

Servants' NEWS

Vol. 5, No. 2

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

Mar/Apr 1999

The Origin & Implication of "Clergy" & "Laity"

by John Bair

When my wife and I were married in 1970, I was on my way to my first assignment as a 2nd Lieutenant, United States Air Force in the Strategic Air Command. Being an officer, I thought she would be proud of "our" position. After all, "rank has its privileges" was a phrase taught at Officer Training School.

As we started attending a small Church off base in upper Michigan where I was stationed, I noticed she seemed uncomfortable with my rank, as many who attended there were "enlisted" men. Even though this was "off duty" time, and I tried to treat all equally as brothers in Christ, there was no mistaking an artificial barrier between us caused division and a lack of closeness.

But isn't rank "ordained" in the Bible? You know: elders, deacons and bishops — the ordained clergy versus the common lay members or laity. Where do these

words, "clergy" and "laity", come from anyway? Are they in the Bible?

This article is intended to clearly identify the incredible origin of these words and the terrible schism that it has caused in the body.

We begin our investigation with the etymology of "clergy" from Webster's New World dictionary 2nd College Edition 1970.

clerg-y (klur'je) *n.*, *pl. -gies* [ME. & OFr. *clergie*, office or dignity of a clergyman < LL. (Ec.) *clericus*: see CLERK] men ordained for religious service, as ministers, priests, rabbis, etc., collectively **cleric** (kler' ik) *n.* [LL. (Ec.) *clericus*: see CLERK] a clergyman—*adj.* relating to a clergyman or the clergy **clerk** (klurk; Brit. Klark) *n.* [ME. <OFr. & OE. *clerc*, both < LL. (Ec.) *clericus*, a priest < Gr. *klerikos*, a cleric < *kleros*, lot, inheritance (later, from use in LLX, Deut. 18:2, of the Levites, hence the Christian clergy), orig., a shard used in casting lots < IE. **klaro-* < base **kel*, to strike, break, whence Olr. *clar*, a board, tablet. L. *calamitas*, CALAMITY] 1. a layman who has certain minor duties in a church 2. an office worker who keeps records, types letters, does filing, etc. 3. an official in charge of the records, accounts, etc. of a school board, court town, etc. *4. a hotel employee who keeps the register, assigns guests to rooms, etc. *5. a person who sells in a store; salesclerk 6. {Archaic} a clergy-

Laying on of Hands (The Error of Simon Magus)

by Jon D. Pike

The topic of laying on of hands is a huge issue that can not be dealt with exhaustively in this essay. Hebrews 6:1-2 calls it a basic doctrine of the Church, so we should not expect it to be highly complicated. After using a concordance and examining all the passages of the Bible where laying on of hands occurs (this is easy and not too time consuming), I have come to the conclusion that my WCG experience left me with a distorted view of this basic doctrine.

In fact, I think that my former understanding was uncomfortably similar to that of Simon Magus, who thought there was power resident in the Apostles' bodies to transmit God's Holy Spirit through touch. Of course I never thought that the Holy Spirit would be given to unrepentant individuals, even if the elders thought they were or be employed as a clerk, esp. a salesclerk—**clerk'ship** *n.*

The Latin derivation was given for the word clergy (*clericus*), however it said to see the word "clerk". This word proved more revealing as it gave its derivation from the Greek word "Kleros", meaning "lot" or "inheritance". This was a small broken piece of pottery used to cast lots in looking to God to show his decision or choice in a matter. Oddly enough, Webster's dictionary actually quotes a Bible verse in reference to this Greek word "lot" from the Septuagint (Greek version of the Old Testament)—Deut. 18:2. In this particular verse we find Levi had no "lot" when they divided up the Promised Land because "the Eternal" was their lot and

Continued on page 27

Continued on page 25

Also In This Issue:

- 2 Truckers' Bible Study
- 3 News of Local Congregations
- 5 Church's Greatest Need: Discernment
- 7 Disqualification of Public Servants and Bishops
- 9 What the New Testament Teaches Us About Demons
- 14 Letters and Responses
- 26 We, Pharisee [a poem]

After 28 Shelter in the Word included!

Trucker's Bible Study

Oak Grove, Mo., #20



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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, the writer of this series.

May 16, 1999: In Revelation we read about the church at Ephesus which had lost its first love. Today we had a trucker who has that first love of God's word.

Although baptized as a teenager, he had drifted away, but just within the past few months (35 years from his teenage commitment) he finally has come to truly seek God and his ways. I found it fascinating to hear him describe the little, seemingly innocuous events that finally led him into God's word. People just happened to be at the right place at the right time to plant just the right seeds and water them. This reminded me of some studies I have come across which indicate that someone must hear the gospel seven times before it finally sinks in. In other words, we might not even know the impact we will have on others. This is a case where one planted, another watered, but God gave the increase.

As a trucker, he is on the road most of the time, as he has decided to change to another company in order to spend more time with his family. How could he know whether it was God's will to take this other job?

We turned to Ephesians 5:17, which says that we must understand what the will of God is. Paul then goes on to talk about the lives we are to lead, and the context of 5:17 implies that it is God's will that we live lives worthy of our calling, part of which is being a good family man (v. 25-33). So whether we take a certain job or not is the wrong question. God is more concerned about eternal things. Take that job if it will help reach toward his Kingdom and build a stronger marriage, for **that** is God's will.

The other trucker was quite knowledgeable, realizing not only that Christ will return, but also that there will be a millennial rule of Christ, and after that a new heaven and new earth, where all suffering will cease, and that even the food laws of the Bible are provable scientifically. Once again I am impressed by how much truth someone can come to know by just taking the Bible for what it says. More than that, I can't figure out why it **should** surprise me.

Finally (because one of these men is from Colorado) I asked him what the impact has been of the Columbine High massacre, and he confirmed that it has caused so much shock that people are beginning to look to religion as an answer. It will be interesting to see how this plays out. As an adjunct to that, we looked at Ezekiel 22, which talks about God looking for a man to stand in the gap. What can we do as individuals to stand in the gap? Tough question to answer. Maybe it is just being who we are and having the courage to stand up for our values.

We ended the study after an hour, but the two gentlemen and I stood around and talked for another 30 minutes or so. It's rewarding to be able to provide a place for people to come together and share what they understand from the scriptures. There is a real hunger for that kind of thing.

—Lenny Cacchio

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We hope other Servants' News readers will try to share in work and rewards of which Lenny Cacchio speaks. You may not serve truckers, but have opportunity to conduct a study in your home, work-place or school. Right now, many people are searching for truth from the Bible. A simple ad for a "non-denominational Bible study" in a phone book, in newspaper church-pages, or on a bulletin board will often get a study started. Then, it will grow by word of mouth. We encourage our readers to try it. The two biggest fears are easily solved: What if nobody ever comes? Then you know that the Eternal does not want you to have the study. What if someone asks a question you cannot answer? You simply say "I don't know". May the Eternal bless your study!

—NSE

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 some charitable deductions do not need this status (see IRS Publ. 557, p. 16, col. 1).

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News from 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.

Full-moon Feast in Nova Scotia

We are considering the possibility of a Feast of Tabernacles site in Nova Scotia, Canada beginning approximately Oct. 9 (based on a full moon calendar). This would be a non-aligned feast site based on a Bible study format. For more information contact Kevin and Ada Macpherson: AMacPherson@webtv.net.

New Site, CoG Assorted Flavors

The Assorted Flavors 7th Day Sabbatharians Directory is now at a new location. Check it out for information on groups:
<http://travel.to/Assorted-Flavors>

Need Translators for BSA Literature

I have been in contact with Richard Nickels about the educational literature offered by the Bible Sabbath Association and Giving & Sharing. He is interested in having some of the materials translated into other languages.

If you are able to assist or can suggest someone who can, please get back to me as soon as you can. In addition to this, I would like to have some articles published on the Origin of the Nations translated, but this is secondary to the BSA and G&S materials dealing with Sabbatarian history etc. Here is a list of the languages desired for translation, but translation into other languages is fine too: Greek, French, Portuguese, Spanish, German, Croatian, various Baltic languages, Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian, Hindi, Mandarin etc.

—Craig White, origin@primus.com.au

Teaching the Law

Mordakhai Joseph and Dale Stogner are pleased to announce the beginning of a taped presentation of Genesis through Deuteronomy entitled *Teaching The Law*. The series will be taped in 45 minute

lessons and will feature Mordakhai Joseph teaching from the Bible.

Mordakhai Joseph was born to a strictly biblically oriented orthodox family in Aden, Yemen. From ages four through 19 he was raised in Israel. After that, he lived a few years in Paris, France and then moved to New York. In 1969 he became a member of the Worldwide Church of God. From 1970 through 1975 he served on the faculty of Ambassador College, Pasadena teaching modern and biblical Hebrew. In 1975 he was sent to the field ministry, serving in the Pasadena area and other local congregations nearby. Later, in the mid-1990s he served for two years in the Global Church of God. He presently attends with the Orange County Fellowship of God (Calif.).

Distribution of the *Teaching The Law* series will be featured on the Internet at www.biblestudy.org as downloadable audio files. Anyone with Internet access and the ability to play audio files will be able to hear the Teaching The Law series at no cost. Those who wish to obtain a copy of the audio tapes can do so by contacting the Bible Sabbath Association; 3316 Alberta Drive; Gillette, WY 82718; 307-686-5191; giveshare@vcn.com; internet: <http://www.biblesabbath.org>

There will be a nominal charge of \$2.50 per tape (which includes postage) by BSA to cover the costs of duplicating a tape, wear and tear on their equipment, overhead, and labor. This is not a money-earning venture from those who are interested in learning the Law, but BSA needs to recoup their costs. We appreciate their efforts to distribute the series. Again, Internet access allows for the free downloading of the teaching. Each tape will have two lessons on it.

Since this is a strictly volunteer effort, lessons will be recorded as time allows. Both Mordakhai Joseph and Dale Stogner have jobs and families and are donating their time. Hopefully, other

qualified teachers of the Law will be recruited and other sections of the Bible will be recorded as well. This is a humble effort that is definitely starting small. For those who might be interested in supporting the effort, Barnabas Ministries accepts donations to cover the cost of the Internet site. Audio files take up quite a bit of space and Internet service provider companies charge based on the total megabytes downloaded. Hopefully, we will have a very large Internet bill. There really are no other costs to cover in this effort. Barnabas Ministries may be reached at PO Box 3393; Farmington Hills, MI. 48333; USA; Internet: www.biblestudy.org; e-mail: webmaster@biblestudy.org

By "the Law" we mean to explain what the Law is and why there is a need to study it in a systematic way. For example, it is hard to understand the New Testament if you do not understand the Old Testament. Many of the controversies surrounding the books of Galatians and Romans, etc. could be avoided if people had the proper background. The New Testament magnifies the Old Testament so the Old Testament needs to be understood. Further, the Law of God is really expressed throughout the entire Bible and includes God's value system, God's character and personality, how God thinks, etc. The Law of God is not limited to the Ten Commandments and the Old Covenant. That would be a narrow, superficial, and incorrect view. Also, we will attempt to point out the difference and the errors made between legalists trusting in obedience for salvation and those who have a false idea of what grace is to the point where they believe there is no Law today. And we believe that the Jewish traditions, while perhaps containing some wisdom, are not scripture and scriptural teaching has precedence over any man or group of men's teachings.

This effort will not reference the Worldwide Church of God, nor any of its

off-shoots. This will hopefully make the lessons timeless and usable by any group that sees value in them. We do not intend to have only one or two distributors. If any group would like to become a non-exclusive distributor, please contact Dale Stogner at 714-730-3561. The lessons are copyrighted but not for the purpose of money making. Anyone can reproduce and distribute individual lessons so long as they do not edit the lessons, and reproduce them in their entirety. We need all the help we can get distributing the lessons and a grass roots effort will be welcomed. —Dale Stogner

UCG Literature On the Way

This week, UCG publications managing editor Scott Ashley informed the UCG Council of Elders by teleconference about upcoming booklets and magazines. **Upcoming cover themes for the Good News include:**

- The real star wars (May-June)
- What happens after death? (July-Aug)
- Can you believe Bible prophecy? (Sept-Oct)
- Just what is the Millennium? (Nov-Dec)
- Are we on the threshold of a new age? (Jan-Feb, 2000)

Booklets planned include:

- Are we living in the last days?
- The Lost Ten Tribes in Prophecy
- The Book of Revelation Unveiled
- Seven Laws of Success
- Making Life Work
- Where Can You Find Lasting Values?
- Heaven and Hell
- Who and What is God?
- Which Biblical Laws Should a Christian Keep?
- Why Does God Allow Suffering?
- Transforming Your Life
- Marriage/child-rearing
- This is the United Church of God
- Is There Really a Devil?
- Who Was Jesus?

Mr. Ashley updated the Council on the Good News print run size, which with the May-June issue reached 193,318 copies. In addition, the 32-page special issue, with general interest articles and a cover story of "How to Raise a Moral Child," will add 100,000-110,000 copies, but will be used as a promotional copy for new subscribers, gift copies, and waiting room introductory packets.

Development of several direct mail

packages is progressing, with either a September or December launch date planned. The supermarket "take one" program is being evaluated to see if expansion of this program is wise. Each issue of the Good News magazine for the remainder of 1999 will contain a literature request form. The stand-alone Bible Study Course is on track to be offered this fall. Six lessons are complete, with all 12 due by late next year. Promotional efforts for the Course should generate 10,000-15,000 subscribers for the Course alone, plus generate perhaps 20,000 additional literature requests.

—Paul Kieffer

[It seems that the UCG-IA and other groups are doing a good job producing literature, but when they do attract new members, they are often bewildered by problems in the local congregations. See the next news item. —NSE]

Lansing Brethren Exit UCG-IA

The United Church of God Lansing (Michigan) was incorporated in 1995—before the UCG-IA. The need to leave the WCG was recognized by the brethren and ministry long before the UCG-IA was a reality. The role of the church organization was also frequently debated: should it be a "headquarters" governing local congregations or should it exist to provide service to local congregations? Some of the Lansing brethren clearly wanted to be a part of a corporate church, others wanted to be independent. Numerous times, the Lansing board considered taking a vote on the issue, but they knew it would divide the congregation, so they refrained.

