

Servants' NEWS

Vol. 4, No. 9

A newsletter for servants of the Almighty Eternal Creator, wherever they may be December 1998

Was Herbert Armstrong the Only One to Teach Sabbath, Holy Days, & Clean Meats?

While producing *Servants' News*, we have learned about many other groups with doctrines similar to Armstrong's. In this article, we list **26 groups** in several categories. The combined total of members is many times the number that Armstrong reached.

All of the groups below are Sabbatarian. Most observe the Clean and Unclean meat rules in the Bible and a large percentage keep the Holy Days. Some have many other doctrines in common with Herbert Armstrong, some have things that most of our readers would clearly class as error. **Unless we specifically note otherwise, none of them learned any of their truth from Herbert Armstrong or the Worldwide Church of God.** This is just a very brief summary with some interesting facts. We will include more extensive stories on some of these groups in the future.

It is also important to realize that most of these groups do not have the degree of hierarchical control exerted by Mr. Armstrong, so their members are free, to some degree, to keep other doctrines as they understand them from the Bible. In other words, some members of these groups may understand more Bible truth than their organization's doctrinal statement indicates. After all, what shows more personal commitment—practicing a doctrine because a church

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Why Should We Challenge Herbert Armstrong, a Man Who Did Such a "Big Work"?

Herbert Armstrong wrote about numerous Bible truths in a readable and compelling style. His writing attracted attention and held interest. He was a dynamic speaker. His entire life was a part of his work—he had no "known" interests unrelated to it. He was not content to teach just a few people; he wanted to teach the whole world. He started colleges to train others who would carry on his work, and built a physical infrastructure capable of delivering the vast array of literature which he wrote or which was written by those he trained. Maybe 100,000 were baptized as the

result of his teaching and hundreds of thousands more were positively influenced.

With all of these "good works" of Herbert Armstrong, why should we discuss his "bad works"? Because that is the only way we can honestly determine the degree to which we should follow his teaching, and how we should present it to others. If we were to only talk about the good teachings of Ellen G. White (prophetess of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church), we would have to conclude she is a teacher that we should all follow—she wrote numerous books which contain many good things. But when we realize that she erroneously taught the earth would be empty for the entire Millennium and when we see that she copied from older books and claimed it was a revelation from God (see *The White Lie*, by Walter Rea), then we are less likely to claim she is a Bible teacher that everyone should hear.

It is easy for WCG members to talk about and freely acknowledge Mrs. White's unbiblical practices or dishonest teachings. It is much harder for us to acknowledge and discuss Herbert Armstrong's unbiblical doctrines and that readers have studied his hierarchical government and New Testament giving in the Bible. If not, please ask for our free papers: *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans?* and *How Do We Give to the Eternal?*

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The WCG Experience, Facing the Past and Putting It to Work for the Future

Trucker's Bible Study

Oak Grove, Mo., Part 9

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.

January 10, 1999: Steve Miller and I met today with a man from Laredo, and we were later joined by two young men from South Carolina. Most of our time was spent talking one on one, and helping the Texan deal with a problem related to a friend.

He has been studying the scriptures for only about 8 months, but has been convicted by what he has read. The problem is with a lady friend from Mexico who is caught in a life of less than good repute. Once again I was reminded that all of the doctrinal niceties that we love to argue about mean little to people who are struggling with sins that they would like to escape, and the big questions of life that every thinking person has.

He mentioned that his wife died three years ago and for a long time he blamed God for her death. He later came to see that time and chance happen to everyone, and often God uses such trials in order to turn us toward Him. His problem now is his lady friend whom he wants to turn from her ways, but she feels that God can't forgive her because she has led such a wicked life. As a Catholic, she believes that she must do penance and go through a priest for forgiveness. On the other hand, she notices the profound change in this trucker's life.

We covered a number of scriptures showing that God is able to forgive sins, even such sins as this. We covered Jesus compassion, and yet his stern warning to the woman in John 8: "Neither do I condemn you, but go and sin no more." Also, that Rahab the harlot was in the genealogy of Jesus and was a woman of faith after she was able to turn her life around.

We also talked about Luke 7, when the woman who was a harlot washed Jesus feet and loved much because she was forgiven much. The trucker took notes of these scriptures to share with his friend.

Steve mentioned an illustration that I thought was brilliant. Next time you get a bill in the mail, tear it in two and give it to her. Have her carry it wherever she goes as a reminder that God can forgive her debts. Tell her that forgiveness in the biblical sense means to cancel that debt. That is precisely what God does when He forgives—he cancels the debt.

One of the young men who came later suggested that he do what he can to remove her from the environment. It would make her lifestyle less burdensome to change. Finally, I mentioned to him that he should remember who he is and not do anything that Jesus would not do. I believe he understood what I was getting at.

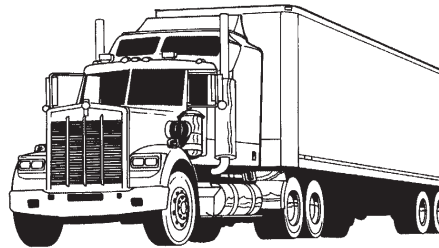
They took some tapes and literature with them.

Again, I am reminded that we need to address people's needs from the perspective of the scriptures rather than using a confrontational theology. Plant the seeds and water it with the word of God.

As we were breaking up I mentioned how my study of the scriptures began when I saw how the beliefs I had been taught as a child did not agree with the Bible. I cited a few examples. One of the men thanked us for giving up our own Sunday church service in order to meet with them, whereupon Steve told him we keep the seventh day—one of those things where the scriptures are different from commonly taught beliefs.

Planting seeds, —Lenny Cacchio
705 NE Bryant Dr, Lees Summit, MO 64086 lenny_cacchio@hotmail.com

Some "Church of God" members may have difficulty working with "these kinds of people". This shows how far away we are from Christ's ministry—he was called a "friend of tax collectors and sinners" (Matt 11:19) —NSE



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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).

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NOTICE: The people listed above do not necessarily endorse every article in this newsletter.

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Local Congregations



This column includes information sent to us from a variety of groups. Servants' News does not necessarily agree with the teachings or practices of these groups. Please ask about them before attending their functions.

Passover/UB Feast in Michigan

Six days of services, praise, education, feasting, fun and fellowship are planned for **March 30 to April 4, 1999** in the Lansing, Michigan area. Everyone is invited to participate in any or all of it:

Day Time Location Event

- | | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| Tue 7:30 pm | 1 | Bread & Wine Service |
| Wed 7:30 pm | 1 | Night to Be Observed meal and brief study |
| Thr 12 noon | 2 | Potluck Holy Day meal |
| Thr 1:30 pm | 2 | Holy Day Services |
| Fri 10 am | 2 | Leave for tour of Michigan Historical Center (learning and fun for young and old). |
| Fri 7:30 pm | 2 | Hymn, praise & worship sing along. |
| Sat 12 noon | 2 | Potluck meal |
| Sat 1:30 pm | 2 | Sabbath Services |
| Sat 6:00 pm | 3 | Family dinner, gym and game night—til midnight. |
| Sun 3:00 pm | 4 | Year 2000 preparation seminar by Franklin Frith, industry consultant. |

- Locations:**
- 1 (homes & *Servants' News*)
 - 2 Dutch Hills Clubhouse
 - 3 Haslett Middle School
 - 4 Meridian Township Hall

For directions and more information, call Norm or Marleen Edwards, 517-543-5544. Nearby motels: Willow Lakes Motel & Grocery, 517-339-9021, \$30 per night; East Lansing Travel Lodge, 517-337-1621, \$45-\$50 per night.

Middle Singles To New Orleans

Attention "singles in the middle" (ages 30 to 55): You are invited to join singles from across the globe in a Spring Holy Day activity in the greater New Orleans, Louisiana area from **March 31 to April 4, 1999**. All Holy Day and Sabbath activities will be at this hotel. A four-night stay at the Holiday Inn Hammond Atrium & Conference Center will cost \$65 plus tax with four persons per room, including a hot-breakfast buffet

each morning. Also planned, are a Night to be Much Observed Dinner (\$20), a Thursday night social (\$8), a Friday riverboat cruise (\$18 including lunch), and a Saturday night dinner dance (\$15). Contact: Ina McLemore at 504-386-7774, e-mail: InaMac@Juno.com.

Dave Havir to Charleston, WV

The Church of God—Southern West Virginia, and neighboring congregations and fellowships will host Dave Havir, pastor of the United Church of God—Big Sandy, on **April 3rd, 1999**. At 10:30 AM a Bible Study will be conducted by Mr. Havir lasting until noon. For those who wish to stay at the hall and fellowship, the local congregations will be providing a potluck type meal for all who wish to eat. For those who wish to eat at local restaurants, a listing can be found on our website along with hotels/motels at:

www.hotyellow98.com/cogsowv/index.html
Sabbath services will begin at 2:30 PM with Mr. Havir presenting the main message. If you plan to attend and eat lunch with us, please call 1-888-293-2243 and give us the number of people in your party. —George Hampton

CGI 1999 Calendar

The Church of God International announces their 1999 calendar of special events (in Tyler Texas unless otherwise noted). **April 2-4:** Bible Study Weekend; **June 19-26:** Sabbath Keeping Youth Summer Camp; **June 27-July 4:** Teen and young Adult Backpacking trip in Colorado; **July 11-17:** Imperial Academy college-level Bible courses; **December 23-26:** Sabbath keeping Youth Annual Lock-In.

All are welcome to these events as well as The Church of God, International Sabbath and Holy Day services in Tyler, Texas. For more infor-

mation contact: The Church of God, International; PO Box 2525; Tyler, TX 75710; e-mail: cgitylertx@aol.com.

Proclaiming Sabbath More Fully

A Sabbath conference for those who follow a Hebrew carpenter from Nazareth. **When? May 21-23, 1999** (Friday 6:00PM-Sunday 6:00PM). **Where?** Lake Region Conference Campground, Cassopolis, Michigan (30 miles from Andrews University).

Why a Sabbath Conference? The renewed interest in the Hebrew roots of Christian faith is one of the great works that the Holy Spirit is producing in the church in this century. After being marred for nearly two millennia by Judaeophobia, anti-Judaism, and anti-Semitism, Christianity is experiencing the beginnings of a revolution, as scholars, ministers, leaders, and laymen in virtually every denomination of the body of Christ are engaging themselves in a quest to reclaim the church's Judaic heritage.

Speakers: Sidney L. Davis, Deacon, Lake Region Conference; **Jacques Doukhan**, Professor, Institute of Jewish Studies-Andrews University; **John Garr**, President, Restoration Foundation; **Oscar Lane**, Evangelist, Last Day Revival Ministries; **George Malkmus**, Back to the Garden Health Ministries, Hallelujah Acres; **Richard Washington**, Pastor, Lake Region Conference, **P. A. Wellington**, founder, Project Gamaliel.

Cost: Each cabin will cost \$30.00 (can hold up to six people). Camper and RV \$30 (incl. water and electrical hookups). This will cover the cost for the entire conference. Meals will be a vegetarian pot luck, come to share!

Contacts: ~~Removed at person's request~~ or Sidney Davis 847- 785-0315. To reserve a cabin or RV space send your check or money order by May 1st to: *The Sabbath Conference*; PO Box 32; Arlington Heights, IL 60006-0032.

Steven Collins to Kansas City

Steven Collins, author of *The 'Lost' Ten Tribes of Israel ... Found!* will speak in Kansas City on **May 8, 1999**. The Church of God—Kansas City is sponsoring his visit. **Location:** RLDS Building, 3100 S. Crysler, Independence, Missouri. Time yet to be determined. A question & answer session and a pot luck meal are being planned. Contact Rick Frazee at 816/461-3252 or Rex Jamerson at 913/262-6009.

—Rex Jamerson

Steve Collins To Australia

Steve Collins is the author of the 439 page book, *The "Lost" Ten Tribes of Israel... Found!* Hosea 1 shows that God would multiply the Ancient Israelites population after their expulsion from Palestine around 721 B.C.

A century later, the prophet Jeremiah sent a message to the ten tribes, and Josephus, the famous Jewish historian, wrote that the ten tribes were too numerous to count in the 1st century A.D., and he even named their western border!

This book explodes the myth that the ten tribes of Israel disappeared or can't be found! It reveals startling, but well-documented, facts about their migrations, wars and empires throughout history. It answers these and other interesting questions:

- Why are the ten commandments (in ancient Hebrew) written on ancient artifacts found in New Mexico and Ohio?

- What historical records show the Israelite escape routes from the Assyrian captivity around 721 B.C.

- Why have Carthaginian coins and inscriptions been found in many areas of North America? Why did the Carthaginians call their own city "K i r j a t h - Hadeschath," a Hebrew name?

- The ancient Greeks wrote much about the

Scythians; why do modern history texts ignore them?

- For centuries, the Roman and Parthian empires were "equals" in the ancient world. Why do modern texts almost totally ignore Parthia?

The book is available post-paid for \$20 in the USA from Steve Collins; P.O. Box 88735; Sioux Falls, SD 57109-1005. It is \$25 from Australia and \$31 from New Zealand from History Research Projects, GPO Box 864, Sydney, NSW 2001; phone: (02) 9528 5049; e-mail origin@triode.net.au; website:

<http://users.netinfo.com.au/~quokka/hrp/>
Steve Collins is planning an Australian lecture tour for mid-1999, his health permitting (recovering from a botched and painful surgery). Those interested in assisting with this tour should contact Craig White, at History Research Projects, above.

—Craig White

Literature/Tapes in French!

Are there any French-reading people who would like to read independent literature? We have been translating the main articles from *Servants' News* (since its beginning until August 1997, and again from July 1998). A 6-tape series of *How does the Eternal govern through Humans?* (August 1998) is also available. Some articles from *Shelter in the Word* are translated as well, not orally, but by writing by Mrs. Dubois, our Sister with whom we meet. About 60 tapes of Jim Rector's sermons are also translated.

We can send you a list of the translation we made and if it would help any French speaker, we would be delighted and blessed. I have been translating sermons for many years in the Churches of God, so it is quite fluent, and Mrs. Dubois has been studying English for three years now.

We would like to hear from anyone who is interested in French speaking literature.

—Guy and Mireille
Hodiamont
Gulpen 122
4852 HOMBURG
Belgium

HWA 1939 Government Article in German

Herbert Armstrong's now-famous article on church government, originally published in the February 1939 "Good News of the Kingdom," has been translated into German. [*] Any who would like to receive a copy should e-mail me. I can send it in two-column Word 6.0 or Word 97 formats, or WordPad, HTML or plain text (.txt) formats, or simply as e-mail. If you would like a printed copy, contact the Hodiamonts (see previous news item).

—David Roe

[removed at person's request]

Need More [Bible Hymnals]

We still have a few outstanding requests from people who need copies of the older purple WCG Hymnal, but we have no hymnals to send out. If you have or know of any books that are not being used, please send them to us and we will send them on to those who have requested them. The Eternal is certainly pleased with helping others to sing praises to Him, no matter which group they may be a part of. You may send these book rate to PO Box 220, Charlotte, Michigan 48813 or by UPS to 202 Pearl St., Suite 8, Charlotte Michigan 48813. Thank you!

—Norman S. Edwards

Help a Family in Tragedy

Thursday, January 14, my brother-in-law David Madsen was killed in an automobile accident while driving to work. He is survived by his wife Lori and (14 year old) daughter Ginni. Dave had little insurance so his place of employment has set up an account for Lori to defer some of the expense and to take care of some of her initial financial concerns.

It is *The Dave Madsen Memorial Fund* account #0000179663 at Columbia Bank; 6202 Mount Tacoma Drive SW; Lakewood, WA 98499 (for bank transfer, it is route #125108272). If anyone would like their donation to be tax deductible, they can send it to CRMI at PO Box 111, Auburn, WA 98071, and we will pass all contributions directly to the memorial fund.

—Gregory Richardson



Death of Robin Hulme

Robin (Sutcliffe) Hulme passed away on January 15, 1999. Her death was caused by cancer—an illness she had struggled with 13 years ago. She is survived by her husband, David Hulme; three children, Mark, Kirsten, and Scott; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Colin Sutcliffe of Australia, and a sister and brother-in-law, Brian and Gillian Orchard of Arcadia, California.

David Hulme is the founder of the Church of God, an International Community. Mr. Orchard is currently a minister in that Church. Colin Sutcliffe was a minister in the Philadelphia Church of God, but has recently moved to another organization.

Donations may be made to the Robin L. Hulme Memorial Fund to assist young people in the Church of God with their educational activities. Write: PO Box 150, Monrovia, Calif. 91017.

WCG To Sell Pasadena Campus

Bernie Schnippert of the Worldwide Church of God stated that a "letter of intent to purchase" has been signed and expects that they will open escrow soon. Foster City-based real estate developers, Legacy Partners, will probably pay in excess of 100 million dollars for the property, to build a "mixed use urban village" on the site. (The exact amount was not disclosed). Bill Shubin, a Legacy partner, anticipates razing some of the college buildings, but certainly retaining 4 mansions and the Auditorium. He expects it will take a year or more to get the property zoning changed to comply with the "West Gateway" specific plan, adopted by the City of Pasadena to set guidelines for changing the campus from public to commercial use.

At least two different groups are attempting to initiate legal action to block this sale. The theory is that much of the money was donated for the specific purpose of preaching Herbert Armstrong's doctrines, and it is a breach of trust to sell these buildings and use it for other purposes. There is talk of demonstrations and a mass-publicity campaign. One group identifies itself simply as "The Underground Church"—with no individual's names

or addresses. The other is John Allen and the Restoration Church of God—an internet-based church (<http://www.destiny-worldwide.net/rcg/>). His "co-worker letters" posted on that site indicate that he has had visions from God telling him he will be Herbert Armstrong's successor.

[I personally believe that these expensive, hard-to-maintain buildings would not benefit any Church organization today. Those seeking to preach the Gospel in the non-materialistic style of the New Testament would not want to be identified with them. If a major media story does come out of the efforts to secure these buildings, it will be one more reminder to the world of Armstrong's physical riches, rather than his service to others or his understanding of the Bible! —NSE]

Home Fellowship Newsletter

Helping Hands is a new newsletter designed to focus upon the questions, needs, challenges, and problems faced by small assemblies or home-based fellowships. As many of you know from firsthand experience, life outside the corporate churches can be rife with confusion and difficulty. Leaving a large church setting brings with it a whole new set of situations that must be faced, many of them involving an individual or personal confrontation. We all revel in our new-found freedom, but what about the responsibility such liberty brings with it? *Helping Hands* will attempt to deal with the hard part of small-group worship.

It is a relatively small, 4-8 pages per issue, newsletter-type format. There is no charge or cost involved for anyone wishing to receive it. *Helping Hands* is offered completely free with no strings attached. We are particularly hopeful that at least one person in each small fellowship will receive a copy. This present point in time is a very crucial one for many of God's people. There is a fantastic opportunity for real spiritual growth and more profitable spiritual service now than perhaps ever before. If you are interested in receiving *Helping Hands*, write or e-mail: Jim Rector; 3802 Olive St; Texarkana, TX 75503-3320; e-mail: atir903@aol.com.

—Jim Rector

Free Sabbath Morning E-mail

I want to take this opportunity to invite you to subscribe to a new list service: The Sabbath Morning Companion. You will receive a weekly inspirational message designed for Sabbath keepers. It will be a great way to start your Sabbath day with a short, thought provoking article.

If you are interested in subscribing to this free service, send me your e-mail address. Everyone is welcome! Of course, you may quit whenever you like.

—Lenny Cacchio

lenny_cacchio@hotmail.com

Free Ex-SDA E-mail Newsletter

On January, 1998, @REST became a weekly publication. @REST exists to quickly and concisely convey who, what, how, where and sometimes "why" our God is bringing us to a RESTing place in Jesus Christ. We anticipate and celebrate the events that are happening in our fellowship and wish to help announce and celebrate the events in similar ministries.

We believe that the Church of God is all believers gathered by the Holy Spirit and joined into one body, Christ being the Head.

We are a community of believers organized in a covenant relationship for worship, fellowship and service, practicing and proclaiming common convictions, while growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We are committed to the priesthood of all believers and practice the autonomy of the local congregation, as we seek to work in association with others for a more effective witness.

Though we have some similar convictions and beliefs with our brothers and sisters of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, we are a non-denominational, unaffiliated, Spirit-filled church operating under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

We believe our church offers a unique message in preparation for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and provides believers an environment to experience the freedom which allows the Holy Spirit to reign supreme. Acts 2:17 reads: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people..." (NIV)

Thank you for your interest in @REST and we hope to hear from you soon. We are your @REST editors, Tom and Mary Katherine O'Haver. In the event you want to add other members or would like to remove yourself from @REST's subscriber's list, please send a reply to the following e-mail address: atrest@newlife.net. —@REST

[As we are "breaking down our walls" and accepting others outside of our organization as believers, there are others in other organizations "breaking down their walls". This is not an ecumenical movement—ecumenical movements seek to unify church organizations from the top down by merging them all into a "super organization". The Biblical approach is for each member to decide with whom they will fellowship and what ministries to support—not to let human organizations decide who is and is not a part of the body of Christ.] —NSEJ

Read Has Time Been Lost?

We are not sure who wrote the excellent booklet, *Has Time Been Lost?* It was not Herbert Armstrong. It was likely someone in the Church of God, 7th Day. However, we are sure that this booklet is timely and much needed today. One of the talk show hosts of St. Louis radio station KJSL (which staged the Sabbath debate between Samuele Bacchiocchi and Dale Ratzlaff) expressed his belief that the "Saturday" of today is not the same Saturday as during the time of Christ. This utterly false idea is still around, even in "educated" circles! "Has Time Been Lost?" tells the truth that the weekly cycle has not been broken. It is one of several Sabbath tracts available from the Bible Sabbath Association. Single copies are free. You may order 100 copies of *Has Time Been Lost?* for distribution for a donation of \$35. To obtain your copy(s), see contact information in the next news item.

Sabbath Sentinel Now Free

The Sabbath Sentinel, published for more than 50 years, is now a free publication. You may subscribe via E-mail or by the address below. The online version should appear on the BSA website soon!

<http://www.biblesabbath.org>
Giving & Sharing, now has a new web sites:

<http://www.giveshare.org>
NEWS!

We need a webmaster to maintain and improve either or both these inter-Sabbatarian sites. Any volunteers?

Richard Nickels, 3316 Alberta Drive; Gillette, WY 82718; USA; e-mail: giveshare@vcn.com. Phone: 307-686-5191.

Need Help Scanning Early Church of God Documents

Richard Nickels, author of *'History of the Seventh Day Church of God (vol 1)'*, put together a large collection of papers, booklets etc of old and out-of-print CoG literature going back decades, known as *'History of the Seventh Day Church of God (vol 2)'*.

The section headings are as follows:

A. General Information, **B.** Stanberry Material, **C.** Denver-Merger Material, **D.** Dugger Material, **E.** Meridian, Idaho Group, **F.** Salem, West Virginia Group, **G.** Caldwell, Idaho Group, **H.** Sacred Names Material, **I.** Bible Sabbath Association, **J.** Gathering Call Material, **K.** Miscellaneous.

Richard is interested in hearing from anyone (or group of persons) who is interested in scanning this valuable and fascinating material. See previous article for contact information.

Sabbatarian Singles Resources

In an effort to draw our "net" closer about us in keeping the singles in touch with one another, I am including the latest addresses I have for locating all of God's single chillun's! Puh-leeze write to me if you have anything to add, or if I've made an error in a name or address!

Please let me know if there are any special activities planned for singles at the Feast this year so we can post them, or if there are any "designated single sites" where we can find new friends, and forge new bonds within the Body!

Sabbatarian Singles Fellowship Forum web site (18 & up), Marla Prouty, Moderator, [SSFF@aol.com](mailto:ssff@aol.com):

<http://www.iwebcity.net/ssff/members.htm>

Sabbatarian Singles "snail mail" & e-mail list (18 & up) maintained by: Michelle

Ward; 66 Demarest Ave; River Vale, NJ 07675; Kheryn@aol.com

Sabbath Singles Connection - SSC, A newsletter for singles in the Body of Christ (18 & up) published by Michael Kawasaki; 3229 Larkin Rd.; Biggs, CA 95917:

<http://home.inreach.com/mikekawa/>

YA Web site (Young Adults -18-30-ish): <http://help.csom.umn.edu/youngadults/>

Singles in the Middle (30-55), Maintained by UCG Akron, OH:

<http://www.ucgakron.org/singmidl.htm>

Sabbath-keeping Singles Register, maintained by Portland UCG:

www.teleport.com/~ucgptld/singles.html

The Calendar of the UCG Singles, maintained by Portland UCG:

<http://www.viser.net/~uwas/Calendar.htm>

Sabbath Singles Message Board (does not appear to be moderated, has had some junk on it):

<http://www.INSIDETheWeb.com/message-board/mbs.cgi/mb101438>

—Marla Prouty, Everett, WA

Norm Edwards in Phoenix

On January 23, 1999, Norm Edwards spoke to the "Building Bridges" group in Phoenix, Arizona. This is a group of Sabbath keepers who meet monthly, to bring many different congregations together for fellowship and to "undo" some of the division. The founders of this group also started it because they wanted to choose who they listen to when they meet together.

Jon Pike, introducing Edwards, said "the government paper, *How Does The Eternal Govern Through Humans?* may be the most significant contribution to the overall COG community. It is considered the primary church government treatise and has been nicknamed 'The Non-Partisan Manifesto' ". The paper upholds the true nature of the "royal priesthood" (church members) recorded in I Peter 2. Pike claims it was one of the two most powerfully impacting writings he has read from non-WCG literature in his life. The other writing, a paper written by Jim Rector is entitled, "The Heart of the Matter".

Edwards' message began in Acts 6, 7, and 8 explaining that the words deacon and minister come from the same Greek word and are not separate offices or ranks. Many have erroneously believed that Acts 15 is about a "Jerusalem Conference" which set the

precedent for future "Ministerial Conferences" making church policy and hierarchical decisions. Scripture reveals this meeting was initiated by believers in Antioch who decided to send men to Jerusalem. There were many other congregations that neither sent delegates to the meeting nor received the "results" from the meeting.

Edwards later discussed the letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. He believes the letters were intended for the people then and for us today. The verses repeat the same words seven times showing the messages are for each of us individually and each individual is to listen to each of the seven messages. This is the opposite of the former teachings of many claiming these verses are only for those people in the "church era" the verse is referring to. The verses contain individual promises to individuals, not to whole groups of people in certain church eras.

Regarding modern history, today we find many people who believe similarly to us (WCG background) and yet they were never a part of our tradition. Many Sabbatarians can be found in many places today and have learned from verbal teachings instead of writings.

Discussion and feedback were welcomed during the question and answer session after the message. Fellowship and luncheon concluded the gathering.

—Marleen Edwards

Dave Havir Speaks in Chicago

On a pleasant sunny Sabbath, Dec. 12, 1998, upwards of 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

Gerald Flurry in Dallas

On January 24th and 25th the Philadelphia Church of God presented *America in Crisis—A Voice Cries Out Again!* This is the first of what is intended to be a national tour.

Gerald Flurry founded the Philadelphia Church of God in 1990, with the foundation of Herbert Armstrong being the modern "Elijah" and his organization being the only true heir to his teachings.

The first night opened with all the lights out; then a spotlight on a young woman singing a very long version of the National Anthem that ended on a note that almost shattered all the glass in the immediate area. It was **way** over done.

Then Stephen Flurry spoke about 15 minutes about the PCG and their magazine, *The Philadelphia Trumpet* (whose circulation is now over 100,000). Most people raised their hand when he asked how many subscribed. There were quite a few PCG members present with some from San Antonio and Sacramento, CA.

Gerald Flurry then spoke about Matthew 24—a rather usual "Church of God" message. He did say at one point that "We should love our **country** more than ourselves." Where is that in Scripture? There was no question and answer session so there was no chance to ask about it.

The second night started with another glass-shattering opening, the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Ron Fraser gave some brief remarks about the news bureau and what they do.

The main presentation was on "The Abomination of Desolation" by Gerald

Flurry. He started by quoting a Reuters news story about the Nazis going underground and planning their return and said that this is connected to the Abomination of Desolation—which is the ending of "the Work". (Later he stated that "None of the other church groups have a work to speak of.") He also quoted from HWA in May 1945 about the same subject mentioned by Reuters. He said that when armies surround Jerusalem it is a signal for God's people, especially in America and Britain, to flee.

Thought: When leaders are in domestic trouble they tend to travel on foreign trips for deflection. Could this be Gerald Flurry's version of this practice? Is He trying to rally the troops for this "national tour" and get their minds off the turmoil in the camp?

—Michael Turner, Plano, Texas
mykeltturner@airmail.net

GCG/LCG Lessons

The split between the Global Church of God (Raymond McNair, chairman) and the Living Church of God appears to be final—we know of no attempt to reconcile the two. Of interest, the GCG dropped the lease on some of its extra office space, only to have it re-leased by the LCG. It looks like the two groups will have headquarters in the same building for years to come. We received one report of an office worker being "corrected" for being too talkative with a worker from the opposite camp. Can you imagine a new convert, hearing their gospel message, deciding to visit their headquarters to learn more about how we will live at peace in the Millennium, only to find two groups with nearly identical doctrine that cannot get along?

Also, we received documentation and testimony about a Global Church of God minister who was mistreating brethren for what were apparently church political motives [we will leave names out of this because the lesson is what is important, not the discrediting of a particular individual or group]. An investigation was done by another Global minister confirming abuse. The accused minister was in the process of being disciplined, but when the Global Church of God split, the investigating minister went to the new Living Church

of God. The accused minister was cleared and reinstated by the new Global Church of God board—it seemed that his actions were aimed at promoting the new leaders, anyway.

