of unbiblical aspects that they perceived in it (see next Servants' News issue for an article on this subject).

One aspect of this chart really needs to be noticed. The job of Jesus Christ seems to be only relaying messages from the Father in Heaven to Herbert Armstrong on Earth. He apparently has only one human to manage. Almost any management consultant who reviewed the organizational chart would probably

recommend that the "Christ's job" be eliminated. Obviously, the problem is not with Christ, but with the chart. When Christ was on Earth, he managed twelve apostles, 120 disciples, and answered questions of thousands. The Bible clearly says He is the Head of the Church (Eph 5:23), managing all of it. Each believer has access to Christ. The Bible **never** mentions a "human head" of the Church.

Armstrong's teaching apparently conflicts with the teaching in Revelation chapters 1 through 3. There were seven actual churches in Asia Minor to whom John was to deliver the book of Revelation (Rev 1:11). Every church (congregation) had different characteristics—some had very serious problems. Yet, Christ calls all of them His churches. John was not told to issue orders to "kick out" those who were lax or preaching false doctrines, but every member of every church was told to hear the messages and to repent of their individual error.

The Bible Analyzes Leaders' Strengths and Weaknesses

Many have compared Herbert Armstrong to David. Their reasoning often goes like this: "They were both good men, but they both had sins, and

God overlooked them, so we should, too". However, David was a man "after His own heart", yet when he sinned, his sins were recorded forever for everyone to see. God did not deal privately with David's sin, but he sent another man, Nathan the prophet, to him (2Sam 12:1). He also gave David a punishment, that "the sword shall never depart from your house" (v 10). As later chapters show, some of David's children killed and raped each other. Absalom and Adonijah died trying to take over the kingdom.

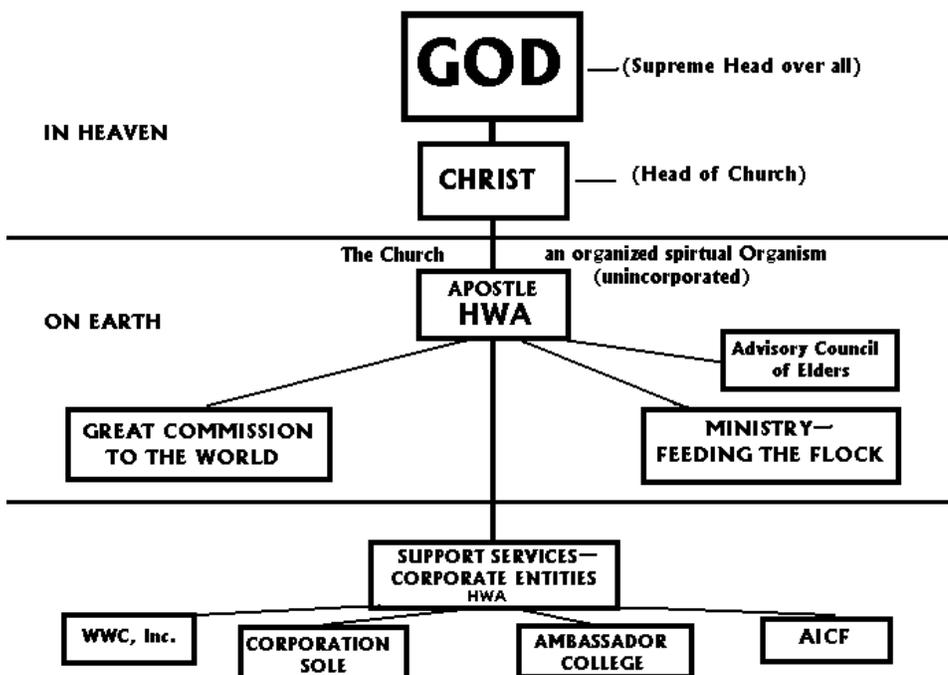
But was Herbert Armstrong like David, or was he more like Solomon?

Before we answer that question, let us first summarize the life of Solomon. Solomon was given the commission of building the temple by David, his father (1Chr 29). Solomon didn't seem to have much choice in the matter. The material was voluntarily donated ahead of time for Solomon—he did not have to collect taxes to build the Temple. When Solomon first became king, he asked the Eternal for wisdom and the ability to judge such a great people (2Chr 1:7-12). The Eternal granted him this wisdom, and also gave him great wealth. But that was not enough for Solomon. He imposed heavy work and tax burdens on the people as well (2Chr 1:7-12). Solomon took 7 years to build the temple, but 13 years to build his own house (1Ki 6:38-7:1). All of this was very useful for impressing foreign rulers like the Queen of Sheba (1Kngs 10, 2Chr 9), but there is no record of all these foreign peoples turning to the Eternal because of Solomon's works. Please read the Eternal's conclusion on Solomon:

⁶Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as *did* his father David. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. ⁸And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. ⁹So the LORD became angry

ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGRAM OF THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

[as printed in the *Worldwide News*, March 6, 1981]



with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. ¹¹Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹²Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son" (2Kngs 11:6-12).