Melvin Rhodes, the UCG-IA Lansing and Ann Arbor pastor made an effort to include a variety of ideas in his services, including interactive Bible studies, questions and answers after messages, more variety in music, etc. Mr. Rhodes even wrote articles for *The Journal* which were critical of the corporate church functioning of the past. It appeared to some that Mr. Rhodes might decide to become an independent minister. On the other hand, some members found the local congregation too tightly attached to the UCG-IA headquarters and began to meet with the fellowship where this writer attends.

During April and May of 1999, Melvin Rhodes made it clear that he was a UCG-IA corporate minister and that

any congregation he would pastor would be a UCG-IA congregation. About 40 of the UCG Lansing members began meeting separately, and within a week, those in the fellowship that this writer attends joined them. The new group was sharing a building with the UCG-IA group until the latter opted for a new place last week. The new group does not yet have a name or any designated "leader". The emphasis is on "doing what the Bible says" rather than on organization and structure. The families rotate the task of planning and conducting the service each week. Of interest, a family with no previous COG experience, who discovered the Sabbath in the Bible, has attended nearly every service. —NSE

Third Alternative to WCG?

A group of the Worldwide Church of God brethren met for Pentecost in the Pasadena Elks lodge to discuss a third alternative to those troubled by the doctrinal changes of the WCG. The two main alternatives have been to leave the WCG or to remain in it hoping God will "fix it". This "third approach" proposed was to remain in the WCG, but actively believe and teach Herbert Armstrong's old doctrines. A 22-point doctrinal statement was distributed. Plans were announced for literature, a cassette program, a feast site and a radio program. Half of the tithes and offerings collected would be distributed back to the WCG. Offering envelopes were passed out.

We hope these brethren, apparently led by Hal Finch, will realize that this idea is not new. It was tried by the "Philadelphia Faithful" in Mississippi and elsewhere. All they are doing is forming a separate group while being members of the WCG. The WCG can sever the relationship anytime that they want to by disfellowshipping the entire group. They have done so in the past.

It is good that these brethren are accepting personal responsibility for serving the Eternal. But if a new person became interested in their Gospel preaching, how could they possibly hope to explain their WCG membership—and sending half their money to that organization? Should they also send a portion of their money to the Church of God Seventh Day or even the Catholic Church because some time in the past they came out of that? —NSE

The Church's Greatest Need: Discernment

By Archie Faul

Just what is the greatest need in the Church?

Some would be quick to say unity. Others would probably say, doing the work. Others would probably say, reaching out to others, whatever shape or form that would take.

However, there is another need that I feel has been overlooked and neglected, now for a long time. And the fruits of this neglect are becoming more and more apparent. More and more brethren are leaving the church out of disillusionment, boredom or any number of reasons. In some cases, going back to customs they religiously abandoned many years ago. Many have followed various mentors into many different splits, branches and groups.

I believe much of what we see occurring is the direct result of the neglect of this one basic need in the church.

The cause of this phenomenon of course, has been generated within the Church for a long time now, and is tragically still going today. This was forcefully brought to my attention recently as I sat through a church service in a local assembly of brethren associated with one of the larger church of God organizations.

Tithing As An Example

A video-taped sermon was played. The subject was tithing.

The presentation was started by reading a scripture about all speaking the same thing. The speaker then said everything belongs to God and went on to create an atmosphere of sacredness about anything of value we might have. It all belongs to God. We're not really entitled to anything. It apparently does not matter how much some might have struggled to put food on the table or buy shoes for the kids, or to save a few dollars. Regardless of your involvement, it all belongs to God.

I guess it never occurred to this man that **we** belong to God too, which makes his point quite moot. But then I suspect the reason for bringing this up was to neutralize any resistance that might be forthcoming in response to his presentation which was to follow.

He then went on to present a series of facts from the Bible, generously interspersed with his opinion as to the meaning of these and then inserting some outright falsehoods as concerns tithing. This went on for the better part of two hours.

Among the things he stated was this: the work of God has always been sponsored by the tithe. Is this true or false? It was implied this was the case at all times. Before you answer, please hear me out.

The question here needs to be asked, did the apostles do the work of God? Did Jesus do the work of God? Did Paul do the work of God? Did any of these collect tithes? Is there any record of anyone in Christ's time receiving tithe other than the Levites and the Levitical Priesthood? The answer is a resounding 'no'!

There are two things proving that Jesus did not receive tithes:

1. Jesus could not by law receive tithe. He was not a Levite or a priest, therefore He did not. As a human, He was of the tribe of Judah and therefore could not be a priest. "For if he were on earth he would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law" (Heb 8:4). No room here for receiving tithe.

2. Jesus was never accused of receiving tithe in competition with the priesthood. His enemies were constantly testing Him and had to make up charges at His trial. He could not have received tithe.

Now did the Apostles, when Jesus sent them out to do the work of God, go out and collect tithe? (Mat 10:8-10) Does the statement, "the worker is worthy of his food" equate to "go out and collect tithe"?

Neither were these accused of collecting tithe. Therefore, they did not.

Did Paul receive tithe at any time? Even though he claimed he had the right to be reimbursed for his work in 1Cor 9:7-14, based not on the tithe law, but on the principle of the laborer is worthy of his hire, he made it very clear he did not take anything from anyone. No tithe here. He again made his posi-

tion known in 2Cor 11:7-9 and again in 2Cor 12:14. No tithe here either.

Paul never appealed to the tithe law to support the ministry. His teaching to the elders concerning support was based on the principle as given in 1Tim 5:18 and remained constant, as quoted here, "For the scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain', and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages'". No tithe here.

Another scripture concerning Paul:

2Thess. 3:8-9: ..."nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but **to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us**".

The reason I detail some of this regarding Paul is because it goes back to what happened at the very beginning of the services. At the very beginning, Paul was quoted from 1Cor 1:10:

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

The speaker was quoting Paul to command people agree with him. If he wanted everyone to "speak the same thing" as Paul, shouldn't he at least speak what Paul spoke in regard to tithing? Shouldn't the speaker be held to the same standard that he is holding his audience to? If Paul clearly states that he did not take anything from some of the churches he labored for, did he teach them to tithe? If he didn't teach them to tithe, was he derelict in his teaching? Was he not doing exactly what he thought was legitimate and appropriate? Wasn't he taught by Jesus Christ himself? Didn't Paul's position matter? Was it only important that the audience agree with the speaker, or should the speaker agree with Paul, too?

This speaker also quoted Mal 3:8-10 to promote the obligation to tithe today on one's money, but then was quick to point out that people shouldn't hold God to the promise to "open for

you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it". He said this promise was for the whole nation and therefore impractical for an individual basis. Isn't that curious?

Think For Ourselves

All of us in the congregation sat through this lengthy sermon feeling that there must be questions to be asked here and differences of opinion to be expressed. To my amazement, after the service was dismissed, there was total silence, muteness. Why? **Was everyone so in sync with the speaker that absolutely no questions needed to be asked?** Wasn't there one person there who had a different opinion? Or was it, as I suggest it was, that the brethren have been conditioned to not form any other opinions than that of their mentor—in this case, the hierarchy of the organization? Is it possible that **asking questions** or voicing opinions contrary to what the speaker says is like an offense to God? Do we have a fear of men or a fear of God?

Is this what God wants of us? Does God want brethren to remain dependent on a mentor, a man, or an organization? Is it God's pleasure to have people check their judgement and discernment abilities at the door when they come in?

What would Jesus say about this kind of conduct?

"Yes, and why, even of yourselves, do you not judge what is right?" (Luke 12:57).

Paul writes in Phil. 1:9-10:

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in **knowledge and all discernment**, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.

You cannot approve what is excellent if you have farmed out your discernment to an outside source. You cannot maintain sincerity to God when your allegiance to God is substituted with a fear to disagree with your mentor.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2Tim 2:15).

Why study the Bible for yourself if

your prime objective is to be in sync with a single voice within the organization?

Does God want us to remain dependent on a mentor, to be spoon fed?

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb 5: 12-14).

I see brethren who have been in the church 10, 15, and as much as 35 years still **dependent upon a mentor** to tell them what is true and what is not. I see brethren who came into the church when I did 36 years ago, going off in

You cannot maintain sincerity to God when your allegiance to God is substituted with a fear to disagree with your mentor.

every direction. Some have become disillusioned or bored. Some have followed various mentors, some went back to their former church affiliation. Why is this?

Isn't it because **the Church has refused to teach brethren to fend for themselves?** Isn't it because the church organizations have stifled personal growth by zealously promoting control from the top down and **not allowing independent discernment or opinion?** I believe brethren have been conditioned to believe that they must not think for themselves, and in many cases I believe their allegiance to God hinges on their loyalty to their mentor.

Learn To Evaluate

It is my belief that many go into a sort of spiritual numbness or possibly even spiritual death. To me, this is a mournful situation. The spiritual well being of the brethren is being sacrificed on the altar of organizational unity and

control.

The greatest need of the church, I believe, now is and has been for a long time the need to teach brethren how to fend for themselves.

I call therefore on **church leaders** to consider gravely what impact your actions impose upon God's people.

I call upon **brethren** to put your faith in God and not allow yourselves to be muted or stifled. **Exercise your discernment, your judgment.** If you pursue God's ways, and His truth honestly, God will do His part. As Paul stated in Rom 14:4, end part:

"Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand".

Iron sharpens iron and diversity of opinion stimulates **discussion** which in turn opens up opportunity of **discernment** and judgment which in turn should promote a lot of **Bible study**.

God is not going to judge us by how closely we follow a mentor, but by what we have done with what we have been given.

"But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load." (Gal 6:4-5)

For those of you who still lean heavily on a mentor, liken your situation to that of one learning to ride a bike. The time comes to take control of that bike and ride on your own. The time may be coming when you have no choice but to be your own, as has happened to many of us already.

Will you end up in the ditch or will you be able to take control and safely ride on? 

Want to Know More About How the Preaching of the Gospel Was Financed? Please write to Servants' News for the free article, *How Do We Give to the Eternal?* It puts virtually all of the scriptures on the subject side by side, and then covers many of the explanations (both right and wrong) commonly given for these scriptures. PO Box 220; Charlotte, Michigan 48813; 517-543-5544; 75260.1603@compuserve.com

Disqualification of Public Servants and Bishops

by Rick Stanczak, administrator of "Likeminds" list, e:stanczak@cwix.com

We all have character flaws—including me! Character flaws usually are a private matter, becoming public on a "need-to-know" basis when one's flaw could adversely affect—**hurt**—another person if that other person was not warned to be wary of it.

The issue with our "ministerial champions" is not their character flaws per se, but if they go to great lengths to hide their personal reality so they can continue to be regarded in a high esteem by others who put them on a pedestal and follow them as leaders—giving them great adulation and financial support. This kind of influence must be satisfying to their egos and very addictive. How dangerous!

An overseer (bishop) of the brethren is to be held to an even higher standard!

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of **good behavior**, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a **good report of them which are without**; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (1Tim 3:2-7).

If one does **not** measure up to these standards, he cannot serve in a position or capacity that influences many brethren. Notice that "of good behavior" and "a good report of them which are without" in the above qualifications is talking about one's reputation as an honest upright man of the highest moral and ethical character that would truly be above reproach. Do you think this "good behavior and good report" is even considering one who habitually breaks the letter of the law? No! These good reputation requirements are looking at even finer nuances of righteous character. So how is it that we CGers so willingly ignore these standards??

Another issue to consider is all the harm we CGers do to both ourselves and

the persons we idolize. By idolizing we are "contributing to the delinquency of a minor" so to speak by feeding the human weaknesses of our champions to the point where repentance is next to impossible. **They deceive themselves into believing** that God's work just can't go on the same without them, or that God needs them, or the brethren just can't get by without them. The reality is that God does His work and does not need anyone, and the brethren must look to God or they won't be His work.

The "champion" is self-deluded into feeding his own ego, and will go to great "sincere and humble" measures to convince his following that God is using **him** for a special purpose, and that anyone who bothers to examine the facts about one's disqualifying sins is a tool of Satan attempting to discredit a holy messenger from God. An **unhealthy co-dependence** is built between the champion and his followers as the champion promises some deeper mystical insight and experience, and the followers long to believe it to fill their own spiritual voids. When these cultish relationships are formed, common sense and plain Scripture seem to readily be ignored by the insiders. Those caught up in the personality cult can't think straight anymore.

So how did the early disciples, the "fellow servants" of God, act when folks started looking to them with adulation? They totally shunned it!

Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand (2Cor 1:24).

Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: (Acts 14:14-15).

For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me (2 Cor 12:6).

Likewise, if anyone including an

original apostle acted contrary to plain Scriptural teaching, that person was confronted and even strongly rebuked if the situation warranted it. Only false ministers acted as if they were above criticism and the law.

I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God (3Jn 1:9-11).

I've learned to take all "ministers" including "tape ministers" with a grain of salt. It is still my personal responsibility to "prove all things" from Scripture and to follow Christ. If any man thinks he's special or **above the law**, I choose not to even listen to that man anymore because I can discern that the underlying spirit is wrong.

We are all brethren, fellow workers in the Lord, priests in the Royal Priesthood! We are all to serve one another, which is Jesus' definition of leadership by self-sacrifice for the needs of others.

Scripture has clear criteria for those chosen for public service. If someone is found not to be qualified, they either must step down from public works or are noted publicly as men to avoid. It's not complicated. We are to walk by the Book.

Would that we were all really small in our own eyes and could **accept the rightful consequences of our actions**. Nobody is indispensable no matter how important they think their public "ministry" is needed. Disqualified overseers can still serve and personally grow, just not in the public domain because of breaking the public trust. So why ignore simple Scriptural criteria and insist on pushing a man back up into the limelight? Perhaps for entertainment value, or yearning for a king?

We are to follow sound doctrine, not with itching ears seeking exciting divergences. We are to walk by faith, not by sight. We are not to judge by appearances, but with right judgement. We are to seek God's still small voice, not be moved by human theatrics.