Is the new Global Church of God board an outstanding bad example for not disciplining a minister just because he supports them? Actually, they are acting in the manner that appears to be **standard procedure** for most “church of God” groups. When I worked for the GCG, I heard many complaints of abuse by this same accused minister. It was not my job to investigate these complaints, and the GCG leadership seemed little interested in doing anything because the minister “brought a lot of people to Global”. Later on, when I started Servants' News, I heard at least 30 different individuals complain about the treatment they received from this minister. Was anything done by the GCG leadership? No, not until it became clear that the minister was not supporting the top GCG leadership, but was interested in promoting the new board.

If this is the only time where this had ever happened, it would not be worth mentioning. But selective enforcement of laws or ethical standards can be a powerful tool for control by those who should be responsible for administering justice. (In other words, when a “judge” is against your cause, every law is brought to bear against you, but when a “judge” likes your cause, your offenses are ignored.) —NSE

UCG-IA Approves US&BC Book

January 9, 1999 the UCG-IA doctrinal process committee's 23 members approved the doctrinal content of Rick Sherrod's manuscript about the location of modern-day Israelites. His research, similar to many others, shows them to be living in the USA, British Commonwealth, and other European countries. Rick Sherrod, a former Ambassador University history professor, has been interested in the subject and compiling information for some time. John Ross Schroeder has been given the task of editing it down from its 110-page size to about 85 pages. Several titles have been suggested to try to capture the theme of “where are the Israelites?” but the final heading is yet undetermined.

CoG-IC Moving To Isolation?

A trusted but very concerned person attending the Church of God, an International Community gave us the following information. (He asked the specifics be withheld, lest he be prevented from attending.) In a local area sermon, a CoG-IC minister told the congregation that reading any Bible literature outside of the Bible, a few of Herbert Armstrong's books and his group's literature was a mistake. He said that God would not reveal any more knowledge to people who read other things, because their thinking would be messed up. He also clearly stated that brethren would be spiritually handicapped if they did not belong to the CoG-IC. He said membership in another organization was better than none, because a person in another group had a better chance of eventually joining the CoG-IC. The speaker was very sincere and not hateful to those of other views, but he seemed to see his group as “the way”.

[The example of Christ and the apostles could hardly be more opposite from this example. They taught in the temple, synagogues, public places and houses. They answered questions of many who disagreed with their views. They dissuaded people from following false teachers, but nowhere did they order people to listen only to them. Even when the Galatians and Corinthians went after “another gospel”, Paul did not fault them for listening to it, he faulted them for believing it (2Cor 11:4, Gal 1:6). The Ephesians were commended for “trying” (listening to and evaluating) those who claimed to be apostles, but finding them liars(Rev 2:2). —NSE]

Dave Havir Speaks in Phoenix

In the 2nd of the continuing series of non-partisan “Building Bridges” Sabbath meetings, Dave Havir spoke to a gathering of 115 brethren in Phoenix on November 7, 1998. This meeting, as the first one, attracted former and current WCG members from the various church organizations, as well as from home fellowships throughout Arizona. Both meetings took place amidst what can best be described as “that unmistakable and joyous Church of God

atmosphere” and were reminiscent of family reunions.

Mr. Havir admitted that he is a product of our church culture and has only fairly recently been able to objectively determine that we were taught several mis-expoundings of scripture in support of our traditional church government theology.

Mr. Havir took questions at a break in his sermon, and then again after it ended. Admitting that in the past, he probably would have been a little fearful of taking questions in such a setting, but now feels that “if a minister is not willing to defend his presentation, but expects people to just mindlessly accept what he says—we're wasting a lot of time.”

After reminding us that the COG is a spiritual organism, he set out to demonstrate that any scriptural expounding that undermines that reality, such as misrepresenting the COG to be a single physical organization, constitutes heresy which leads to idolatry. He further indicated that we should expect God to “knock this heresy out of our heads before it's all over.”

Spirit of God Holds God's People Together

By reminding us that God's saints will be brought before rulers of this world to testify, and that these future events will be organized by the spirit of God, he exposed the fallacy that organizational affiliation could somehow serve as an indicator of conversion. In the context of these end-time testimonies, Mr. Havir made it clear that the claim that “a group of 5-15 brethren is too small to be used by God” constitutes a denunciation of the spirit of God. Though it may make some of us feel more secure, God doesn't need for us to all be in one organization for the gospel to be preached; and the over-emphasis on physical things, including church organizations and their ruling hierarchies, “insults the great God in heaven”.

Misuse of “the Body” analogy

1 Corinthians 12:18, 22 and 23 say: “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. ... Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. And those

members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.”

Mr. Havir used these verses to illustrate that if someone were to claim for example, “I’m an eyeball in the Body, while you’re just a hair on the big toe, and you’ll never be as important as I am”, they’d be transgressing the principle of verse 23, which tells us to bestow more abundant honor on those members we might perceive to be feeble. On the contrary, he exclaimed, “God is **pleased** to have you in the Body!” (v18).

He pointed out how other familiar contentions can run afoul of the spirit of 1 Corinthians 12:22. For example, when statements such as this are made: “We’re the true COG ... and, oh yeah there’s some feeble Christians over there that aren’t doing the work ... they’re perhaps an embarrassing part of the Body.” Any instruction to avoid such Christians would clearly constitute a violation of the spirit of 1 Corinthians 12:23.

Falling Away

Mr. Havir reminded us of the man in Mk 9:38 who Jesus’ disciples opposed because he cast out demons in Christ’s name—“but was not in our group!” Christ admonished his disciples as a result of this and Mr. Havir made the point that in our day, such exclusivity promotion “is either due to ignorance, or greedy pursuit of money”.

After reading 1 Corinthians 3:1-4 (“I am of Paul...I am of Apollos.’ are you not carnal?” etc.), Mr. Havir drew a parallel with today’s COG where “men are causing division in the body by encouraging the setting up of some men as champions. Paul called this carnal.”

In citing Hebrews 6:4-6 (about how it is impossible to renew to repentance those who have committed the unpardonable sin), he said that such falling away “refers to falling away from the spirit of God, not changing one’s place of worship or physical affiliation.” Mr. Havir stated that collective cooperation is something the Saints have the right to engage in—as long as the organizations that result don’t promulgate heresies (such as the ones he was exposing) to promote themselves.

Next, Mr. Havir showed how the old WCG military rank system is also a

heresy. After reminding us how Jesus said “it shall not be so among you” (Matt 20:25-26) in regards to Gentile over-lording institutions, he then showed how the greater context surrounding I Cor 12:28 (1st apostles, 2nd prophets... etc.), from verses 1-31, establishes that this passage is addressing spiritual gifts, not ranks.

Mr. Havir said that the key difference in perspective, when viewing the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 as ranks, as opposed to functions, is that the former places emphasis on men, while the latter moves the focus to God and Christ. He cited some faulty fruit as the legacy of the hierarchical rank system. He said that “the whole system of how we chose elders needs to be re-evaluated, as is being done in Big Sandy”. He recounted how the old system empowered 21 year-old novices, before they were ready, by designating them as “elders”. Other products of this unbiblical system he mentioned were people designated as “evangelist” who didn’t evangelize, and how people were encouraged to bury their talents. He also insisted that we all have the responsibility to “beware of false prophets, who will dress in sheep’s clothing, not wolve’s clothing”.

HWA’s biggest mistake

Mr. Havir opined that “probably the biggest mistake I ever heard Mr. (Herbert) Armstrong make was in the last sermon of his life. He didn’t know it’d be his last sermon and he did many wonderful things, but in that sermon he said in effect: ‘Some day I’m going to die and there will be a new Pastor General—and you should follow him, because your salvation depends on it.’ I’m not even talking about what later happened—just the concept of believing that your salvation depends on following any man, is a heresy. Making that claim is tantamount to claiming dominion over your faith, rather than being a helper of your joy. Helpers of joy don’t control people.” *[Unfortunately, Mr. Armstrong conducted most of his ministry claiming that his organization was exclusively “the Body of Christ.” —NSE]*

The True Biblical Hierarchy

Mr. Havir said that “the true biblical hierarchy” is found in I Cor 11:3 (...the

head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man...). He also said that the Bible makes no provision for men to be found “between” other men and Christ. He also showed how Eph 5:25 illustrates how the husband is to be head of the wife, “by being willing to die for her” rather than to demand service from her.

Following the Beast

Mr. Havir concluded by directing our attention to II Thes 2:3-4 (about the falling away and the revealing of the man of sin). He encouraged us to think of God’s Church as “the temple of God” as a possible spiritual fulfillment of that scripture. He pointed out that if that is what the scripture means, we could “expect to see in the COG, people acting like God, opposing God and exalting themselves in the place of God as in the case of the Catholic model”. Noting that we’ve already experienced church government that placed a man or a group of men effectively in Christ’s place as Head of the Church, he said we should be able to visualize how this could transpire in a way that fulfills that scriptural interpretation, in the future.

Because of this unfortunate reality in our heritage, he said that “the COG has been set up to follow the beast. God has allowed this and people who don’t see this are asleep to it.” He said that following Satan’s false government, instead of God, could bring some to this very dangerous place in their spiritual lives.

In contrast to that bleak scenario, Mr. Havir also said that something else we could expect to see in the future is “true, giving, sharing, loving, foot-washing servants of God; demonstrating their willingness to give up their wealth and prestige for the people of God, even to the point of being willing to die for them”.

Following the meeting was a potluck, and then later an open house in a member’s home where the fellowship lasted many many hours. COG teacher Jim Rector, in Phoenix visiting relatives, was on hand for all the day’s activities. Subsequent scheduled “Building Bridges” Sabbath meetings are planned to include the participation of Ray Wooten in December, Norm Edwards in January, Ron Dart in February, and Jim Rector in March.

—Jon D. Pike, Phoenix, AZ

Barnabas Ministries 1998 Year End Report

This is the 1998 year end report for Barnabas Ministries. This service organization is dedicated to encouraging understanding of God's word and a deeper relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. We also pursue preaching the gospel to as many people as can be reached.

First, let me say that this past year has been one filled with various trials and difficulties that at times have made it tough to maintain and enhance the services offered. Yet through it all God has sustained and kept this ministry motivated to spend time blessing others. Thank you for your prayers.

Contributions for the year were about \$3,700 in U.S. dollars. Expenses for the year were approximately \$9,700, which leaves a \$6,000 deficit. Expenses included money spent on office supplies, utilities, postage, copying costs, and partial coverage of travel expenses and miscellaneous outlays. Additional expenditures were incurred due to the need for updated computer equipment and software. Our basic cost to have a Web site on the Internet tripled in 1998 due to the need for more storage space and transmission capability to handle the tremendous volume of Bible study materials requested.

This service has been blessed to accomplish a great deal with the contributions it receives. Part of the reason a little has gone a long way financially is that Barnabas Ministries runs lean. We have no buildings to support, no full-time employees to pay, and no other costly commitments to drain contribu-

tions away from our primary goals. We are a solely volunteer effort that spent 100% of the money donated to preach the good news of the Bible to the world and to serve wherever we can.

Highlights of 1998's accomplishments are:

1) The Internet Web site at WWW.BIBLESTUDY.ORG has experienced explosive growth both in materials added and retrieved! We added an audio sermon area so that our tens of thousands of visitors can listen to great Biblically-based messages and included a bookstore to aid purchasing Bible study materials. Our "homepage", the first screen people see when they visit the site, was redesigned. We deepened our offering of Bible articles, Biblical research and links to other Bible resources. All this contributed to a phenomenal increase of more than 900% from the previous year in the amount of information the world pulls off the Bible Study Web site. Visitors at the end of 1998 were requesting the equivalent of 55,000 35-page booklets of Bible study materials. Not only that, but numbers at the end of January 1999 show an increase of another 85% above December 1998 figures! Additionally, we have been pleased to detect an increasing number of referrals from other Web sites. Various "church of God" groups, sites affiliated with the Church of Christ and Jehovah's Witnesses, and several independent fellowships and service organizations have begun to send people our way.

2) Year 2000 seminars were conducted to help people prepare for the potential fallout of computers not correctly handling certain dates. These interactive discussions helped people understand the Y2K problem and what they can practically do to lessen the effects of this soon-coming challenge. Our computer guide, which gives tips on how to buy a computer and how to "cruise" the Internet, was also updated.

3) Several Bible study weekends and seminars were attended. These meetings included Christian Education Ministries study weekends in Toronto and Chicago, the Intercontinental Church of God leadership conference in New Orleans and the United Church of God-Big Sandy study weekend in December. Church groups of various sizes and home fellowships were also visited in 1998.

4) Three Bible bookmarks were created and distributed. These bookmarks contain scriptures to comfort people, a calendar of when God's Holy Days of worship occur, and Internet sites people can visit to find commonly-requested information. This ministry additionally handled mail and Email requests from the U.S. and other countries for literature and study materials.

For 1999 we hope to branch out and begin advertising the Bible Study Web site outside the Internet. We may put some small ads in religious magazines or newspapers to let people know where they can get Biblical answers to their questions. Of course, this service will continue to improve and add materials to the Web site over the next year. Other projects will be scheduled as well.

Thank you for your support. May God bless all of us so that we can boldly continue to grow in His grace and knowledge and serve others with all our strength.

Barnabas Ministries PO Box 3393 Farmington Hills, MI. 48333, USA
Founder/Webmaster: Alan Ruth Email: Webmaster@biblestudy.org

—Alan Ruth

“But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased” (1Cor 12:18).

The work that Alan Ruth is doing is a good example of how much can be accomplished by one person with a gift in a certain area. I have read several “high and mighty” sounding letters from larger church organizations about the marvelous “door that God is opening” for them to “preach the Gospel on the Internet”. Yet these organizations have web sites that are in their infancy compared to Alan Ruth’s site. The number of responses they receive shows it.

However, most big church organizations do not refer their members to www.biblestudy.org because it shows them that good teaching is available from numerous sources, not just from them. Do I agree with everything that Alan Ruth has on his site? No. But the majority is good, and I know of no other site that combines so much good material. It seems that every Bible teacher has some error—I discover it in my own teachings sometimes. But I trust Christ to direct people to the truth, and away from error as He sees fit. —NSE

Feast of Tabernacles 1999

Let Feast sponsors know now where you are planning to attend! It is very difficult to plan a Feast when the number of people attending is unknown. Time and money are wasted if estimates are too high. Facilities are too crowded if estimates are too low. **Are you not sure yet?** It is still better to let them know now and change your mind later if necessary.

- Unless otherwise noted, all sites use the Hebrew calendar—the evening of September 24 through October 2, 1999.
- We are happy to print information on other Feast sites that welcome all brethren regardless of organizational affiliation.
- Please send information on such sites to *Servants' News* (see contact information on page 2 or back cover).

Butler State Park, Kentucky

Houston & Dolly Holland, George & Pam Dewey, Norman & Marleen Edwards and other brethren will be hosting a Feast of Tabernacles site at Butler State Park, Carrollton, Kentucky. This feast is to be a “family reunion” of the Body of Christ. It will be designed for a maximum amount of praise, learning, sharing, fellowship and fun with other believers. (See page 1 of Sept/Oct 1998 *Servants' News* for this site's goals.) We plan to make this Feast a memorable, enjoyable and spiritually profitable event for every member of the family.

Butler State Park is located a few miles off of I-71, half way between Cincinnati, Ohio and Louisville, Kentucky. Immediately nearby is the Ohio river, which is the border between Kentucky and Indiana. A variety of accommodations are available, both at the State Park and in motels 1 to 3 miles away. All prices listed here include tax.

New Information: The Port William Motel has just been renovated and is offering great rates for stays of a **week or more:** \$24.02 for a single and \$29.48 for a double (children free). It is located on the Ohio River about 2 miles from the Park. Call **502-732-5985**.

The State Park offers lodge rooms at \$58.54 for double occupancy, and cottages with kitchens from \$80.00 to \$130 per night. Camping, including RV hookups, is \$12 per night. Mention that you are with the “Feast of Tabernacles” when calling **800-325-0078**.

Four modern motels are less than three miles away. Cost per night:

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

Call us for information on several “bed & breakfast” inns. We would like to hear from anyone who would like to help serve or attend at this Feast: 517-543-5544, 75260.1603@compuserve.com.

Ludington, Michigan

For the second year in a row, the same group of people will sponsor a Feast site at Ludington, Michigan. This site is not aligned with any corporate church. There will be room for about 100 people at the Lands Inn and Convention Center. Messages will be followed by question and answer sessions. Very reasonable off-season motel rates are available. Ludington is on the West coast of Michigan, but may be reached by ferry from Wisconsin. For more information, contact Darrell West; PO Box 26; Webberville, MI 48892; 517-521-3630.

CEM in Destin, Florida

CEM will be in a new location this year, after sponsoring the largest independent Feast sites for 2 years in Kissimmee, Florida. This year's meetings will be held in the Arts Center of the Okaloosa-Walton Community College in Niceville, Florida, just across the bay from Destin. Maximum capacity in the auditorium is 1600. There are ample rooms for seminars and youth classes, and ample parking. The primary host resort will be Hidden Dunes Beach & Tennis Resort at 9815 Hwy 98 West, Destin, Florida 32541, (800-824-6335)

For those of you interested in other available housing, contact Christian Educational Ministries (Ron Dart) at PO Box 560, Whitehouse, Texas 75791, (903) 509-2999; fax: (903) 509-1139 or e-mail: CEM@ballistic.com.

Omega Praise Fellowship in Oregon

Imagine keeping God's fall *moed* (appointed time) among tall, fragrant fir, pine and cedar trees. Imagine cool nights and a warm hall in which to fellowship with like-minded brethren. Imagine bright autumn days walking with family/friends on graveled paths between expanses of grass-covered knolls. Imagine the joy and

peace of the Feast of Tabernacles—and imagine keeping it with us, Omega Praise Fellowship of southern Oregon, at Fir Point Bible Conference Camp.

This fine facility is located about 5 miles off Interstate 5 (Exit 80), just outside the southern Oregon community of Glendale. The camp has large and small cabins, and RV sites. Recreational opportunities include a large sports “pavilion”, suitable for basketball or volleyball, hiking trails, horse shoe pits and more. Meals, including a Very Special one on Erev Shabbat (October 1st), will be provided at the dining hall by the Camp Directors, John and Sharon Wilcox. Cost for all of this: \$55 a day per couple (\$27.50 per day for a single person) will cover all meals and housing. Children of those attending who are 18 years and under, will be free.

Our vision of the Feast of Tabernacles is people meeting together as though they were already part of the family of God—a Feast where we worship and study, share meals and fellowship together in a peaceful and joyous atmosphere. It is a Feast where songs of praise and dances of worship are woven into our services. It's a Feast where we are encouraged to participate by “Bringing our talents” to share with the brethren our Heavenly Father has inspired to join with us.

For more information, write: Omega Praise Fellowship; PO Box 1742; Rogue River, OR 97537-1742. Or, call: 541-855-7220, 541-479-0467 or 541-855-7403.

—Sharon Bonney

UCM in Clearwater, Florida

Harborview Center will be the meeting place for the Feast of Tabernacles. For more information, contact: United Christian Ministries (Ray Wooten), PO Box 361725, Hoover, AL 35236-1725, phone 888-985-9066, fax 205-985-9515. To con-

tact Harborview Center, PO Box 329 Clearwater, FL 33757, phone 813-462-6778, and fax 813-462-6798, e-mail: gfs@harborv.com.

UCM/Guardian in Oxnard, CA

Guardian Ministries (David Antion) and United Christian Ministries (Ray Wooten) will be co-hosting a site at the beautiful Embassy Suites Mandalay Beach Resort, in Oxnard, CA. The selected location offers all the comforts of a luxury retreat. It is a seaside setting that is both invigorating and inspiring. There are miles of sandy beaches, two harbors, championship golf courses, and the majestic Channel Islands National Park.

Two-room suites each have two bathrooms, a refrigerator, microwave, coffee maker, two color televisions, two marble baths, two dual-line telephones, and a comfortable living and dining area. Additional free features: Children under 18 no charge; cooked-to-order breakfast; beer, wine, cocktail, or other beverage and snack reception each evening; two large spas; large swimming pool; and lighted tennis courts.

For one or two adults, non-view rooms are \$109 per night weekdays and \$129 per night weekends. Garden rooms are \$119 weekdays and \$139 weekends. Additional adults (persons over age 18) sharing the same suite are \$15 additional each. There is a special rate for those staying all eight days. To make reservations please call the resort at 1-805-984-2500 and let them know you are with the Church of God Retreat. For those flying into Los Angeles, United Airlines has a special deal that allows passengers to fly on to Oxnard at no extra charge. However, the site is only about a one-hour drive from the Los Angeles International Airport. Shuttle service is also available.

For more info write us at Box 50734, Pasadena, Ca., 91115 or e-mail us at cogscpas@aol.com. There are also other less expensive hotels in the area. We are currently working on a great speaking schedule, mini-discussion groups, a Sabbath program for children, youth activities, etc. Perhaps our family day will be a beach party with volleyball and other games.

Lake Murray, Oklahoma

The sponsors of "In The Footsteps

Of The Messiah" seminars will host a new Feast site this year. Mitchell Smith and Tim Kelley say the meetings will focus on learning about events and practices of the Feast as observed in Jerusalem by the Messiah and apostles.

Speakers include Joe Good, Avi Ben Mordechai, Ron McKown, and others. Lake Murray is located just southeast of Ardmore, Oklahoma, and fills 5,728 acres of a 12,496 acre park. Many lake and outdoor activities are available. The meeting hall will hold up to 600 people.

For reservations, call Lake Murray Resort at 800-654-8240 and mention "Season of Our Joy" Feast Conference for room discounts. Call Mitchell Smith at (903) 882-7446 or Tim Kelley at (903) 769-2750 or e-mail: N55154@aol.com.

UCM Philippines Feast

UCM will co-sponsor the Feast in Baguio City. It will be observed at the Inn Rocio. Contact UCM at the above address or write directly to: Enrique M. Gabuyo; #398 Kinsville Subdivision; Calamba, Laguna; 4027 Philippines

Lake Texoma, Oklahoma

What made the Feast at Texoma great in "98"? **1.** We came to praise God, rejoice, and love and serve each other. **2.** No personal agendas advanced. **3.** You made the feast great. This Feast will consist of sermons, seminars, Sabbath classes, daily evening prayer, Bible studies, youth activities, teen activities, music, family fun park, talent/fun show, family dance, lake activities. Our priority will be striving to become closer to our Father through Jesus Christ. Prayer is an important tool in accomplishing this goal and will be used daily for all who wish to participate.

Join us at beautiful Lake Texoma Lodge. Also available are cabins and camping facilities. Numerous recreational facilities are available. No collections will be taken up. An offering box will be in the back of the room for anyone wanting to make an offering. All funds will be used for feast expenses. Motto for "99": If there is no Joy, you are doing it all wrong.

Make your reservation early and mention you are with the church of God: Lake Texoma Resort Park; PO Box 248; Kingston, OK 73439-0248;

800-654-8240 (2).

Steve Kieler, Feast Coordinator
(Church of God Outreach Ministries)
2193 Sheker Drive
Fort Dodge, IA 50501-8707
515-576-5743


FOT In Thailand for \$2000

Attention former AC students, project participants, and Church of God members who have been to Thailand! Also, to those who have always wanted to visit!

From 1987 through 1992, Church of God members from all over the world enjoyed getting together to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the Kingdom of Thailand. When the political situation would permit, our Karen brethren would join us. We all enjoyed a rich and rewarding cultural as well as spiritual experience, visiting palaces, temples and hilltribe villages and meeting together for services in elegant, first class hotels. This opportunity is again available.

Leon Sexton, elder and long-time Thailand expert is arranging a Feast site in Thailand for 1999. He was the pointman for the feasts there for the first 3 years and arranged hotel accommodations and all cultural visits, particularly to Chitralada Palace, the royal residence of King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit. The Thailand site will be open to all various Church of God groups without discrimination. Elders from our various fellowships will be invited to attend and present sermons to the participants. Costs should come in under \$2000 USD per person for shared accommodations. As before, this would cover round trip air fare Los Angeles to Bangkok & Chaing Mai; all accommodations, food, ground transportation and other fees.

In order to make this work, Mr. Sexton needs to know **how many persons** would be interested in keeping the Feast in Thailand in 1999. **If you are seriously interested**, Please contact Mr. Sexton with: **1.** The number of persons in your family who will attend. **2.** Your **contact information** such as address, telephone number, fax and/or email.

At least 100 participants are required to make this work. So please contact Leon Sexton as soon as possible. Phone: 972-412-4909; fax: 972-412-7886; e-mail: Glomar7@juno.com. 

For Even From My Youth...

Should Teens and Children Partake of the Bread and Wine?

by Toli Bohonik

When Jesus walked this earth some 2000 years ago He cared deeply about children. Jesus wanted to be near children. He wanted to hold them in His arms. He desired to bless them. He was their Savior just as much as He was their parents' Savior.

Jesus wants children to "come to" Him and learn to follow Him. It is a lifelong process. One that Jesus often initiates at a very young age. As children grow older, Jesus will lead them to make an increasingly stronger commitment to follow Him and to serve God the Father.

Notice Jesus' words in Mark 10:13-16:

¹³ Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." ¹⁶ And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.

King David is a good example. God called David when he was just a child. David then served God his entire life. His life was spent following God and learning the ways of God. As a child, as a teen, as a young man, as an adult, and finally as an old man. David spent his **whole** life learning about God and serving God. It was a lifelong process!

That process began very early in David's life. Notice these Psalms:

I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only. O God, You have taught me **from my youth**; And to this day I declare Your wondrous works Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come. (Pslm 71:16-18).

Isaiah, Samuel, Obadiah, John the Baptist, Timothy and others in the Bible were all clearly taught and trained in the ways of God when they were children—we will study some later in this article. Christ taught some very powerful lessons about receiving little children, being humble like little children, and not offending little children (Matt 18:1-6).

God often calls children at a very young age, just like He called David. One of the most important things that the Father and Jesus do together is to bring young people into the faith. Bringing children into the faith is a vitally important task! The Father gives some an early start towards the Kingdom of God.

Children and the Passover Season

Children are the future of the Church of God. Since children are so important to Jesus and the Father, one has to ask how they should participate during the Passover season. Should young people attend the service? Should they partake of the bread and wine?

In the past, the Churches of God have not allowed unbaptized young children and teens to participate in their Passover service. They recognized only "baptized or unbaptized" people, with no status for those that are seeking to obey God, but too young or still uncertain about baptism. Some congregations allowed older children to participate in foot-washing, but that was not common. Churches taught that unbaptized individuals, including children, are unconverted and should not take the bread and wine. While this concept was not specifically taught, to some degree the taking of these symbols *was regarded* almost like a "sacrament"—a *spiritual benefit* to those who were baptized and still in "good standing" with an organized church.

But do the Scriptures teach that baptism is a requirement to attend or take the bread and wine? If you read carefully what God teaches in the Old and New Testament, nowhere do the scrip-

tures say that one must be converted to do these things! Don't be shocked—we will study the most common scriptures that some have used to "prove" that children should not be welcome.

It is extremely important that young and old alike realize that Jesus Christ is the Savior of all and that they learn to follow Him. One of the most important parts of following Jesus is to take the bread and wine as a symbol of living by him. Please read:

⁵¹ "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." ⁵² The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" ⁵³ Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:51-54).

Jesus' last supper was very important to Him. It was something that He would not do again until He does it in the kingdom. There were no women, no children, no teens. It was just one leader and twelve students—a most somber occasion:

¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:17-20).

Just because children were not present at this service does not mean they should not take the bread and wine. Women were not present here either, but we certainly expect them to take it today. Jesus calls men, women, teens and children, and then bids them to follow Him. We must remember that the Passover service given to Moses was for the whole family, specifically including children (Ex 12:24-27). If we apply these Old Testament customs to today,

then young people who want to follow Christ **should take the bread and wine**, even though they may not be baptized.

God Has Work For Children

Jesus calls children to follow Him. Some of these children eventually serve in important functions in the Ekklesia, the church. Others grow up and serve Jesus their entire lives with no public recognition. At times they may be required to do valiant deeds for Christ, deeds that may be unseen and totally unknown to most people. Yet deeds that are vital for their families, their communities, their churches, or even their country!

In the Old Testament there are many examples of children serving the Lord. **Samuel** is a good example. As a very young child Samuel served the Lord. Samuel grew up to be a great prophet. The Lord personally taught Samuel when he was a small child. As a very young child, Samuel actually "...grew before the LORD":

18 But Samuel ministered before the LORD, **being a child**, girded with a linen ephod. 19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home. 21 And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And **the child Samuel** grew before the LORD (1Sam 2:18-21).

Another good example of God calling and working with a child is the example of **Obadiah**. Obadiah did great deeds for the Lord! His early calling prepared him for this unique service.

Obadiah was the governor of Ahab's house, when Ahab was the King of Israel. At one point, Ahab and Obadiah were searching for Elijah. Ahab wanted to kill Elijah and he had his governor, Obadiah, helping Him find Elijah.

Obadiah had served the Lord from his youth. Here is an example of a wicked king working with a righteous governor to try and kill a prophet. What a dichotomy! What a challenge for

Obadiah!

And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water) (1Kngs 18:3-4).

God called and worked with Obadiah at a very young age. As a youth, Obadiah learned to fear God, to obey God, and to serve God. When he was grown, the Lord used Obadiah to save many lives. This pattern is repeated time and time again in the scriptures. God calls young people. He then teaches them. They serve Him their entire lives. And God has them do mighty deeds.