Notice it said that Solomon "did not fully follow the Lord". It is possible to follow the Eternal in some ways and not in others. Solomon built the Temple of the Lord and executed righteous judgment among the people. But he also followed after foreign women and their false gods. Of course, he needed money from the people to support all his palace activities. Similarly, Herbert Armstrong built up the temple (the church) of the Eternal, but at the same time continually asked people to give money so he could live a wealthy life-style. (The next *Servants' News* will have an article covering this subject.)

Solomon's successor, Rehoboam, did not have near the wisdom of Solomon, and not long after he took over, he offended people, and the northern kingdom of Israel departed. The Eternal said that the division was from Him and could not be stopped (I Kings 12:24). The kingdom never regained its wealth or strength to this day. Similarly, a couple of years after Armstrong died, it became clear that his successors had much less skill than he at keeping a group together. In this case, they have split off into many competing groups, and the prospect of more splits seems much better than the chance of any of them getting together. Most of the physical things that Herbert Armstrong built in his lifetime are already gone. Two of his colleges have been sold and a third is in disrepair. His "House for God" (auditorium) is little used and his TV

studio has been gutted. His great volume of books and articles are virtually all out of print.

If new people are to learn the Bible truth that we know, how should it be presented to them—as "truth from the Bible", or as the teachings of a man now dead, from an organization now largely defunct? Mr. Armstrong's accomplishments impressed a great many people when he was alive. But that is history that is becoming more and more ancient.

Furthermore, it is very important to recognize the difference between works and fruits. Did Mr. Armstrong have great fruits, or great works? The article beginning on page 5 of this issue discusses the difference between fruits and works. There is an important difference. Works are the outward things we do, whereas fruits are things that come from the heart. Some of the Pharisees of Jesus' day had great works, but they did not have good fruit. Herbert Armstrong had great works. But all of the buildings and organization he built are clearly just **works**. The New Testament never teaches wealth as a sign of conversion or righteousness. Rather it teaches that those who preach the Gospel **should not** seek wealth by it (1Tim 3:3,8; 6:5; Titus 1:11; Jude 1:11). The New Testament does not even mention so much as a humble church building that was owned by the Church or its leaders.

Judging whether or not Mr. Armstrong had great fruits is much more difficult. Most of us never spent any time with him, so we do not know why he did what he did, and the attitude he had. This author has spent no significant amount of time with Herbert Armstrong, but has spent many hours talking to people who have, and also has numerous writings from people who have worked closely with him. Much of this information was not common knowledge to Worldwide Church of God brethren. The next issue will cover this subject. We will try to present only those things that can be documented or confirmed by more than one living witness. (We intend to avoid some of the wilder rumors which we have no way of proving.)

In the next issue we also will have an article quoting the many prophecies

of Herbert Armstrong, from 1934 until his death, and you can judge for yourself if it is reasonable to ask others to rely on his prophetic understanding. We will also have an analysis of the "18 Restored Truths" that Herbert Armstrong spoke of in his last days. The first "truth" is "church government"—did Mr. Armstrong actually restore the truth here? We will also analyze which teachings he actually restored and which were taught by others.

This issue has articles on *The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy* and the older booklet *Has Time Been Lost?* These articles are both valuable in understanding whether all of Mr. Armstrong's teaching was inspired from God or possibly borrowed from others.

Personal Reflection

It was not easy doing all of this research. I spent my younger years believing I was in the "One True Church or God", and that we had Christ's direct guidance through His Apostle. The Worldwide Church of God was big enough that this idea seemed believable. We had "the best" and of course God, the owner of the universe had "the best". But was that what the apostle Paul taught were the "signs of an apostle"? No. He described the sufferings and difficulty he went through to help others as his qualifications (2Cor 11-12—two good chapters to read).

It was a "letdown" to realize that I was not a member of an elite group that was somehow "special" to the Eternal. I finally came to the realization that Mr. Armstrong, like Solomon, did some incredible things. But he also did some things contrary to scripture. And when his work was tried by fire, it seemed to catch fire and burn (1Cor 3:13-15). Obviously, God is not interested in which men we follow, but how well we follow Him. Christ is the one who promised never to leave us or forsake us. If there is any lesson we can learn, it is that our trust must be in Christ and not in man.