Yet this generation, too, looks for a sign, and is thus ripe for lying signs and wonders. 

New Testament Verses Relating to Demons

Most of the information on demons in the Bible is in the New Testament. The word only appears a few times in most translations of the Old Testament. Other terms, such as “familiar spirit”, “lying spirit”, “wizard” and others are occasionally used. The Eternal protected ancient Israel from demonic influences (Num 23:23) and told them to have nothing to do with them (Lev 19:31). Unfortunately, ancient Israel sought after evil spirits and by New Testament times, they had great influence. Christ cast out many demons and taught his followers to do the same.

- Matt 4:24; 8:16; Mark 1:32-34, 39; Luke 13:32; 16:18** Christ cures demon possession among many other problems.
- Matt 7:21-23** Some people will claim to cast out demons in Christ’s name but not really know Him.
- Matt 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-19; Luke 8:26-39** Jesus casts out demons from two men into a herd of swine.
- Matt 9:32-34** Jesus casts demon from mute/deaf man, Pharisees claim it is by the ruler of demons.
- Matt 10:1,8; Mark 6:7,13; 13:14-15; Luke 9:1** Christ sends Apostles out, gives them authority to cast out demons.
- Matt 11:18; Luke 7:33** John the Baptist accused of having a demon.
- Matt 12:22-32; Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11:14-23** Christ casts demon out of a blind-mute man; Pharisees accuse Him of doing it by Beelzebub, prince of demons, and Christ explains that attributing miracles by the Holy Spirit to Satan will not be forgiven in the world to come.
- Matt 15:22-28; Mark 7:25-30** Christ casts a demon out of Syro-Phoenician woman’s daughter.
- Matt 17:14-21; Mark 9:14-30; Luke 9:38-43** Disciples could not cast out demon causing epilepsy in child, Christ said this kind required prayer and fasting to come out.
- Matt 25:41** Everlasting fire is prepared for the Devil and his angels (demons).
- Mark 1:23-28; Luke 4:33-37** Christ casts out demon in synagogue who tried to reveal His mission.
- Mark 9:38-42; Luke 9:49-50** Christ tells disciples not to stop others from casting out demons in His name, even though they do not follow him.
- Mark 16:8-10; Luke 8:1-3** Seven demons cast out of Mary Magdalene, yet she helped to fund his ministry and was the first to see Him when He was risen.
- Mark 16:17** Casting out demons listed as first sign of those who believe.
- Luke 4:41** Many demons were cast out while trying to reveal Christ’s mission.
- Luke 10:17-20** Seventy disciples who were sent out rejoice that demons were subject to them.
- Luke 11:24-26** Christ explains that when a demon is cast out, it may try to return with more demons.
- Luke 13:10-13** Christ heals woman who had a “spirit of infirmity” for 18 years and could not stand up.
- John 7:20; 8:48-49,52; 10:20-21** Christ is accused of “having a demon”.
- Acts 16:16-19** Paul and Silas cast a “spirit of divination” out of a woman.
- Acts 19:13-20** Seven sons of Sceva are wounded when they fail to cast out a powerful demon in the name of “Jesus whom Paul preaches”. The demon recognizes Jesus and Paul, but not these men. The well-known event causes many to burn their magic books.
- 1Cor 10:19-21; Rev 9:20** People who worship idols are worshipping demons.
- 2 Cor 2:11** “lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.”
- 2Cor 11:13-14** “And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”
- Eph 6:11-12** “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do **not wrestle against flesh and blood**, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against the **spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.**”
- 1Tim 4:1-3** In the latter days, people will give into deceiving spirits and “doctrines of demons”.
- Jms 2:19** Demons believe there is one God.
- Jms 3:13-16** Evil, earthly wisdom comes from demons.
- 2Pet 2:4** “For if God spared not *the* angels who had sinned, but having cast them down to the deepest pit of gloom has delivered them to chains of darkness *to be* kept for judgment;” (Darby Translation).
- Jude 1:6-13** Angels that left their proper place wander around doing evil and will be judged for it.
- Rev 12:3-4** The great red dragon (Satan) “drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth”. Did one third of the angels become demons?
- Rev 16:13-14** Demons can perform false miracles.
- Rev 18:2** Demons sometimes dwell in demolished cities.

—Norman Edwards

What the New Testament Teaches Us About Demons

“Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2Cor 2:11).

The most common “Church of God” teaching on demons was “stay away from it all!” Members—even ministers—were discouraged from studying the Bible on this subject. The casting out of demons in Church of God groups is an extremely uncommon and unpublicized event. If people in these groups have problems with demons, it is far more likely that the people will be cast out of the group, rather than the demons being cast out of the people.

Yet the casting out of demons was a big part of Christ’s and the Apostle’s ministry. About 215 verses (see article on facing page) are about the subject of demons. This is about 3% of the New Testament. While it is a small amount in comparison to the big themes of worshipping the Eternal, loving our neighbor and salvation in Christ, there is much more about demons in the New Testament than about the Sabbath, Holy Days or tithing.

I highly encourage you to read the verses in the list at left from your own Bible, and make some notes on them. You can see that demons (interchangably called “unclean spirits”) are angels who have left following the Eternal and now follow Satan. They do much evil, but can only do what the Eternal allows them to do (Luke 22:31-32). They have different strengths and characteristics. They can affect men and women, both young and old.

Why Study About Demons?

Many brethren take the approach: “I’m not affected by demons now, so why should I study about them?” If we had some kind of guarantee from the Eternal that we would never be affected by them, then this might make sense. But if you are asking the Eternal for spiritual gifts, and hope to serve Him in a significant way, then there is a chance that you will encounter demons in the future. It is more likely that someone in your fellowship will encounter them.

From my experience, the people least affected by demons are atheists and agnostics. Since these people do not believe in any God or anything supernatural, the demons are careful to avoid giving them any reason to begin searching for **any** kind of spiritual power in

the universe. This principle carries over into religion. Demons tend not to bother religious groups that try to live moral lives **but expect little direct communication or miracles from the Eternal.** They probably realize that any supernatural persecution they might bring would cause people to strongly seek the Eternal for deliverance. So, they leave such groups alone. This seems to be the case for most Church of God groups.

(People who dabble in mystic or occultic ideas, or who have major, repeated sins often have trouble with demons no matter what group they attend. The solution is to repent of the sin, and ask Christ for the power to overcome it. We do not believe that this problem affects many of our readers, so we will not cover it further.)

But when brethren begin to concentrate on their own relationship with the Eternal—when they begin to minimize or let go of their relationship with corporate churches, then demons see them as targets to trouble.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12).

Fortunately, this scripture continues, explaining how we may use the entire “armor of God” to defeat these evil powers. Satan and his demons cannot win. When believers seek direct guidance from the Eternal or some other miracles in their life, demons may try to scare them or fool them with a false answer. However, a humble believer will also ask the Eternal to deliver him or her from these demonic attacks, drawing even closer to the Eternal and his power.

A second important reason for all believers to learn the Bible teaching on demons is that there will be increased demonic activity near the end:

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1Tim 4:1).

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time (Rev 12:12).

Learn From Experience as Well

The scriptures in the article on the facing page are the basis for what we know for sure about demons. They are from the Bible, **they are true.** It is evident that demons have different strengths—some are cast out easily, some are not. Some cause people to be violent, others cause people to be mute, or sick in some way. A person can be affected by more than one demon at a time. It is especially important to realize that the “casting out of demons” is **not** listed as a spiritual gift—any believer can call upon the name of Christ to do it.

While only a very few in the “Church of God” groups have written about this subject, the average Christian bookstore will have dozens of books on “deliverance ministry”—the casting out of demons. Some of these books take a very Bible-centered approach. Others concentrate on incantations, objects, spells and other “methods” which are probably demonic in origin. In general, these books are like most other books at a Christian bookstore: a mixture of truth, error and promotion to make money for the authors and publishers.

I am not recommending any specific book. However, there are questions to which believers sometimes need answers, which cannot be directly found in the Bible. For example:

1. Can demons affect people with the Holy Spirit?
2. Does the Eternal allow demons to speak to people claiming that they are “God”, “Jesus”, “Yahweh” or some other divine name?

I have a number of Sabbatarian friends with experience dealing with demons who would all answer the above questions the same way. Most of the remainder of this article consists of the writing of Tammy Roberts, who did not know the answers to these questions a few months ago. I first met Mrs Roberts and her husband on a speaking trip to Orange County in April of 1998. They seemed like average reawakened, independent “Church of God members”—much like my family or maybe yours. Tammy wrote the following beginning on May 12, 1999, with additional editing later:

EDWARDS: *(My comments are interspersed in this typestyle.)*

Tammy Roberts Story

ROBERTS: I am sitting in the Phoenix, Arizona airport waiting to go home, but I live in southern California. Why am I in Phoenix? Because my flight back to southern California from Tulsa, Oklahoma has a layover in Phoenix. Why was I in Oklahoma?

Here is my story: About one and a half years ago, I met a really nice family. They came to our Sabbath fellowship group in Orange County. They had gentle demeanor, sweet faces, and they loved to praise God. They called him "Yah" and his son, "Yahshua". They sang out loudly in praise to God every Sabbath. Occasionally, they would reach up their arms in worship. Their worship style was different than mine, but I began to want to be like them. They expressed a love for God with their whole hearts.

EDWARDS: *This practice has support from scripture (1Kings 8:22,54; Luke 24:50; 1Tim 2:8)*

ROBERTS: Almost a year ago, before they left our fellowship, they spoke to me privately about the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" or the "baptism of the Spirit". They said this was a deeper relationship with Yah and Yahshua. When one received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they said, the manifestation was the speaking in tongues. I was familiar that the New Testament church had the gift of tongues, and that they began to do this when they had received the Holy Spirit. My curiosity was piqued. They moved away. At that time, in my reading, I saw the scripture "do all speak in tongues?" Well, that settled that, I thought. All do not speak in tongues. I put the matter away.

Then about three weeks ago, I happened to correspond with them for the first time since they had gone. In their E-mail to me, they included a link to the Internet website they maintain. They are Chris and Connie Barr; 89 Home Place Trail; Pocohantas, Ark. 72455. They work with a Sabbath-keeping group known as "The Little Children of Jesus". Their website is:

www.littlechildrenofJesus.org/

The founder of this group was John Quincy Adams (JQA) who preached to many people in the 20s, 30s and 40s. He is now deceased. Chris is resurrecting his old papers and is publishing them to their website.

EDWARDS: *I have met Chris Barr and his family and also found them to be delightful people. They do not have a "Church of God" background but have a similar understanding of the Sabbath, Holy Days and many other doctrines.*

So, Chris included the Internet link to some new JQA papers he had just put on his site. These were four articles on the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. I wanted to know what they said, so I read. In one of JQA's articles, he stated that the **gift of tongues was not the same** as speaking in tongues as evidenced by the Holy Spirit. Hmm. Not the same. O.K.... (this was a mistake). The tongues, according to him, were proof that you had the Holy Spirit baptism.

Over the years I had wondered why there have been no spiritual gifts in the Sabbath-keeping churches of God. No miraculous healings, no tongues, no resurrections. Why? They had quoted Psalms 22:3: "God inhabits the praises of his people." According to them, it was in offerings of pure praise to God that one could be inhabited by the Father and the Son. The referenced scripture for the indwelling of God and his Son is in John: John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

I have wanted a deeper, closer relationship to God. JQA said he had been a Sunday-keeper when the Holy Spirit had told him "Sunday is damned!" That and other **tongue-speaking and interpretation led to his change to Sabbath-keeping and holy-day observance.** I took these as proofs that it was God's Spirit that had come upon them (another mistake).

In one of his articles, JQA says that in order to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you must begin to praise God purely, i.e. praise **only**. He says that when you are praying longer sentences of praise to God, your mind will run out of things to say. (At the time I didn't question why you couldn't just write down longer sentences of praise and repeat them—it's because it won't allow your mind to "disconnect") In addition, he says, you can't focus on the intensity and passion of your praise if you are trying to think up praises. He advised to just say the word "glory." "Say it over and over again, then your praise will be a sacrifice to God and he will accept it and evidence it by the outpouring of his Spirit on you." I wanted the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but the idea of just saying "glory" over and over made me feel uncomfortable. I never used that word in my normal speech, prayer or otherwise.

EDWARDS: *Does the Eternal want us to praise "with our whole mind and heart" or "out of our mind and heart"? The idea that there is some physical act that a person can do which will require a response from*

the Eternal is all wrong. "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word (Is 66:2).

ROBERTS: Two weeks ago, I prayed with praise only, arms upraised for a long time. But I did not repeat "glory, glory..." I said much longer sentences of praise. I read from the praises that David wrote in Psalms. Nothing happened. I was disappointed. The next day was a repeat. Nothing happened. I began to think that maybe JQA knew what he was talking about, and since I was a novice to all of this, I should just follow his instructions. I began to pray "glory, glory, glory, glory..." over and over again. This is quite a tongue-twister even when it is done slowly. He said the words would begin to change, not to worry, this was the Holy Spirit. Yield to the Holy Spirit and let him do his work in you. After a short time, my tongue got tripped up. He said yield to it, so I yielded. I began to gag and cough. I tried to yield more. Suddenly, I began speaking a very rapid language that sounded like Chinese. I became frightened. I tried to pray "Father save me! Father save me!" but the words continued to pour. I felt a warm surge of energy come into my hands and chest. "I've received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit!", I thought. I was **elated!!!**

All that week I spoke in tongues in prayer, not knowing what I was saying. Finally one night the tongue said, "Come to Papa." I thought God was telling me, "You are my child and I am your Father." I began to ask questions and this spirit would answer me, using my own voice. My husband had wanted me to ask this a question to "test the spirit" because he feared demons were at work. He had me ask, "Who shall I say is speaking?" The spirit answered, "My name is Yah." Well, I thought this was God's name and that he would not allow any demon to appropriate his name.