⁷ Now as Obadiah was on his way, suddenly Elijah met him; and he recognized him, and fell on his face, and said, "Is that you, my lord Elijah?" ⁸ And he answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your master, 'Elijah is here.'" ⁹ So he said, "How have I sinned, that you are delivering your servant into the hand of Ahab, to kill me?" ¹⁰ As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone to hunt for you; and when they said, 'He is not here,' he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you. ¹¹ And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, "Elijah is here!"' ¹² And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from you, that the Spirit of the LORD will carry you to a place I do not know; so when I go and tell Ahab, and he cannot find you, he will kill me. But I your servant have feared the LORD **from my youth**. ¹³ Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid one hundred men of the LORD's prophets, fifty to a cave, and fed them with bread and water?" (1Kngs 18:7-13.)

We have already mentioned the example of **David**. David was called by God when he was just a boy. The deeds of the young David are legendary. He served God as a young shepherd in the fields of Judah. He killed a lion and bear and knew it was God who delivered him. Later he fought and killed the giant Goliath. Notice his Psalm:

³ Be my strong refuge, To which I may resort continually; You have given the commandment to save me, For You are my rock and my fortress. ⁴ Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, Out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man. ⁵ For You are my hope, O Lord GOD; You are my trust **from my youth**. ⁶ By You I have been upheld from birth; You are He who took me out of my mother's womb. My praise shall be continually of You (Pslm 71:3-6).

Ezekiel was one of the greatest prophets who ever lived. He too served the Lord from His youth. Ezekiel's deeds are public and well known. But you must ask, could Ezekiel have been such a great prophet if God had not called him at a very young age?

So I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Indeed I have never defiled myself **from my youth** till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth" (Eze 14:4).

Notice the distinct pattern. The Lord called these young children. He worked with them, He taught them, He loved them, and they served Him throughout their entire lives. Some served in obvious ways and others served in not so obvious ways, but from childhood all of them willingly served God in a wicked world.

New Testament Examples

In the New Testament there is also a record of individuals who served the Lord from early childhood. We read about the rich "young man" in all three synoptic gospels. Notice Mark 10:14-21. This section of scripture begins with Jesus saying, "Suffer the little children to come unto me". Jesus first tells us that He wants children to come to Him!

But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them (Mark 10:14-16).

In this context of Jesus caring for children, Mark goes on to write about a **rich young man** who had obeyed God

“from my youth”.

This young man ran up to Jesus! He knelt before Him! This man had kept God's commandments “from my youth”.

Jesus loved him!

Yet Jesus knew the rich young man had a character flaw. The young man loved his wealth, and he was not willing to give it up. Jesus corrected him.

¹⁷ Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” ¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. ¹⁹ “You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” ²⁰ And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept **from my youth.**” ²¹ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me” (Mark 10:17-21).

Paul is another New Testament example. Paul served God “from my youth”. When Paul was grown, the Lord chose to make him an apostle. But it is important to realize that God worked with Paul when Paul was but a child.

My manner of life **from my youth**, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee (Acts 26:4-5).

Today God continues to work in the same way. He may call very young children. He convicts them of His reality, of His goodness, and of His sovereignty. These children serve God with a pure heart and they have truly received “... the kingdom of God as a little child”. When they grow up they generally continue to obey God and to serve God.

The Old Testament Passover

Let's look at the example of the Old Testament Passover. Anciently, all of those who lived under the Old Covenant ate the Passover. Fathers, mothers, sis-

ters, brothers, the young, and the old all ate the Passover together.

The one requirement was circumcision. (Females were required to have a circumcised father or husband.) The stranger, the foreigner, and the hired servant were not allowed to eat the Passover. Those who did not know or care about the God of Israel were not to take it.

Yet the stranger who wanted to serve God, and who was circumcised, was allowed to take the Passover. It was an individual matter even then. The stranger whose heart was turned toward God could take the Passover.

⁴³ And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. ⁴⁴ But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it. ⁴⁵ A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it....⁴⁸ And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. ⁴⁹ One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you” (Ex 12:43-45, 48-49).

New Testament Parallel

Under the New Covenant, circumcision is of the heart (Rom 2:29). If someone's heart is turned to God and they want to follow Jesus as He leads them to the Father, then they need to take in His flesh and blood—to partake of the bread and wine.

Since circumcision included children under the old covenant, it must also include it in the new. That would include those who are young, unbaptized, and unconverted. If they want to follow Jesus, they should participate.

A number of observations can be made from the last supper with Jesus and his disciples recorded in Luke 22:14-32. (See verses 17-20 quoted on page 13).

1) Notice that there were only thirteen men present. There were no women, no teens and no children. But the instructions that they had in Exodus indicated that women and children participated fully in their Passover service.

Furthermore, if Jewish history is accurate, boys of 13 and older could participate in services, actually reading the scripture. Just because there were no women, teens or children present does not mean they had no part in what Jesus was doing.

2) Notice what else happened during this service:

Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. ²⁵ And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves” (Luke 22:24-26).

Why strife among Christians? These twelve men were Christians—they were “followers of Christ”—but **they were not converted**, see Luke 22:32! The Spirit of God was with the apostles but it was not in them. They behaved accordingly.

The twelve apostles were not baptized in the name of Jesus, nor had they received the Holy spirit when they were taught to take the bread and wine as a symbol of His body and blood! So conversion is not required. You do not have to be perfect nor do you have to be converted to take these symbols.

3) Jesus taught them that they must be servants. This is an attitude and approach that Jesus wants all of us to have whether we are converted or unconverted. Jesus said this to twelve unconverted men. At this late point in His ministry, the apostles still did not understand some of the most basic elements of Christianity. They were unconverted, they were imperfect, yet Christ gave them these symbols of bread and wine because He knew that they still needed Him in the way that they could understand at that time!

But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves (Luke 22:26-27).

4) Fourthly, notice that an unconverted person can accomplish a great

deal! These men continued with Jesus' throughout His temptations! Of course He helped them. He was with them daily. Yet even though they were not converted and the Holy Spirit was not dwelling inside of them, they still accomplished some things, and Jesus commends them for that!

But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials (Luke 22:28).

5) The apostles were promised a reward **prior to their conversion**.

And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:29-30).

6) Peter was promised help from Jesus **prior to being converted**. Jesus helps those who are unconverted as well as those who are converted.

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren" (Luke 22:31-32).

Conversion is not necessary to be at a service, wash feet, or take the bread and wine—nor is perfect behavior necessary.

What Is Necessary?

If baptism and conversion are not necessary to take the bread and wine, then what is necessary? Fortunately we have a precise explanation from the Apostle Paul on this matter.

²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on **the same night in which He was betrayed** took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of

the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world (1Cor 11:23-32).

The scripture here is very clear. Anyone who wants to partake of this bread and wine that is symbolic of Christ's body and blood must do so in a worthy manner, and must examine themselves. The word "man" here is obviously a general term, otherwise women could not participate.

Some parent might think that they would not dare let their teen or child partake of the bread and wine, because if they were not in the right attitude, they could get sick or die from it. A parent should prevent a child from taking the bread and wine if he or she has only a frivolous interest or simply wants a snack. A parent should discuss the service with children long before it begins. But for children who are interested in living by the word of God, they need to realize that there are decisions they can make about their relationship with God that really do matter. Their parents' relationship with God will not save them—they need a relationship of their own. Children can examine themselves in their imperfect understanding, just like adults can in their imperfect understanding. Taking the bread and the wine is a positive, public act of saying "**I want Jesus**"—it is much more than "**going to a church that believes in Jesus**".

Under no circumstances should any young person (or old person) be pressured into partaking bread and wine. This defeats Paul's instruction for self examination. If a parent tells a child, "why don't you participate this year, all of the Smith children do", that parent is instructing the child to do it for social reasons rather than self examination and wanting to take in Jesus.

There is no reason to fear taking the bread and wine. Jesus is kind and merciful, and He knows exactly how much self-examination we are capable of.

The Bread and Wine, First Step in the Plan of Conversion

Whether you understand "the same night He was betrayed" (verse 23, above) to be the Passover or a separate service before the Passover, it is the first event of the sequence of God's Holy Days (Ex 12:2). Leaven (sin) is put out and unleavened bread is taken in for a week. Pentecost, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, comes later. It happens best in that order. The apostles took the bread and wine with Christ before they received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

When a young person takes part in these services with their parents, this helps deepen the resolve to obey God. It is one of a series of steps that will hopefully lead to the commitment of their entire life to God at baptism. Children need tangible steps along the way.


The common church of God practice of giving children almost nothing to do in Sabbath services, and completely excluding them from the bread and wine symbolically tells them that they are not important to God. That is not true. Many Sabbatharians can quote Acts 2:38, but do you know verse 39?

...Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children... (Acts 2:38-39).

Wanting to Follow Jesus

Young people should be encouraged to follow Jesus Christ. If **they** desire to take part in the bread and wine service, they should be encouraged to examine themselves, and allowed to take it. That is the pattern in the scriptures. They must do it in a worthy manner—desiring to obey God and wanting to follow Jesus Christ.

Sadly, many young people have no desire to follow Jesus Christ. Too many of our youth are swayed by society to follow this present evil world. Satan is clever. There probably will not be a stampede of young people to take the bread and wine this Passover season. But there will be a large number of our youth who will desire to follow Jesus Christ and who will want to live good lives.

Let children and teens come to Christ. Let children and teens take the bread and wine. Let them serve the Lord from their youth so that Jesus can use them later in His service! 

Was Herbert Armstrong a **PROPHET?**

Most dictionaries define a **prophet** as one who says divinely inspired things, often foretelling the future. A person who uses **human** knowledge to foretell the future is **predicting** the future.

As far as this writer knows, Herbert Armstrong never personally claimed that he was a prophet—he never claimed direct revelation from the Eternal or His angels either in person or by dream or vision. Yet he never claimed to predict the future by merely human understanding of the Bible. He frequently claimed to have divine understanding—and even used the accuracy of his prophetic understanding as authority for his work. He cited people, countries, dates, and events not directly found in the Bible, and foretold what would happen. He did not hesitate to call other Bible teachers “false prophets”—even though these teachers did not call themselves prophets.

But Herbert Armstrong taught much truth from the Bible that few others taught. This compelled many to listen and trust his prophetic understanding. Also, Mr. Armstrong claimed to be the head of God’s Church on earth. He signed his letters “in Jesus’ Name” and claimed the authority of God behind his teaching. Some of what he said actually came to pass—he certainly had some understanding of Bible prophecy. It is also possible that other things he said *will come to pass in the future*.

Unfortunately, many of the prophetic interpretations he gave simply did not come to pass. Others, if they do happen, will be at least 10 to 20 years later than he ever anticipated—time for much of a generation to die and a new one to arise. This would not be a disaster if he gave his prophetic understanding in terms of: “This is how I understand the Bible” or “This is my speculation”. To the contrary, he was dogmatic. Those who challenged his prophetic understanding or taught other understanding were often thrust out of his organization, which **was** the Body of Christ according to Armstrong.

While he did not claim to be a prophet, **the closest English word describing what he did is “prophecy”**. Below, we can see some of the

All quotations are the writings of Herbert Armstrong unless otherwise noted.

claims made for his accuracy in his own publications:

Plain Truth, December 1956, p. 3 (author uncertain): “This is how you can know who is preaching the truth today—when what he says comes to pass.... But who today understands what the prophets foretold? Why, only the ministers today whose word comes to pass!—those who are appointed and guided by God to preach the truth! Those whose utterances do not come to pass have not spoken the prophecies truly... But what we have been warning you about is happening!—precisely as we have stated... This is how you can know that our work is not of men but of God!”

Plain Truth, August, 1957 (Roderick Meredith): WHERE ARE God’s true prophets today?... Listen! This work has been warning America of *definite* and *tremendous* events to come for *many years!* The popular, denominationally-supported evangelists often... use the words ‘*may,*’ ‘*could,*’ or ‘*might.*’ They are *afraid* to be *definite* and *specific!* The truth of the matter is that they DARE NOT be specific about the future because they just DO NOT KNOW what the Bible says is going to happen! But on the World Tomorrow broadcast and in this magazine we have dared to unlock the Bible prophecies and apply them to *specific* nations and events that are NOW being affected.”

“Just What Do You Mean... KINGDOM OF GOD?” (1962): “If the deceived religionists who think the CHURCH is the Kingdom of God were right, and there is not going to be any supernatural and all-powerful WORLD GOVERNMENT which is the Kingdom of God, then humanity is utterly without HOPE—there will not remain a living human in 20 more years!... It’s about time you come to know who are the false prophets, and WHO is speaking the true word of God faithfully.”

Feb 1967 Plain Truth, page 47.

“The ‘Day of the Eternal’...is going to strike between five and 10 years from now!... I am not writing foolishly, but very soberly, on the authority of the living Christ.”

The “Day of the Eternal” has not arrived yet, after over 30 years from the time that Mr. Armstrong wrote the above. We must conclude that either something was wrong with Christ, or that Herbert Armstrong did not have His authority to make that statement.

Poor Predictions From the Start

Many people remember Herbert Armstrong’s *1975 in Prophecy* teaching which placed the Tribulation beginning in 1972 and the return of Christ in 1975. They have assumed (as I did at one time) that his main error was that he was “off” on this *one date*, but that he properly understood the flow of events. This is not the case. By reading his old letters, we can see that he gave several different dates for the return of Christ, and foretold numerous events that proved to be wrong.

The first regular issue of the Plain Truth, February 1934, page 3:

...we may be absolutely certain that we are in, and for about three years have been passing through, this great world-wide tribulation.... We have

Study Mr. Armstrong’s Writings for Yourself

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 resource materials 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 order a set of these CD-ROMs free of charge from the Web-site: www.herbertarmstrong.org/cdlist.html 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.*)

<p>1917-Jerusalem Delivered</p> <p>Tapering-off period of EMO of TIMES of the GENTILES</p> <p>"How it is high time to awake out of sleep; for NOW is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13:11)</p> <p>"Behold NOW is the day of Salvation." (II Cor. 6:2)</p>	1914	FALSE PROPHETS---thru whole age, now intensified. (Mat. 24:5; Rev. 6:2)
	1918	WARS---Culminating in th World War. (Mat. 24:6,7; Rev. 6:4)
	1928	FAMINES---Culminating in recent famine in Russia. (Mat. 24:7; Rev. 6:5,6)
<p>1936- END of AGE</p> <p>DAY of the LORD</p> <p>"In those days shall men seek death, and they shall not find it." (Rev. 9:6).</p> <p>"And the rest of the men repeated not." (Rev. 9:8)</p>	1928	PESTILENCES---Culminating in Flu epidemic. (Mat. 24:7; Rev. 6:8)
	1936	DEPRESSION
	1936	TRIBULATION---Nations in distress. A time of world-wide trouble such as never existed since the beginning of the world. (Mat. 24:21; Rev. 6:9-11; Dan. 12:1; Luke 21:25,26; etc.)
<p>DAY of the LORD</p> <p>KINGDOM of GOD</p> <p>PEACE ON EARTH</p>	1936	Continuing until
	Super-Natural PLAGUES	<p>← Sun and Moon Dark--Stars fall - (Mat. 24:29 - Rev. 6:12-13)</p> <p>← SIGN of the Son of Man (Mat. 24:30) Heavens depart as Scroll; Sealing of the 144,000 (Rev. 7) (Rev. 6:14)</p> <p>FIRST FOUR "TRUMPET" PLAGUES---Hurt the earth, sea, and trees. (Rev. 8)</p>
	WAR (Roman Empire)	<p>1st WOE---(Rev. 9:1-11)</p> <p>2nd WOE---(Rev. 9:13-21)</p> <p>The TWO WITNESSES and their testimony. (Rev. 11:3-14)</p> <p>3rd WOE---or the SEVEN LAST PLAGUES. (Rev. 11:14-18 and ch. 15,16)</p>
WAR (Russia vs. Great Britain and US)	<p>BATTLE of ARMAGEDDON (Rev. 16:16; 19:19) and</p> <p>SECOND COMING OF CHRIST (Rev. 19:11-16) and</p> <p>RESURRECTION OF THE JUST (Rev. 20:5; II Thes. 4:16; Dan. 12:2; I Cor. 15:52)</p>	
Super-natural PLAGUES (WAR Continues)	<p>The DEVIL CHAINED (Rev. 20:1-3); MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB (Rev. 19:7; Mat. 22:1-10; 25:1-13). NEW COVENANT MADE (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13)</p> <p>KINGDOM OF GOD Established on earth. (Luke 21:31; 13:28; Dan. 2:34-35,44; 7:27).</p>	

The Bridegroom came... and the door was SHUT! (Mat. 25:10)

MILLENNIUM 1,000 Years Begins

seen that the "day of His wrath" is the "Day of the Lord," which is a day of DESTRUCTION. WHO will be able to stand it? Will YOU, brother, sister? You can't escape it. It is just as CERTAIN as are all these other events which have happened right on schedule.

The fifth issue of the Plain Truth, June/July 1934, page 1: Most Bible students know, too, that the seventeenth chapter of Revelation tells us the ancient Roman Empire will once more be revived, this time by a federation of ten nations—and it will be the aggressor in war. But WHEN? How Soon? Before or after Russia precipitates war? What is the time when the two witnesses of Revelation 11 appear?

This chart from the June/July 1934 issue clearly shows that Herbert Armstrong believed that 1936 was the "END OF THE AGE" to be immediately followed by the heavenly signs and then the "Day of the Lord". Should we give Mr. Armstrong credit for understanding the interpretation of symbols and the order of events, even though his dates were wrong? As you can see in the above quote, Armstrong acknowledges that "most Bible students" understand the Roman Empire is portrayed in Revelation 17. Actually, Adam Clark identified the Roman Empire in Revelation

and numerous other prophecies—finishing his writing in 1825. About 100 years later, numerous popular religious teachers taught prophetic doctrines similar to Mr. Armstrong. You can read about them in books such as *Armageddon Now! The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel Since 1917* by Dwight Wilson, ©1977 Baker Book House, Grand Rapids Michigan. Their teachings would have been available as Herbert Armstrong was doing his famous six-month study in the fall of 1926. The revival of the Roman Empire, Mussolini's resurrection of it, 2520-year "times of the Gentiles" and other typical "Armstrong" doctrines can all be found in this book—taught **before** Mr. Armstrong taught them.

The greatest difference between the popular teachers of that time and Mr. Armstrong was that they acknowledged their speculation, but Armstrong tended to be dogmatic—said that he was right. As early as 1927, some of the writers realized that Mussolini might only be a precursor to "the Antichrist", but Mr. Armstrong kept on prophesying:

Plain Truth, March 1938, page 8:

Mussolini and the Pope will hatch up an idea between [them] of setting up a world headquarters at Jerusalem—and so Mussolini's armies will enter Palestine (Dan. 11:41), and eventually will capture just half of the city of Jerusalem! (Zech 14:2)

Plain Truth, January 1939, page 4: Mussolini will fight Christ!

Plain Truth, August 1939, page 6: Once war is resumed, it must continue on thru the great Tribulation, the heavenly signs, the plagues of the Day of the Lord, and to the second coming of Christ, at the last battle, at Armageddon!... But this you may know! This war will be ended by Christ's return! And war may start within six weeks! We are just that near Christ's coming!

Plain Truth, November/December 1940: Title on **page 1:** WAR Events Hurl On Toward *Prophesied* CLIMAX....

Page 2: It is part of God's prophesied plan that Britain shall be invaded and conquered...It is in the prophesied course of the War that the main fighting, eventually, shall be in the Mediterranean and in the near East. Both Palestine and Egypt are to fall.

Plain Truth, May/June 1941,

“Where There Is No Vision, The People Perish”

This quote, from Proverbs 29:18, was often repeated by Herbert Armstrong. He would talk about the vision of Winston Churchill and other leaders (sometimes including himself). His definition of "vision" matches my dictionary definition "2b(2)" (*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th edition): "unusual discernment or foresight". While human discernment and foresight in a leader greatly helps a leader serve his people, is that the kind of "vision" that this scripture is talking about?

The word "vision" in Proverbs 29:18 is translated from the Hebrew *chazone*, Strong's word #2377. It is used 35 times in the Old Testament, **always** translated "vision" in the KJV and means a **prophetic vision!** The first place it is used is in 1 Samuel 3:1: "...And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open **vision**" (KJV). Most uses of the word occur in the prophets: "The **vision** of Isaiah the son of Amoz..." (Isa 1:1), "Then they will seek a **vision** from a prophet... (Ezk 7:26), "...a **vision** appeared to me—to me, Daniel..." (Dan 8:1), "The **vision** of Obadiah..." (Obd 1:1), etc. The word is used when describing false prophecy: "...they prophesy to you a false vision" (Jer 14:14). But the Hebrew *chazone* never refers to human foresight as the English word "vision" can.

Proverbs 29:18 is clearly showing us that we need ongoing revelation from the Eternal—just as we see prophets functioning in the New Testament. To look to the human wisdom and foresight of human political and church leaders is a tragic mistake. How do we obtain a divine "vision" from the Eternal? The first thing that must be done is ask—"Yet you do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2). While we are waiting for an answer, we can continue to follow the written word of the Eternal that we know. Notice the Proverbs 29:18, NIV:

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.

page 2: [Article: Hitler's 1000-year Reich Plan:] There are to be three classes. The German's will be the ruling, executive, wealthy class, *in every nation*. The Germans also will be the only military class. Next under them will be a middle class, granted more privileges than the slave class. This middle class is to be made up of those nations whom Hitler accepts as the "Junior Partners" of the Reich. Already he is taking in a number of the junior partners. Probably Spain and Portugal soon will join. Probably Hitler himself does not know, now, how many of these junior partners he will accept, but BIBLE PROPHECY reveals it—and the number will be exactly TEN!...Hitler will be permitted to continue on—just so far, and no farther! He shall be permitted to tear down—for this present order of paganized civilization men love and fight and die for is not worth saving! It is DOOMED, and it is now toppling in its own self-imposed destruction! But these horrible events must soon reach their climax at ARMAGEDDON!

While it was good that Herbert Armstrong preached the need for individuals and nations to repent of their sin and turn to the Eternal, one can hardly say that his prophecies were from the Eternal. So many never came to pass! The above quote as well as much of his September/October 1941 issue said that the United States would be invaded and conquered unless there was massive public repentance. There was little public repentance, and God did not destroy this country or the "paganized civilization".

Not Better After World War II

After these prophecies failed to come to pass, did Mr. Armstrong apologize? No! His son, Garner Ted, later claimed that these prophecies were right: "It doesn't take an understanding of certain 'Bible doctrine,' or necessary agreement with it, to admit to yourself candidly that what Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong was faithfully proclaiming back before, during, and right at the close of World War II, and what he and others who have since come to join him in this great work of God have been proclaiming day in and

Internet Sites with Herbert Armstrong Materials

These sites contain Herbert Armstrong writings and other information about his work. They are largely favorable to him. You may need to prefix the name with "http://".

www.telear.com/~steveb/lesson.html
 web.singnet.com.sg/~wtanlh/auto.html
 web.singnet.com.sg/~wtanlh/ihp0.html
 www.valleylife.net/tcg/
 www.herbertwarmstrong.org/
 www.herbertwarmstrong.org/cdlist.html
 web.singnet.com.sg/~wtanlh/
 www.uponair.com/nationaleagle/index.htm
 www.ozemail.com.au/~davhill/hwa.htm
 home.sprynet.com/sprynet/pabco/
 www.tcog.org/
 www.hixnet.co.za/home/Mystery/USand
 BinP/contents.html
 www.geocities.com/SoHo/4392/index.html
 web.ukonline.co.uk/rt.taylor/gnweb.htm
 www.golden.net/~mtech/memorial/hwa/
 hwa.html
 www.toonville.com/wolvertoon/page6.html
 www.telear.com/~steveb/books.html
 www.datadepot.com/~hreimann/godorm
 ds.htm
 web.ukonline.co.uk/rt.taylor/guard-the-
 truth.htm
 www.herbertwarmstrong.org/
 www.hixnet.co.za/home/Mystery/
 miso.wwa.com/~curadist/ReferenceLibrary
 /Christianity/WCG/DJHill/readbook.htm
 web.ukonline.co.uk/rt.taylor/hwaradio.htm

The following sites are opposed to Mr. Armstrong's work in some way. Most are opposed to the abuse the authors received as members or ministers and to the lifestyle of Mr. Armstrong compared to New Testament examples. Unfortunately, in the process of rejecting the error of Mr. Armstrong, the authors of these sites have also rejected some of the truth he taught. They all contain some bitterness—the last two sites contain a lot. Much factual information is available, but you have to pick it out from that which is hearsay and opinion. And, if a negative attitude will trouble you, stay away!

members.aol.com/coving1d/index.html
 www.cybergate.com/~birone/arindex.htm
 www.quango.net/ekklesia/wcghistory_ind
 ex.htm
 members.tripod.com/~ejm/painful.htm
 members.macconnect.com/users/r/rod-
 neyo/thecult/links/hwalies.spml 

day out ever since—is actually happening before your very eyes!" (**Plain Truth, November 1962, page 21.**) Since Armstrong's ministry was growing faster than 30% per year during the 1950's and 1960's, most of the people joining it did not have access to the old Plain Truth magazines to find out if those old prophecies were true. Even after World War II ended, Mr. Armstrong kept prophesying a quick "end of the world", and used it as a reason why his listeners should send in ever-increasing amounts of money:

Co-worker Letter, December 8, 1947: The destruction of the United States of America is foretold in YOUR BIBLE. It is foretold by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Amos, Micah, and others. It was foretold by Jesus Christ Himself! But the worldly churches and their ministers, all divided into sects and denominations, bound by sectarian creeds and blinded by world-wide spiritual deception, deceived, by a devil who poses as GOD and has deceived the WHOLE WORLD—they do not understand the Bible, and do not perceive what is so clearly prophesied!

Yet this catastrophe is sweeping on toward an unsuspecting America with increasing momentum—and in a few years it will STRIKE—suddenly, unexpectedly! "AS A SNARE," said Jesus, will this SUDDEN DESTRUCTION come. Then it will be too late!

Listen, dear Co-Worker! To set your heart, your mind and interest now in the pursuits of THIS WORLD, or THIS LIFE,—to ignore this appeal, and this PRIVILEGE, to HELP TO YOUR VERY UTMOST in the closing work of God—to figure that you can't afford to spare anything now for God's cause because of OTHER worldly interests—is to enjoy a fool's paradise, and find yourself suddenly, when least expected, in just a few years, caught in the snare of this oncoming DESTRUCTION!

I tell you, ON THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST, IT IS COMING! Many of you NOW, are in financial condition to DO A LOT MORE than you are doing for GOD'S CAUSE—to help me get out this Message over the air, and in print—to help me train and prepare talented, able, consecrated young men and women for THEIR part in soon carrying this vital

message to THE ENTIRE WORLD—into EVERY NATION!

One consecrated co-worker and his wife are mortgaging their home in order to place a few more thousand dollars in this mighty work that more millions may be warned! At first I shrank from accepting money under such conditions—but when we remember that in a few years NONE OF US will be living in our present homes—EVERYTHING material we possess now will be swept away from us, and we shall then be either in that haven of safety under God's divine protection, or else dead or in slavery worse than death—and when we consider further that this brother and his wife are not deprived of their home, but merely PUTTING IT TO WORK FOR GOD'S GREAT CAUSE, while they enjoy it and live in it, too—then it appeared in a different light, and we could do nothing but accept it, to use it for God's honor and glory. WHO KNOWS? perhaps this one sacrifice on the part of this one man and wife may be the means to bringing MANY precious souls not only under God's divine protection in the TIME OF TROUBLE TO COME, but also into ETERNAL LIFE in God's Kingdom FOREVER!

The people who read the above letter did not witness the destruction of America in a few years. Most of them died at a good old age. If any eighteen-year-olds read that letter and are still alive now, they are 70 years old! The family that mortgaged their house may have died still in debt, but Herbert Armstrong died in 1986 with nearly half a billion dollars of paid-for assets in the Worldwide Church of God. Yet he made the above claim "ON THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST". What a disgrace to our Savior!

Armstrong and Herman Hoeh continued to make obviously un-inspired claims, some resembling tabloid newspapers or the worst of "conspiracy theorist" publications:

Plain Truth, August 1952, page 14 (Hoeh): One of the purposes of our trip to the Continent is to investigate the report that Hitler still directs the underground. Should this prove true, the pope, in order to secure world peace, would bring forth a "purged" Hitler—one now free of racial preju-

dice and one willing to submit to the Catholic Church—by uniting his “soul” with his body. The next Pope will be a professed miracle worker, a supposed proof that God is using him to order and pacify the world!

Plain Truth, August, 1952, page 1: *HITLER Did Not Die*; Adolph Hitler's fake suicide in his Berlin Bunker now is exposed as History's greatest hoax! Positive evidence comes to light Hitler did not die—here's new evidence that Hitler is alive, directing Nazi underground, today!

The next pope was Pope John XXIII. He never claimed to be a miracle worker and never tried to organize or pacify the world. The Hitler article showed that there was no reliable documentation of Hitler's death, but it utterly failed to offer one piece of evidence that Hitler was alive—no claims that people saw him, no documents by his hand, etc. The only reason a person would believe it is because they had faith in Herbert Armstrong. As you know, Hitler was never heard from again.

1975 in Prophecy

About 1953, Herbert Armstrong's and Herman Hoeh's prophetic studies led them to believe that the tribulation would begin in 1972 and that Christ would return in 1975. While many writings did not set specific dates, some certainly did. Other Plain Truth writers tended to set dates more than Armstrong, but he approved the content of his magazines, and never retracted or corrected these statements:

Plain Truth, January 1955, page 1 (Hoeh): We face a national catastrophe by 1975...we will be totally consumed and carried away captive to other nations as slaves within twenty years.