We have already mentioned many things that we will cover in our next issue. We will also have some concluding comments about what we believe the Eternal expects of His people now. We hope you will read them.

—Norman S. Edwards

"Letters" from page 32
servants would be feeding others when He returns (Luke 12:42-43).

I believe Matthew 24 applied both to the first century and also to our day. Herbert Armstrong made his error when he said he "was going to do it" or "did it". If the vast majority of people in the world have no idea that they have "been warned", then have they been warned? I say, "No!"
—NSE

Finding Difficulty With Groups

LETTER: November 25, 1998
My husband and I go around to a number of different splinter groups.

One week we'll go to United, another week Global, and once in a blue moon we use to go to John Ritenbaugh's church. If you do this, one thing becomes very noticeable. Everybody believes he is the designated leader. Flurry believes with all his heart that he is the true leader of HWA's church. Meredith believes with all his heart that the baton has been passed to him. John Ritenbaugh believes he has been called to lead his church. United believes that they are the remnant of HWA's legacy.

After going to these different groups for awhile, it all starts to look really foolish. Children need strict rules and regulations. Adults shouldn't! I am quite frankly sick of hearing it. From now on I think I'm going to attend in small family groups where people don't fight about who's in charge. They just come together on the Sabbath and sing and fellowship and talk scripture. They do a smaller work, but better to do a smaller work where peace exists, then a larger work where contentions roar.

—Terrie McCord, Colorado

RESPONSE: I certainly agree with your thinking here. Why are any of these big groups evangelizing? If someone does become interested in the truths that they teach, will they want to come to one of their services? If this new person does come, will they find more arguing about "which group is the greatest" than they will find interest in what the Bible says? The Bible says absolutely nothing about successors to apostles. If nothing is recorded about the successors of these men who were certainly chosen by Christ, why should we care about finding a successor to Herbert

Armstrong—a man whose work (the WCG), was tried, caught fire, and burned!
—NSE

Learned Truth in Many Places

LETTER: December 2, 1998
Mr. Edwards,

I have a varied religious background. When I came to the Lord for my salvation I was worshipping with a group that had no religious label but I believe they were mostly Protestants. I then moved to Mississippi and was baptized in a Missionary Baptist Church. Since then I have learned many things, one of which is that some of the things in the Old Testament were not just "thrown away". One of those "things" is the belief that God did not just change the way He viewed certain types of animals that could be eaten. In the last year I have ceased eating pork and scavenger type animals such as lobster, oyster, clams, and catfish. I have also discovered that the Sabbath is actually Saturday and not Sunday. Since I learned this I have given up or not taken many jobs because of their requirements of working on Saturday. Unfortunately my wife does not share my belief. I have not found a place to worship here in my area and actually hope that through your newsletter I may find one. I hope this helps....technically I am still on the rolls of Lebanon Baptist Church in Laurel, Mississippi.

When I first learned of this, that God had not given permission to eat these types of food and the scripture relating to it was more or less a type of parable to Peter regarding the conversion of the gentiles, is when an e-mail friend in Michigan told me of your newsletter. I had signed up with *Servants' News* earlier in 1997 but moved from the address where I lived to here and could not remember how to get your newsletter.

Yours in Christ,
—Mr. Shannon Challender, rlyriser@cts.com

RESPONSE: Thanks for sharing your story. For many years the Worldwide Church of God refused to acknowledge that there were people who had learned many of the same truths from other places. We have met many others. We hope everyone will see Christ continuing to work everywhere, not just the narrow world of those primarily following the teachings of a man now dead.

—NSE ☐

Plan Now for Butler State Park Feast!

The Edwards family made a recent trip to Butler State Park in Carrollton, Kentucky. The Park has fine facilities for outdoor recreation, picnics and meetings if we desire. Those interested in staying at the state park should make reservations soon as it is a popular place and we cannot keep our reserved rooms and cabins indefinitely. The reservation number is **800-325-0078**.

We visited the four motels (3 miles away). All include a continental breakfast and are similar in quality. Super 8 had the least features, but the largest rooms. Only Hampton Inn has a heated pool. Prices including tax:
Days' Inn, 502-732-9301 \$53.50
Super 8 Motel, 502-732-0252 \$53.50
Hampton Inn, 502-732-0700 \$60.00
Holiday Inn, 502-732-6661 \$57.87

If you are interested in helping to plan this Feast, please contact Servants' News soon!

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Servants' News, PO Box 220, Charlotte, Michigan 48813-0220
tel: 517-543-5544, fax: 517-543-8899, email: 75260.1603@Compuserve.com