My husband also had me ask the meaning of the phrase "law of Moses" from Acts 15:5. The spirit responded that the "law of Moses meant "Jewish traditions." Both my husband and I assumed this to be accurate. Later, after the ordeal, we found out we had been lied to, when we checked the Bible.

And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel (Neh 8:1).

On Mother's day, late that night, I went to pray. I had many questions for the "Holy Spirit". I asked about many things and he

gave many answers. When he said that the new moon is the conjunction, I said there was a man at our fellowship who was going to present a paper on the crescent new moon. Did he have a message for this man. He gave me the message. Then I asked him if he wanted me to tell my fellowship this Sabbath. He said, "Do not speak to them, they are not my people!" I was shocked.

Trip to Oklahoma

This spirit which I thought was the true God, was a lying spirit, a demon. I will not include, here, all of the lies he told me. To cut the story a little shorter, I will skip to the part where he said that Gerald Flurry was his servant. He told me to go see Gerald in Edmond, Oklahoma. I had previously been a member of the Philadelphia Church of God, but had long since dismissed Gerald Flurry's exaggerated claims about his PCG. Yet I was terrified of disobeying the Most High God, as he began to call himself. He had told me I was going to die in Jerusalem. I was the prophetess of Israel and my name would be Sarah. Gerald would be Lemiel, the Judge of Israel. We would be the two witnesses, etc....

EDWARDS: *Many in the "Church of God" groups have been around corrupt leaders for so long that it is still possible for us to believe that the Eternal will use one as his final, end-time witness. We forget that when corrupt people such as Simon the Sorcerer, Annanias and Saphira attempted to "join the Church" that the Eternal completely rejected them.*

ROBERTS: You can imagine the tears and terror of all this. My husband and I were crying. We didn't know if we would ever see each other again. But we all thought it was God, so my family took me to John Wayne airport and I left for Tulsa, Oklahoma on Monday around noon.

This demon began to test me in small measures of control "to strengthen me", he said. On the plane, he said, "Tell that man next to you, 'Your name is Brian'." I felt uncomfortable telling the man this, but I feared disobedience. I said, "Is your name Brian?" Suddenly, all of the strength left my body. "You have failed me!", he intoned. "You must die." The previously placid plane began to shudder violently. "The plane is faltering, it will crash. You must die because you would not work the works of God. Your name will be the name of infamy. You will be called The Woman Who Would Not Walk With God. You will have a myocardial infarction because your heart will not be able to take the stress. You will hear

people scream and you will go black. The landing gear will get caught and the plane will break when it lands. You will be thrown into the seat in front of your and both of your legs will be broken. They will be broken because you would not walk with God. I am the Most High God who will not be thwarted!"

EDWARDS: *Is this the Eternal that you know? Contrast this demon's methods with the way the Eternal dealt with Gideon, Paul or others who were not sure who was speaking to them. The Bible has stories where individuals were severely punished for disobeying the Eternal, but they were very sure who was speaking to them.*

ROBERTS: I thought, "I have failed! I have failed God and I have failed my family I love so much. I am so sorry, Father. I am so weak." By this time my heart was racing, in fact, my chest did hurt (small twinges) my eyes were closed and I was trying to prepare myself for the crash. The voice then said "You will die at home. When you wake up you will be in the hospital. Doug and the children will bring the van to be with you. You must sign yourself out of the hospital and go home to die. Many people will come to see you as you are dying. You must tell them that you are the woman who would not walk with God; You are the woman who would not work the works of God. For this you must die." I was terrified.

I asked him for forgiveness. He said that he did forgive me but I must die. I accepted the fact of my imminent death and then I offered praise to the one I thought was God. The god who was going to execute me for disobedience. After some time, I became aware that the plane seemed to be rolling. I opened the window-shade and saw that the plane had indeed landed and had not crashed. "Why am I not dead?", I thought. "Because I have changed my mind. You are the woman I want. You repented and praised me, even though you thought you were going to die. You will be strong, you will teach my people to be strong."

He had forgiven me. I had another chance! I would not fail to obey his every command. I had escaped a horrible death. He continued to tell me that he was the Most High God Who Will Not Be Thwarted! He said, "Tell that man his name is Brian." I looked at the man and said, "Your name is Brian." He smiled and said, "No, my name is Cody." "Don't worry about his response, there are strong, dark forces at work. I am only concerned that you speak my words and do my works."

This demon's desire to control me con-

tinued. He made me fall in the airport, would not let me eat or drink, or speak unless he directed, I must not scratch, I must not push my hair out of my face....etc.

Of course, Gerald Flurry did not show up to greet me as predicted. The demon made me stand in the baggage claim area for almost three hours. Standing perfectly still, not scratching, keeping my head straight ahead, not looking around, etc. "Don't look at your watch!", he commanded when I wondered how much time had passed. Of course, after I thought I had narrowly escaped death, I did everything he commanded. He even made me sing one of my favorite "praise songs" while standing there.

It grew late. He said that the people had failed him just as I had failed him. He would give them another chance. It was late and I must rest. He would not speak to me much from now on until the morning. He told me which cab to get and which motel to go to, that the cab driver would not hurt me, and how much the fare would be. After that, he did not speak to me ever again. On the ride to the Comfort Inn, I began to question why nothing had ever happened as he had predicted. I began to wonder if this was really God. At the motel, I immediately called my husband. "I don't think this is God!", I cried. My husband thought it was. **The demon had used God's name and we both had thought a demon was not allowed to do that.** Suddenly, I had a thought. I had missed my family so much during the flight, I had asked the demon what they were doing at home. "They are at Ruby's (a restaurant) eating the foods they ate when you were with them." I asked Doug, "Did you go to Ruby's today?" "No", he replied.

The Lessons

This I write to all of you in hopes that you will never experience this kind of horrific event in your own lives. Just because we pray specifically to the true Holy Father, does not prevent the demons from coming when you give your mind up by speaking jumbled words. This is the mechanism by which it happened to me. I chose the word, "glory", but it could be any word or phrase that when repeated to the point it becomes mindless repetition, your thinking mind "disconnects" and that is the open door for demons.

I had prayed specifically to our True Father of heaven by addressing him as the only true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. All spirits knew who I addressed. The problem was that I had disconnected my mind when the "glory, glory..." gibberish

began. Just because some "Sunday-keepers" say their spirit led them to keep the Sabbath and the holy days, **does not make them a source of truth!**

My husband and I also thought we noticed more of the "fruit of the Holy Spirit" in my life when the demon arrived. I was full of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness and faith, etc. This counterfeit spirit was so precise as to bring these thoughts and emotions to my life in order to convince me this was the Holy Spirit. This demon told me to not take my Bible (the Word of God) because he (God) was in me. Also, I asked him if I should be praying to him on my knees in private prayer. He said we were that way before, but we are now different. This should have been a warning to me, had I been aware to detect it. This demon was very subtle. Scripture tells us how to fight these demons:

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph 6:11-17).

The demon told me not to bring my Sword (Bible). I am blessed to have much of that Sword in my mind, so I was not totally defenseless, however I was very vulnerable. If I had prayed with my own mind, not trying to "yield to the Spirit" I would have made contact with the True God, my Father in heaven and He could have intervened on my behalf. As it occurred, I believe He probably did intervene. The demon told me he would not be speaking to me much any more, until the morning. That gave me time to think and to critically analyze what was happening. During the conversations that led up to my flight to Tulsa, my husband and I had asked many questions and received many answers. Had we taken the time to verify the answers we could have caught this demon much more quickly. As it was,

he bombarded us with statements that we thought were accurate but later found out were mostly lies.

Some things we have learned from this is that the **demons are very limited in their access to information**. They, for example, did not have access to my husband's mind. He had not opened the door for them, and just because they were right next to him, in me, they still did not have access. They could not read my husband's mind. When questions were put to the lying spirit about Doug the responses were from my memory or general like "Doug will know what to do." They do not have the power to bring their predictions to fruition. They predicted that other people would do many things, but the demons could not perform the work.

EDWARDS: *People I know and books I have read confirm this. Unless a person grants a demon access in some way, most demons cannot "read the mind" of a person. The Bible teaches believers to command demons in Christ's name (Acts 16:18). Such commands must actually be said—if they are just "thought", the demon will not hear. (God may still "read our minds" and command the demon for us, but we should follow the Bible example if we know it.)*

ROBERTS: God, on the other hand, says:

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isa 46:10).

The true God will not need to make excuses that "the strong, dark forces are at work". Remember Paul's warning

And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light 2Cor 11:14).

I experienced this first-hand. I did not understand this scripture the way I do now. I used to think this referred only to false ministers, but now I know it can include actual demonic presence. This demon appeared to be the one true God. I had prayed to the one true God and was expecting no one else.

This was all very subtle at the time it was happening. As I review the events, I see warnings I was blind to. It was a horrifying, gut-wrenching experience. It was also very humiliating to find that I had been led by a demon. As humiliating as it was, my concern for all of you is greater. You must learn from my experience. This is how the lying spirit worked in my life:

1) I had doubts that I had the true Holy Spirit, I was fervently looking for God, and I wanted to know I had God in my life.

2) I opened my mind to the lying spirit by disconnecting my conscious control through "vain repetition," or chanting in fervent emotional prayer.

3) I experienced counterfeit emotions of the true Holy Spirit, "love, joy, and peace."

4) While my intent was to pray to the true God, while my mind was vulnerable in mindless chanting "glory glory..." the lying spirit manifested itself.

5) It started by asking me to do simple things, like "go to window." I obeyed and established my willingness to obey.

6) It made me speak in tongues—Chinese-like sounds—then later, English.

7) It knew my thoughts.

8) It answered questions to gain my confidence, that it was indeed God.

9) Then it began to exercise control over me though fear.

10) It told me that unless I obeyed it would take my family from me.

11) It told me that if I failed it would kill me.

12) It had me leave my family with only the clothes on my back, call a man Brian who's name was Cody, terrify me that I was going to die in a plane crash, stand in an airport baggage area for three hours not permitted to eat, drink water or scratch, and repeatedly sing a song as passengers walked by, all the while waiting for his predicted arrival of a ministerial greeting committee.

Perhaps because my association with this particular lying spirit was so intense the time of affiliation was short. The lying spirit made so many untrue statements and so many subsequently failed predictions, in such a short time, that it became obvious they were lies. The key objective was to gain control over me—or you if possible. I have since found that lying spirits have made others live in poverty and suffer, convincing them that they were obeying God. Remember these points:

The way of God is liberating, not controlling: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2Co 3:17).

You do not have to speak in tongues to be a Christian: "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" (1Co 12:30).

Test the spirits: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they

are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world (1Jo 4:1).

Above all, do not chant: But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking (Matt 6:7, KJV).

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand. If anyone wishes to contact me, you may do so via e-mail:

tjr@home.com
—Tammy Roberts

Closing Comments

EDWARDS: For some, this story may seem totally bizarre—even unbelievable. For others, it may be all too familiar. The important thing is to realize that this story is neither unbiblical nor untypical. Satan himself desired to gain control of the Apostle Peter (Luke 22:31-32). “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons (1Tim 4:1). We should not be surprised. We should not be ignorant.

On the other hand, we should not treat everyone who either has or wants to speak in tongues like they are “agents of Satan”. Many of us were once deceived into thinking that people had to belong to a certain organization in order to be in the “True Church”—even though the Bible does not say that. We should not be surprised to find that others think that speaking in tongues is required for the true believer. While some of the scriptures about “speaking in tongues” refer to actual languages, the Greek for word used to “interpret” tongues in 1 Corinthians 12 & 14 is *diemeneuo* (Strong's #1329) which means "to expound"—distinct from *hermaeneuo* (#2059) which means "to translate". Also, consider these scriptures:

For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries (1Cor 14:2).

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal (1Cor 13:1).

These verses speak of a gift that involves speaking to God in a way that no one understands. But nowhere does the Bible teach continual repetition or letting go of one's mind. Chris Barr, the man who introduced these methods to Tammy Roberts, has written many

pages about this incident, and believes that with his guidance, it is still possible to use these methods to reach God instead of demons. I believe that these methods are unbiblical and should be avoided, but in fairness to anyone who wants to hear the “other side”, they may contact him at **Chris Barr; 89 Home Place Trail; Pocahontas, AR 72455; cbarr@childrenofjesus.org**.

Studying the Bible teaching on spiritual gifts helps to put this entire issue in perspective (Rom 12:6-8; 1Cor 12:7-11,28-31; Eph 4:11-15; 1Pet 4:8-11). These gifts are given by the Eternal. They are not given by church hierarchies, but **nor are they “worked up” by something that individuals do**. We are encouraged to pray for the gifts, but the Bible contains no formula to assure us *if* or *when* we will receive them. Spiritual gifts are “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph 4:12). They are not a reward from God so people can feel close to Him. People I have known who feel close to God are people who do what He does—give of themselves to help some less fortunate than themselves. The Bible clearly shows that we will be judged by how we love our neighbors, not what kind of spiritual experiences we have had. **Read 1 Corinthians 13!** There are *no* “short-cuts” to growing in the mind and character of the Eternal.

Beware of All False Spiritual Gifts

It is important **not** to single out mindless repetition as **the** single practice that leads to demon problems. Christ warned about what would happen in the time of the end:

For false christs and false prophets will rise and **show great signs and wonders** to deceive, if possible, even the elect (Math 24:24).

Are demons easy to recognize? Are they all clearly evil? The scriptures show that they have incredible variety: some are incredibly violent, others can be very “religious”, proclaiming “You [Jesus] are the Christ, the Son of God!” (Luke 4:41). Simon the sorcerer convinced people that he had the “the great power of God” (Acts 8:9-11).

In general, demonic forces are usually either “black” or “white” (the origin of the terms “black magic”, “white magic”, “black witches”, “white witch-

es”, etc). The black ones are usually evil, grotesque, and always opposed to the Eternal's way. The white ones often pretend to be good and sometimes say things from the Eternal. Balaam (Num 22-24) and the witch at Endor (1Sam 28:7-25) fall into this category. Obviously, **the Eternal says that we should seek Him directly:** “Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God” (Lev 19:31).