Same article, page 15: Only remember that if you do not square yourself with the Almighty Ruler of the universe, that He will collect from you all your past obligations by casting you out of your very own home. These are strong words, but they are true. God Almighty has spoken through His servants the prophets that He will punish our people for their sins. He will let our own lust cause such droughts, floods, pestilences and famines that we will be totally consumed and carried away

captive to other nations as slaves within 20 years... Tithing is God's challenge! Are YOU going to practice what He commands you? It is your only protection from the coming disaster that faces our nation.

Plain Truth, November 1956, page 3 (Hoeh):...millions of Christians in the United States and Britain will be MARTYRED—and that within the next 16 years!

Co-worker letter, July 5, 1960: Up to now, western Europe has relied on United States power to hold back the Red avalanche. NOW THE PRIDE OF OUR POWER IS BEING BROKEN. Other nations are fast losing faith in it.

Reds are now shouting, for the first time, “The United States is clearly defeated. It is already wobbly as a world power.” As soon as western European nations begin to really believe that, they will UNITE. And when they do, says GOD in His prophecies, they will turn first on OUR PEOPLES! My job, now, is to WARN YOU, my dear friends—and to warn the whole world. THIS IS REAL. And this is by authority of Jesus Christ!

In reality, the USA remained the strongest military power for almost 40 years, and the communists (reds) collapsed of their own accord.

Co-worker letter, October 27, 1963: But IS GOD'S WORK keeping pace with world events? INDEED IT IS! God Almighty is moving this—His Work—forward at ever-increasing momentum. We may now have only eight or nine more years to FINISH His Work!

The United States and the British Commonwealth in Prophecy, 1967 edition, page xii: The events prophesied to strike the British and American peoples in the next four to seven years are SURE! ... These colossal world events, shrinking the first two world wars into insignificance, WILL COME, on schedule.

Co-worker letter, April 17, 1967: Right now, just prior by not more than five to seven years, to the coming terrible Day of the Lord, the living Christ has moved swiftly to open the all-important door that has been closed since the days of the original apostles!... Almighty God has opened to the World Tomorrow [broadcast],

Divine Revelation of a “Place of Safety”?

Many “Church of God” groups tell their members that God will give them a supernatural revelation when it is time to flee to a place of safety. Some go as far as saying or implying that other groups will not have such a revelation and may therefore suffer the Great Tribulation. Obviously, the Eternal may reveal anything He chooses to any group or individual whenever He chooses.

But should you stake the life of you and your family on such an anticipated revelation? **Have these groups ever had any kind of revelation before?** This is a very important question. Most “Church of God” groups freely admit to not having any specific revelation—even when it comes to making important decisions for their organization. There are many cases where a program will be started, or a man will be appointed/elected to an important job, then several months later the program was scrapped or the man was removed from his job. In some cases, men have been removed from jobs in order to “preserve the unity” of a church group, but the result was a split in the group.

If the leaders in these groups are not close enough to the Eternal to receive divine guidance for important internal decisions, can we rely on them for deliverance during a global calamity?

exclusively, the gigantic door of superpower radio from Jerusalem!... We have signed with the Hashemite Government of Jordan, a five year binding contract... And when the time came, to whom did God open up these precious radio facilities? Not to Roman Catholics... nor to Protestants! Nor the Coptics... No, He has opened it exclusively, by binding contract with the government of Jordan, to His Work... If you ever had any doubts whatever about where the real Work of God is, you ought to be sure now!

If Mr. Armstrong was staking his proof of “where the real Work of God is” on a Mideast broadcast, then he was not the “Work of God.” Less than two months later (June 5, 1967), the “Six-

Day War” began and the Jordanian radio station was taken by the Israelis. His contract was not honored and he never did have a Mideast broadcast. Even more dramatic proof that Mr. Armstrong’s pronouncements were not inspired by the Eternal can be found here:

Co-worker Letter, December 13, 1965: But Jesus Christ is speeding this Work right along ON SCHEDULE!... If world events had reached their climax even five years ago—where humanity would have been erased from this earth except by the second coming of Christ—THERE WOULD NOT THEN HAVE BEEN ENOUGH OF THE “ELECT” TO HAVE SAVED HUMANITY—according to Jesus’ prophecy of Matthew 24.

But now this Work is gaining such momentum that, indeed, it does now appear that IF that fatal climax should be reached in, say, five, six or seven years, THERE WILL BE ENOUGH! Humanity WILL BE SAVED! The WORLD TOMORROW WILL DAWN—a world of PEACE, of happiness, of good health, of ABUNDANCE! Co-Workers, YOU AND I are privileged to HAVE A PART, with Christ, and under Christ, in SAVING THE WORLD!

Herbert Armstrong here places his “work” nearly on the same level as Christ. He is saying that his work was necessary for the salvation of the world. How did he “know” that some number of people were necessary in order for the Eternal to spare the world? The Bible does not say. Did the Eternal tell him? How does this fit with his prophecies of Christ’s return in the 1930s and 40s when he had far fewer followers? How does this fit with his work continuing for another 20 years?

But as you well know, the Tribulation did not begin in 1972, and Christ did not return in 1975. Did Herbert Armstrong apologize for his inaccurate prophecies, or speaking as if God inspired his every decision? He claimed not to set dates—and that might be true if we assumed that his readers could not add. **But most of his readers could add**, so when they read a 1956 article that said the Tribulation would come in 16 years, they knew he was saying 1972. When many thousands of people read the 1967 edition of the US & BC in prophecy, they could add “4 to 7” years to 1967 and cal-

culate the prophecy to be for 1971 to 1974. But when a man is the head of an organization with members that regard it as the “one true Church”, they tend to believe what he says, even if it denies his former statements:

Tomorrow’s World, February 1972, page 31: “We do not set dates!... Yet in our human zeal and enthusiasm for getting this greatest mission on earth done, we have a few times come close to it, or appeared to—and that we deeply regret... if we... appear to set a date, I feel I do not need to apologize!”

How does one “appear to” set a date but actually not set a date? And if there is nothing wrong with “appearing to” set a date, why would one “regret” it? And if one does something that one “regrets”, what is wrong with apologizing to the people offended? Many people in the WCG made personal and business decisions based on Mr. Armstrong’s prophetic time table—though they thought they were doing it based on the word of God.

Sometimes, Mr. Armstrong reversed his speculations in a very short time:

Co-worker letter, February 25, 1982: “I hope to arrange for the use of Petra as a possible refuge or place of safety during the Great Tribulation when I see King Hussein. Pray for this please.”

Co-worker letter, July 16, 1982: Incidentally, I know many of you seem to have your hearts set on going very soon to Petra as “the place of safety” during the soon-coming Great Tribulation. Well, GET YOUR MINDS OFF PETRA. Brethren, I HAVE NEVER said that Petra definitely is the place of protection where God will take us. I HOPE IT IS NOT!

In the the first letter they were asked to pray **for** Petra as a place of safety that Mr. Armstrong “hoped to arrange”. Five months later they were told to get their minds off it, and that he “hoped it is not” the place of safety.

Many, Many More

In our study of Herbert Armstrong’s writings, we found many other specific predictions that did not come to pass. We would fill this entire issue if we tried to list them all. We also found numerous predictions with an approximate fulfillment time: “next few years”, “very

soon”, “your lifetime”, etc. Yet the events have not happened 20, 40, or 60 years after such predictions were made.

There were a few, undated prophecies that did come to pass (reunification of Germany, etc.). However, they seemed greatly outnumbered by the ones that did not come to pass.

As time went on, Herbert Armstrong and the other writers clearly tried to “set dates” less. There were often long, graphic, dogmatic explanations of Bible prophecies followed by a statement such as “this *might* occur in three to five years and you need to be ready for it”. It would take many hundreds of pages to reprint all of these “might or may” prophecies. It was clear that these writings were intended to stir the emotion of the reader as if they were sure that it would come to pass in specified time, without risking ridicule if they did not come to pass on time.

But is this an honest way to deal with prophecy? Is it a righteous thing to write a prophecy so that the reader can easily assume that the writer thinks that the dates are inspired of God even though they have a “might or may” escape clause buried somewhere at the end? Is it right to ask people to give their last dollar because the end “might” be near?

Prophecy to “Keep Us Diligent”?

Were Armstrong’s faulty prophecies allowed by the Eternal to keep believers diligent? Some say that the Eternal could have brought Armstrong’s prophecies to pass, but He decided not to do it so some people could have more time to repent. Others say that people needed to be continually told that the end would come in a few years so that they would be diligent. What does the Eternal say?

...when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him (Deut 18:22).

It is very clear that the Eternal did not give Mr. Armstrong his false prophecies! If the Eternal would have spoken to him, his specific statements would have come to pass. Remember, Mr. Armstrong signed nearly every one of his letters and “personals” with the words “in Jesus’ Name”.

Did Apostles Prophecy Falsely?

Yet some will claim that there is nothing wrong with incorrectly saying that Christ will come soon because the first century apostles did it, too. Some of the New Testament letters do indicate that the apostles thought that Christ *could* come in their lifetime, but there were some very distinct differences between their approach and Mr. Armstrong's approach. The following are all the scriptures this writer could find where the apostles indicate Christ's return could be very soon:

But this I say, brethren, the **time is short**, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none. But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you (1Cor 7:29).

Behold, I tell you a mystery: **We shall not all sleep**, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and **we shall be changed** (1Cor 15:51-52).

Let your gentleness be known to all men. **The Lord is at hand** (Phil 4:5).

For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive and remain until the coming** of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then **we who are alive and remain shall be caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord (1Thes 4:15-17).

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more **as you see the Day approaching**.... "For yet a little while, *And He who is coming will come and will not tarry*" (Heb 10:25,37).

You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for **the coming of the Lord is at hand** (James 5:8).

But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers (1Pet 4:7).

Little children, **it is the last hour**; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour (1Jn 2:18).

He which testifieth these things saith, **Surely I come quickly**. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus (Rev 22:20).

These statements differ from Armstrong's statements in several significant ways.

1. No time elements were mentioned at all—no periods of months, years or decades. The references to "we who are alive" were not specific to any individual. While the apostles may not have known it, the Eternal was inspiring scripture to be written to a larger audience. He let the apostles write "we who are alive" so that each generation would think about being ready. John's expression "last hour" means a general time, not implying an hour, day, or even year.

2. No specific people, events, or Old Testament prophecies are falsely identified. No person is identified as the "abomination of desolation", no years are added up from the book of Daniel, and they did not claim to explain Christ's prophecy in Matthew 24.

3. The apostles did not use the closeness of Christ's coming to get people to send them more money—something Herbert Armstrong did over 100 times. Most of the things that the apostles suggested to do because "the end is near" are spiritual things that are good to do any time. The one physical matter suggested by Paul is that people not marry (1Cor 7:29). But, Paul was very careful to say that it was only **his opinion** ("But this I say"), and to make clear that marrying was not a sin. (This is a great contrast to Mr. Armstrong, who threatened people with the Great Tribulation or the Lake of Fire for not contributing enough—see pages 21 and 28-29 of this issue.)

4. Something really big **did happen** a few years after the apostles wrote the above statements. While the final "great tribulation" did not occur at that time, the 70 A.D. destruction of Jerusalem by fighting Jewish gangs (and finally the Romans) did occur in the lifetime of most who read the Apostle's writings. Some believers were certainly killed at this time—for them, Christ returned as their next waking moment will be with

him (2Cor 5:8). For those in Israel who lived, it probably was the greatest tribulation of their lives.

5. Since the apostles had no prophecies of specific events, all of what they said about the Kingdom being "at hand" or "coming quickly" can be understood in a personal sense—to those who die, it is coming for them.

Christ gave his disciples no hint of the year when He would return. They certainly might have "let down" if they knew it was 2000 years away. But even though they hoped His return would be soon, they did not make false predictions. Christ's prophecies in Matthew 24 were dual—many being fulfilled to some degree in the first century and all to be fulfilled in the end. Christ did not explain this to them, and much of prophecy is still hidden to most people. Nevertheless, the apostles did not prophesy error in the name of Christ.

Conclusion

Many of the **doctrines** HWA taught were correct. This caused many to trust him in other areas—one of which was prophecy. But with his record available for all to see, can we expect anyone to believe any prophecy just because Mr. Armstrong taught it? Certainly not! Once we see that the Eternal did not inspire a substantial part of Mr. Armstrong's work, can we expect anyone to believe a doctrine just because Herbert Armstrong taught it? The answers are obviously "No". Anyone who is going to teach prophecy in the future must do it from the Bible and from any revelation genuinely given to them by the Eternal.

The main reasons that so many people believed Armstrong's prophetic interpretations for so many years was because it appeared to be possible, because **he** seemed to believe it, because so many others believed it, and because everyone in the WCG was forbidden to read or write about his prophetic mistakes.

We can be thankful for those things that we learned from Herbert Armstrong that were true. However, any prophecy or doctrine we teach now must be substantiated from the Bible. The Bible has a very good reputation. Herbert Armstrong died with a very muddy reputation—one that will not be cleared up until the resurrection and judgment.

—Norman S. Edwards

FINANCING THE WCG,

a Work of Faith?

Herbert Armstrong wrote a massive number of member and co-worker letters—we have 618 of them from 1934 to 1986. Some of them were called “The Bulletin” or “Co-Workers Bulletin”, but their style and purpose was the same throughout his ministry. Some were only a few pages long, but many were 10 pages or more. It was in these letters that Herbert Armstrong communicated financial requests with **church members and co-workers**—his contributing followers. He did not ask for money from “the public”.

However, a co-worker was often not far removed from the public. If a person asked for two booklets within a few months and sent in a few dollars to help defray the cost, he or she would probably be sent a letter asking if they wanted to receive co-worker letters—which would include “news and financial needs of the work.”. What they began receiving was often a shock. But in the 1940s and 50s, co-workers greatly outnumbered members and were responsible for most of Armstrong’s income. This gradually declined, and at Herbert Armstrong’s death in 1986, there were about the same number of co-workers as members but the co-workers supplied only a fraction of the income

The main thrust of most of Mr. Armstrong’s co-worker letters was events of “the work”. The stories of his successes have been recounted many times in his autobiography and other Worldwide Church of God literature. What is *not* often told is the story of **the incredible number of requests for money made to co-workers**—along with the vast array of methods employed to get them to give. **This article attempts to summarize that story.** If you would like to read the let-

ters for yourself, ask for our *Herbert Armstrong Co-Worker Letter Reprints*.

Of his 618 letters, 525 mention financing in some way. The word “offer- ing(s)” appears in 423 letters, “money” in 378 and “tithes” in 376. No small number of letters were primarily emergency appeals for finances. Over 100 letters contain the word “emergency”. Other frequent phrases are:

# of letters	phrase
114	“air mail” [requested way to send money]
106	“thousand dollars”
91	“special offering”
82	“generous offerings”
74	“return mail” [another way to send money]
52	“urgent need”
50	“pledge”
48	“more money”
29	“regular tithes”
29	“great(est) need”
29	“large(st) offering”
19	“financial crisis
19	“save the work”

By contrast, nearly every letter also mentioned prayer and praying for “the work”. Phrases about the Eternal’s power appear in many letters: “Holy Spirit” is in 134 letters and “Spirit of God” or “God’s spirit” in 128 letters, and “power of God/Christ/Jesus” in 77 letters. “Work of faith” is in 15 letters. **But the number of words about money greatly exceed those about prayer and the power of God.** “Praying for more money” and “for others to send more money” were frequent themes.

It would require hundreds of hours to read all of Mr. Armstrong’s letters and to precisely analyze how much time he spent on each subject. But one thing is certain: A few of his longest co-worker letters contain more words on the subject of “financing the work” than can be found in the entire New Testament. Nearly all scriptures about financing the New Testament ministry are printed in the first five pages of

How Do We Give to the Eternal? (available free from *Servants’ News*). The New Testament does not record one case where some evangelistic activity was not accomplished due to lack of funds. It clearly shows that the Spirit of the Eternal directed the activities, and that The Eternal would provide for physical necessities.

Requests for Money:

From the Eternal or From a Man?

Herbert Armstrong clearly did not learn his money-asking methods from the New Testament, but was it God’s will for him to request all that money so he could do a “big work” and warn and reach a lot of people? **Many of the groups which have come out of the Worldwide Church of God want to continue using his methods.** Indeed, some justify using his methods by saying his “big work” is proof that God was with him—though these same people would probably reject that reasoning if it were used as proof that the Seventh Day Adventist or some other “work” was of God. But lacking any clear divine revelation or statement in the Bible about Mr. Armstrong’s work, **we must understand the methods that he used to finance his work from his letters, and compare them to the Scriptures.**

While Mr. Armstrong never claimed that the Eternal gave him the words to say in his letters, he did claim that Jesus Christ supported the overall content. Nearly all of the letters were signed “in Jesus’ name” or “In Christ’s name”. A few were signed “In Christ’s Service”. What does it mean to write or do something “in Christ’s name”? This is how Mr. Armstrong understood it:

To ask for anything in prayer, or to do or perform anything, IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, is to ask or do it BY HIS AUTHORITY. It is to act for Him. To do it for Him, in His stead. It is acting as if by power of attorney to act FOR Him (*All About Water Baptism* (1972).

Herbert Armstrong clearly told his

We must thank Don Tiger and those who worked with him to put this information on CD-ROM (see box on page 17). This research would have been much more difficult without this resource.

readers that what he wrote in his letters had the authority of Jesus Christ. So what, then, did he write in his letters? This article will summarize the major points about financing in his letters, supporting them with quotations from his letters. In most cases, we had to choose from **many** quotations with essentially the same message.

Tithes, Offerings & More Offerings

Mr. Armstrong always clearly stated that the offerings and urgent needs he was requesting were to be “over and above” regular tithes and offerings. The phrase “over and above” occurs 50 times in his letters:

April 5, 1945: So I now ask MORE OF YOU to send in pledges, (as God makes possible) for weekly or monthly offerings over and above your REGULAR offerings, or tithes, for the rest of the work in general.

June 24, 1952: However, the regular work must not suffer because of this special project. Don't put any money into it you would have put into the Gospel Work. Be sure that whatever you send for this project is an extra, special, additional contribution, over and above your tithe and regular offerings. But the need is URGENT, and IMMEDIATE!

March 30, 1967: He PROSPERS those who pay into HIS WORK their TITHE—which is the first tenth of actual gross income—the same income on which you pay income tax. And God Himself does expect free will offerings beside from us all—according to our circumstances and ability, of course!

Mr. Armstrong strongly suggested that brethren could be killed by God for mixing up their categories of giving:

May 5, 1969: Now about the annual Holy Day offerings.

I am discouraged and sorely disheartened, Brethren, because THE FACTS ARE that on these seven occasions, the receipt of money at Headquarters to carry on the Work of God drops off AS MUCH as the amount put into these offerings! That can only mean one thing! Most of you Brethren are NOT putting in ANY real special Holy Day offering at all, but instead taking what otherwise would have been mailed in-as tithes and normal offerings-and putting

THAT into the Holy Day offering!

Brethren I wonder if that is not doing almost exactly what Ananias and Sapphira did! Please read that again-it is in Acts 5:1-11. They professed that they put in the amount they sold their property for. Peter said THEY LIED to THE HOLY SPIRIT. They DROPPED DEAD! If YOU profess that what you put in the Holy Day offering is a SPECIAL HOLY DAY OFFERING, when it is only a regular offering, is not that about the same thing? Brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ I say I WOULD BE AFRAID to do such a thing!

It is interesting to compare this warning with the Worldwide Church of God use of funds: Third tithe was used, at times, for expensive mansions and jet fuel. Excess second tithe and “tithe of tithe” were not always used for festivals or assistance, but simply put back into the WCG general fund. Mr. Armstrong does not seem to consider that his co-workers may have already been giving everything they had available on a regular basis, so they could not come up with extra for Holy Day offerings. He continually encouraged them to send in anything that they had available “right now” by air-mail.

December 20, 1934: Will GOD'S PEOPLE be willing now to GIVE TILL IT HURTS—to GIVE UP THINGS—to SACRIFICE—that many may be saved for eternity? The night is far spent! Jesus is SOON COMING! The MILLIONS are not awake! We must WARN THEM!

Think, now, of some of the material things you plan to buy. Then think of the “stars in your crown” that God will add FOR ETERNITY if you will sacrifice it and use that money to GET THE PURE GOSPEL TRUTH TO THIS VAST MULTITUDE!

August 23, 1945: But please do not neglect to send, by return mail, all you possibly can for the regular work which must KEEP GOING!

December 8, 1947: This work needs your greatest sacrifice—it needs all you and every other co-worker can give. It needs MORE than you can give...

We also must realize that Mr. Armstrong was not asking only the well-off to give out of their abundance, but the poor. “Widow's mites” are

mentioned in 98 of his letters. He was careful to point out that widows should give *more than one* mite:

November 20, 1945: Co-Workers, I have to appeal to you now—this greatly-multiplied program is NOW GOING OUT—we need the widow's mites IN LARGE NUMBER now as never before—from many who may not be able to send in more, and have sent nothing for some time!

June 9, 1947: I know that, while MOST of our Co-Workers are in poor economic circumstances and can send only the “widow's MITES”—notice it was “MITES,” not just one “mite,”—and while it is these many small amounts of a couple dollars, or a five or ten, that are the very BACKBONE OF THIS WORK...

March 30, 1969: Remember that even the widow's mites HELP GREATLY in this Work.

If You Cannot Give It, Loan It

When it became clear that co-workers could not give enough money, Herbert Armstrong also asked for monetary loans, a practice never used in Scripture to support the Eternal's work (an axe was borrowed in 2Kngs 6:5, but not money).

October 29, 1947: Now, even at greatest sacrifice by all, I realize that we are not going to be able to raise all this money quickly enough by tithes, offerings, and gifts. A few of our co-workers have helped us up to now by LOANING us money they have felt they could not GIVE. Some have said they may never need to take the money back, but in case they do need it, they have our note and guarantee it will be promptly repaid. One or two had money saved up they may need a year or two from now, and they have placed this money at our disposal to help us over this terrible emergency, letting their money WORK FOR GOD now, to be repaid to them, if, and when they will need it, later. One has borrowed money on some property he owned, and we are making the payments to him to pay his bank, as the payments and interest come due. Some have sold bonds, or securities, and loaned us the cash, to be paid back in the manner that fits the

needs of each one in each case. We need now to borrow several thousand dollars more on this basis. In each case I give the lender a note, binding the Radio Church of God, incorporated, to repay on whatever terms are agreed upon, as fit the need of the lender.

Numerous co-worker letters continue to talk about these loans and the complex circumstances surrounding their repayment. Can anyone imagine Christ or the apostles talking about borrowing money to board a ship to preach the Gospel, and hoping to pay the loan back with money they received from the city they visited? But Mr. Armstrong kept asking for private loans through his co-worker letter of December 29, 1969. After this time, Mr. Armstrong writes about obtaining loans from banks and insurance companies. Why the change? One possibility is that by that time the WCG had so much real estate that it could easily obtain bank loans. It is also possible that the members realized that Mr. Armstrong planned **not** to pay back most of those loans:

March 30, 1969: Now WE knew, from years of experience, that only about 20% of these loans would be demanded for repayment—80% eventually would be converted to donations. But a banker examining our financial statement would not know that. Actually, we maintained a 20% cash reserve to back up these loans. Actually our practice was TWICE AS SAFE as bank practice. But we cannot afford to have it LOOK unsound. God's Work MUST NOT BE BROUGHT INTO DISCREDIT by any act or oversight of ours!

So I have had to ask all of you who can to cancel out your loans by converting them into donations or freewill offerings. And, if you simply CANNOT do that at this time, to convert them into FIVE-YEAR loans instead of demand loans—that is, we would not be legally bound to repay more than 20% in any one year. I have explained that, IF an unexpected emergency should arise and you should seriously need more than 20% at any time, we would try to accommodate you and do the best we could, at our own discretion—but without legal obligation.

In reality, Mr. Armstrong's practice

was not "twice as safe as bank practice". Mr. Armstrong may have kept 20% in reserve where banks only kept 10%, but banks invested the other 90% of their money anticipating all of it back, whereas Mr. Armstrong spent the other 80% of his money. If a bank ran short of money, it could sell its investments to pay off its loans. But Mr. Armstrong was simply relying on new contributions to pay off old loans. He never once hinted that he would sell assets of his work in order to repay loans.

As it was, the old loan program was replaced by a new kind of loan program. This time, members were asked to borrow the money from their banks, and then give it to the WCG. The letter on the next page tells the story. Notice the underlined portions, where members are given some possible lies to tell their bankers about why they wanted these loans. Notice also that a member must be sure that this loan will not cut into his normal giving. And finally, notice that this was directed toward members who had so little money that they might have to take out a loan to buy a TV or dishwasher. They were expected to forgo these items so the work could...could do what? The letter does not say exactly what the need was for—just "IMMEDIATE CASH". While Mr. Armstrong and Stanley Rader probably did borrow \$5000 from a bank, it is unlikely that they would have needed to. Their salaries were both over \$100,000 per year and later disclosures indicated that both had personal savings of many thousands. **They did not go without a TV, dishwasher or limousine to help "save the work"**..

The Advertising Man At Work

Mr. Armstrong often said that God used him to do "the work" because he was an advertising man who knew how to reach people. This may be true. On the other hand, it may have been a big problem in that his advertising skill attracted many people to his organization when they had no real relationship with God. What is evident, though, is Mr. Armstrong's advertising skill in asking for contributions. He used an incredible number of methods, varying from one letter to the next—sometimes contradicting himself.

His most common approach was to mix in "exciting news of the work"

with "praise for what co-workers had already done" with "desperate needs for money if the work was to continue". These letters appeared to be heart-felt and believable, especially since the reader was learning Bible truth from Armstrong's organization and had a natural tendency to want to believe them. But when examined historically, many of these heart-felt and believable items seem to be little more than marketing ploys. It is clear that he rated the effectiveness of his letters by how much money they brought back:

June 9, 1947: I sent out a very special emergency letter. The response was splendid, and in three weeks two thirds of that indebtedness was paid. But then tithes and offerings began to fall off again. The last BULLETIN helped a little, but we have been just barely holding our own with week-to-week expenses.

Mr. Armstrong said "the last BULLETIN helped", but it really was the people who helped.

One of the most common techniques Mr. Armstrong used to increase contributions was "visualization"—making the instruction so clear that a person has nothing left to think about; they know that they could do it now. Advertisers know that a sale delayed so the customer can "think about it" is often a "lost sale". In over 100 letters, Mr. Armstrong suggested specific amounts that a co-worker could give:

December 20, 1934: Some will be able to contribute only 25 cents or 50 cents a month. God will bless it, if you cannot send more. But the number who subscribe will necessarily be SMALL—so that unless everyone who possibly can subscribe MORE than a dollar a month—say \$5, or \$10—this wonderful campaign for God will fail.

August 23, 1945: ...I have sufficient faith in God to believe this BULLETIN will be read by someone—perhaps only ONE—who has the ability, if God makes the heart willing, to supply for this purpose a sum of between one and two hundred thousand dollars. And perhaps one or two others able to put in \$35,000 to \$50,000. I believe there will be a few more who can manage to place at our disposal from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Continued on page 28

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
 WORLD HEADQUARTERS
 PASADENA, CALIFORNIA
 HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
 PRESIDENT and PASTOR
 March 30, 1970

Dear Brethren in God's Church:

I am forced to write you with a very heavy heart. For more than a year our nation has been in a financial recession. No one wanted to call it that. There are signs that an upturn is already started, and it may soon be over. Most bankers and businessmen have called it a "tight money situation" instead of using the term "recession," or the more frightening term "depression."

It has hurt the Work of God SERIOUSLY! I have not wanted to tell you. Up to now we have weathered the storm by wise business management, and several times last year, and twice already this year, making cuts in our budget that looked as if they would be sufficient.

But now I have to come to you with the frank statement that drastic action must be taken. About ten days ago I took drastic action—but it was not enough. I started at the top. I made a 20% cut in salary of all top-salaried officials, including evangelist-rank ministers, and a 15% cut in all pastor-rank ministers. Because this would have put several pastor-rank ministers lower than some preaching elders, certain adjustments had to be made in that. I put our airplanes up for immediate sale.

However, this very recession has slowed purchase of planes to a standstill and selling may be difficult.

Next, I have had to reduce publication of *THE PLAIN TRUTH, TOMORROW'S WORLD*, and *THE GOOD NEWS* to every-other-month. Next, I have had to cancel off entirely several radio stations, and to reduce most of the rest to one broadcast a week until October.

BUT THOSE CUT-BACKS WERE NOT ENOUGH. And in the long run they will hurt the Work. We received another very substantial reduction in our cash outgo the other day when our bank further showed their confidence in us by agreeing to let us reduce our monthly payments which remain on our recent building program by cutting the payments IN HALF.

But that still is not enough. We are making reductions in operating expenses in every department of this Work where it is possible. We now (with these reductions being made) have reduced our budget to a point even with income.

But that still is not enough. The BIG

Exact Reprint of Letter (with underlining added)

immediate need is extra cash funds—NOW—IMMEDIATE!

For this I am going to ask all of God's people to do one thing, and all who can and are willing to do one other thing.

The first is, that I am calling for a full day of FASTING AND PRAYER FOR THIS WORK FOR THIS SABBATH, April 4th. That, Brethren, can do more to help this situation than anything else—IF we really take this seriously to heart, and PUT OUR HEARTS INTO OUR PRAYERS in real earnest, and in FAITH BELIEVING!