Most Church of God brethren would try to stay away from all demonic influence, black or white. Unfortunately, the entire purpose of “white demons” is to be “transformed into an angel of light” (2Cor 11:4) so that people do not recognize them. As one example that will be familiar to most of our readers, do you remember the Walt Disney classic *Mary Poppins*? She comes to work as a nanny for the Banks family. She shows the children a marvelously good time, and through a variety of events brings the workaholic father and independant mother closer to each other, their children, and the rest of humanity.

But Mary Poppins is clearly a powerful white witch. She flies on an umbrella instead of a broom. She got rid of other nannies competing for her job by causing a powerful storm to blow them away. She performs numerous miracles without giving any credit to God. At the end, her parrot taunts her that she will never be able to have her own family, but must always keep moving with the change of the wind. (This is a common practice of demons—awarding supernatural powers but in exchange taking away something even more valuable. By contrast, the Eternal gives without taking some other good thing away.)

I am not saying that watching *Mary Poppins* will cause someone to have trouble with demons. The point is, that **demons can be very subtle and very difficult to detect**. They might even come preaching Bible truth. If we are to avoid being fooled by false miracles, we need to know what the Bible says about Satan and his demons. We need to learn from the experience of other believers and we need to pray “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matt 6:13, KJV).

—Norman Edwards



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.

Liked Feast Keeping Article

LETTER: December 21, 1998
Dear Norm,

Got my *Servants' News* (Sept/Oct) today and your front-page item "How Should We Keep the Feast" was right on!

My family kept the Feast for 40 years. Finally the time came when I went alone, as a pensioner. As you stated "people without friends stayed late after services hoping to find someone who would include them in their plans"... I was one, and with no luck.

Again, you stated, "there was much less emphasis on making sure that everyone was able to spend a lot of time meeting other brethren"... After services, I just killed time for the rest of the day. I don't shop or watch TV to any great extent, so kill time, I did... and I thought, "I don't think I'd enjoy the millennium if it was like this."

After the Feast, I tried to convince those in charge to make provision at future Feasts, for the single or lonely to meet somewhere in afternoon/evenings, but to no avail. Their response was "surely with all the people you know there, there's no need to be left out". Well, who wants to foist themselves on others, when they have money to spend and you don't?

Being a pensioner who couldn't really afford a motel, restaurant meals, and a bus/plane trip to the Feast, I stayed home this year. Each day I played a taped sermon from last year. In afternoons, I reviewed my Feast notes from the fifties (when we had 3 sermons daily) to see if they were still relevant.

I didn't have to kill time; seek out company, nor eat all my meals at McDonalds. I didn't go broke. So I ask, in my case, which is the proper way to keep the Feast?

I repeat, your article was right on!

—A Subscriber

RESPONSE: Thank you for your encouragement. We hope that brethren in local congregations will try to make sure

that everyone they know has a way to go to the Feast. We hope that those who organize feasts will make a fellowship-hall available for long hours for those who primarily want to talk with out brethren at the Feast.

What is the proper way to keep the Feast?

The Old Testament taught people to come to Jerusalem and offer sacrifices. The Feasts were kept in the New Testament, but it does not spell out exactly how. It seems that assembling with other believers would come high on the list of importance, but I certainly recommend that you ask the Eternal to show you what He wants you to do.

—NSE

Making Fringes on Your Garments

LETTER: June 2, 1998

I was reading my Bible and came across Numbers 15:38. What does this mean? Why did they do this and is it required today? Thank you.

—Kay Rea, Indiana

This verse commands the children of Israel to make fringes on their garments so that they, a people inclined to harlotry, can remember the law (see the next two verses). If you believe that fringes will help you remember and keep the law, then wear them. It is my understanding that many of the physical rituals (including sacrifices) of the Old Testament were not taught in the New Testament: "but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God" (Rom 2:29) If circumcision is transferred to the heart, is not the "wearing of the law" transferred to its writing in our mind? "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them" (Heb 10:16). Unfortunately, many people who claim to be "New Testament Christians" have never even read the Old Testament laws showing how to live at peace with one's neighbors, so these laws are represented neither in their minds nor on their garments!

—NSE

What is the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

LETTER: November 22, 1997 :

Dear Sirs;

I, being new to the web am just learning of your monthly news letter. I've enjoyed both reading your articles and hearing from various groups. It pleases me to know God's people are still out there and that all hope is

not lost. Though scattered and seemingly powerless for the moment, God's people are alive and awakening to the evils of the day. I thank you for the reassurance.

Being a former member of the WCG for many years myself, might make my question for you seem strange. However, I would like a answer from you. My question is, **what is the gospel of Jesus Christ?** Everyone seems to declare they are preaching it. That, the gospel is what sets them apart from the others. Sometimes I believe we've used the term so much we've lost contact with what it is.

God says to seek; preach; and pray for the gospel of Christ. So, I ask you to define in length what is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

—[E-mail without name]

RESPONSE: The scripture says Christ and his apostles preached the Gospel. Therefore, everything they preached, to some degree, was the Gospel. The gospel, defined at length, is Matthew 1:1 to Revelation 22:21. The scripture does not spell out sections that are "not the gospel". There are many "Gospel of" phrases in the Bible: "Gospel of the Kingdom", "Gospel of Grace", "Gospel of Christ", "Gospel of God", "Gospel of peace", etc. We are to live by "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God".

Obviously we cannot learn all of the Bible in a day—we need to learn it piece by piece. Preachers should learn to "give meat in due season"—to teach what their listeners need when they need it (Matt 24:45). When people study, they should concentrate on their personal areas of need rather than always studying obscure theological questions. However, it seems to me that if I were to create a very narrow definition of "the Gospel", it would only serve to encourage people to study and teach that little portion of the Bible that I label "important" (the Gospel) and to miss out on the other things that the Eternal has for them. "...man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD" (Deut 8:3).

—NSE

He Wants Us Following Him

LETTER: February 2, 1999

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Norm Edwards,

Thanks so much for your continued work of helping God's people. God keeps knocking down walls that the self-exalted leaders keep setting up. If God be God, follow Him and His Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

We do not have to have man's permission to do that, or his permission to use the gifts God gives to each of His children. We

are not to look to the so-called top leaders, to give us as they see fit.

I think God continues to winnow and sift and shake up to see who will look to and follow him. We do not have to tremble and fear, and go to some man asking, "what shall I do?" I have been guilty of that in the past.

Thanks again. Enclosed is a small donation to help with postage.

—IR, Arkansas

RESPONSE: You are right. We do not need to ask some man "what should we do", but we each need to ask the Eternal "show us what to do".

—NSE

Comments on Government Paper

LETTER: January 26, 1999
Greetings to you all from Eastern Canada.

I hope things are going well for you there.

I am a seeker of God's truth and a new-comer to the faith (baptized July 1996). I have been left somewhat disappointed and confused as a result of my involvement with church "organizations" over the past two and a half years or so. (CGI and then Global). Looking for answers and in an open frame of mind, I have just finished reading the article entitled "How Does The Eternal Govern Through Humans?" by Norman S. Edwards. I have found it extremely interesting and enlightening and would like to extend my thanks to Mr. Edwards for writing it and making it available.

I am a subscriber to the Journal and I would like to request a free copy of the November 1998 issue of your newsletter "Servants' News" which you have offered to its readers. I think it is important that the apparent extra-biblical traditions that are commonplace amongst the Churches of God be questioned and held up to the scrutiny of God's Word. If they don't stand the test—we shouldn't be adhering to them—regardless of which "church leader" says we should. It is amazing how much we can take for granted! [literature request omitted]

May we seek God's guidance in all things and be receptive to His lead, trusting in our Savior to administer and build His Church. God with God.

—AA, Canada

RESPONSE: For years, the WCG taught that members were in training to serve under Christ in the Millennium. Some actually said that we had to obey humans in imperfect government so that Christ could be sure that we will obey His perfect government. Everyone was encouraged to obey the person "over them". Use of the Bible in

personnel and business matters was almost non-existent. Now that I think about it, is not that the way that most government and big-business employees are trained? Are not most wars and atrocities committed by men and women who will simply obey the person "above them" rather than think about what is morally or Biblically right?

—NSE

Not in Kingdom Unless Forgive GTA

LETTER: January 6, 1999
Greetings,

I wanted to write today to request something I saw offered in your newspaper. [request omitted.]

I am with the ICG (Intercontinental Church of God—GTA) and support Garner Ted Armstrong. I realize that you have nothing good to say about him and always are negative in your attitude towards GTA.

But you fail to realize all the good work he has done in the past and the good work he is doing today. I'm getting his TV program on in this area and put ads in the papers to let people know about it as well as offer a free booklet.

People here have been in the dark for so long and now they are finally going to hear the light of God's truth.

Ted Armstrong said something very accurate and true in a sermon called "Signs to Watch" (6/22/98). He said many in the churches of God will never be in God's Kingdom unless they overcome a major stumbling block, and that stumbling block was him.

Unless they are willing to forgive him, they will never be in the Kingdom of God. I also realize the churches of God (both members and ministers) including the PCG (Philadelphia Church of God, founded by Gerald Flurry) are afraid of Garner Ted, and their leadership won't allow their members to listen to him for a variety of reasons that I could list.

If leaders, ministers, and members of God's true church are refused entry into God's Kingdom for the above-mentioned reason, then they have only one person to blame for that—theirself.

—Alex Nicholson, Nova Scotia

RESPONSE: If there were nothing good to be said about Garner Ted Armstrong, he would not be a point of contention—he would be ignored by the "Church of God" brethren. The truth of the matter is:

1) Garner Ted Armstrong preaches a lot of truth in a way that people can understand.

2) He is one of the most gifted speakers in the Sabbatarian movement today, maybe **the** most gifted.

3) He is a very charismatic and likeable person.

So why, then, do we not support this "teacher of truth"? Because the Bible gives clear instructions on who should be leaders in His Church in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Eternal wants to be represented by people who "walk the walk", not just "talk the talk". If these Bible chapters do not apply to Garner Ted Armstrong, we would like to know why they are even in the Bible? Does someone have to be a mass murderer or a professional gangster in order to be disqualified as a Church leader? Or can these people claim repentance and go on preaching?

The truth is the reputation of Garner Ted Armstrong will be forever known through Geraldo Rivera's TV Show and many articles written with firsthand testimony. It is widely accepted that he has "a bad report from without". He has not openly admitted what he did, but continually lied to cover it up, including lying directly to me (See Dec 1997 article, Feb 1996 letters section and July 1997 news section of *Servants' News*).

Will people be kept out of the kingdom because they have not forgiven Garner Ted Armstrong? This is possible. The "unforgiving" and the "sexually immoral" are mentioned together in Romans 1:28-32. I forgive Garner Ted Armstrong for lying to me and for bringing a bad name to Sabbatarian Bible teachers.. I hope others have forgiven him also. But the Eternal does not need any one teacher so badly that He must ignore His own instructions in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

Truth is not learned from only one source as so many of us have been taught. We could all learn a lesson from J. Vernon McGee, a man with a radio ministry called *Through the Bible* based in Pasadena, California. He reached the point where he felt indispensable, that listeners needed **him** to teach them. Later, he found out he had cancer and realized that his ministry could end soon. He was greatly humbled during all the treatments and prayers of others on his behalf. After he recovered, he realized that God did not "need him" so badly.

—Norman and Marleen Edwards

Eating Shrimp or Mushrooms

LETTER: January 19, 1999
Dear Norman,

Thank you very much for the subscription to Servants' News, which I find both interesting and entertaining(!). I have followed the Worldwide Church of God since the 1980's, and never cease to wonder, at all that has occurred within that organization within such a short period of time. Your publication has opened my eyes to many

other things going on within the off-shoots from the original organization. It seems that as doctrinal and organizational changes continue to accelerate, the momentum of these changes causes the people in these groups to fly apart.

I have several questions which are not extremely urgent but which have been bothering me for some time. I read some time ago (I do not recall where) that we should not eat mushrooms because they do not fall within the group of "green plants" given for food. (Gen 1:30 and Gen 9:3). I assume that "green plants" refers to plants which produce chlorophyll, a key component in the photosynthesis process which drives the plant metabolism. Photosynthesis uses solar energy to liberate the oxygen that we breathe from water molecules. The remaining hydrogen from the water molecules becomes part of the sugar molecules that supply energy to our bodies. Chlorophyll is truly a wonder of creation, but should plants not containing chlorophyll be rejected as food? Mushrooms, for example, are excellent sources of many important nutrients and good substitutes for or complements to meat in many dishes. To my knowledge, mushrooms are not identified specifically in Leviticus as a food that we should not eat. Do you have any more specific information relating to whether we should eat mushrooms?

Also, I am curious whether shrimp should be excluded from the diet. Three times Leviticus 11 states that "fins and scales" are requirements for edible fish. Leviticus calls living things in the water which do not have fins and scales "abhorrent". To my knowledge, shrimp have scales, but do not have dorsal fins. Also, they have the same general body structure as the crawfish and lobster, which are definitely not edible because they have no scales. Therefore, it appears that shrimp are not edible, however I have read in the Jerusalem Post of special jumbo shrimp being imported to Israel for feast celebrations. Personally, I believe that shrimp should be left as food for our depleted maritime fish populations, which is what I assume the Creator intended them for.

Do you know of a reference on edible foods written from the biblical perspective? I would like to obtain one, if it exists, and I am sure there are many people who would also be interested. I am very interested in this subject because the more I learn about the Creator's directives, the more I can see that they are part of a comprehensive plan to make our lives the best that they can be.

[Literature request deleted]

Thank you again for your efforts in preparing and distributing the Servants' News, which I believe, fills an important need.

—Jeff Blaney, Georgia

RESPONSE: Thanks for your questions.

I do not have an authoritative reference to exactly which foods are clean and which are not. I have read several in the past. Giving and Sharing (888-687-5191) has one available. After a while, one learns about enough good foods to eat that when some uncertain, obscure fish or bird is offered for food, it is easier to simply not eat it than it is to do more investigation. I certainly agree with your conclusion that shrimp is not clean.

I have heard the argument that mushrooms should not be eaten because they are not "green plants" or because they are not an "herb that yields seed" (Gen 1:29). I think it is important to realize that the Bible never talks about clean or unclean plants in the way it talks about meats. The Bible mentions "green plants", which is the usual color of plants, but does not specifically say "plants must be green to eat them". The grain used in offerings was dried grain which is no longer green. Other plants, such as purple cabbage, never are green, but are very similar in content to green cabbage. Technically speaking, mushrooms have spores instead of seeds—but, I do not believe that Genesis was trying to make a distinction between spores and seeds. I think the meaning of Genesis 1:29 is that we should not eat plants that are not healthy enough to reproduce. The fact that some mushrooms are poisonous does not mean we should eat none of them, some green plants are poisonous (tomato leaves, potato leaves, castor beans, etc.). We are sending you Steven Collins paper on clean meats.

—NSE

Ezekiel 34 Applies To Ministers

LETTER: February 1, 1999
Hello Mr. Edwards,

The various Church organizations keep on dividing and subdividing as witnessed by the latest in Global thus adding to the prophecy of Daniel that the power (unity) of the Holy People would be completely shattered (NKJ).

It seems like the higher echelon of the ministry in these various organizations are the ones doing the scattering, as they try to gain power for themselves. When you set up a church like a worldly corporation structure, you can expect the same results, coups, takeovers, back-stabbing, slander, malice, deceit as each tries for the CEO position. In turn, the CEO fires or demotes any who pose a threat to his sovereignty as he wants to maintain his position of rulership.

In this struggle for power by the upper echelon ministers, the people become like pawns in a chess game or soldiers (GI's) in

war games, they're expendable, as long as there is enough left to support the Kings and their agenda (doing the work) it seems the carnage will continue.

Many have assumed Ezekiel 34 applied to worldly ministers. Read it in context with our situation today. Could it apply to God's church today with the breakup of WWCG? It may or may not apply, but it sure fits some calling themselves shepherds today.

—PH, Ohio

RESPONSE: The expressions "My flock" and "My sheep" appear numerous times in Ezekiel 34. These are obviously the Eternal's people. The "bad shepherding" in this prophecy is not set in any specific time or place—it applies to all bad shepherding throughout history. (The setting up of David as prince is probably Millennial.) I am often amazed at how prophetic teachers try to show that there is a specific fulfillment for nearly all prophecies—and then also try to show that most prophecies are going to be fulfilled in their life-times. Did not the Eternal prophesy anything for other generations?

While many of these ministers have good intentions, their mistaken ideas of the need for a big corporation to "do the work" does lead to the political maneuvering that you describe. One of the sad fruits of this is that the leaders of today's organizations are mostly those who are the best politicians. Men in organizations who are gifted as teachers or pastors are often kept "in the background" lest all the people find out and demand these gifted people as leaders.

Let us not forget the encouraging aspects of Ezekiel 34: "And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats'" (v17). This seems remarkably similar to Christ's judgment "as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats" in Matt 25:31-46. We can count on Christ to reward people for every good work, and to justly deal with those who misused others for their own political goals. Some of those judgments may be coming sooner rather than later as church organizations fracture to the point that they can no longer pay men who know no other job than that of a corporate minister.

—NSE

Compare Armstrong/Meredith Start

LETTER: March 29, 1999
Norm,

Your presentation of statistics in your latest SN about 45 (no previous contact) baptisms and 500 (previous contact) baptisms is misleading.

If you compare the first 5 years of the

Radio Church of God to the first 5 years of Global, I believe the numbers would probably be in Global's favor.

It took Mr. Armstrong years of broadcasting before thousands and thousands were called, but his perseverance (one of the Seven Laws of Success) paid off.

Do an objective comparison with the Radio Church of God and the first 5 years of Global! You might be surprised!

—Anonymous

RESPONSE: Actually, your proposed comparison of the Global Church of God and the Radio Church of God baptisms would be misleading. Herbert Armstrong started his ministry in the depression, with only himself and his wife to work, a few tiny radio stations, and a hand-made magazine. Mr. Armstrong was just coming to a knowledge of many Bible truths and had no one to help him.

When Rod Meredith started the Global Church of God, he had access to dozens of ministers and thousands of members who were already taught by the Worldwide Church of God. He had tithes and offerings pouring in from all over the world. Within six months of starting, he had over a dozen full-time workers, a monthly newsletter, a radio broadcast on numerous stations, and dozens of local churches and video groups. I know because I was there from the beginning. I brought my writing and computer skills to the GCG, just like so many other WCG members brought their skill to the GCG. Mr. Meredith readily acknowledged this.

Herbert Armstrong had some Church of God Seventh Day members who helped him, but they had almost no background in "doing a big work". I do not know exactly how many baptisms Herbert Armstrong performed in his first five years. However, the amount of money and skilled people available to Mr. Armstrong was almost "nothing" in comparison to what Mr. Meredith had when he started the GCG.

Why was the GCG, with all the years of experience and skill, unable to produce so much more than Herbert Armstrong's early ministry? I believe it was because Herbert Armstrong was willing to answer public questions—whatever people wanted to ask—when he started. He spoke to people in their own language and answered the questions that they had. He may have given some wrong answers at times, but at least he was not afraid to answer. Today, most leaders of church of God organizations will not publicly answer questions because they know that there are some questions that they cannot answer. Therefore, they are seen by many as teachers of a "dead man's doctrines", rather than as a living Bible-teaching ministry.

Mar/Apr 1999

—NSE

Loving Attitude, Not Organization

LETTER:

March 27, 1999

Dear Norman Edwards

I refer to the article about Church of God—AIC moving to isolation in the December 1998 issue of *Servants' News* [page 8]. The person who told you he had concerns over the ministry of COG-AIC sounds like he could easily be a member of the congregation I attend. Our pastor says the UCG literature is not inspired by God and that there are evil spirits at work in the writing (he said that some time ago just about the time we left UCG). Some of the members of the congregation are very much against the other Churches as well, and when 4 of us visited UCG they regarded us as visiting the enemy and being disloyal. There are a few here who regard anything to do with UCG as supporting something wrong.

Personally, I see nothing wrong with attending another church group so long as they have the basics right and a good attitude. It is my understanding that the PCG, for example, does not like people from other groups attending so I won't go there. But I have been made very welcome when visiting GCG in Belgium and UCG in Bricket Wood, England (at the site of the former Ambassador College). I also have attended Churches of God UK who are associated with CEM. I found nothing wrong in any of these groups, all I saw were God's people trying to do right, they were friendly and warm, and the attitude was good, better than that of some in COG-AIC.

What I find strange in this is that whenever I hear David Hulme's preaching or read his writings, his attitude is very good, his teachings very helpful and true, yet there are those who claim to be a part of the church he administers who do otherwise. Could it be that with some, attending church is nothing more than an intellectual exercise? I think David Hulme has it right, but the local ministers and some members have yet to catch the vision.

I don't mind whether our local congregation is with COG-AIC, UCG, GCG or CEM, so long as we have an open attitude to people, a loving and caring attitude. We need to build bridges between the different church groups rather than run down the others because they don't happen to agree at least 99% or more with us.

—[name withheld]

RESPONSE: I have heard similar thinking from others. If we cannot get along with other groups that are 99% similar, how can we ever expect to teach others who may

start much further away doctrinally.

Many have also noticed an apparent discrepancy between a church organization's official policies and the way they are treated in a congregation: the organization claims that visiting other groups is O.K., but those who do so are relieved of duties in their local congregation. Part of this can probably be attributed to "over zealous" or maybe even "dictatorial" local leaders who know that one of the best things they can do to please their headquarters is to keep their attendance figures high. What might happen if members "visited another group and liked it"? They might leave—and others might find out and they might leave. Therefore, punishments are handed out to those who visit to completely discourage the practice.

The second reason for this headquarters/local congregation discrepancy sounds more sinister, but has happened to me more than once, and I have heard of it happening to others. The full concept is explained in the famous historical book "The Prince" by Niccolo Machiavelli. In brief, leaders have a tendency to want to maintain a kind, loving, "good guy" image, and have others do their dirty work for them. I know of specific cases where a church organization leader decided to disfellowship someone, but then ordered the lowest ranking local minister to do the disfellowshipping without letting it be known who gave the order. In some cases, people never were unable to find out who decided to disfellowship them and why. It seems that most leaders who do this are not intending to be "bad", but feel that they must do it "to protect the Work".

Probably, the leaders (and nearly all of us members) need a lot more faith that the Eternal's work can be done with His methods: we can tell the truth, confess our faults to others, admit we have been wrong in the past, admit we "don't know" on some questions, etc., and still get his work done. We do not need to sin to make His Work look better.

—NSE

Look at Fruits of Church Leadership

LETTER:

December 14, 1998

Dear Norman,

Thanks again for another great issue of *Servants' News*. I'm sure by now you have heard of the recent firing of Rod Meredith from Global. How ironic that the very ones Rod Meredith termed "God's true ministers" have been the very ones to oust him. If memory serves, all the "ministers" who came with Global were the ones with the "fire in their bellies". And wasn't Global the most "reliable branch" of God's Church? Now he calls them dissidents.

Several areas have had their local battles with ministers in recent times only to be told they were to obey their ministers. The people were not allowed to go over their ministers' heads, but were forced either to submit or leave. Yet, what did those at headquarters do? They disagreed with Rod Meredith, who hired them in the first place, and fired him. More of "do as I say, don't do as I do".

How often have we been told by leaders to look at the fruits to know who is of God? As I look at the fruits of the leaders in the organizations, I see many things.

Fruits of the Ministers

First of all, I see men who wouldn't hit a lick at a snake living off many poor people. I see soft, tender hands held out for money as hard, rough, calloused hands turn it over to them. (When a living thing lives and feeds off another living thing, we call it a parasite).

I see power plays, politics and greed among those who are fighting to be in control. I see childishness as they play a spiritual game of "king of the hill". I see lack of cooperation and spiritual tug of war. And they dare to call those of us who have withdrawn from their organizations chaotic.

If anyone has ears to hear and eyes to see, it's not hard to see who is in confusion, chaos and anarchy. Who has caused it? The leaders—the so-called "ministers"! Can this be denied?

Probably most of the members of Global were fairly content and were willing to give and take with each other in order to fellowship and do a combined work. But, alas, the leaders once more became disruptive and chaotic and disagreeable. So now, once more the people must choose whom they will follow. Once more, they will split in order to follow the one or ones they must decide God is truly with.

The members would be more than content to let differences alone in order to fellowship and live in peace. But, the leaders will not allow it. There is too much power and too much money in the hands of little men with too much human nature. And they claim to be servants of God? God forbid that we would have to be subject for eternity to the likes of their rule.

Fruits of Spirit and Flesh Compared

The fruits we are to look for are "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance". Gal 5:22-23.

The fruits of the flesh are "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and the like. . .they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God". Gal 5:19-21.

Now which set of fruits do we see as we observe the leadership in the organizations? Let the words of Gal 5:19-23 give the answer.

Is this judgment against obedience to God? Did He not say, "by their fruits you shall know them"? Of necessity, the fruits must be discerned.

Is there love shown among the leadership? Where is the joy, peace, and gentleness? One "minister" recently was asked not to participate in a church family weekend. Why? They didn't say but he was not of their organization. Were they afraid he would taint them? Most of the leaders would rather the members in their groups would not go church hopping. Why? Are they afraid of losing control?

Too much of the fruits of the flesh are, and have been evident in this amazing, elite little clique called, improperly, the ministry.

What Would Jesus Do?

If Jesus were on the earth today in human form, what would he say about all of this? That's an easy question to answer. It seems like he had to deal with the same attitude among his disciples. His address to them (and should be to us) is found in Matt 20:25-28, Mark 10:42-45, and Luke 22:25-27.

Matthew 20:25 "You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you (but it is so and has been so among the hierarchy of religions) but whosoever will be great among you let him be your servant (as minister should read). And whosoever shall be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto (served) but to minister (serve) and to give his life a ransom for many".

Jesus was a true servant. He was not a parasite who lived high while those He served lived low. He did not exercise dominion and authority over his disciples as these scriptures attest. They should also make people think twice about the husband having rights from God to exercise authority and dominion over his wife. But that's another story.

Luke 22:25-27 This scripture adds a little more depth to Jesus' words to his striving disciples concerning who was to be the greatest: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But you shall not be so, but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger and he that is chief as he that does serve. For whether is greater, he that sits at meat or he that serves? Is it not he that sits at meat? But I am among you as he that serves".

Where would Jesus be if He were physically here today? Among us, busy serving us! He certainly would not be in the middle of all the squabbling, fighting, and bickering. If He would not be in it physically, what makes us think He's there in spirit?

Do Ministers Serve or Rule?

If all these "ministers" in all these organizations had the same desire to serve as Jesus did, there would be peace, love and joy present. No one would desire to exercise lordship and authority over anyone. There would be cooperation even if everyone didn't understand everything alike. Yet we see "the kings of the Gentiles" alive and well in the "leadership" of the various organizations who claim to be the churches of God.

We must judge the fruits. Next time someone says these words to prove their group and its leader is of God, I will ask them to compare their fruits to those listed in Galatians and to the words of Jesus in Matt 20:25, Mark 10:42 and Luke 22:25.

Thanks again for *Servants' News*. I look forward to each issue.

Your friend,

—Tawanda Ray, Alabama

RESPONSE: Your letter does a good job of describing the modern day manifestations of an age-old religious problem: People want to prove that their group is the "right group" so that they can be "right" before God simply by being in their group. Yet the Bible says nothing about favorable judgment for being in the "right group", but much about judgment for what we do with our lives.

—NSE

Working Together Yes, Merger No

LETTER: December 21, 1998
Dear Norman,

There have been unofficial talks by senior ministers of UCG-AIA and Global working together or getting together. A). Working together, and B). Merging UCG-AIA and the remnant of Global. Beneficial or not?

My opinion on this is brethren fellowshiping together and joint socials are good; exchanges of ministers is good; also joint services also can be good. Joint booklets are good. Getting the work out together, yes this is a good example. To outsiders and peaceful fellowships, why should brethren always be separated? We need more of this.