The second I ask of all who can and are willing. This was suggested this afternoon by Mr. Stanley Rader, our legal counsel and financial adviser. It is that those in position to do so, if willing to do your part for God's Work in this immediate crisis, go to your local bank and borrow whatever you are able—from \$100 to \$1,000. Some will be able to borrow no more than \$100. Many will not be able to borrow that. If not, please don't think you need to write in explaining why—we here at Headquarters UNDERSTAND many are unable—and we do not expect those unable to do it. But that is all the more reason why those of us who ARE ABLE will, I hope, be willing to borrow whatever you can—some can borrow \$200, some \$500, some \$1,000.

Most bankers will ask why you want it. There could be many needs at this season—income tax payments coming up—you are short of funds temporarily—or just tell him you want to make a special donation to your Church. For those who can and will do this, borrow merely on your signature—don't mortgage anything—whatever you are able, to be paid back monthly. And you should not obligate yourself to monthly payments except what you will be able to pay OVER AND ABOVE tithes and offerings for the Work—so that it does not lower the income for the Work through the rest of the year. IF you can pay only \$5 to \$8 per month to the bank repaying the loan, you should be able to borrow around \$100. If you can pay \$10 or \$15 per month in repayments, then you could borrow \$200, etc.

Mr. Rader, Mr. Portune and I were discussing this crisis at lunch, and Mr. Rader said he would go to his bank and borrow \$5,000 to start this plan going. I felt I was the one to set the example, so immediately this afternoon I beat him to it.

I know that many of our members do,

from time to time, buy such things as a new TV set, or dishwasher, on monthly payments. Perhaps some will want to put off such a purchase and let those monthly payments go to repay a loan at the bank that will supply God's Work with IMMEDIATE CASH, which is the serious IMMEDIATE NEED.

If some of you feel you are not in a position to take part in this plan for IMMEDIATE extra cash to the Work, or feel you don't want to, there's no need to explain—I do not expect it unless you really want to and are able. I'm not "high pressuring" you to do this. But I recognize Mr. Rader's suggestion as a plan that I feel will give the immediate financial "shot in the arm" that GOD'S WORK SERIOUSLY NEEDS right now. And I have participated to the best of my ability, and Mr. Portune will, and all of God's leading ministers and executives here at Headquarters.

We felt many of you Brethren would be willing and glad to make this sacrifice of borrowing whatever you are able, giving it to the Work, and paying it back monthly yourself—IN ADDITION to continuing to send in your tithes and offerings.

Brethren, TOGETHER we can really do WONDERS. Through the power of earnest and believing PRAYER with fasting, especially.

Please REMEMBER the immediate serious NEED of God's Work by FASTING AND PRAYER! For this IS serious—the MOST serious crisis since 1947 and 1948. A number of Brethren came to the aid of the Work then with from \$1,000 to several thousand each. There are a thousand times as many of us today. Can we do as well proportionately today?

This is the greatest Work on earth today. MILLIONS listen to the broadcast; MILLIONS read *THE PLAIN TRUTH*—and more than a half million now read the deepest, MOST POWERFUL spiritual and Biblical articles ever written in *TOMORROW'S WORLD*.

Our new expansion program for *THE PLAIN TRUTH* and *TOMORROW'S WORLD* are working wonderfully. We are reaching many HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS we could never have reached before. *THE LIVING CHRIST IS BLESSING IT GREATLY.*

How much are WE willing to do to HELP IT, and KEEP IT GROWING?

With love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

“Financing WCG” from page 26

There are, I'm sure, still more who can, if willing, find a way to contribute sums of \$100, \$250, or \$500.

As the years went by, the numbers kept getting bigger. But is believing someone else will give huge amounts of money, faith in God? Or is it tempting God? If someone gave an amount between \$51,000 and \$99,000, would Mr. Armstrong reject it because it did not fit his above statement? Or, is this statement just a hope that a wealthy person reading this letter would have one of these amounts at his disposal and then think that it was God's will for him to give it? Or, is the purpose of this statement to make slightly wealthy people who cannot give the largest amounts feel like the least they could do would be to give one of the middle-range amounts?

Faith is believing what the Eternal says, not inventing something and claiming that He will do it. Did the Eternal want Mr. Armstrong to use phony faith in order to raise money? It is difficult to believe that Herbert Armstrong was so “close to God” that He revealed to him how much other people could contribute. In the same time period, he was predicting America's defeat during World War II, and then, a soon-coming World War III with Hitler still being alive and leading the Nazis. Mr. Armstrong's anticipated big donations were not based on previous fact either, as his June 9, 1947 letter acknowledges that \$1000 was the largest gift that he ever received. Over two years later, he said “Never yet has anyone given a single contribution to this work as large as \$5,000” (November 11, 1949).

But he also took the opposite approach and used the diligence of his poorer co-workers to spur the wealthier ones to give more:

May 17, 1946: And if those who are ABLE would do proportionately anywhere NEAR as much in God's work as those so poor in this world's goods—many of whom actually live on a monthly income of \$16 to \$50, and still spare two to five dollars of it for God's work—then we would be able to shake this whole world to its foundations with the power at our disposal! For some of you, one to several thousand dollars would not

be as great a sacrifice as the “widow's mite” given by many of our precious co-workers! Just now God's work sorely NEEDS many of the larger, more generous offerings which many are able to give, if they will let God make their hearts willing—offerings of \$25, \$50, \$100, a thousand or several thousand dollars.

**Divine Miracle Required,
but Your Money Will Do**

Herbert Armstrong would sometimes talk about miracles from the Eternal, but those miracles nearly always turned out to be co-workers giving more money. We did not find claims that the Eternal sent him money, caused his supplies not to run out, or caused a stranger to give him the things he needed for free. These things did happen in the New Testament (Matt 17:27; 14:19-21; 21:2-3). The following two paragraphs come from the same letter, one near the beginning, the other near the end. The first asks for a miracle, the second is a full-blown visualization technique to get everyone to send everything possible:

April 7, 1947 I have to tell you candidly and frankly, that every APPEARANCE—every visible circumstance—says the work is doomed, and we will be shut off the air on our two most powerful and important stations, XEG, and XERB, by the 15th of this month, April! In fact, there is no visible hope that anything can now save the work. GOD MUST PERFORM A MIRACLE! ...

...Now, as never before, the work needs generous offerings from some who can—if their heart is yielded to God and made willing—put five or ten thousand dollars into GOD'S WORK. We need many offerings of a hundred dollars or more. But—most important—those of you who do not have such amounts, DON'T THINK THAT BECAUSE OF THE GREAT NEED THE WIDOW'S MITES WILL DO NO GOOD—there must be a quick, air-mail SHOWER of WIDOW'S MITES if this need is to be met. Just send QUICKLY—by air-mail—and if a larger sum, by WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH, the largest sum YOU can, whether a dollar or ten thousand.

Building the Guilt Trip

It is an unusual person who does not sometimes feel guilty before God. Mr. Armstrong often stepped into the role of the authoritarian parent (claiming to represent God) and gave his co-workers a stiff lecture about their laziness. He could not have known their personal income and expenses—there were too many co-workers for that to be possible. When he chastised them for non-payment, he never seemed to consider that they might have given everything they had after receiving his last letter and actually needed to pay some of their own bills in order not to bring disgrace to Christianity by their bad example.

These are among the dozens of accusations against co-workers:

June 9:1947: Suddenly it had gone thousands of dollars behind, because some of our Co-Workers had grown lax and careless.

November 11, 1949: Nevertheless, while the ACTIVITIES of this work, and the RESULTS accomplished, and the BLESSING FROM GOD, have steadily increased thru this year, our co-workers have at the same time STEADILY LET DOWN!

May 23, 1958: This is an EMERGENCY letter. It must be short, and quick to the point! Please put this ahead of everything you have to do!

Right now God is blessing His work as never before, while many of you Co-Workers are slacking off in your part!

The expressions “slacking off” or “slackening” are in 19 other letters. The guilt trip was taken further when those who did not give enough were threatened with the Lake of Fire. This letter was written when Mrs. Armstrong was suffering from an intestinal blockage:

March 2, 1967: Many professing to be Church MEMBERS say, when a Co-Worker letter arrives, in a grumbling, complaining disgust: “Oh, that's another of Mr. Armstrong's REQUESTS for MONEY,” and many don't even read the letter!

Are YOU one of those? If so, LET ME BURN YOUR EARS before the Almighty GOD burns YOU in the Lake of FIRE! If that has been YOUR attitude-if YOU are only on the GETTING side, and SHUN helping, and giving to the cause of GOD, then I say to you ON AUTHORITY

OF JESUS CHRIST, if you don't REPENT and QUICKLY, and change that hostile, despicable, detestable attitude, you DO NOT BELONG in GOD'S CHURCH! You are some of the ROTTEN, PUTRID, spiritual WASTE that has been PLUGGED UP INSIDE OF THE SPIRITUAL BODY OF CHRIST'S WIFE, just as physical waste is plugged up in my dear wife's body! And the living Jesus is just as able to EXPEL YOU from the spiritual Body of HIS WIFE as He is to expel this physical waste from my wife's body!

January 15, 1962: MANY OF YOU WHO ARE ABLE AND OUGHT TO PLEDGE HAVE FAILED OR REFUSED!

Brethren, do you realize this is the work of ALMIGHTY GOD? Do you realize HE is holding you accountable, according to your ability? It is not yet too late—but if you become a spiritual slacker, there is a Lake of Fire looming ahead, and I say to you in all sincerity and love, and by authority of Jesus Christ, you had better begin to fear and TREMBLE! This is EXPECTED of you, and if we don't do MORE than expected, we are UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS, and Jesus Christ says that the unprofitable servants are to be thrown into the Lake of Fire! I did not decree that—CHRIST DID!

There is no doubt that people who do not obey Christ will be put into the lake of fire. But in these letters, Mr. Armstrong makes failure to obey him the same as failure to obey Christ. Beside the "stick" of the Lake of Fire, he also dangled the "carrot" of a Place of Safety for those who supported him:

December 8, 1947: Every individual who HEEDS this warning, turns to God, is WATCHING and PRAYING ALWAYS, being filled with God's Spirit, living by every Word of God, with a life consecrated to Him, will be given special divine protection—taken beforehand to a place of SAFETY—preserved thru the final horrifying tribulation, time of plagues and human anguish soon to visit this earth!

But if we to whom God has revealed this terrible future thru His divine prophecies fail to heed it—if we fail to each play his or her full

part in WARNING this nation and the world, now, while we may—then God says we shall not escape, but He will require the blood of this entire people at our hands!...

I tell you, ON THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST, IT IS COMING! Many of you NOW, are in financial condition to DO A LOT MORE than you are doing for GOD'S CAUSE...

Prophecy the Reason for Urgency

Mr. Armstrong usually asked for money to pay specific bills or for specific future projects. His reason for not waiting for money to be available to start the new project was nearly always the same: time was short and the Great Tribulation and the Return of Christ was near. He continually reminded individuals that they would not need their property soon, while he piled up millions of dollars of property in Pasadena. Many of the prophetic reasons he gave to urgently collect money have proven false:

February 14, 1941: Dear Co-Workers, He is able to supply every cent of this need—and He WILL, if you join me in BELIEVING EARNEST PRAYER, and each does his VERY UTMOST, sending the largest offering you possibly can, even at great sacrifice. Our work is God's work. We must not slacken or let down. We must press forward harder now than ever! TIME IS SHORT! We are near the END! Soon the true Gospel will be BARRED from the air.

58 years later, the Gospel has not been barred from the air.

January 23, 1945: Where are we, now, in the prophetic unfolding of God's PLAN? We are already IN the very crisis at the close of this age, spoken of by Daniel the prophet. We are in that period portrayed by the four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—of the Book of Revelation. Jesus explained these in His Olivet prophecy (Mat. 24). The false prophets representing a false, counterfeit Christ, have appeared.

...Expenses are mounting past \$1,000 weekly. So PRAY! Respond, by return AIRMAIL with the largest offering you can. It's URGENT! We can't falter! God bless you for standing by me!

The false prophets he identified are dead, the prophecy has yet to be fulfilled.

May 17, 1946: This lull in between World War II, and the final great ATOMIC WAR now acknowledged by leading observers in Washington as a definite possibility within FIVE YEARS, is the most dangerous time of our history!... Soon it is prophesied, THERE WILL BE A FAMINE OF EVEN HEARING THE WORD OF GOD PREACHED! We cannot delay. We dare not let down! This is by far the most important business in this world. WHAT an opportunity, NOW! Soon that opportunity will be GONE—TOO LATE! Think of it! TWO THOUSAND precious souls reached with every dollar you put into this vital, glorious work!

HOW MANY of those dollars are you able to send, now, in this present emergency?

November 11, 1949: BUT WE MUST HAVE YOUR HELP, AND IT MEANS REAL SACRIFICE ON YOUR PART!

This is the most important work and activity on earth today! WE ARE IN A TIME OF PEACE FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF ALLOWING ME TO PROCLAIM THIS MESSAGE TO THE WORLD! In a few years YOUR MONEY, YOUR PROPERTY, will be worthless, or blown to bits. Present so-called "peace" won't last! We are near the end of this world—this age—this civilization! ONLY THE WORK OF GOD COUNTS NOW!

November 20, 1957: What does this new WORLD CRISIS mean? It means God's work MUST speed up, even as hell-bent Science and Technology are SPEEDING UP toward world-destruction. It means that this great work of God must SPEND MORE MONEY THAN BEFORE! IT MEANS the expenses of this work are speeding up—and so must the income!!!

...The time for thinking of pleasures, the things we can buy to enjoy, the things we'd like to do that take money, IS PAST, if we're AWAKE to the FACTS and URGENCY of the hour!

No Guidance in Following Bible

While the co-worker letters contained numerous requests for money,

and asked for all kinds of sacrifice, they contained almost no guidance as to how co-workers might balance these requests with commands in the Bible:

If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs (Deut 15:7-8).

But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? (1Jn 3:17).

A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children... (Prv 13:22).

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (1Tim 5:8).

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).

Thanks to computer searching, we can be nearly certain that Herbert Armstrong never explained these verses in his co-worker letters. He talked about the giving of "widow's mites" in 98 letters, but never once talked about helping to care for widows. Co-workers were left completely on their own to determine how to balance their contributions to Herbert Armstrong's work with helping those they know that were in need, helping take care of their spouse, taking care of their children, planning for their education, paying for medical bills, or buying things that would save them money in the long run (for example: new, energy-efficient appliances can pay for themselves in a few years by reducing utility bills).

If a person were to literally believe what Herbert Armstrong said, that he was the only voice that God was using to speak, and that the whole world would be over in a few years, how could they use **any** money on themselves and their families when they receive a message like this in the mail:

January 29, 1948: NOWHERE else can this money do so much

good, or reach so many people! Except ALMIGHTY GOD interferes, this world faces certain DOOM—utter annihilation of human life on this globe by atomic destruction at the hand of man! The glorious GOOD NEWS of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD, and the SECOND COMING OF CHRIST to at last straighten everything out for us and bring a blinded and deceived humanity understanding, peace, and joyful salvation—the true GOSPEL of Jesus Christ—must now be shouted in great power to the entire world. Soon it will be TOO LATE. NOW is the time! YOU have your part, just as I have mine. I'm doing my very best—will YOU do ALL that YOU CAN? Please rush your offering, as large as possible, as soon as possible—air-mail (now only 5 cents) or even by telegraph.

God bless you—SOMEHOW I know we will be carried through, and this great work will survive and continue on, TO THE END!

But his work did not endure to the end. A great many of his co-workers did not help others in need, did not attend to their own medical needs, did not plan for their children's education, did not plan for their retirement, did not plan for their own funerals and now they are dead. "The End" predicted by Herbert Armstrong did not come in his or his listener's life times and his "great work" is gone. This writer knows of many people who suffered greatly because of the money sent to Herbert Armstrong, and others who appeared to receive miraculous protection through it all—the Eternal may well have honored their zeal. But all of these co-workers will be judged by scriptures like the ones listed above (1Pe 1:17; 2Tim 3:16), not by their response to the co-worker letters of Herbert Armstrong!

Several places, Herbert Armstrong claimed that he would not ask co-workers to do anything that he would not do. He also talked about how he suffered more than any of his readers would ever know. But he virtually never shared any information about how much money he personally received, the type of house he lived in, the cost of his office facilities, the type of clothes he bought, etc. When he wrote about his own personal wealth he was usually claiming to be giving up some of it.

He did sell his home (which was partially paid for by the local congregation) and put the money into "the work" in 1944. But this "forced" him to eat in restaurants for the next three years as he lived in various rented rooms without kitchens. (Most poor people I know who find themselves without a kitchen eat sandwiches and raw fruits and vegetables). Three years later, he admitted that this expense of eating in restaurants was equal to a house payment: "It [the new home] came to us with no down-payment except just three monthly payments in advance, and on monthly payments which just equal what we have had to spend in restaurants for food" (June 9, 1947).

Did Mr. Armstrong stop eating in restaurants regularly after he bought the home? People who knew him at that time say "no". Did he encourage his co-workers to buy homes? His letters never indicate such.

A January 12, 1958 letter indicates that he was planning to personally save \$100 per month for emergencies or to take care of Loma should he die. He never encouraged any such saving among co-workers.

In the late 1970's when court proceedings and private investigations delved into Herbert Armstrong's finances, they found that he had a salary of over \$200,000 per year, benefits worth hundreds of thousands, and assets he personally used worth millions. When Mr. Armstrong entertained the Ambassador College seniors in the 1970s, he would boast that his table setting cost over \$100,000. If he could have served the seniors on a \$1000 table setting, every poor person in the church worldwide could have had a new pair of shoes.

No Spiritual Gifts for Co-Workers

Herbert Armstrong virtually never taught about spiritual gifts, even though the Bible contains a lot about them (Rom 1:11-13; 12:6-8; 1Cor 12; 14; Eph 4:11-15; 1Pet 4:8-11—to help study these, ask for our free paper, *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans*). Now that he is gone, those who followed him are having a very difficult time teaching new people from the Bible. We have not prayed for spiritual gifts, and if we have them, they have not been developed. Mr. Armstrong's

approach was simple—it was just nothing like New Testament teaching:

November 20, 1945: ...MY PART in the work is to conduct it, do the preaching and writing—and while YOUR PART in the work is to provide the financial means to keep it going...

Little Concept of Divine Guidance

Herbert Armstrong seemed to have little concept that the Eternal could guide his ministry by dream or vision—or even by supplying money for the projects that He wanted, and by **not supplying money** for the projects that He did not want. Mr. Armstrong seemed to regard any apparent “set-back” as a failure of co-workers to contribute. The apostle Paul lists many beatings and real setbacks as signs of his apostleship (2Cor 11:22-28). He also shows how the Spirit guided them to do things that they would not have humanly chosen:

After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us” (Acts 16:7-9).

Herbert Armstrong saw every possible opportunity as “an open door” to walk through. He said this so often that his co-workers (including myself) believed it. But the truth of the matter is that numerous religious organizations did the same thing that he did—as long as they had enough money. Mr. Armstrong virtually never asked co-workers to pray with him and send money only if the Eternal showed them that a particular project was His will. He almost never peacefully said that “if this project is the Eternal’s will, He will fund it, and if not, I know that I am not responsible to do it.” When projects became possible, he asked his co-workers to fund them, and went looking for more projects. If existing projects fell into a snag, the co-workers suddenly had to bail them out.

October 25, 1954: Now, in addition, in order to keep the network stations on the air thru the summer, Mr. Mattson had been gradually getting behind with XEG, XELO, and XERB and XERF. The last of

September they had suddenly demanded that all the unpaid balances be paid immediately, or we would be thrown off the air.

I want you Co-Workers to know just how near this work has come, and just how close it is this very moment, to being STOPPED—KILLED! This is the crisis we are in!

Mr. Armstrong did not present the facts honestly and say that he “will have to drop one or more stations for a period of time”. He says “killed” and “thrown off the air” (that expression is used in 10 other letters). If Herbert Armstrong had a divine revelation to place his program on as many stations as possible and never go off any of them, one might understand the panic here. But in reality, Mr. Armstrong frequently dropped stations that were producing little response for their cost. He dropped subscribers from his mailing lists who had not responded in a certain length of time. Could not he realize that the Eternal might sometimes show him ahead of time which stations not to go on because they would not bear much fruit?

70s - 80's: Milder, But No Apology

The letters of the 1970s and 1980s were milder than those that went before. After the “1975 in prophecy” concept failed, new dates were not set for Christ’s return. The motivations used to “contribute now” were more like “the end is near” or “we are in the gun lap”. Also, the wealth of the WCG became more generally known and it was harder to ask co-workers to sacrifice when they knew that Mr. Armstrong and top assistants were living in million-dollar mansions, chauffeured in limousines, and flying in 20 million-dollar aircraft. But Herbert Armstrong never publicly apologized to anyone for their great personal sacrifice in sending every spare cent to him only to see it used for a false prophetic warning or a \$1000 dinner at a restaurant.

It seems that Mr. Armstrong never did attract any wealthy donors—possibly the wealthy could see through his marketing techniques. Only the Eternal knows how many people were genuinely interested in the Bible truth that he taught, but stopped all contact with him when they received his first money-grabbing co-worker letter. This writer remembers his parents considering that very thing.

Living Past the Legacy

Herbert Armstrong reached millions of people with Bible truth, but we have no way to know how many really established a relationship with God, and how many were simply humanly convinced by his great marketing skills that he was God’s representative. We cannot judge Mr. Armstrong’s motives for asking for so much money. Did he believe it was all God’s will, or was he partly selfish? **What we do know is that his legacy of co-worker letters has been preserved for all to see.** It is on the Internet; it is in books and magazines. Anyone who studies Mr. Armstrong in the future may well think of 1 Timothy 6:5 (NIV):

And constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

People who believe that God’s future “work” will be based on Mr. Armstrong *could* start a massive effort to suppress negative history about him. But is the Eternal in desperate need of people to “cover” for Him so He can work?

The “work” of Herbert Armstrong is gone. His broadcasts are off the air, his writings are nearly all out of print, his buildings are being sold and the organization he founded is a fraction of its former size—no longer teaching his doctrines. Those upholding Mr. Armstrong as a great man are divided among many small groups. Even if one of them were to rise up and build a big organization with 100,000 members, it will be a *new organization* with mostly new people, and **considered the work of the new leader**, not a continuation of the work of Mr. Armstrong.

The method Herbert Armstrong used to finance his work is not worth keeping. The methods used in the New Testament are worth keeping. The truth that Herbert Armstrong taught is worth keeping—it can be much better taught without his name attached to it. We need to **look inward** to see what truths we know that we can teach from the Bible *without* having to refer to Mr. Armstrong’s writings. We need to **look outward** to the world around us, to understand the questions in the minds of people today and how we can best serve and teach them. We need to **look upward** to our Father in heaven, and ask, “Please lead us, we want *You* to show us what to do.”

HE WILL! (Heb 13:5; 1Jn 5:14)

—Norman S. Edwards

During the last few months of his life (Fall 1985), Herbert Armstrong would often speak in Pasadena auditorium sermons of his life's accomplishment—the "truths he restored to the Church of God". This writer was there to hear those sermons. The number of "truths" and their order sometimes varied, but there was almost always between 16 and 19 points. A summary of these sermons was printed in *The Worldwide News* on August 25, 1986, Page 5. We will use this as the basis of our evaluation.

What right do I, the publisher of a small newsletter, have to evaluate the life's work of a man who taught millions? The same right that a young Herbert Armstrong had to evaluate the life's work of Plato, Constantine, Darwin, Christ and Andrew Duggar. Mr. Armstrong found the first three men very influential, but in error; the fourth man perfect and the fifth man (a leader in the Church of God Seventh Day) to be a good man in some areas, but lacking in other areas.

All of us must make evaluations of the work of other men. We do not judge their eternal fate, but we judge their works and fruits, and determine to what degree we will accept their teachings and help them in their work. It was necessary for the early church to judge (test) their leaders, even those who claimed to be apostles: "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you **have tested those who say they are apostles** and are not, and have found them liars" (Rev 2:2).

Most members of the Worldwide Church of God were not in the habit of testing their leaders and their teachings. They read only literature from their headquarters, which never contradicted their leader's teachings. People who read "outside" papers that sincerely challenged the teachings of Herbert Armstrong were usually disfellowshipped from the WCG. But if we are going to "test those who say they are apostles", we must look at their claims, then look at the Bible and historical sources and see if they are true.

We would certainly like to acknowledge that there are many things to Herbert Armstrong's credit:

1) **Much of what he taught was truth from the Bible—more so than many other groups.**

2) **He diligently taught it for most**

of his life.

3) **He made a great effort to train others to teach his doctrines.**

4) **He made an effort to promulgate his doctrines to the entire world.**

Nevertheless, we cannot use the size and scope of Mr. Armstrong's work to prove it was all correct. If size were the measure of truth, then we should all become Catholics.

We must also realize that **Herbert Armstrong never claimed that his doctrines came as the result of the direct speaking of the Eternal.** (By contrast, many books of the Bible did come this way). Mr. Armstrong claimed to be taught by the **written word of God**, beginning with his "six-month intensive study". This is the same written

word of God available to you and me. Mr. Armstrong's writings never mention the use of a Greek or Hebrew concordance such as the *Englishman's Greek Concordance* or the *Englishman's Hebrew Concordance*. Yet these books, or their computerized equivalents, are vital to understanding the meaning and use of Greek and Hebrew words in the Bible. They are also vital to establishing every place where the Bible talks about a particular concept. (Englishman's concordances do not work when a Greek or Hebrew word is inconsistently translated—which happens fairly often.)

Herbert Armstrong did claim that the Eternal guided his mind as he studied and taught him the truth, but this process was obviously not 100% correct. He made major changes in his teachings on Church government, divorce & remarriage, the counting of Pentecost, make-up and others. He also made numerous prophecies that did not come to pass. Herbert Armstrong's teachings must be evaluated in the light of the Bible—this author finds no proof whatever that a doctrine is true just because Herbert Armstrong taught it.

The purpose of this evaluation will be to determine 1) if each of the "18 truths" really are true, and 2) if Herbert Armstrong actually restored each teaching or if it was taught by others. We cannot go into an exhaustive doctrinal study

Herbert Armstrong's 18 Restored Truths Report Card

- A - Armstrong restored this truth as he claimed.
- B - Borrowed truth—others taught this before Armstrong, so he did not restore it.
- C - Copy of another "truth"—largely another aspect of a previous point that stands or falls with this one.
- D - Doubtful value—key aspects of this teaching are difficult to prove from scripture.
- E - Error—the main point of the teaching is not Biblical.

on each point, but will give brief explanations and references to other literature.

We are reprinting the entire text of the Worldwide News article as it appears to be a sincere effort to summarize Mr. Armstrong's teaching. Each point will be followed with a "grade" and comments. Please see the above card for the "grading" system used. The point of this article is not to condemn Herbert Armstrong, but to show what a difficult time Sabbatarians will have if they identify themselves as Herbert Armstrong followers and base their teaching upon his work.

HWA's 18 Restored Truths:

1. **The government of God.** When Christ comes, He will restore God's government to the whole earth. So you can be sure the one to come in the spirit and power of Elijah would restore God's government in His Church. When Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong came among the Oregon Conference era of the Church of God (Seventh day), the church had the right name, the law, the Sabbath and the tithing system. But they also had a government of men, with a biannual conference, voting just like they do in the world.

Today, the government of God has been restored to His Church. That's the kind of government you find in

Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12.

E Herbert Armstrong's understanding of government from the Bible was far better when he wrote his *Good News* article on the subject in 1939 (available from *Servants' News*). The Bible teaches a system where the Eternal Himself places people with spiritual gifts into the Church (1Cor 12:18, Eph 4:11). Herbert Armstrong used the same system of hierarchical control and human ordinations that is used by the Catholic Church. His teaching that "God would correct the man at the top" proved utterly false. Mr. Armstrong named Joseph Tkach as his successor who, for ten years taught numerous doctrines opposite to Mr. Armstrong's. No matter which doctrines you believe are correct, the Eternal did not stop either leader in their teaching. For an in-depth study of government in the Bible, ask for our paper: *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans?*

2. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God has been restored after 1,900 years. The Church of God (Seventh Day) did not have a clear understanding of the Gospel: they emphasized what they called a "third angel's message".

B Herbert Armstrong's preaching of the Kingdom of God as the Millennium on earth was a fairly common teaching during the past 1900 years (see *Servants' News*, May 1998, p. 1). Many prior teachers of this doctrine also predicted specific years for Christ's return which did not come to pass. To an impartial observer, Mr. Armstrong's teachings and unfulfilled prophecies seem about the same.

Sometimes, Herbert Armstrong appeared to teach that the "Gospel of the Kingdom of God" was the only use of the word "Gospel" in the Bible. Actually, it is mentioned only 4 times, whereas terms such as the "Gospel of Christ" and the "Gospel of God" occur much more often. It is important to teach all aspects of the Gospel.

3. The purpose of God, that we are to be born of God and become God. God is reproducing Himself, and no other church on earth knows that or preaches it. As a counterfeit they talk about being already born again. Christ is the firstborn of many brethren. Has anyone else been born

again by a resurrection from the dead like He was?

D Many groups over hundreds of years have taught that man can become God (see *Servants' News*, May 1998, p. 1). Whether this is true or not is mostly an argument of terminology which is impossible to prove from the Scripture because the Scripture specifically never says "man becomes God" or "man cannot become God". Many times, it says that we can be "children of God". The Apostle John read the Old Testament, knew the writers of the New Testament and spent years with Christ. If he did not try to "nail down" the exact status of believers in the future, do we think we can do it by our scriptural arguments? "Beloved, now we are children of God; and **it has not yet been revealed what we shall be**, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

4. Who and what is God? The Jews think God is one person. Many people mistakenly think that God the Father is the God of the Old Testament and then Christ came as His Son. Traditional Christianity believes in the trinity, that the Holy Spirit is a person. God is neither one person nor a trinity. God is a Family into which we may be born and also become God. His Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are the begotten children of God. And when we are born of God we will not even be able to sin.