But, merging to one governance, I feel would be negative. Why? 1) There would be arguments about which way forward. 2) Many members came to be associated with these bodies because they liked the governance of that particular body. Examples: Indianapolis for many UCG people and Global's original booklet on

government, for some Global people.

Therefore forcing a different style of governance upon them would cause unrest upon brethren, and arguments We would see a number leaving and going to [other groups?] and some disbanding our basic doctrines altogether.

Working together: **Yes**, Merger: **No**.

—David & Anne Young, Scotland

RESPONSE: You have well explained the difference between unity and “ecumenicism”. The ecumenical movement seeks to unify religions from the “top down”—leaders negotiate over governance and doctrine, and craft a policy whereby two or more groups can work together. The followers in individual groups are often bewildered: The other church groups that used to be their enemy are now their friend. Unity is the practice of individuals willing to accept that the Eternal may be working with others even though their practices and beliefs may vary.

We have also heard of merger talks between the Global Church of God and the UCG-IA, but the situation brings up a number of problems. If members have been highly discouraged from attending each other’s services for 4 years, how can it suddenly be alright for them to merge? Will the groups go over their past tapes and literature to remove all of the negative comments they made about each other? What about members who were “relieved of duties” for attending the other group? Will their duties now be restored?

The deciding factors will probably be economic and political realities. The GCG is saddled with debt and expensive long-term payments—it is running out of money to pay its staff and ministry. They own the rights to all the World-Ahead magazines, TV programs, and the GCG’s literature. But most of that prominently features Rod Meredith—a man whom they no longer want to promote. Most of this literature is of little value to either the GCG or the UCG-IA. The UCG-IA would have to run it all through their literature approval process in order to use it. The UCG-IA is financially stable, but had to cut many ministers back to 1/2 or 3/4 salary in order to remain so. Would its elders vote to take on other ministers or high-paid headquarters staff? Probably not. Furthermore, the UCG-IA would need to modify its constitution in order to merge with the GCG or to place GCG leaders on their board.

From a physical stand-point, the most sensible thing is for the GCG to merge back with the LCG (Meredith) so that all of their literature can be used again. That would essentially be an admission that the GCG was wrong to vote out Dr. Meredith—but it might be easier for the GCG leaders to do that than

to let the GCG go bankrupt. If the latter happens, individual GCG ministers with large congregations (that can pay a minister’s salary and more) will either join UCG-IA, other groups or become independent.

The whole process would be much less traumatic if there were no controlling “church organizations”, but stable local congregations which worked together to produce literature and TV programs. May Christ grant understanding of this situation to each member who is seeking Him.

—NSE

Learned Much Since Leaving WCG

LETTER: January 7, 1999
Servants' News,

Enclosed is a small donation to help with the cost of putting out *Servants' News*.

My husband and I left Worldwide Church of God in January of 1995 and attended with Global. Then when in November Global split, we haven’t gone with either group. We still meet with the same small group but we are all of like mind—we don’t want to go with either Global or Living Church of God.

We understand that God’s church is not a corporation. So far, we are listening to tapes of sermons given by Harold Smith in Washington, and the local men give sermons and do the rest of the service.

We like *Servants' News* and the fact that you try to be fair in your assessment of what has happened and is still happening.

We have learned so much new truth since leaving Worldwide and can see God’s hand in many different groups of His people.

Thank you for all the work you, your wife, and staff do to help God’s people.

—GA, California

RESPONSE: Thank you for your encouraging letter. We hope that some corporate church leaders will read it and listen. When I worked for the GCG, we would occasionally get letters like yours—interested in God but not the corporations. We (including myself) would usually say something like “they’re in rebellion against God’s government” or “they don’t want to do a Work” or “God is no longer using them”. I hope that these leaders can learn to see beyond their own current organization.

We also hope that independent believers will not forget that they still have significant work to do, even though they are no longer being badgered to give or participate in church programs. They do not need to rely on a man to tell them, but they do need to ask the Eternal to show them.

Open Letter to GCG/LCG

LETTER: January 3, 1999
An open letter to both the Global & Living Churches of God:

I’ve read all the letters (the garbage) from both sides, and I’m really not impressed. Neither seems to have a Christian attitude, it’s just “he said”, “she said”—like a bunch of little kids. Where’s the humility that one would expect from the very ones that we are looking to for spiritual guidance?? Anybody with an ounce of brains can see the politics involved in this whole thing.

I see what I feel is a problem that really needs to be addressed, and the sooner the better (my opinion). That of the understanding of the word “work”. I think the real problem here is not totally one of Government, but one of which direction the Church should be headed! By this I mean, do we “Try” to preach the Gospel to the world (a sick and dying world, one that God does “not” care about at this time) or prepare the Church to be acceptable as the Bride of Christ??

Most (even some ministers) still think of the word “Work”, in the way that it was pounded into us under Mr. Armstrong, to Preach the Gospel in all the World to the end. Where in scripture does it say this? This is not possible!! Maybe we really need to look into what Truly constitutes the Work—what the “Work” is at this time, the end Time—what the Church should be doing at this time—where we are in time!

Mr. Armstrong, ushered in the Philadelphia Era. The Philadelphia Era was given an open door according to Rev 3:7. In 1981, I think the March issue of the WN, Mr. Armstrong stated something like: I think when I die, the work that God called me to do will be finished. God gave Mr. Armstrong an “Open Door” to go to (in) the World and Preach, Proclaim, and Publish, the Gospel, Rev. 3:8. In verse 7, it states “he (God) that opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens”. Obviously showing that there will be a time when “He” (God) will open a Door which no one (man or otherwise) can shut, (this was the time while under Mr. Armstrong’s leadership) the other side of the coin is that God (can) will close that Door and no “man” can reopen it. At Mr. Armstrong’s death that Door was closed, and man, no matter how much he tries, will **not** reopen it. That door “is” closed!

The Fruits produced by the Church since his death is proof enough. 13 yrs, multiple millions of dollars spent on radio and T.V., with what as a result? 45 or so people

called, that had no previous contact with God's Church! How many have been lost? At Mr. Armstrong's death the Church (body of Christ) was approximately 135,000+ strong, now 13 yrs later, the body (in all the off-shoots) may be as high as 30,000+, this is a loss of over 100,000 people. Does this sound like an open Door? Does this sound like God is blessing the Church? Does this look like it is bearing fruit? I think not!

The Philadelphian "Church"?, during the Laodicean Era, has a different "work" to do! I think some of the Churches, splinter groups, right now are just spinning their wheels trying to reopen that door—trying to regain the membership they once had instead of moving on with the job at hand, which should be preparing the Church to be the Bride of Christ.

Now the way most seem to read the statement in Matt 24:14 is "to preach the Gospel to the whole World". I've heard this time and time again, even from H.Q., but that's not what it says. It says, "in" all the world!! (KJV) There is no way possible, to preach the Gospel "to" the whole World, it can't physically be done. Scripture backs this up.

First you have a scripture that states "a famine of the word" (Amos 8:11). How can you have famine of the word if the gospel is preached till Christ returns? Then you have the Two Witnesses. They too, will be doing an end time work, "not" the Church. Matt 24:14 will not even be completed by the two witnesses, as it won't be complete until after the 7th Trump! Scripture goes on to say (Rev. 10:11) that an Angel will prophesy again before, peoples, nations, and kings. Showing that an Angel at the very end will also be doing the "Work", again "not" the Church. God will not allow the Church to do something (work) He (God) has scheduled for an Angel, the two witnesses or anyone else. With this in mind how is it possible for the Church to be doing the "Work" like it was being done by Mr. Armstrong, to the very return of Jesus Christ?? Matt 24:14 really reads "and this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached "in" all the world (not "to" all the world) for a witness in all nations!"—end of thought. Then it goes on to say, "after" some period (possibly years) of time, "then the end will come".

It's very obvious that the 50 some odd years that God used Mr. Armstrong to preach in the World, was through this open Door, and then it was closed, at his death! And no matter how hard Man (or who-ever) tries, it will not be reopened. There's no reason to reopen it, the Gospel was taken (by Mr. Armstrong) around the world (for the first time). That's all Matt 24:14 says "preached in all the world", not "to" all the world, which

again, is a physical impossibility. How about all of those who died before Christ, and all the 3rd World nations now in our time, that will never hear the Truth, or the Gospel?? There's no way that Matt 24:14 can mean that the Church will preach the Gospel to the whole World, or till Christ returns!!

Now this is not to say that the Church shouldn't be doing a Work, it should be warning the Ezekiel warning, and "most" importantly, "feeding the flock"!! I feel the Church (the Body of Christ) at this time should be getting itself ready to be the bride of Christ!! This is the "work" the Philadelphians should be doing at this time! Mr. Armstrong told us many times—"I laid the foundation, now you build on it", he also said that we should be getting the spots and wrinkles out, out of what?? You only get spots and wrinkles in clothing. If we are told we are to be the bride of Christ, it is very obvious that the Spots and Wrinkles are in the Wedding Gown. We the Church (the Body of Christ) need to be getting these Spots and Wrinkles out!

Did Christ baby-sit the people or did He tell it like it was?? The people of His day either accepted what He had to say or walked away. If the Ministry keeps showing (telling) the people what to do, and when to do it, leading them by the hand so to speak, they will never be able to see what's really going on. There are still people in God's Church, both in Living and Global, that don't know why they left the WCG, they are just following men. Let the chips fall where they may. When is the Church (ministry) going to quite treating us like a bunch of babies. "Where's the Beef?" We need meat, not milk! For example, we go to the Feast every year and spend 2/3 of the days being told why we are there. Then Christian living Sermons. Then they lie to us about the conditions of the Churches so as not to offend the \$\$'s. Aren't we adults? Do we need to be treated with kid gloves? I think not! If there are people in the Church that can't handle the Truth, or what's going on, "so be it", then they better grow up or move on. If they don't know why they are here, they don't belong here! There are "no" corporations in God's eyes, only those who have His Holy spirit and are part of the spiritual body of Christ!

The solid "Bible based" people who (are becoming fewer and fewer) do read the scriptures and discern the Truth and can easily see the error in what the Shepherds are trying to do in both the Global and the Living, and the other COGs.

These Churches, GCG, LCG, are (by their childish antics) losing those who are not well grounded in the real understanding of God's Truth. This "is" the fault of those

Shepherds, those who are to busy playing politics, "I want to lead", "No, I want to", from both sides, the Brethren are the ones who are getting the short end of the stick!

Wake up people before it's to late!! You people need to make a decision as to where "you are"—not which group to belong to! It's time you stand up for yourselves.

'Nuff —said!

—JDP, Washington

RESPONSE: We completely agree with your observations on the lack of success of the various COGs. We also agree that Christ has the plan to preach to Gospel to the world—no man or organization has that job.

We would hope that most Church of God brethren would realize that the Eternal is not greatly blessing big work efforts, but is, in some places, drawing people to congregations where they have friends and relatives. The worst thing about many of these local congregations is that there are so many sermons and so much debate about loyalty and government, that people actually leave because there is no spiritual food for either the long-time member or the new believer.

We disagree with your interpretation of Revelation 3, claiming that Herbert Armstrong's organizations were the "Philadelphia church". It is characterized by brotherly love and having a "little strength". Mr. Armstrong probably had more money and media power concentrated in one place than any other Sabbatarian group. From the 1950s onward, the organization was not characterized by brotherly love, but by the false concept that Mr. Armstrong was head of the government of God on earth and anyone who disagreed with his decision was disagreeing with God and should be put out of the church and was forever lost if they did not repent and come back.

Nevertheless, we agree that Mr. Armstrong's mission has not fallen to any successor. Mr. Tkach, whom he named, reversed many of Mr. Armstrong's doctrines and none of the other groups is growing anywhere near the way the WCG did. None of the others who claim to be his successor are doing a similar work. We believe that no one should try to repeat Mr. Armstrong's work. His prophetic mistakes, and his non-biblical badgering of co-workers for more money are mistakes that all of us should know to avoid.

We hope those in the Church of God groups will read your letter and learn. We have talked to dozens of people who decided to drop out of both when the GCG/LCG split.

—NSE

Comments on HWA Issue

LETTER:

December 30, 1998

Hello Again Norman Edwards and Staff:

Its been awhile since I last wrote to *Servants' News*, but after reading your latest publication of Nov. 98, I decided to write to you again to "thank you" for finally giving me something to read in your publication that actually took Herbert Armstrong to task on some of his erroneous writings and teachings, etc. Now that your publication has "opened the door" to your readership concerning the obvious, maybe now you will consider publishing the articles and letters and testimony etc. of those in your readership, whose lives have been messed up royally because of the wrong teachings of HWA. How about it Norm?

Was Herbert W. Armstrong the Elijah of Malachi 4:5? Anyone with just half-a-brain knows that HWA was no Elijah! Only the naïve and the brain-dead think that he was! I asked Garner Ted Armstrong at a Feast site one year, if he thought that his Dad was the Elijah of Mal 4:5? His answer to me was, "absolutely not"! He then went on to say: that his Dad was "on the most expensive autograph hunt in all the world, and that he definitely was not the Elijah of Malachi 4:5"! (I already knew it, but it was sure good to hear others say it, especially his own son!)

Was Herbert W. Armstrong an apostle? Again, anyone who studies even a little knows that HWA was no apostle! The definition of an apostle is "one who is sent". To be an apostle, one had to have been "sent by Christ" personally. The apostles that are mentioned in the scriptures were all sent personally by Christ. All others are fakes and frauds. A "real apostle" named Paul, said in 2Cor 11:13 "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ". Christ tells us at the end of Rev 2:2, "and you have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and have found them liars". Isn't it about time that people stop lying about Herbert Armstrong being an apostle, or the Elijah to come? Isn't it about time that the "idolizers" of HWA wake up and smell the coffee, and stop spreading that nonsense?