B A variety of trinitarian and non-trinitarian teachings have existed since the third century. Herbert Armstrong was right to point out the errors of the trinity teaching, but he did not "restore" such teaching. He certainly was aware of the non-trinitarian teachings of groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. Also, there were many other scriptures regarding the nature of God that neither Herbert Armstrong nor the WCG ever addressed.

The "family of God" concept may be true, but is not found directly in scripture and will therefore always create arguments when taught to people who are allowed to ask questions. We should learn from the analogies in the Bible, but not use them to build more analogies. For example, the Bible teaches that believers are Christ's body (1Cor 12:27; Eph 1:22-

23; Eph 5:30; Col 1:24) and that believers will be the bride of Christ (Rev 19:7-9). If we try to put both of these analogies together, we have Christ marrying himself. Obviously, neither analogy perfectly describes the way things are in heaven. If the Eternal gives someone clear revelation to preach about His nature, then he should teach it. But we should not take our favorite analogy from the Bible and extend it to mean something that the Bible has not said.

5. What is Man? Do we have an immortal soul? Or are we just an animal? What happens at death? The dead are unconscious and they don't know anything. The Church of God (Seventh Day) people understood some of what happens at death, but not fully. They believed that man did not have a spirit. That's been explained more fully now.

C This point is largely a combination of point 3, above (Man to become God), and point 6, below (the spirit in man).

6. The human spirit in man. What makes the difference between a human mind and an animal brain is that there is a human spirit with the human brain. That spirit is not the conscious part of the man. And it needs to be united with the Spirit of God.

B Much of Mr. Armstrong's teaching on this subject was the work of Robert Kuhn, a minister of the WCG who had done much research in the study of the sizes of various animal brains, and noted that the human brain was only slightly larger, yet many times more capable. Armstrong gave some credit to Kuhn, but also presented many of Kuhn's ideas as his own.

The concept of a "spirit in man" is and has been taught by many Christian groups (a search on the Internet will reveal thousands of pages from numerous religions). On the other hand, Adam Clark's commentary, finished in 1825, says this about Job 32: "...and by the afflatus [divine blowing] of this spirit he [man] become capable of understanding and reason, and consequently of discerning divine truth." These many teachings may not be identical to Mr. Armstrong's, but the parts that are clearly taught in the Bible have been taught before by others.

7. The Church is only the firstfruits, and not the end of God's plan of salvation. God isn't trying to save the whole world yet. It starts with us, and we're being taught and trained so that we, under Christ, will be the teachers and rulers when Christ comes to rule in the Millennium, when He starts to save the rest of the world.

We have the great opportunity of being made God and, in the future, to rule over others and teach them and help them be converted so they can become children of God, also. And those who are converted during the Millennium will, with us, be kings, priests and teachers for the rest of the world that will be resurrected after the end of the Millennium.

A Nearly all "Christian" religions teach that those who are not saved now are going to an ever-burning Hell. This doctrine has been the excuse for the torture, death and "forced conversion" of millions of people throughout history—church leaders justified mistreating another's body in order to "save its soul". This is the exact opposite of "loving one's neighbor as oneself."

This writer knows of no teacher before Herbert Armstrong (other than Bible writers) who correctly taught that those who do not know God now will be raised from the dead and given a chance to understand later.

8. The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God, but we are the embryo that will become the Kingdom of God.

D The question of whether or not the church is "the Kingdom of God in embryo" is another example of introducing new terminology that is not in the Bible, and therefore it is not possible to prove it one way or the other from the Bible. The Bible makes no such comparison. Some religious groups teach that the Kingdom of God is here now, but many other groups look to a future literal Kingdom of God (see *Servants' News*, May 1998, p. 1)

Also, some scriptures indicate that we are in some way part of His Kingdom now: "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph 2:19). "He has delivered us from the power of darkness

and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love... (Col 1:13).

9. Only those whom God the Father calls and draws to Him can be converted now. No other church knows that or believes it. That's another truth restored to the Church through Mr. Armstrong. None of us had ever heard that before, except as we got it through Mr. Armstrong. Only those God chooses and calls now can come in and become part of the firstfruits. Satan has deceived the whole world, and the Church is called out of the world.

C This is an "A" point—very true and good—but it is part of point 7, above. All of these teachings stand or fall together.

10. The resurrection to judgment, the Great White Throne Judgment. God has a plan to save those who have not had an opportunity for salvation and who are now dead in their graves. They have not had the Holy Spirit. Their time is coming. But our time comes first, and we have to fight the devil, and they won't.

In the judgment, they'll be found guilty and condemned to death. They'll have their first chance to know that Christ came and paid the death penalty for them. They'll be allowed to accept that payment, and they'll have 100 years to prove they want to live differently than they did in their first life. They can be saved at last.

A & C Many Christian groups preach that there is a resurrection to judgement. The important difference in Mr. Armstrong's teaching is that the judgement will provide a means for salvation for those who have never had an opportunity. This concept is in some ways a "copy" of #7 & 9, above.

11. The Millennium. The Kingdom of God will rule nations on earth, and Christ and the saints will rule and bring prosperity to the entire earth. The Church of God (Seventh Day) understood the time duration, but, because they did not adequately grasp the full meaning of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, they knew little in the 1930's of what the Millennium would be like. Salvation will be open to all for the first time since Adam sinned and God closed

off the tree of life.

B Other groups have taught that the millennium is a time when the earth will be ruled in righteousness and when salvation will be open to all. Please see the *Servants' News* article in the May 1998 issue, page 1).

12. The Holy Spirit coming into us only begets us. It opens our minds so we can understand the coded book, the Bible. Eye has not seen nor ear heard the things God has in store for us, described briefly in the Bible. God does reveal them to His Church by His Spirit that resides in us. Without that Spirit we cannot understand the Bible. Spiritual knowledge comes from the Bible, but by the Holy Spirit.

D Mr. Armstrong's concept of believers being "begotten of God" now and "born of God" at the resurrection is difficult to prove from the scripture since only one Greek work, *genao*, is used for both "born" and "begotten". Mr. Armstrong wanted to translate *genao* as "born" in verses like John 3:6: "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit", but "begotten" in verses like 1 John 5:1: "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born [begotten] of God...". This is circular reasoning: the doctrine can be learned from the Bible only if the Bible is translated according to the doctrine.

A study of analogies in the New Testament shows that being "born again" or "begotten of God" was not a slogan of the first century church. The believers did not go around saying "I'm born again" or "I'm begotten again". Rather, the scriptures use a variety of analogies comparing physical life to human life. Mr. Armstrong is correct in pointing out analogies where the change from flesh to spirit is compared to being born of God: "for in Christ Jesus, I [Paul] have begotten you [Corinthians] through the Gospel" (1Cor 4:15). But humans are also compared to already-born babies: "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (Peter 2:2). And finally, they are compared to children or adults: "Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature" (1Cor 14:20).

13. We are only begotten now, not born again. We are heirs, not yet

inheritors. The Holy Spirit begets us as children of God, but we are not yet born.

C This is largely a duplication of the previous point. The holy spirit begetting or birthing believers is taught by numerous Christian groups.

14. The identity of modern Israel. What are America's roots, our national identity? We are Manasseh, one of the lost 10 tribes of Israel. Numerous other groups have some knowledge of this truth, but no major denomination does. The Church of God (Seventh Day) officially rejected this truth. Mr. Armstrong wrote up the proof in an article and sent it to the leader of that church. You'll find a copy of the leader's letter in response in Mr. Armstrong's autobiography.

B Herbert Armstrong used J. H. Allen's book to write his own book on this subject (see *Servants' News*, November 1998, p. 19). Numerous groups have taught this concept in the past, and numerous groups are teaching it today: the Identity movement (both Sunday and Sabbatarian), some Messianic Jews, and even some Jews in Israel.

15. Prophecy can be understood only if you know that we are the Israelites, and what prophecies apply to us and which do not. Others who do not know Israel's identity can't understand, for example, the 30th chapter of Jeremiah and scriptures like that, which show the Great Tribulation will be the time of Jacob's trouble.

D Herbert Armstrong's teachings on prophecy are not as unique as most of his listeners believed (most did not listen to other prophecy teachers, so they never knew). Some of his teaching came from the Millerite movement in the 1840's and other things from the Scofield Reference Bible. In the June/July 1934 *Plain Truth*, Mr. Armstrong stated: "Most Bible students know, too, that the seventeenth chapter of Revelation tells us the ancient Roman Empire will once more be revived, this time by a federation of ten nations—and it will be the aggressor in war."

While understanding that the British and North American people are largely descendants of Israel is helpful for understanding some aspects of prophecy, this understanding did not help Mr.

Armstrong predict world events very well. Many times, he predicted the wrong outcome for leaders, wars and who would join the European Economic Community. Mr. Armstrong predicted the return of Jesus Christ numerous times during his lifetime, all of which were in error (see article on page 17). If an auto mechanic can only repair a small fraction of the vehicles brought to him, no one is going to ask about his secrets of auto repair. When someone makes as many errors in interpreting prophecy as Herbert Armstrong did, few people will be interested in his "keys to prophecy".

16 The annual festivals, the feast days. What other church knows about them or keeps them? Where did you hear it from? God revealed it to Mr. Armstrong.

For seven years he and his wife kept the annual Holy Days alone. And for seven more years they kept God's Holy Days with the Church in Eugene, Oregon, before God revealed their meaning.

It was not until the end of World War II in 1945 that they began to see that we have to get away from our homes for the Feast of Tabernacles. These Holy Days picture the seven major events in God's plan of salvation. How many of us would have kept God's days for 14 years without fully understanding their meaning?

A Mr. Armstrong began to keep the holy days on his own and apparently did not learn this practice from any Christian group. Jews have kept them for centuries. Today, many groups keep the holy days, some of which have never heard of the WCG.

17. The authority of the sacred calendar, preserved by the Jews. Before Mr. Armstrong revealed this to the Church of God (Seventh Day), they were confused as to when the year should begin. Mr. Armstrong also made clear the importance of the Jews' preservation of the weekly cycle.

B Most groups that keep either Passover or all of the Holy Days use the Jewish Calendar. This writer believes that the Jewish Calendar is the best one for groups to use to meet together on the Holy Days. However, Herbert Armstrong did not explain that

the Jewish calendar has clearly been modified by the Jews, and is **not** a "sacred calendar" that has been preserved unaltered for thousands of years. He never taught the errors associated with this calendar, nor the somewhat arbitrary decisions that were humanly made. Mr. Armstrong certainly brought nothing new to the study of calendars.

18. Second and third tithe. What other church knows these points? The second tithe is for God's feast days. Other churches do not keep the feasts, so they have no reason to have second tithe. Third tithe is for the needy, primarily within God's Church.

E Herbert Armstrong's view of "second tithe" and "third tithe" are very difficult to prove from the Bible, because those terms do not exist in the Bible. Very few of the strict Orthodox Jews believe that the scriptures require 30% of one's increase to be tithed in some years. Furthermore, both the Bible and Jewish history only mention tithes on agricultural products. Paul would have been breaking the law to accept tithes because he was not a Levite. When he was arrested, his accusers did not say that he unlawfully received tithes, but had to make up charges. Furthermore, Paul often worked to supply his needs—neither the New Testament nor secular history records any transfer of tithing from the Levites to the New Testament ministry. All the brethren are the new priesthood, not just the ministry (1 Pet 2:5-9). For more information, write for our paper, *How Do We Give to the Eternal?*

Conclusion

Herbert Armstrong taught many truths, both those listed here and many others. He also taught error—some borrowed, some his own. There are some scriptures that he never explained at all. This writer believes Mr. Armstrong probably taught a higher percentage of truth than most Bible teachers throughout history, but finds it impossible to say that he was "the Elijah" who restored "all things". The process of studying, accepting truth and rejecting error must go on. It is difficult when we come to realize that we may not know as much truth as we once thought. But that is the first step to learning more.

—Norman S. Edwards

Letters & Responses

We print a representative sampling of our mail—both positive and negative. We do not include names unless we are fairly sure that the writer would not object. To avoid any difficulty, writers should specify how much of their name and address they would like us to print.

We have received many more letters than we can print. We will include more in the next issue.

HWA and Plagiarism

LETTER: January 9, 1999
Dear Norman,

You asked if any of us knew of other instances where Mr. Armstrong used other sources in his literature. Enclosed are a few pages from a 1931 book *Fulfilled Prophecies That Prove the Bible* (126 pages). I cannot say that there was plagiarism here, but I have often wondered if Mr. Armstrong got many of the basic ideas for his "Proof of the Bible" from this little book. If you are interested in seeing the rest of it, I would be very happy to copy it for you.

I appreciate the work you are doing in trying to unravel the earlier history of the development of the WCG doctrines and authority. Understanding that history is vital to understanding where we in the church are going today and why.

My opinion about Mr. Armstrong (if I may offer it) is that he did a marvelous job of popularizing, streamlining, putting a lot of biblical and other religious information into understandable terms, and making the information available to masses of people. However, I agree that he should have credited his sources or those who gave him the ideas. We then might have admired his synthesizing abilities.

My research in the archives of the Church of God (Seventh Day) in Denver indicates that most of the **basic** doctrines and attitudes passed on to us from Mr. Armstrong came from that church (exceptions being the holy days and the modern identities of Israel). Is this assessment correct according to your information? But didn't Mr. Armstrong teach a few biblical doctrines that other churches do not? Wasn't

the "spirit in man" doctrine one of these? I am unaware of this doctrine from any other source the way Mr. Armstrong taught it. In addition, are there other churches that teach about *spiritual blindness*?

Certainly, if Mr. Armstrong was wrong about something, we should correct it. If he didn't give proper credit for his sources, we should find and credit them. But if he did correctly teach a doctrine that other churches have missed, we should give him credit.

Sincerely,

—Rose Difley, Utah

RESPONSE: We can never be sure how much teaching Herbert Armstrong borrowed from others and how much he rediscovered on his own, but many of his teachings are like the Church of God 7th Day. A few are similar to the Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah's witnesses. See the "18 Truths" article on page 32 for more information about where his "restored" doctrines came from. Page 33 shows that the "Spirit in Man" idea has been taught by many others, though probably none in the way he taught it. That phrase only appears once in the KJV Bible—"spirit of man" appears three times. The word "spirit" appears much more often, and many Christian groups teach that we are a body with a spirit. Yes, some throw the "immortal soul concept" in there, but a significant number of Christian groups do not. They, too, have read that "the gift of God is eternal life" (Rom 6:23).

The concept of spiritual blindness is discussed by many theologians with a wide variety of ideas. (Try searching the Internet.) Herbert Armstrong was probably the primary preacher of the doctrine that the Eternal does not hold people accountable who are spiritually blind now and will offer them salvation at another time. I think this is one of the most valuable doctrinal contributions he made.

—NSE

Was HWA's Work Destroyed

LETTER: January 5, 1999
Dear Mr. Edwards,

What did you mean in your last newsletter (page 36) when you said that Mr. Armstrong's work (the WCG) was tried, caught fire, and burned?

—A Reader

RESPONSE: Others have asked about that statement! I am sorry if it was over-dramatic. What I meant was this:

He spent his last thirty years claiming he was the human head of the "one True Church", teaching people to follow the top-down government and to let Christ correct

the man at the top if there was a problem. This concept of a "one True Church" organization failed. The Eternal did not correct the man at the top as promised. When Tkach began to change Armstrong's doctrines, members went scurrying back to their Bibles to study doctrines that they had believed simply because Mr. Armstrong taught them. Others accepted the "new truth" even though it was the opposite of the "new truth" Mr. Armstrong taught a few years later.

The WCG members clearly had been held together by Herbert Armstrong, not by a common understanding of the Bible or a uniform spirit working in them. About a third of the WCG members completely left Sabbatarian religion, about a third split among dozens of other groups, and somewhat less than a third are still in the WCG (though many there do not agree with the doctrinal changes). Dozens of individuals are claiming to be the successor to Herbert Armstrong, but the groups keep dividing. Yet, very few of the groups have the presence of mind to recognize that they are not unique, and then be willing to work with each other.

Finally, Mr. Armstrong's colleges, magazines, literature, broadcasts and nearly everything else that he built are now either gone or in a state of disrepair. While he often boasted about his record of growing 30% a year for 30 years, it looks like the decline of his organization may even break that record.

—NSE

Home Fellowships Fulfill Needs

LETTER: February 11, 1999
Dear Servants' News

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! Thank you for your recent mailing. Do you and your family still attend one of the COG organizations or are you independent?

My wife and I attend the UCG-IA, but by reading the governmental problems in the "organizational churches", I am beginning to get frustrated. It seems to me, although I have no personal experience in the "home fellowships", that the Spirit is moving more freely in these. Is this your opinion also?

I've recently read some quotes from people in these fellowships (LRCOG's) and they seem to believe that the Spirit is less "quenched" and their gifts are more utilized than when they were in either a hierarchical or non-hierarchical organization. Is this your impression also? God bless all of you at Servants' News.

JS, California

RESPONSE: Home fellowships can be places of fellowship, edification, learning,

and worship. However, they are not immune to personality problems, nor are they immune to false doctrines. If you have a place to meet that is peaceful and a generally congenial group to work with, it can be a profound and edifying experience. On the other hand, it is what you make it. If people cooperate together and give their talents to the good of the group, (not expecting to just sit back and be served), it will be beneficial and worthwhile.

We usually attend with a small independent fellowship group, but also visit some corporate groups. Sharing knowledge and interacting is valuable with all. We meet in different places, as opposed to only one location. Different people contribute to the group according to their gifts (abilities), whether it be music, research, or preparing the physical meeting place.

—Norman & Marleen Edwards

Split Till There's Splinters

LETTER: April 20, 1998

[This was a message sent to the LikeMinds Internet list.]

Two small congregations in Prestonsburg, Kentucky share the same hall. I believe the CGI pastor does the dealing with the Comfort Suites and rents the hall for the entire day. UCG-IA then pays half the rent and uses the room for their services. The CGI congregation has under 10 people attending. The UCG-IA has under 20 in attendance. UCG-IA meets at 11:00 am and CGI meets 2:30 pm. I sometimes visit the CGI congregation. The CGI people wait in their cars outside the hall until the UCG-IA people leave. Since I am suspended from UCG-IA, I did the same, but fellowshiped with a friend out in the parking lot. When I was a member of UCG-IA, we would attend both services. In Prestonsburg, the churches of David Hulme and GTA also hold services. I am not sure what happened to the WCG congregation which used to be there. According to my 1993 Rand McNally Road Atlas, Prestonsburg has a population of approximately 4,000.

—John [NOT Dave] Havir

RESPONSE: Would it not be much more sensible for all the Prestonburg brethren to meet in one local congregation, not controlled by any national group? The total cost of hall rental and other expenses would be greatly reduced. Children could fellowship with others their own age. It could be a unified group where new believers could be nurtured. Either local evangelism, or contributions to mass evangelism would be possible. As it is now, how could any new person come to any **one** of these small groups with its extremely minor dif-

ferences from the others and believe that it is the Church of God?

—NSE

Offerings Given Forever?

LETTER: January 16, 1999
Dear Norm,

In the November 1999 SN (p30), you said "The offerings mentioned in Deut 16:16 were animals to be sacrificed. In verse 17 it is a "gift" that's to be given. In Lev 23:9-38 it shows a gift (firstfruits) was to be given to the priest at each harvest (three times a year). I may be wrong to believe HWA had a reason to teach this. If so, I must misunderstand Lev 23:41, the word "forever" to me would include our time now. Would you explain your reasoning on this for me?

I believe the true ministers today are spiritual Levites because of Jeremiah 33:21 and because there will be priests in the millennium.

My goal is to get it right! I can see things clearly only after I look at all sides of an issue. Thanks for helping me do that.

—Pennsylvania

RESPONSE: Thank you for your sincere questions. The answers are largely Bible translation issues. When we see the word "gift" we often think of money or something wrapped in pretty paper with a ribbon. Yet it is also used to refer to offerings given in the Temple. I did make a mistake by saying "animal sacrifices". These offerings could be grain or drink offerings as well. These various offerings are described in Leviticus chapters 1-7. The Temple did not have an un-ending need for money as do most modern church organizations. Their needs were provided by the "shekel of the sanctuary" (Ex 30:11-16).

The word "forever" in Leviticus 23:41 is translated from the Hebrew *owlam*, (Strong's #05769). It does not mean "eternally", but more like "to the end of an era", or "to the end of the age". When a man becomes a permanent servant, "his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him **forever** [*owlam*]". Obviously, the man stops serving when he is dead. Other laws show that his children do not become servants for eternity. Also, "In the tabernacle of meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before the LORD. It shall be a statute forever **to their generations** on behalf of the children of Israel" (Ex 27:21). Did Aaron and his sons keep serving outside the **tabernacle** after Solomon build the **temple**? Does the Eternal hold descendants of Aaron responsible for not serving today when there is no taberna-

cle or temple? To answer your questions, are we still responsible to give offerings of Deut 16:16-17 when there is no temple, Levites, or priests to receive them?

Jeremiah 33:20-21 says "Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers.'"

I can see you would conclude that the above verse indicates that there must be Levites and priests serving forever and that they have been replaced by ministers now. Part of the difficulty is with the word "minister". Today, we usually think of a "minister" as someone ordained to a religious office. The Hebrew word *sharath* (Strongs' #08334) means "a servant"—usually a more educated one. Joseph was a *sharath* to Potiphar (Gen 39:4). The Greek *diakonos* (often translated "servant", "minister" or "deacon" has a similar meaning). There is not one instance of someone being "ordained" to become a "minister". I will send you a copy of *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans?* which explains this in detail. I believe the Jeremiah 33 scripture is fulfilled by British royalty who are descendants of David. Those serving the Queen are called "her majesty's ministers"—educated servants—fitting the Biblical definition. Some of these ministers have the last names of Levi, Aaron, Cohen, Kaplan and others clearly traceable to Levitical families.

These things fulfill the physical promises to David. I understand that there will again be a physical temple in the Millennium and that the descendants of Levi will again serve. Today, the body of Christ is the spiritual temple, and all believers are the priests (2Cor 6:16, 1Pet 2:5,9). If we tried to extend the Levitical system into the Church, we would find everyone able to receive tithes and no one to pay them. The New Testament contains numerous references to how the preaching of the Gospel was financed. I am sending you a copy of *How Do We Give To the Eternal?* which explains these scriptures.

—NSE

Y2K Information

LETTER: January 11, 1999
Hello Norm and Marleen,

Bentonville United Church of God is having Y2K classes now, thanks to your eye-opening articles last year. There is much to learn and do. [Write for "year 2000" computer crisis information published in the Dec 1997 issue of Servants' News].

Thanks for all the good you are doing all along with *Servants' News*.

—Lois Gordon, Arkansas

RESPONSE: I am glad that the article was helpful to you. We no longer plan to produce a Y2K packet because so much information is now available from other sources. We are publishing many of those sources in this issue's Shelter in the Word. It is important to work with a community of people to plan for and work through any difficulties.

—NSE

Don't Blame HWA

January 26, 1999

Hello Norm and Staff,

Here is a little bit to help in publishing good and real spiritual works (truth). Some not so good though. We're all still human aren't we?

I sort of get a kick out of some letters—putting blame on HWA and his troops for causing all their problems. They have a brain. They brought on their own problems. Had they searched the scriptures on their knees seeking the Father fervently, which HWA told us to do, they would not have been brain washed.

Then there's the idol worshippers, who still believe HWA did no wrong and are still following his teachers, idolizing them. Would you call them vicars?

I enjoy much of the literature. Thanks for trying to help.

—ZL, Idaho

RESPONSE: The Bible is a big book, it was originally written to people who lived thousands of years ago and spoke a different language. We all have to rely on translators, and to a lesser degree we have to rely on historians who tell us something about the people and the customs to whom the books were written. If this is all relied on the "experts" for, we would not have too much difficulty.

But some of the Bible is also difficult to understand by its own admission (Matt 13:14; 2Pet 3:16). Also, people have a tendency to let others do difficult work for them, rather than studying themselves. And finally, there is a human tendency to want to look to a "person whom God is using", (who obviously has a good relationship with God) rather than for each individual to look directly to God. It is these problems that affected people (including myself) who put too much trust in Herbert Armstrong.

His teaching of the Sabbath, clean meats, repentance, baptism, and other doctrines were very biblical—in a way that many other church group's teachings are not. Unfortunately, Mr. Armstrong was the only

one that many of us knew who taught these things. Once we saw these truths, it was easy to accept his other teachings without going to the same effort to study them. His hierarchical government was never taught until after a person was baptized, and many of us stopped checking so diligently at that point.

While we should not blame Herbert Armstrong for our lack of study, he, a teacher, will be judged for what he taught (Matt 18:6; James 3:1). We do not have to judge him now, but any who would teach now must be very careful not to repeat his mistakes! *We* will be judged for it if we do!

—NSE

Leaving the SDA Hierarchy

LETTER:

July 11, 1996

Norman:

Thanks for your good response. I am looking forward to your newsletters.

I was brought up Presbyterian in New Zealand. My minister told me when I was in my early teens that the Bible was a book of myths and legends. I refused to be confirmed and stopped attending church a year or so later. But I was still looking for God. As a result of a motor-racing accident, I came face to face with death and was motivated to attend an evangelistic series presented by an SDA Evangelist (not presented as such). I was convinced by his exposition of Prophecy that the Bible is true. I took nearly a year to study the Sabbath issue and decided it was Biblical.

My family (Presbyterians) were scandalized. I went to Avondale College in Australia and graduated with a BA (Theology). I was an Adventist minister for 29 years and served in four countries in various capacities - evangelist, ministerial director, pastor, college professor.

During my first year in the ministry, (1968) I found that things were not as I had thought. The political manipulation and fear used by administrators to control pastors became apparent. The Lord led me to a knowledge of the Gospel of grace (after I had a doctoral degree—showing that scholarship is not where it is at) in 1977. In 1980, I had an experience with the Holy Spirit, and began to seek to leave Adventism. But I was convicted on the Sabbath and where does one go? I remained an Adventist pastor and returned to the USA where I thought the attitudes of Administrators were less legalistic.

In 1994, the Holy Spirit graced my ministry with many healings. The local church was thrilled by the Spirit's ministry (exceptions: a doctor and college professor). I was already "under a cloud" as Adventist administrators say, for my grace and Gospel

teachings. The healings were too much for them. They put me out of the ministry, not even allowing me to speak to the committee that fired me.

The Lord miraculously called me back into an independent ministry with several groups of Gospel Sabbatharians across the State of New York. Most are ex-SDAs who believe in the Gospel of Grace as well as in the ministry and power of the Holy Spirit for these last days. We have had enough of authoritarian religious organizations who protect their own identity and power at the expense of allowing their people to relate directly with God. We in no way seek to begin another denomination by networking with Sabbatharians. I detect a similar attitude in you.

My initial assessment of the Armstrong movement—as you describe it—is they have "thrown the baby out with the bathwater". Sabbath is both a creation and redemption motif. We keep Sabbath because it is biblical (so did the apostles) and it is a sign of righteousness by faith. We rest, having ceased from our own labors for salvation, not only in Christ, but also on the Sabbath - God's Holy Day. The Sabbath is both a sign and a seal of Righteousness by Faith. It is the fruit of obedience, not the labor of works.

May the Lord bless you and your group. Can you share what happened with you over the Armstrong split?

—Eoin Giller, Clifton Park, New York

RESPONSE: Thanks for telling us about your background. The current leaders of the WCG rejected most of Mr. Armstrong's truth along with his error. The major difference between the WCG now and most Protestant groups is that the WCG has services on both Saturday and Sunday in many places. When they drop their Saturday services, they will be little different than any other group. We are sending you the *Servants' News* back issues so you can see what happened to us.

—NSE

Why Are You Attacking HWA?

LETTER:

January 18, 1999

Dear Norman,

You are not concerned with the Truth of the Bible but only with your own truth or what you consider to be 'truth'. Before me is the November issue (1998) of *Servants' News*. It would appear that you are having a change of heart, may be what you write about Armstrong is just a prelude to more realistic views on the Bible and the Truths that YHWH reveals in the end-time.

The trend seems to be against the beliefs and teachings of Armstrong. You always had a good feeling for trends and

you pick up this anti-Armstrong trend which serves your purpose, to lash out at Armstrong, a servant who never did you any harm but only good. When I read the title I got a little hot under the collar, and I asked myself, 'why kick a dead horse'?

RESPONSE: I did not write these articles about Herbert Armstrong because of any "trend" but because I had been studying his writings and continued to find difficulty with them. After seeing the numerous scriptural problems with his government and tithing teaching, I began to look into his prophetic teachings and other teachings. About the same time, his works began to be available to study on CD-ROM and the Internet. I was amazed to discover how he taught that Christ was coming very soon for 50 years—and how he nearly always linked that teaching to the need to give to his organization. These letters had not affected me so much when I received them one at a time. During the 1970's, I was a student, so I could not give much if I wanted to. During the 1980's, the appeals for funds were less frantic and often. I thought these things were necessary because we were getting close to the end of the millennium. I was amazed to find that frantic appeals had been the standard fare for 50 years.

I would not say that Armstrong never did me any harm. He taught me much truth, but he also taught me to rely on a church corporation for truth and guidance rather than on the Holy Spirit and my own Bible study. I am not angry at him, because I voluntarily let him do it.

LETTER: You were a diligent student at AC and you supported Armstrong to the hilt and until the bitter end, 1992. You never opened your mouth when you were employed by the WWCOG and even at that time you must have known that most of what he taught was not Biblical. But you did not want to endanger your fancy salary and hung in there until it became embarrassing when you quit to start your own ministry and carried on teaching the 'truths' of Armstrong. But now you consider the time has come to turn against Armstrong who is in the grave and can no longer defend himself. You will hurt a lot of people with your forthcoming negative comment, many will hate you for it. Again, why kick a dead horse?

RESPONSE: I feel embarrassed, but no I did not understand the unbiblical teachings of Herbert Armstrong while I worked for the WCG. I would have explained hierarchical government just like Mr. Armstrong or Rod Meredith. People who openly challenged such doctrines quickly disappeared from headquarters jobs. At the time, I thought that was the right thing to do with "dissidents". I worked many more hours than required for

the WCG because I believed in what it was doing at the time. I was a mainframe computer programmer for the WCG and numerous times turned down job offers for more money than I was getting there.

If no one were still following Mr. Armstrong's teaching and methods, we would not write these *Servants' News* articles. But many groups *are still following*. I do not believe we can be effective in teaching others until we see ourselves as "Bible believers", not former-Armstrong-followers.

LETTER: You may argue that the truth has to be told. Yes, indeed, I do share this belief, but why now, why so many years after his death? You never raised your voice against Armstrong and the WWCOG when you were still in his employ. During all the years of the existence of *Servants' News* you hardly ever mentioned anything against Armstrong but now you consider it opportune to go along with the rest, all those who have doubted "Armstrongism" over a long period of time. You jump on the bandwagon of the anti Armstrong pack. I was never an Armstrong admirer or adherer, YHWH showed me early on that I should not follow men but Him only.

RESPONSE: I am glad that you came to this understanding much sooner than I did. Since leaving the WCG, I have met many others who have come to see Mr. Armstrong's difficulties. Some tried to show them to me, other were patient knowing that I would some day discover them. We have received letters about Mr. Armstrong since *Servants' News* began (notice some of the dates in the last issue). Since the Eternal has given me this opportunity to help teach others, I try to teach what I believe is the most important. A lot of former WCG members are frustrated because they are trying to rebuild on Herbert Armstrong's old foundation and it is not working. They (like I had to) need to realize that a Herbert Armstrong foundation and a Christ foundation are not the same thing. I hope these articles will show them what the Armstrong foundation really is, and then we can move on to talking about building on Christ as a foundation.

LETTER: For all you know, Armstrong was YHWH's anointed. So why kill him a second time? Even David had the good sense not to kill Saul because he was YHWH's anointed. YHWH raised up Saul to make him king and he may have raised up Armstrong to make many see that the Sabbath is YHWH's Holy Day and to become aware of the coming Kingdom of YHWH. Finally Armstrong blew it just like Saul did. Saul's kingdom was taken away from him and so also Armstrong lost his church which imploded because YHWH

was fed up with that church which pretended to be the 'Church of God' but nobody has been able to show me so far what is 'of God' and what 'church' means. A name used by all denominations of this world to prove that they are not 'of God', but of Satan the Devil. It is high time that those who believe in YHWH's Holy Day and the future Kingdom of YHWH should realize that they are members of the 'Spiritual Ecclesia of YHWH' or the 'Spiritual Assembly of YHWH' which name will set us apart from all other false religions of this world.

But I doubt whether this will ever be brought about before the return of Yashua ha'Messchiach and 'we can see Him as He is'.

RESPONSE: I do not understand why you are glad to have knowledge of the need to not rely on Herbert Armstrong, but do not want that knowledge shared with others. I think it is important for them to learn it. I am aware that some etymologists trace "church" and "God" to pagan words, but the New Testament that we have preserved uses the Greek *Theos* for YHWH and *ecclesia* is also used for a pagan assembly (Acts 19:32). The Bible uses *tartaroo* (place of the wicked dead) from Greek mythology. Christ said that his disciples would be identified by love (John 13:35), not by the language they speak. There are groups that use the name YHWH, but do not believe in Yashuah (Jesus). There are groups who use the name that believe most of mankind are "subhumans" without the capability of eternal salvation. It is clear that the Father and Son do have specific names, and when they return, I will use whatever name in whatever language they want us to use.

LETTER: So carry on with your diatribe against YHWH's anointed, I am sure He will not be pleased but will hold it against you.

—A reader

RESPONSE: Again, I do not understand why you do not want me to help people rely directly on the Eternal when that is what you do. The Old Testament tells of many kings who were anointed—and tells of many of their sins. Our effort is to patiently tell a truth that is not generally known. How can the Eternal hold that against me? I do not believe that the Eternal needs me to "lie" for Him so His servants can look better than they really are. We need to praise our Father in heaven and Christ, the true Head of all believers, rather than continue to build up men who claimed to be things that they were not.

—NSE

Which Pope Is the Antichrist?

Howdy from Texas! I do hope that you and your family are doing well.

I just want to respond to something that was said in the "Religious and World News" section of the latest Servant's News:

"Few believe that the current pope, John Paul II, is the 'antichrist', but they wonder if his successor will be a much more evil man. As a matter of fact, John Paul II himself wonders if his successor will be an evil man. More than once he has mentioned the old Catholic prophecy that there would be 265 popes, the last of which would be evil. John Paul is number 264."

My answer to this is: **why not** John Paul II? The fact that many "Christians" don't expect him to be the one is a red flag in itself. And the bigger red flag is the fact that he himself is warning about the next one. WHY would he be doing this? Is YHVH using **him** to warn **us** or the world? I find that very hard to believe. **Why** would He do such a thing? Or is there something else going on here?

Just stop and think of this great end-time deception:

Everyone is expecting (because of their lying false prophets) an "evil" man, who "claims to be God" and leads some kind of a "world religion", to persecute "Christians" and "the church". Throw in a old demonic-inspired prophecy that has been true **up until this moment** ("It's been true for centuries, so there **has** to be one more pope!").

Now have an old, frail pope on the scene who believes in this and wants to get the church prepared. A man who has been around for 20 years and is admired, respected, and loved around the world (except by the NWO elite); who has good character and stands up for what is good and right, the family, the cross and God, and says a number of things that even **we** have a hard time disagreeing with.

So what we have is a setup for a mass deception that may even fool some of those who **shouldn't** be fooled. My advice is to watch him carefully and listen to what he says attentively. Don't be distracted by all the NWO smoke and mirrors (aka: Israel's collapsing attempt at world gov't), but watch for the rising of the one and only: The **holy** Roman Empire of the **German** Nation (and no, it's **not** the EU!)

That's all I have for now. Take care and keep pluggin' away,

Michael Turner, Plano, TX
mykeltturner@airmail.net

RESPONSE: I would not say that John Paul *could not* be the Antichrist, but so far he does not fit the pattern. Most evil dictators pretend to go to church and "be good" while making a trail of serious offences for which there somehow was not quite enough evi-

dence to convict them. I do appreciate your caution against claiming the NWO (New World Order—a largely secret conspiracy of politicians and business men from many nations) is about to take over the world and that a leader from them would be the Antichrist. I think there are such groups that would like to take over, but even they are divided and have a long way to go. Our prayers should be to do what God wants us to do now, and pray for understanding of what to do in the future.

—NSE

Study Info If You Are Interested

LETTER:

January 1999

Dear Norman,

[paragraph omitted]

You never printed the information that I requested to be offered for people to exercise their personal responsibility to "prove all things" in the process, denying me the insights and research of others....

[partial paragraph omitted]

You constantly present yourself as open-minded and accepting, advocate tolerance of people who believe differently on some issues than our personal views. In my case you seem to have a double standard and total lack of tolerance.

[a paragraph and a part omitted]

We are still open to new insights on calendar issues and wish to compare notes with other researchers... The main issue that I am concerned about presently, is determining the beginning of the year, considering the proper time for Pentecost is wheat harvest (Ex 34:22) which convinces me that nobody in this era has identified either correctly as per my enclosed article on the calendar.

Your's sincerely,

—Myron Martin; Patriots of the Kingdom; PO Box 72119, Pine Valley P.O.; Woodbridge Ont. L3L 8N8; Canada

RESPONSE: I receive hundreds of pages of articles every month and cannot possibly publish them all. I am not treating you differently than others. There are other authors that I have never published who regularly send articles. I publish that which I believe is most true and beneficial to the brethren. For information that I believe is less useful, I may publish an address where it can be obtained (as I have done for you more than once). Other information is simply delayed so I can study it, and articles I believe are deceptive or mostly false, I do not include in *Servants' News* at all. I do not call other people "unconverted" because they have different beliefs. I fellowship with many people with different beliefs. I do not try to

stop anyone from reading other's literature. But I do not believe I should use my resources to promote ideas that I believe to be incorrect. "Whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom 14:23).

—NSE

What Continues of OT Law?

LETTER:

January 10, 1999

Dear Norm,

It's been a while since I have written you, but I have been busy, nevertheless studying into different topics of Scripture. One topic I found interesting came about after being challenged on tithing by a member of a certain church organization. In studying the Scriptures to give him my answer, I found the principle of tithing seemed to be tightly interwoven with sacrifices and offerings and that all pertained to the temple and the Levitical priesthood. Then I questioned, what was the example of the apostles and disciples of Yahshua, during the first century, before the destruction of the temple? I found numerous accounts, especially in the Book of Acts, of the apostles and followers going daily to the temple to worship and teach. Although paying tithes and offering sacrifices is not mentioned except in the case of Paul in Acts 21, where James is advising him to take a vow (shaving his head) to demonstrate that he "walked orderly and kept the law." (vs.24). Were not offerings and sacrifices a part of the Nazarite vow (Num.6)? Therefore, did the apostles not continue to keep all of the law, including the temple laws of tithing, offerings and sacrificing animals after the death and resurrection of Yahshua? If they did not, would they not have been deemed guilty by their non-believing Jewish critics and thereby condemned by their actions as unrighteous, according to Hebrew law?

RESPONSE: You are quite right. If the apostles and other believers continued to worship at the temple, they must have continued to follow the Old Testament law as understood by the Jewish leaders of that time. The penalty for not observing the Sabbath or the Passover as prescribed was to be "cut off" from their people, which would have caused them to be rejected from the temple and most synagogues.

LETTER: If my understanding of various church doctrine (including the so-called churches of God) are correct, the need to bring offerings and sacrifices to the temple ceased with the offering and sacrifice of Yahshua.. Was it not hypocritical, therefore, of the apostles to teach that there was no longer any need for animal sacrifice, and to themselves offer sacrifices? Or, is it **our** interpretation of Scripture that should be called

into question. Did the sacrifice truly end with the death and resurrection of the Messiah, or when the temple was destroyed?

Of course, the tithing laws were connected directly to the temple and the Levitical priesthood as well. Would the apostles and first believers not have continued in the practice of paying their tithes to the temple in accordance with the law? Or did the apostles accept tithes and offerings themselves instead? I can find no evidence that they did. I would think that any offering taken to help those in Jerusalem, would have been over and above their temple tithes. Would this system, therefore, not have ended also with the destruction of the temple, as did animal sacrifice?

Yet the religious organizations of the world, including the various churches of God, and some sacred name churches, just love that law. They have placed it above every other law in importance. Why did they so readily discard the messy ritual of animal sacrifice laws and keep the tithing law. The answer is obvious: \$\$\$\$\$.

RESPONSE: There is no evidence of tithing to churches or their leaders in the New Testament or early church history. Even Jews outside the land of Israel did not tithe to the temple. Certainly, Gentiles were never expected to tithe. Yet today, churches which say that the Old Testament is "done away" will still quote the tithing laws from it.

LETTER: We know that the practice of animal sacrifice is to be restored in the millennium, and I am sure that we all have puzzled with the question, "If Yahshua's sacrifice ended the need for animal sacrifice, why is it to be restored in the future?" Well, the question I have for you and all the readers of the *Servants' News* is, "Who was it that brought an end to sacrifice and offering? Yahshua or Satan?" The answer can be found in the book of Daniel.

Daniel 9: "26And after the 62 weeks the Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the price of the people (Satan) who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. 27Then he (Satan) shall confirm a covenant with many for one week: but in the middle of the week he (Satan) shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering."

Yahweh [the Eternal] would have certainly had to allow Satan to do this, else he would not have been able to. Yet, allow it He did. Why? Did it have anything to do with Yahshua's sacrifice, or was it because of the disbelief of the main body of Jews?

RESPONSE: Matthew 23:29-39 shows that destruction came upon Jerusalem because of the sins of many throughout the years, but

that the particular generation at that time was very evil. Numerous other scriptures show that the body of Christ is the Temple (1Cor 3:16; 2Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21-22; Heb 3:6; 1Pet 2:5). Hebrews 9 and 10 show the limitations of the animal sacrifices—they were reminders of sin, but not able to cleanse people from sin.

LETTER: What were the earliest Gentile believers taught. Were they not found by Paul, already in the synagogues, keeping the Sabbath and learning ALL the law of Moses? Of course, unless they were proselyte Jews, they would not have been allowed in the temple anyways. However, that is exactly what they were in there studying to be. Did Paul teach them contrary to this law? Would it not have been named among the accusations later brought against him by the Jews, if he did? In his defense Paul declares;

Acts 25:8: "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all."

Was Paul lying to save his own neck? Or was he telling the truth?

RESPONSE: Paul continued to live according to this manner, but he never taught Gentiles to live as Jews or taught that it was required for salvation (Gal 2:14). He taught that the sacrifice of Christ was superior to all law-keeping and custom: "...If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ".

LETTER: Conclusion: Christianity has brought us a long way from the original followers of Yahshua, They worshipped and taught in a Jewish temple, and/or in Jewish synagogues. They strictly observed **all** the laws of Yahweh and likewise taught that they should **all** be obeyed. Even the law of circumcision, which was called into question in Acts 15, was only set aside as a pre-requisite for Gentile fellowship with believers. As James declares in Vs. 21, "For Moses has throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath". They were already going to the synagogues learning the law of Moses. It was therefore hoped that when they were taught the law of Moses, they would submit themselves to circumcision, as did all the Proselyte Jews. In

fact, in the beginning of the next chapter (16), Paul is circumcising Timothy. Why would he do this if circumcision was no longer required? He would have had to have been the worst type of hypocrite.

RESPONSE: Jesus taught his followers that they would be put out of the synagogues (John 16:2). With only a couple of exceptions, the epistles almost always refer to brethren meeting in houses. While learning the law of Moses is important, numerous scriptures make it clear that Gentiles were not expected to keep the national aspects and those that required a priesthood. Paul did not circumcise Timothy because he was teaching circumcision of Gentiles. He did it so he would not offend Jews: "Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek" (Acts 16:3).

LETTER: The temple laws have been set aside temporarily because there is no temple. There also is no Levitical priesthood. If the sacrificial laws, pertaining to the temple and the priesthood, have been halted, then so have the tithing laws. When the temple is restored, these laws will be re-instated. Anyone previous to this, who teaches that they have been given authority to accept tithes or (if the case may be), offerings and sacrifices as well, He is a fraud, a liar and a thief, for he does so outside of the law.

I hope I have kept this brief enough for you to print in your publication and look forward to any direct discussion of the matter with you or any of your readers. Please feel free to give out my name and e-mail/postal address.

—Gary Primo; 11 Elm St.; RR3;
Fenelon Falls, Ont. Canada K0M 1N0;
gprimo@lindsay.igs.net

RESPONSE: I agree that tithing pertains to a complete national system where the Eternal gave people land, a three-fold blessing in the sixth year and provided the priesthood and Levitical functions in exchange for tithes, firstfruits, and many other offerings. No scripture teaches that tithing has been transferred from the Levites to the church or ministry. I believe that the temple will be restored along with tithing for those in the land of Israel. However, at that time, it will be clear to everyone that all these things "are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ". The system that the Eternal gave to Israel will continue as an example to all nations who will, from time to time, go up to Jerusalem to see it (Zech 14:16). But it will not be practical nor necessary for people living all over the globe to offer the sacrifices required in the existing Old Testament law.

—NSE ☐

Was Herbert Armstrong Uniquely Chosen To “Warn the World” Rather Than To Teach Doctrine?

On many occasions, Herbert Armstrong said that he was sent as the “Ezekiel Watchman”, to warn the Israelite nations and the rest of the world of tribulation to come if they do not repent of their sin. He went on to say that only the Father can draw a person, so there was little need to teach Biblical doctrine to people who were not being drawn. All of this is probably true. Mr. Armstrong’s autobiography clearly relates Loma Armstrong’s dream that Christ had work for the Armstrongs to do.

But is it possible that the Eternal commissioned others to warn the nations? If people are to be warned, without necessarily being taught doctrine, then we must realize that there were numerous groups issuing a warning message.

Hal Lindsay preached a coming tribulation and the return of Christ from the 1970’s till today. He wrote *The Late Great Planet Earth*, the most popular prophetic book of all time. It was printed over 100 times in 52 languages. An astounding 35 million copies were sold or given away. A movie was made in 1978, narrated by Orson Welles. In addition, Mr. Lindsay has appeared in thousands of interviews, speaking engagements, articles, etc.

John Walvoord wrote over 30 prophetic books which are widely sold in book stores. His book *Armageddon, Oil, and the Middle East Crisis* (1990) sold over 1 million copies. He teaches repentance from national and personal sin and Christ’s return to reign on earth in the Millennium. He is the chancellor of the Dallas Theological seminary. This position, as well as his many magazine articles and personal appearances have had major impact on prophetic teaching throughout the USA.

Billy Graham preached a national warning message as well as individual repentance. His books, *World Aflame* (1965) and *Approaching Hoofbeats: The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1983) taught that we are living in the end times and that Christ will return to set up the Millennium on earth. The latter book reached the New York Times best seller list and the former book was given away to many live audiences. Mr. Graham has preached to over 210 million people in live audiences in 185 countries. His weekly radio program, the *Hour of Decision* is on over 900 radio stations. His prime-time television specials reach about 60 million viewers each year. His weekly column

goes to a newspaper circulation of 5 million and his own magazine has a circulation of 1.7 million in 160 countries.

Herbert Armstrong’s warnings were significant and good, but they were small compared to the above. If a person responds to one of these Protestant messages to repent and change his or her way of life, then it is an easy matter for Christ to steer him or her to another group preaching more truth. I should know—it happened to me, as well as many other WCG members whom I have met. We first responded to a Bible message that was limited in understanding, then later began to study Herbert Armstrong’s teachings.

Warning to World Leaders

Many will point to Mr Armstrong’s trips to world leaders to show that he was unique among servants of the Eternal. This writer agrees that Armstrong’s world-leader visits are unique, but I am not at all sure that this is good. Many Bible prophets and apostles spoke to world leaders, but the manner was nothing like Mr. Armstrong’s visits. We find differences in **five** important areas:

1. The biblical prophets did not desire of their own to go to visit leaders. Herbert Armstrong clearly stated that his visits were fulfilling his long-time desire to be among “the great and the near-great” of this world.

2. Bible figures clearly represented the Eternal to the leaders they met—sometimes speaking exact words that He gave them. Mr. Armstrong traveled as the head of the Ambassador International Cultural foundation or as an “ambassador without portfolio”. In his July 30, 1973 member letter Mr. Armstrong said his teaching was “**nothing like** what missionaries have taught in those countries! They will not recognize any connection **what-ever**. It will not appear as anything competitive to **their** religions. In Japan it will be thundered to them as direct from the **Creator of the Japanese people**. I will not say anything against their religions.”

3. Most Bible figures gained access to leaders because they were either recognized as a “man of God” or as accused prisoners. They never “bought” their way in to see a leader. (Paul even refused to “buy” his way out of prison—Acts 24:26). Yet Aaron Dean, a man who accompanied Armstrong on his travels, admits that thousands of dollars were paid to arrange some

of Armstrong’s early meetings with world leaders. After Mr. Dean began to arrange these meetings himself, this “buying” stopped. But throughout his travels, Armstrong continually spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on Steuben crystal and other “gifts” for leaders. He also contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to various cultural programs of these leaders.

4. Mr. Armstrong was never persecuted for his message to leaders, whereas Bible messengers were. At a minimum, Bible messengers were thrown out and told not to come back. Mr. Armstrong’s calculated non-offensive message and gifts usually produced invitations to return.

5. This writer has never been able to find one externally-observable effect of any of Herbert Armstrong’s visits to leaders—no laws changed, no official proclamations, no stopping of hostilities with other nations, etc. Nearly every leader whom Herbert Armstrong visited is now dead. **They did not personally change, nor did they see the coming tribulation or the “world peace” about which Mr. Armstrong spoke.** In other words, his visits had no observable effect on the world.

Some people will make the argument that Mr. Armstrong had to do it this way, or he never would have “gotten in” to see these leaders. That is exactly the point. It appears that the Eternal had not sent him, but he was there, trying to do good, from his own understanding. Billy Graham also went to meet many world leaders (including most living US presidents). While he apparently had no message directly from God (nor did his visits have a great effect), he did go **claiming to be a minister of Christ** and did talk about personal sin.

Conclusion

Herbert Armstrong’s visits to world leaders cannot be considered any kind of prophetic warning when compared to warnings in the Bible. He did warn a great many people to repent of their sins through his broadcasts and literature, but he was not the only one to do this. His biggest mistake was claiming that he was the human head over every one through whom the Eternal was working. We can be thankful for the work he did and the truth he taught without repeating his mistakes. The Eternal works through whomever He wills.

—Norman S. Edwards

"HWA the Only One?" from page 1 organization will disfellowship you if you don't practice it, or practicing it because of personal commitment?

Large Groups

Seventh Day Adventist: The approximately 10 million people who would use this name are becoming more divided all the time. There are dozens of splinter groups, some of which keep the Holy Days, reject the Trinity, and teach other doctrines similar to Armstrong's. Some within the main body do have doctrinal beliefs different than the main group, but they stay in the main group because they do not want to be separated from their friends. (Sound familiar?) We know of one long-time SDA member who stood up in an interactive Bible study and said: "If we have doctrines that can be found in the writings of Ellen G. White (the SDA prophetess), but not in the Bible, we need to change our doctrines." This is a radical step for an SDA. If only 1% of Seventh Day Adventists have accepted doctrines similar to your own, that would be 100,000 people who believe like you, but were not taught by Herbert Armstrong.

True Jesus Church: This church has about 2 million members in China, but must keep a low-profile as it is not officially recognized. It has thousands of members elsewhere. Their Melbourne office provided a speaker to the 1997 Australian Friends of the Sabbath conference. It is difficult to work with this group in any major way because they are hierarchical and consider themselves the "one true church"—is that familiar? (Source: Craig White, Sydney, Australia.)

Church of God Seventh Day: Over 100,000 people, most outside the USA, make up the several branches of this group. Most Church of God Seventh Day doctrines are very similar to WCG doctrines. One branch, based in Caldwell, Idaho, officially teaches Holy Day observance. Other branches make their church camps available to those who would like to keep them. One of their ministers, John Kiez, observed the Holy Days since working with Mr. Armstrong in the 1930s until his death in the 1990s. While Herbert Armstrong called these groups the "Sardis Era" and "spiritually dead", many congregations have continued to grow with no TV or other expensive evangelism. Today, they are larger than all of the WCG-split-off groups combined.

Seventh Day Baptists: This diverse group has a history going back into the 1600s. Some are doctrinally similar to Sunday-keeping Baptists, except for their worship day. Others hold doctrines similar to Church of God groups. The Seventh Day Baptist World Federation listed 55,000 members in 1986 *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups*, (Bible Sabbath Association, 1986).

House of God, Holy Church of the Living God, Pillar and Ground of the Truth, House of Prayer for All People, Inc. This organization was founded in 1918 by Bishop R. A. R. Johnson. Most members are of African descent, with about 130 congregations in the United States, Canada, Jamaica and Africa. They keep the Holy days, do foot-washing, eat clean meats, and have other doctrines similar to the WCG. There are about 10,000 members. (Source: Minister Tyrone Johnson and web-site <http://www.houseofgod.org/>)

The Church of God and Saints of Christ: This group was founded by William Saunders Crowdy (born a slave in 1847) in 1896. He taught the Sabbath and Holy Days, though their main get-together is at Passover. Today, there are about 8,000 members. They have some doctrines which most WCG members would find unusual, but their principles of living at peace with neighbors, working hard and going into business for yourself if possible are quite refreshing. (Source: www.churchofgod1896.org/.)

Evangelical Reformed Methodists: Sixty-eight congregations in North America separated themselves from the other Methodists in an effort to return to the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints." They observe the food laws, do not use crosses, and keep other doctrines familiar to "Church of God" groups. They are still very much learning and growing in their understanding (Source: Nov/Dec 1997 issue of the *Hebrew Roots* magazine.)

International Groups

Scottish Sabbatarians: Margaret McKormack, born January 25, 1916, grew up on the Scottish Island Arran. Most people on the Island were Sabbath and Holy Day keepers. They believed in British Israelism, clean meats, the destruction of the wicked, and many other doctrines similar to Mr. Armstrong. They called themselves "the Church of

God." While the group has been scattered or disbanded today, its history goes back generations. Margaret later came in contact with the WCG and attended. (Source: John Morgan, Melbourne, Australia.)

English Sabbatarians: Gladys Carnes, born March 5, 1897 was the daughter of Alfred Henry Wight, a minister in the "Church of God." A building near where she grew up was inscribed with that name—it was built in the 1600's. Mrs. Carnes knew of seven congregations when she was little. She was baptized at age 21, and when she met Herbert Armstrong in the 1950's, he saw no need to rebaptize her. (Source: Jeff Zhorne, *Worldwide News*, March 4, 1985).

Dutch Sabbath Association: This group consists of many smaller, mostly Sabbatarian groups, but has undertaken quite a bit of evangelism. They distributed over 500,000 leaflets advertising the Sabbath, drawing the attention of the local news media. Over 750 Sabbath information packets were sent as a result, in addition to telephone and internet inquiries. Congregations are growing as a result. (Source: Joop Peterse, Netherlands.)

Ukrainian Sabbatarians. On Pentecost, in 1949 Michael Palchay began to keep the Sabbath after it was revealed to him through speaking in tongues. Various congregations continued to flourish, even though they were illegal and hunted by the KGB. Today, there are over 3000 Sabbatarians in the Trans-carpathia area. (Source: Victor Kubik, UCG-IA Minister.)

Transylvanian Sabbatarians: These groups clearly go back to the Christian reform movements of the 1500s. They kept the biblical food laws and some kept many of the other practices that most people would consider "Jewish". There were many thousands of these brethren, but they were often persecuted by other Sunday-keepers, sometimes officially by the government. Most had to go into hiding during the communist rule. Today, a few thousand are still known to exist in the areas of Cluj and Sibiu. Others may exist, but are still in hiding. (Source: Gerhard O. Marx, *The Beliefs and Practices of the Church of God in Transylvania During the Middle Ages.*)

Polish Sabbatarians: The Sabbath Day Christian Church currently has about 400 members in 25 congregations. They have roots in the Seventh Day Adventist movement, but have rejected Ellen G.

White, the Trinity and other doctrines. One of their leaders was Pavel Buyok, who has traveled in the USA. He was quite interested when the Holy Days were presented to him. (Source: 1996 e-mail from Craig White.)

Sabbath Keepers in Chile and Argentina. Some Church of God Seventh Day brethren in Chile in the 1930's began to study and keep the Holy Days. When Israel became a nation in the 1940's, they felt the end was near and wanted to migrate to Israel. Some travelled to Argentina as the first step in their migration, but only a very few ever made it to Israel. But the Holy Day-keeping congregations in Argentina flourished. The several thousand brethren in these countries eventually came into contact with the WCG, some joined, but some remained independent.

(Source: Ambassador College Correspondence Course Lesson #53, p. 11, 1969).

Burmese Sabbatarians: About 17,000 people attend a variety of congregations, speaking a variety of languages in Burma. While these groups were influenced by WCG and Seventh Day Adventist literature, they are not connected to these organizations. Indeed, communications and travel are so difficult in these areas that they must be served by their own ministers. Lazum Brang is one such minister. He is a subsistence farmer with two small children, but he spends whatever extra time he has traveling, often on foot, to preach the gospel, and whatever extra money he has to write or print literature. (Source: Leon Sexton—traveled to meet these brethren in January, 1999).

Australian Independent Sabbatarians: In the early 1930's, a former Adventist minister, A. H. Britten, founded the Remnant Church of God. He may have been influenced by G.G. Ruperts writings (see next item). On Pastor Britten's death in 1966, the church was looked after by a Mrs. McLachlan. The Church observed the Holy Days and appeared similar to other Churches of God. Later, it was led by a former WCG member, David Dutton, but now it is apparently completely disbanded. (Source: *200 years of Sabbath Keeping in Australia* by Bruce Dean.)

Smaller Groups

Independent Church of God (Seventh Day) Movement: G.G. Rupert was a minister for the Seventh Day Adventists, then the Church of God Seventh Day. In 1902, he began to work on his own. He wrote thousands of pages of material, in a more scholarly method than Herbert Armstrong. He taught in several cities, one of the latter being Pasadena, California! Rupert taught the Holy Days, abstinence from pagan holidays, clean meats, British Israelism. He

used a different calendar and had a different understanding of prophecy than Armstrong. Rupert never believed in hierarchical government, and after he died in 1922, many of the congregations he founded joined other groups or broke up. His daughter kept his publication going until 1929, but much of it was the reprinting of old articles. (Source: *The Remnant of Israel* by Richard Nickels, available from *Servants' News*.)

The Prophetic Herald Ministry: Headquartered at Bethel Temple in Spokane, Alexander Schiffner began teaching the Sabbath and British Israelism in 1933. He was on as many as 40 radio stations, had several congregations numbering in the hundreds, and taught against Roman Catholicism. His ministry broke up when he died in 1973, but some members eventually joined the WCG. (Source: Betty Cook, one of the people baptized by that group, later a WCG member, and now a *Servants' News* subscriber.)

The Little Children of Jesus: This unincorporated group was founded by John Quincy Adams (a descendent of the U.S. president of the same name), a Baptist minister. In 1921, Adams was sent to preach against the "speaking in tongues" that was going on in a local congregation, but understood it to be something of God. The group learned about the Sabbath and Holy Days through interpretation of these messages. They also learned about modern day Babylon and the false doctrines of the Trinity and pagan holy days from these messages. Adams wrote as prolifically as Herbert Armstrong and evangelized throughout the central USA and Canada. (Source: Chris Barr, currently attends in

Pocahontas, Arkansas.)

Church of God, Jerusalem Acres & Restoration Foundation: With headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee, this group has no connection with other "Church of God" groups. It has a Jewish flavor, but members keep the holy days and food laws. They are quite active in evangelizing, through print and traveling lectures. (Source: Norman Edwards.)

Jasper, Arkansas: A congregation here is led by Peter Youngs, the grandson of Andrew Dugger. His family has been Sabbatarians for as long as they have records. While Dugger was affiliated with the Church of God 7th Day, Youngs is an independent. (Source: e-mail from Mr. Youngs)

Queensland, Australia: A Sunday-keeping group here converted to the Sabbath. They are associated with an annual "pilgrimage" of Protestants to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles and to show solidarity with the Jews. Many keep the Sabbath and all the Holy Days in homes. (Source: Dale Heslin—attended their meeting.)

Local Groups

Nashville, Tennessee: Arthur Lee, Sr., an older African-American gentleman held Bible studies on Saturday afternoons in a Nashville park in the early 1970's. The studies were largely attended by members of the hippy culture, some of which were "Jesus Freaks". The man would ask questions then ask people to read the answers from the Bible. The people learned about the Sabbath, Holy Days, clean meats, avoidance of pagan days, etc. Eventually, the study broke up, but most attending found their way into the WCG (Source: Richard and Tarcila Fox, two who attended those studies, became WCG members, and are now *Servants' News* subscribers).

Appleton-Green Bay, Wisconsin: John J. Purvins and Gary L. Lesperance studied literature from the Worldwide Church of God and other groups in the 1970's. They received a visit from WCG ministers, but found them quite arrogant—not like the "servants" described in the Bible. In 1976, they began an independent congregation which continues to this day—about 40 members. They observe the holy days and food laws, and teach basic Biblical Hebrew and Greek. They also have a community outreach.

Grand Ledge, Michigan: In 1928,

All of the groups mentioned here are neither all good nor all bad. Like the churches of Revelation 2 & 3, they are a mixture.

Nora Bush, a former Methodist, began to teach a group of people what she had learned from her studies of the Bible. She taught the second coming of Christ, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, clean meats, and many other doctrines also taught by Armstrong. After Ms. Bush died, others continued to teach in her place. Little written literature was ever produced. Today, 15 to 20 people meet every Sabbath at a small building they have acquired. They have worked with other groups, but found no need to join them. (Source: Barbara McDirmid, wife of their current pastor.)

Inlay City, Michigan: Al and Jeanne Raines, former WCG members attended a year-2000 seminar. They spoke to six people who had dropped out of organized churches to study the Bible on their own. These people realized that the Sabbath is the day of worship, and are looking into the holy days and many other doctrines.

Obviously, there is no way of knowing how many such local groups there are. Since most do not do mass evangelism or advertise, there is no way to find them. But small things cannot be discounted. The Eternal performed great miracles so Philip could baptize one Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:27-39).

What Is the Meaning of So Many Groups—Each Slightly Different?

It means that Christ Himself is leading his church, not a man. It also shows that

Christ allows errors in His congregations. Just as the Seven Churches in Asia Minor in Revelation 2 & 3 had some varying and erroneous doctrines, so 1900 years later the hundreds of congregations have many varying and erroneous doctrines. Sometimes the groups last a long time, sometimes they break up and reform, sometimes they seem to disappear.

It seems that no matter how humble and God-centered a teacher is, there is a tendency for people to build an institution around the person and reduce religion to a creed and an organization to join. The “organization” that God built was the nation of Israel—anyone who was circumcised and kept the law could be a member for life. It was a temporal state and “a church organization”. In the New Testament, Christ asked for the hearts, minds, and lives of **individuals**. He did not undo the righteous teaching of the Old Testament, neither did He ask believers to join a new human organization.

All of the groups mentioned here are neither all good nor all bad. Like the churches of Revelation 2 & 3, they are a mixture. Some groups teach that they are the only true church—they might treat you as an unconverted person who needs to be counseled and baptized before entering their fellowship. Others would probably accept your baptism, but you might find their practices “odd” because their teachings are so heavily dependent on the leader or founder of their group.

You might find that some of the other groups were very accepting of you—quite happy for you to fellowship with them even though you would probably have some doctrinal differences.

But we need to consider how a member of one of these groups might view the group we attend. Would they find us accepting of them and united on the common ground of solid Bible teaching? Or would they find us overly pre-occupied with the prophetic interpretations and doctrinal teaching of Herbert Armstrong? Would they have trouble accepting phrases that Mr. Armstrong used, but that are not in the Bible?

Some of these groups are active, strong and serving in some capacity. Others spend much of their time debating the teachings of a person now dead. We need to decide what kind of person we want to be. Do we refuse to work with other groups because they may bring up doctrinal issues that we do not have an explanation for? Because we are afraid our group will lose members? Or because we think our group is better? None of these are good reasons for rejecting other believers.

Indeed, there are groups that have false doctrines that truly are dangerous, or that seem to have a contentious spirit. We are not saying that any believer can work with any other group that calls itself Christian. But on the other hand, it seems that most believers reject most “other groups” before they even know much at all about them.

Christ clearly pictured a day of judgment when people from various eras would be able to comment upon each other:

The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here (Luke 11:31-32).

I have wondered, sometimes with tears in my eyes, if Herbert Armstrong and his followers are going to stand up and try to tell Christ that none of the people in other groups are His, because their doctrines differed from Armstrong’s. I wonder if Armstrong will tell Christ that none of these people preached the gospel,

Let’s Get Together to “Do a Work”?

This phrase is often heard among Sabbatarians. Some are trying to “do a work”. But what usually happens is: “Let’s get together and spend some money.” Many WCG-splinter groups have worked out their tithing, receipting, payroll, and ministerial ranking systems long before they had a definite message or plan to preach the Gospel. Some changed plans several times, ousted telecast presenters, etc. They were not collecting money for a specific “message” that the Eternal had given someone to preach, but they collected money, **then** looked for a message.

Only the Eternal knows exactly how much of Herbert Armstrong’s message was given by Him, and how much was Mr. Armstrong’s own ideas. Nevertheless, Herbert Armstrong clearly had a message he felt that he needed to teach, and others joined him to help pay for that message.

Today, many WCG-split groups seek to imitate Armstrong’s message—but most are not doing it very well, and if the Eternal **has not given them that message to preach**, then of course we should not expect much success!

Some of the leaders of the groups on these pages did have a message that they felt “called to preach”, and many joined them to help them. The first priority of every mature believer should be to live a life that is an example of the life of Christ (1Tim 3). We all can encourage other believers, help those in need and “be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1Pet 3:15). From that position of stability, we can ask the Eternal to give us a message to take to others, or we can find someone else with a message that we believe is from the Eternal and we can help them!

because he was the first one to preach the gospel in 1800 years. Mr. Armstrong taught his doctrines to as many as 300,000 people, but the groups listed here add up to many times that—and we have no way to know how many people really have the Spirit of God, whether they be in the WCG, these other groups, or groups unknown to us.

Many Sabbath-keepers had their property confiscated and were persecuted greatly for their beliefs. Their leaders taught brethren to rely on the Bible and the Holy Spirit, because they knew that they could be killed at any time. Herbert Armstrong died surrounded by every comfort that money could buy. He left his followers so ill-prepared to live a spiritual life without him, that within ten years and without any outside persecution, they had dispersed to dozens of competing groups or given up on the Eternal completely.

To anyone who will hear, I urge each of you to take up your place as one of the many humble children of the Eternal—realizing that He calls whom He will and is under no obligation to tell us how or where He does it. Remember the real Elijah, a prophet whom the Eternal used to perform many miracles, and whom the Eternal gave His very words to speak before kings. Even this man did not know about 7000 of the Eternal's people who lived at his time (1Kngs 19:14-18). This article contains only groups that I do know about, without spending that much time looking.

A true servant of the Eternal knows that his or her name is written in the Book of Life—they do not need to make a name for themselves in human history. Have you ever noticed how little the Bible writers say about the importance of themselves and their ministries? Compare that to what Herbert Armstrong said about his ministry!

If we are to be effective in the future, we must consider ourselves followers of the Eternal, not of some man or organization. We must ask Him to use us, and be willing to work with the people He sends our way. If they have doctrines that differ from ours, we need to be willing to show them from the scripture where they are wrong. If we cannot show them of our doctrine from the scripture, then either we need to study more, or avoid showing them that doctrine.

—Norman S. Edwards

“Challenge HWA?” from page 1 tices because we so heavily identified with him in the past. To acknowledge his error is to acknowledge our error, and that does not come easy.

We could probably say the same thing about the leaders of the other 25 groups in the other article beginning on page 1. If we looked only to their good teachings, every leader would be worth following. Nevertheless, many of them do teach some error—probably some more than others. Some of those teachers thought that they were the human head of the church on earth. Do you think you should follow them? Or do you think that the people in those groups might be deceived and be “following a man”? If they need to realize that they are not the “one true Church on earth”, do we also need to realize that we are not? (And were not in the past either!)

It would take more than a lifetime to try to evaluate every Sabbatarian Bible teacher and try to find the one with most truth and least error. We are to follow Christ—to really trust that He will lead us individually. We can rely on Him and His Spirit for teaching, and use the gifts that He has given us in His Body. Paul clearly taught in 1 Corinthians chapters 1 and 3 that we should **not** seek to align ourselves with a particular teacher we consider the best.

The Eternal Works In Spite of Human Error

In spite of Mr. Armstrong's errors, this writer believes in the probable truth of Mr. Armstrong's autobiography account of Loma's dream in which Christ said that He had much work for the Armstrongs to do. A person can be given a job from the Eternal, yet be far from perfect. The relationship that King Solomon had with the Eternal, the way he built His Temple, the wisdom he had and the prayer that he made are **awesome**—nearly beyond belief (1Kngs 3-9). Even though Solomon's good work, the temple of God, lasted hundreds of years, notice what the Bible concludes about him:

So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after

other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded (1Kings 11:9-10).

The building of the second temple was done by the Eternal's anointed, Cyrus, a Gentile king who never “converted” in any sort of way (Is 44:28; Ezra 1:1-4). King Jehu of Israel was commissioned to destroy the house of Ahab. He did and he was rewarded, but he did not follow the Eternal (2Kngs 10:30-31). Jonah was told to prophesy to Ninevah, but tried to avoid it. The Eternal thwarted his escape plan and Jonah still had to do the job, even though he didn't like it (Jonah 4:1).

There are other examples of very imperfect servants of the Eternal in the Old Testament, as well as some in the new: Demas worked hard with the Apostles (Col 4:14; Phm 1:24), but later lost his way: “for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica...” (2Tim 4:10). Phygellus and Hermogenes deserted Paul: “...all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes” (2Tim 1:15).

Simply because the Eternal gave Herbert Armstrong or some other person a task to accomplish, does not mean that:

1. The task will be completed.
2. The task will be completed with the attitude that the Eternal desires.
3. The person will obey the Eternal or be a good example in other aspects of their life.

The Bible speaks of many people whom the Eternal “worked with”, but that does not mean that we can rely on every word and deed of those people. Herbert Armstrong never claimed his teachings were divinely revealed by dream or vision, but that he was taught by the “written Word of God”. We must read and hear that Word for ourselves—not rely completely on him.

If It Were Not For HWA's Ministry, Would We Not Know the Truth?

Several people have told us: “You have no right to evaluate Mr. Armstrong's work, if it were not for him, you would never have known the truth.”

That is wrong. If we believe that, then we believe that Herbert Armstrong

had the right to decide who is being "called and chosen". This right belongs to the Father in heaven (John 6:44). To say the Father required Herbert Armstrong to use the methods that he used is to say that the Father required him to sin. Mr. Armstrong did not have to claim that he was the human head of the "one true Church". He did not have to live in luxury while writing hundreds of letters encouraging poor people to give more money.

Many will say that TV and mass circulation magazines are God's preferred way of reaching people—that He would have had a big centralized work in the first century if mass communication had been available then. Actually, forms of mass communication were quite available during the time of Christ and before. When Absalom wanted to get everyone's attention, he "provided himself with chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him" (2Sam 15:1)—people came to see this "big happening". First century people were quite used to attending Roman amphitheaters which seated tens of thousands. The Apostles could have hired the directors, musicians and actors of their day—the parallel of today's TV and radio professionals. Many thousands could have heard the Gospel this way. They could have hired scribes to make many copies of tracts and books, and paid to have them distributed throughout the empire. The Apostles could have insisted that all the brethren "sacrifice" to "get behind their work"—to pay for these expensive efforts. **But it was not done that way.** The Gospel was preached by humble people by the power of the Eternal's miracles and His Spirit.

While it is not a sin to use modern broadcast means to preach the Gospel, it is a sin to tell the Eternal that He **has to**, or **had to** use them. If it were the Eternal who intended hundreds of thousands of people to hear Armstrong's message, then He would have made a way for him to do it within the principles taught in the New Testament (1Cor 10:13). The Apostles did **not** continually predict Christ's return in a few years, tell brethren that they need to send in all available money because it would be "of no use" in a few years anyway, and then claim that if they left their organi-

zation that they could not have salvation.

The early apostles gave all credit to the Eternal, and recognized that each had a function: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (1Cor 3:6). How much of your teaching and support in time of difficulty came from a diligent local minister or member? The WCG frequently acknowledged that the biggest source of new members were friends and relatives of current members who saw a good example. Rather than giving all credit to Mr. Armstrong, how much belongs to other Godly men and women?

There are other very vital questions that we must ask ourselves and the others we know from the WCG: When did you first hear that you should love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself? Many church groups teach these most important commandments (Matt 22:37-39). When did you learn that Jesus died for the sins of

mankind and that we, individually need to repent and accept His sacrifice? When did you first read Bible stories—examples of faith and righteousness. When did you first realize that you may be judged for your life actions at some time in the future?

This writer understood all of the above teachings before entering the WCG. Most of the other WCG members I know also understood these basic truths before they came to the WCG. Some even had much more knowledge. We could back up even further and ask who were the men who copied the scriptures for hundreds of years and who were the men who died in the effort to produce English language translations. The truth of the matter is that many men were used in the process of bringing truth to us. **Herbert Armstrong was certainly an important part in bringing us truth.** But we should not give him all of the credit simply because he wanted to take it.

Human Credit for Divine Calling?

While Herbert Armstrong always acknowledged God as the head, he claimed most of the human credit for himself. He called himself the "spiritual father" of all present believers, and the "founder" of every organization he started. The number of accomplishments he credits to himself in his writings probably exceeds the total amount of credit that he gives to all other people.

Only in a few places does Mr. Armstrong acknowledge the fact that he learned about the Sabbath from his wife, who learned about it from Mrs. Runcorn. Do we know where she learned about it? Do we even know the name of the Baptist minister who baptized Mr. Armstrong?

Actually, there is no need to know these things. The Bible tells us the exact attitude we need toward our leaders. Please read this section of the Bible, with a few added items in brackets [] applying these words to our time:

¹ And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ [apparently, many of us still are babes]. ² I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; [Do we still need a "leader" to follow?] ³ for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among

you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, "I am of Paul [Armstrong]," and another, "I am of Apollos [imagine another favorite Bible teacher's name there]," are you not carnal? ⁵ Who then is Paul [Armstrong], and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? ⁶ I [Armstrong] planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. ⁷ **So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.** ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his **own** reward according to his **own** labor [we will receive no reward for simply claiming to follow Armstrong, no will we receive a reward for sending money to a group that accomplishes nothing]. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. ¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. [Paul does not say to build on his foundation, so we should not build on Mr. Armstrong's foundation—we need to be diligent about what we do.] ¹¹ For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1Cor 3:1-11).

—Norman Edwards

Discouraging the Gospel

While Mr. Armstrong did many good things to warn the world and preach the Gospel, a balanced evaluation of his work must also consider how much he did to *discourage* some people from coming to a knowledge of the Sabbath, Holy Days, and other truths. While this may seem strange, it happened in two major ways.

1. WCG members were discouraged from sharing truth with others. Members were taught to refer anyone with the slightest Bible interest to the WCG ministry. This was a great discouragement to people who were very interested in the Bible but unhappy with “corporate religion”. These people wanted to find out what other people understand about the Bible, not what a church organization teaches. These are the sort of people who would be quite willing to accept Bible truth even though it differs from traditional “Christian religion”. Nevertheless, WCG members were not encouraged to communicate with people with this kind of Bible interest. Notice this quote from Lesson 8 of the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course (1966):

Should You Loan Your Lessons?

Absolutely **not!** There is **no surer way for you to lose a lesson!** Besides, **Jesus Christ forbids** you to do it **indiscriminantly**. Notice! "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they **trample them under their feet**, and turn again and rend you!" (Mat. 7:6.)

It is hard to understand how someone who is interested in studying a Bible correspondence course could be classified as “swine”. Christ never used this term for the unlearned masses—he called them “sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36). Christ reserved his most derogatory terms for those who resisted his message for their own personal gain. The commands to WCG members not to teach religion to others stopped a lot of personal evangelism before it could get started. Those commands no longer exist in most WCG splinter groups, but the “we are better than those unconverted people” attitude that was taught is still there in some cases. This makes it difficult for former-WCG members to get involved in any kind of

program where they are rubbing shoulders with “ordinary unconverted people”. We must remember that Christ was not embarrassed to eat with people who were known sinners (Mark 2:15).

2. Many people disdained the truth of the Eternal because of Armstrong’s publicized problems. The New Testament apostles and evangelists attracted *public attention* from the miracles that the Eternal did through them, and from their teaching which was different than the religious leaders of their day. The most *public attention* that Herbert Armstrong received was in early 1979 when a California court-appointed receiver temporarily took control of the WCG assets. While neither the media nor the government officials involved were honest or thorough in their portrayal of Herbert Armstrong’s practices and doctrines, it was truthfully obvious to everyone that Mr. Armstrong and those few close to him lived a very expensive life-style—having the vast WCG assets at their disposal, as well as large salaries. They also saw the great infighting within the WCG about who would be in control of those assets. How many viewers who were interested in the truth of the Bible compared these reported problems with the simplicity of New Testament Gospel preaching and with verses like this:

and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain (1Tim 6:5, NIV).

Herbert Armstrong’s concept that he needed to live a wealthy life-style so he could appear before kings is simply not in the Bible. Do you see how people could have dismissed the WCG as a source of Bible truth simply because of this reported preoccupation with wealth?

The second greatest amount of *public attention* brought to the WCG was several mass-media stories through the 1970s about Garner Ted Armstrong’s sexual misconduct. Herbert Armstrong was well aware of the qualifications for church leaders (1Tim 3; Titus 1). He was the only one who could remove Garner Ted from his position of leadership, but he did not act until 1978. Herbert Armstrong never apologized for (or even acknowl-

edged his mistake) in letting his son continue to be a leader when he was disqualified. When King David was involved in a sexual sin, The Eternal said through Nathan the prophet:

...by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme... (1Sam 12:14).

David openly repented of his sin, was publicly punished for it, was forgiven of the Eternal, and restored respect for his kingship, Israel and the Eternal. To this day, Garner Ted Armstrong identifies himself as the successor of his father, yet video tapes of his escapades have been aired on national television. Rather than being drawn to the truth that Herbert Armstrong taught, many people have simply dismissed him as another one of the many religious leaders who do not practice what they preach. Unfortunately, the truths that Mr. Armstrong taught have also been dismissed with it.

This is not to say that Mr. Armstrong’s problems “prevented the Eternal” from reaching people that He planned to call, but it does mean that the Eternal had to reach them another way. It also means that if we hope to bear fruit today—to reach others with the Gospel—we **cannot** build on the fractured foundation of Herbert Armstrong, but must build firmly on the chief cornerstone, which is Christ!

Armstrong’s Ministry Was Unique Why?

Even with all of the problems listed above, Herbert Armstrong’s ministry still seemed unique in history. He probably gave the greatest media airing of all time to certain of the truths that he taught. Nevertheless, it was the combination of diligent mass media effort and the error of hierarchical government that caused Mr. Armstrong’s outreach to appear much bigger than it actually was. This happened for two reasons:

1. Herbert Armstrong repeatedly claimed to be **the human leader of the “only true Church”**. He brought many people into it who were probably never called by the Eternal. They may have been impressed with his personality, the wealth of his work, or his explanation of prophecy. Even though they never had the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,

his preaching left them with two alternatives: suffer terribly in the soon-coming great tribulation, or join his "one true Church".

2. Mr. Armstrong threatened or rejected those who criticized his work or who studied other current Bible teachers. The WCG ministers never baptized anyone unless the person agreed that the WCG was the true church. They taught people that they would lose salvation if they left that organization. They regularly disfellowshipped people for studying the writings of other Bible teachers or attending other services.

These two practices brought a lot of people into Mr. Armstrong's organization, and made it difficult for them to leave. Certainly there were many true believers among them. The first booklets which people read—on the Sabbath, heaven & hell, baptism, etc. were well documented from scripture. It was not until they had studied much, been baptized, and begun to attend WCG services that they encountered the doctrine of hierarchical government. By that time, most members had so much trust in Mr. Armstrong that they did not carefully read and research that doctrine from the Bible. A few did—and left the WCG shortly after they were baptized.

But the majority who were baptized by WCG ministers remained in Armstrong's organization. At his death, a mixture of over 100,000 people considered themselves members—but they were there for many different reasons. Now, thirteen years after his death, they have no uniform opinion about how to react to the doctrinal changes introduced by the Tkachs. Some stayed, but most have left to join dozens of other groups, and thousands have dropped out of Sabbatarian groups altogether.

Why Debate Armstrong Today?

We are forced to debate the soundness of Herbert Armstrong's doctrines today, because he would not do so during his life. From the 1960's onward, it was next to impossible for a WCG pastor to bring a doctrinal issue to Mr. Armstrong—and it was impossible for the WCG member. Most of the doctrinal changes that Armstrong implemented were in answer to a significant group of people planning to leave if he did not

make the changes.

Mr. Armstrong did not answer questions or debate anyone either from within his own organization or from without. He would never publish letters of people who disagreed with him in a credible way—letters published that were against his teaching were usually obviously flawed. Mr. Armstrong would talk about the doctrines of others and refute them, so members assumed that he could answer any questions. They did not realize that Mr. Armstrong could always refute others **only** if he completely controlled what members were allowed to hear. This is totally unlike Christ and the Apostles who quite regularly answered questions from antagonists in the presence of numerous believers.

It has not been easy for this writer to study, pray about, and think through these issues. I read the Plain Truth mag-

azine as a teen-ager, attended WCG services my last year of high school. Upon graduation, I attended Ambassador College from 1974 to 1978, then worked for the WCG until 1992. I worked for Roderick C. Meredith and the Global Church of God from its inception until the end of 1994. **Most of the physical things I worked to build during those years are now gone, or about to go.** Many of our readers probably feel the same way.

But some good things remain!

There are great strengths that still remain. In the next issue, we will discuss those strengths, and our understanding of what can be accomplished by those who share our past experience in the Worldwide Church of God.

May the Eternal strengthen and guide all of us during these difficult times.

—Norman S. Edwards

Did Herbert Armstrong preach the true Gospel for the first time in 1850 years?

Richard Abanes, director of the Religious Information Center, was with "the Way International", but left and later wrote a book entitled *End Time Visions, the Road to Armageddon*, 1998. The book covers the numerous groups that teach a "climax at the close" and a literal return of Christ to the Earth. The WCG is mentioned only a few times, one being a quote from a 1986 *Good News* magazine about their being "increasing earthquakes" as a fulfillment of Matthew 24:7. The book compares this claim to geologic data showing that the average number and magnitude of worldwide earthquakes has not changed significantly. Indeed, many of the most powerful known earthquakes occurred in previous centuries. When you heard these proofs that we were in the end time, did you check into any of them, or just accept the word of the preacher? This writer, unfortunately, must admit that he did not check them!

Abanes' book lists the prophecies of many other groups, nearly all of which did not come to pass. Abanes, who had no bias for or against Herbert Armstrong, did not find Armstrong's preaching at all unique, nor is his prophetic accuracy at all unusual. While the most of these other groups that preached Christ's return may not have had as large of the TV and magazine outreach that Herbert Armstrong did, they left a greater impact upon the world in that their teachings extended beyond their own ministries—often enduring after the teacher was gone. For example, many wrote books which appeared in bookstores and articles for mainstream magazines—these are still in store and libraries today, whereas the *Plain Truth* largely is not. These teachings as well as public appearances reached ministers and Bible teachers in many congregations and denominations. In other words, a great many local Bible study groups of all denominations would study Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, but very few would be reading Mr. Armstrong's books. Hal Lindsey believed his readers could be Christians even though they were not part of Lindsey's denomination, Armstrong taught that all true believers were in his group.

Abanes' book (and others like it) shows that many were preaching the return of Christ to set up His Kingdom on earth. The first article on page 1 shows many groups have preached doctrines similar to Armstrong throughout history. To believe that Herbert Armstrong was the first person to preach the true Gospel in 1850 years basically requires one to listen **only to Herbert Armstrong** and his ardent supporters. Whatever you believe the essential message of the Gospel to be, there were many others who preached it also.

—Norman S. Edwards

Partial Literature List

All items are free upon request. All back issues of *Servants' News* are available as well as a **Complete Literature List**.

Our goal is to bring worthwhile information to as many as want it at the lowest practical cost. The loose-leaf format used by *Servants' News* and most of the literature below is inexpensive and makes copying easy (most literature is public domain). You might wish to hold the pages together with a 3-ring binder, staples, brads or a paper clip.

New Items Appearing For the First Time:

Basic Literature:

CEM Correspondence Course by Ron Dart, 62 pages. We now have the whole 9-lesson correspondence course.

How Not To Be Caught in Cults by Charles V. Dorothy, 32 pages. Easy to read, illustrated booklet explaining the characteristics of controlling cults. Does not discuss doctrine.

The Mysterious 7-Day Cycle by Kenneth Westby, 22 pages. Plants, animals and man have biological 7-day cycles—the 7-day week is an organic function, not a man-made creation.

Shelter in the Word Literature List 10 pages. Complete list of *Shelter in the Word* articles and basic literature for new people.

Study Resources and Information:

The New Millennium edited by Ken Westby, 48 pages. Sample of free magazine of the Associated Churches of God, an over 20-year-old non-hierarchical organization.

Passover in Perspective by Norm Edwards, 4 pages. Notes from Bible study given in Orange County—useful, but not complete.

Sanctuary of Silence Book Promotion and Order Form by Peter Kershaw, 2 pages. Information about the difficulties with church incorporation and 501(c)3 status.

Y2K News Magazine by Wilson Publications, 48 pages. Sample issue of magazine devoted to Year 2000 computer problems and how they will affect nearly everyone.

Critiques of Other's Writings:

May 2, 1974 Member Letter about Church Government by Herbert Armstrong, 26 pages. With scriptural analysis by Norman Edwards.

Church of God 7th Day Old Documents About Herbert Armstrong, 20 pages. Shows Herbert Armstrong served as a Church of God Seventh Day minister from 1934 to 1938, and that he plagiarized their booklet, "Has Time Been Lost?"

Herbert Armstrong Co-Worker Letter Reprints, 110 pages. Complete text of co-worker letters demanding money referenced in SN December 1998 page 24 article.

Thanks for Waiting So Long For This Issue!

It has been about three months since we mailed our last issue (November). We were encouraged by all of the letters, e-mails, and calls asking for the next issue. My study of Herbert Armstrong's history and its effect on "Church of God" brethren has been a physically and emotionally draining experience—but something that had to be done. If we are going to be effective servants of the Eternal in the future, we have to understand our past, know what to

keep and know what to let go. In our next issue, we will talk about the many good things in our Church of God past that we should keep and put to work.

Speaking of the next issue, we hope that we will get back on schedule within the next few months. We will have combined Jan/Feb and March/April issues. We already have many articles and letters ready to go.

We have one older literature item that

might be of interest to those studying our history: *The Remnant of Israel, An Analysis of G. G. Ruppert* by Richard Nickels. Mr. Ruppert lived from 1847 to 1922 and taught many doctrines similar to those of Herbert Armstrong. Part of his ministry was in Pasadena, California!

We hope everyone has a marvelous and meaningful Holy Day season. Please read the Y2K article in *Shelter in the Word*.

—Norman S. Edwards

Highly Recommended Items Listed Every Issue:

Mature Literature

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

Biblical Calendar Basics by Norman S. Edwards, 10 pages. Introduction to the issues about the Biblical and Hebrew calendars (beginning of months, years, postponements etc.)

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

The Heart of the Matter by Jim Rector, 31 pages. Our calling is to spiritual growth,

not just attendance, socializing, politeness or legalism.

How Do We Give to the Eternal? by Richard Tafoya & Norman Edwards, 36 pages. Biblical study of giving and tithing.

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

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

Study Resources and Information

Freedom Biblical Information Center Catalog by Wayne Schatzle, 12 pages. Free, mostly Sabbatarian literature & tapes sources.

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

The Journal: News of the Churches of God edited by Dixon Cartwright. One free sample issue. Best single source of news about Sabbath-keeping groups. 16 pages.

Servants' News Statement of Receipts and Expenses, 2 pages.

Servants' News Complete Literature List & Index, 36 pages.