Also, was Herbert Armstrong a false prophet? Indeed he was. He made over 100 prophecies before 1975, and not one of them came true! Does that make him a false prophet? It certainly does! God says that we can tell a true prophet from a false one, if the thing that he prophesies about comes to pass or not! Due to the fact that all of HWA's prophecies failed, then I can conclude without a shadow of a doubt, that the man was indeed a "false prophet"!

Was Herbert Armstrong a true minister of God, or was he a wolf in sheep's clothing? I know that I am not going to make many

friends by saying this, but I personally believe that the man was indeed a wolf in sheep's clothing. The main reason that I feel that way is simple. In Matthew 7:15, Christ said this: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves". Verse 16 says, "You shall know them by their fruits".

I have already concluded that he was a false prophet, and I have also concluded that he taught much error, and I have also concluded that the fruits of what he taught, has done some very serious spiritual damage to the people who followed him in those teachings. So, common sense tells me that the man was not a true minister of God. A false prophet, and a false minister, are one in the same, from what I read in 2Cor 11:13-15. The Apostle Paul says that false apostles, and deceitful workers, transform themselves into the apostles of Christ. And that Satan himself transforms into an angel of light, and that Satan's ministers also, "transform themselves into the ministers of righteousness", etc. So, it's very simple to figure out who is of Christ, and who is of Satan, if we examine the fruits of that person!

When I examine the overall fruits of Herbert W. Armstrong, I see some pretty rotten fruits in not only his doctrines, but also in his personal lifestyle. So, I conclude without any reservations at all, that he was indeed a wolf in sheep's clothing that Christ warned us to watch out for! I know that I will make a lot of people mad who "idolize" him, but the truth is the truth, and the facts are the facts, and the words of Christ are the words of Christ. So, don't get mad at me, I am only repeating those words!

I have plenty of proof that some of his doctrines and beliefs were totally wrong. And I have plenty of proof that his lifestyle was anything but Godly. I am not his final judge, nor do I want to be. I am simply following the words of Christ, when he tells us to look out for the wolves in sheep's clothing and expose them for what they really are. By exposing them, we save other sheep from being chewed up by them! Christ tells all of us to "beware" of them, and that's exactly what I plan on doing from now on! I would rather be called "a wolf hunter", than be called "a dead sheep"!

Sincerely with love,

—Glen (Wolf Hunter) Myers, Florida
1047 Iroquois St; Clearwater, Fla. 33755

NOTE TO READERS: Glen Myers continues to send us articles, which, for multiple reasons, we decline to print. You may write him directly if you are interested.

RESPONSE: I agree that it is very difficult to believe that Herbert Armstrong was the man who will "turn the hearts of the fathers

to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers" (Mal 4:5-6) when he died completely estranged from his family—he had not seen them for years.

The scripture certainly gives no promise that Christ would continue to appoint apostles. A few scriptures indicate that a few others were recognized as apostles after the twelve and Paul, so I do not think we can dogmatically say that "there are no more apostles". Barnabas (Acts 14:14) James (Gal 1:19) were called apostles, and depending on one's understanding of the Greek, Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25) and Andronicus and Junia (Rom 16:7) might be, also. Nevertheless, I do not know of any other apostles and do not see that Herbert Armstrong had the signs and wonders of an apostle (2Cor 12:12).

We have not tried to make an exhaustive list of Mr. Armstrong's prophecies—but there might well be 100 false ones before 1975 as you have said. On the other hand, he did have some that did come true. He did say that the Berlin wall would come down and Germany would re-unite. He did say that the USA would not go to war with Russia. The most dangerous prophet is **not** one who has all false prophecies, but one who has some true and some false prophecies. That prophet is likely to have a following, especially if he down-plays his "prophetic error". The Bible teaches that if **any** of a prophet's predictions do not come to pass, that we should not heed him (Deut 18:22).

Was Herbert Armstrong a false minister, a "wolf in sheep's clothing"? I cannot make that judgment. He claimed to be seeking the Eternal most of his life. He taught much truth to millions. Yet he also taught error, and at times, seemed very far away from God. The Eternal will look upon his heart and judge him. But whatever his judgment, Herbert Armstrong is clearly not worthy of our adoration, nor should he be the foundation for future preaching of the Gospel.

—NSE

Seek God's Forgiveness on HWA

LETTER:

April 9, 1999

Dear Norman,

Thank you for forwarding copies of *Servants' News*.

However, with receipt of the December 1998 issue, I would like my name removed from your mailing list.

Devoting so much time and effort ("a physically and emotionally draining experience") to attacking Mr. Armstrong has revealed so much about you and your character, that I fear for you, and hope that you will repent and seek God's forgiveness.

—New Zealand

RESPONSE: You have brought up a good point which we had to think about. How will the Eternal judge us for what we have printed about Herbert Armstrong? We are well aware of this scripture:

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you (Matt 7:1-2, NIV).

We realized that we had to deal with Herbert Armstrong in a way that we would want the Eternal to deal with us. We did our best to tell the truth about Herbert Armstrong. Most of what we said was quoting his own writings. If he prophesied many things that did not come to pass in the name of God, does the Eternal want us to tell the truth about it, or to pretend like it never happened? If Mr. Armstrong wrote 98 letters asking his readers to send in their widow's mites, should we pretend that he simply relied on God for his money? Does the Eternal require that people hide the clear public truth about His servants so they can "look better"? The Bible I read mentions many of the mistakes of the servants of the Eternal.

Of the "complaint" letters we have received, almost none have shown us any inaccurate information that we have printed—most simply want us **not** to write on the subject at all. We have heard many unprovable accusations about Herbert Armstrong which we will not print. We would not mind being judged with the same judgment we are judging Mr. Armstrong. All issues of *Servants' News* are still available. We do not have any false prophecy or demands for money in them that we are embarrassed about. We have grown somewhat in our doctrinal understanding—we would write some articles differently today. However, we never claimed that **our** understanding of the Bible was necessary for salvation. Because Herbert Armstrong claimed to be **the Apostle** through whom Christ put doctrine in His Church, his doctrinal errors are a much bigger problem.

In summary, I do not fear to be judged in the manner I have "judged" Herbert Armstrong. I have presented and analyzed the facts from his writings. I would not mind someone doing the same to my writings. I am far more concerned that the Eternal judge me for *having an understanding* of His way from the Bible, but not **applying** it enough in my own life. Many times, I have misjudged, not listened to, or yelled at my wife or children—sometimes while working on a Bible article. I have also wasted time on irrelevant pursuits. I have dwelt on thoughts that I know are

wrong. This demonstrates a lack of continual prayer and seeking of the Holy Spirit. It is all sin! It is just not apparent to most people. But the Bible teaches:

...casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2Cor 10:5).

But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment (Matt 12:36).

For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil (Eccl 12:14).

The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them (1Tim 5:24)

We do not know how the Eternal compares private sins and public sins. He teaches us that people with major public sins should not be congregational leaders (1Tim 3; Titus 1) and sometimes not even allowed to attend (1Cor 5). Because he wrote so much, a big part of Mr. Armstrong's life was very public. The Eternal expects us to use wisdom—to use the information available to us.

I hope that everyone, everywhere will see the public and private sin in their lives, repent and change. There will be no way to hide the truth from the Eternal. Pointing out the sins of others does not make anyone more righteous. However, we felt it was necessary to go through the "physically and emotionally draining experience" of analyzing Herbert Armstrong's own public writings to help others **avoid more sin** by basing their Biblical understanding too much on a man and not enough on Christ and His Word!

—NSE

Did HWA Baptize into Organization?

LETTER:

March 23, 1999

I found a couple of mistakes in your articles about HWA:

1. You said, "one branch [of the CG7], based in Meridian, Idaho, officially teaches Holy Day observance." The Meridian Group has **never** taught the Holy Days. The Caldwell, Idaho group, founded in early 1950s, **does** teach the Holy Days. You have probably confused these two groups. Certainly this is an honest mistake.

2. You said, "The WCG ministers never baptized anyone unless the person agreed that the WCG was the true church." **Whoa!** This one is a big whopper! Myself, my wife, and many other people can call you on this big fib. A fundamental teaching of the Worldwide Church of God was that the

Church is a spiritual organism. I knew this very clearly, because I studied intently for eight years before I was baptized in 1969. At my baptism, I emphatically **did not** believe the WCG was the true church, because the WCG is an organization. I discussed this with the ministers just moments before my baptism, and of course they agreed with me, because this is the Biblical teaching, and what the WCG taught. I was baptized into Christ, into the spiritual Church of God, by Al Dennis, a WCG pastor.

I was not baptized into an organization. What church were you baptized into? You also said, "They regularly disfellowshipped people for studying the writings of other Bible teachers." Many homes I entered of people in the Church had writings of other Bible teachers, and they excitedly showed this information to any church member such as myself, and we discussed this literature from other groups, during and after Sabbath services.

Norm, you must have been in a different church than I was. This openness was true in 1969, and from old time members that I have personally discussed such matters, it was true in 1939, 1949, 1959, etc. In fact, the old time members, almost unanimously, were the most open, diligent, sincere, Bible students one could find. They did not slavishly support the WCG or HWA. They studied much literature outside of the Church, whether from Sabbath-keepers or not. They knew of other Sabbath-keepers, and had contact with them, often regularly. Yet they were dedicated supporters of the WCG. These are the people that I modeled my spiritual life after. When the McGills and Helms are right down the road in the CG7, and will tell you that HWA had plenty of faults in his early days, it kept things honest.

This church which you apparently never experienced did not just exist in the Willamette Valley. Mrs. Clem Robinson of Texas, grandmother of John Robinson of In Transition, was part of that church as well. In Texas, they studied their Bibles first, Armstrong a distant second.

Again, Norm, what church were you part of? I grant you that some people were at times baptized into an organization, either due to their own ignorance or that of the ministry who "dunked" them. Myself and many others were not. And, in 1969, I believe my experience was the general rule. Your past seems to be really hurting you, and I pray that God will help you to make a new, correct, start. Anybody who worked in Pasadena as long as you did, at the time that you did, must undoubtedly have been so scarred that it will take a miracle to undo the damage.

Norm, these statements of yours are not truthful. I haven't yet read all your recent issue, but these glaring errors call into question all that you wrote. Your writings of the WCG seem to be like Job writing of what he knew little about. You need to rectify the situation.

—Richard Nickels Family
Giving & Sharing, Bible Sabbath Assn
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RESPONSE: Thanks for your letter. I have corrected the error about the Meridian Church of God 7th Day, and replaced it with Caldwell. I knew about both groups and intended to correct this error during proof-reading.

I agree that most ministers would say they are baptizing people into "the body of Christ"—as they did to me. However, if one did not agree that the WCG was the one true Church where "God was working", it was my understanding that WCG ministers (in the 60's and later) were told not to baptize them. I am glad to hear that some ministers would baptize people and teach that it had nothing to do with the organization. I would be interested in hearing of any specific cases you know where someone went as far as asking for a RCG (Radio Church of God) or WCG minister to baptize them even though they told them that they would be attending with another group.

I agree that the further back in time in the RCG/WCG that one goes, the more tolerant of others it was. Also, the further one got away from headquarters, the more tolerant it was. Nevertheless, ministers of the WCG, especially those at headquarters, regularly disfellowshipped people (and commanded other members to have no fellowship with them) specifically for reading literature or attending services of other groups. This happened to me—even though the ministry admitted that I had made absolutely no effort to convince others of my views.

Richard, I agree that you and I may not have been "in the same church" in some ways. I know that there were a great many sincere, dedicated ministers and brethren in the RCG/WCG. I have met many other believers from the WCG who were "Bible first and Armstrong later" people. But if anyone preached this in a headquarters congregation, it was their last time preaching there. Can you find one place where Herbert Armstrong wrote that RCG/WCG members should practice what they understand to be truth from the Bible even if it differed from "Church teaching"?

The erroneous teaching that the WCG was the only "true Church" does not inval-

idate the conversion of individuals or the truth of other doctrines. However, if you read the article excerpts below, they show that the clear RCG/WCG teachings were that members were baptized into the one "True Church" and that that "True church" was the "visible organization" of the RCG/WCG. **There is no room for individual understanding of the Bible.** These quotes represent the teaching of the Armstrongs and the actual practice that I observed among the headquarters ministry:

HWA QUOTE: *Should We Listen to Others? from the Good News, May 1960* by Herbert Armstrong:

Is it wrong to listen to a fellow-member who disagrees with the ministers? To attend other churches? To listen to other religious broadcasts? To admit "Jehovah's Witnesses?"

AFTER you have come to a knowledge of the TRUTH, have repented and been baptized, and by the Holy Spirit been put into the true Church of GOD, is it all right to attend some other church?

"Well," you might reply, "here's the way I look at it—"

But WAIT! Stop right there!

If you have truly REPENTED, you have stopped using human reason and acting according to the way YOU look at it! If you had the faith in Christ as personal Saviour to be baptized into Him, you were accepting HIM as your Lord and Master, to obey what HE says—not the way YOU look at it. If you have received God's Holy Spirit, it is to lead you into all TRUTH—which means understanding of GOD'S WORD, and what it instructs on all these questions, so that you know WHAT to obey...

NSE RESPONSE: The article goes on to use its own "human reason" to declare the decisions of "the Church" (Herbert Armstrong's organization) to be the decisions of God. It answers all of the initial questions with a resounding "Yes". It even has the audacity to claim that Armstrong's decision barring female members from wearing makeup was "God's decision"—which he later reversed a couple of times. Here is the concluding section entitled "Authority of the Church", which clearly states that such authority was vested in Mr. Armstrong's church organization and no other:

HWA QUOTE: When you repented, you repented of rebellion against God and His government. You surrendered to OBEY God's government. And God carries out His government THROUGH HIS CHURCH!

Has God given His Church AUTHORITY to determine DOCTRINE? Yes, indeed He has.

In the Apostolic days God set up His

HEADQUARTERS Church at Jerusalem. There are some matters of doctrine, or procedure, which do not appear plain to all members alike in the Scriptures. One such example was the matter of whether physical circumcision was still to be practiced. The Church at Antioch was divided, and in doubt. This could have split up the church. But they took it to the Headquarters Church at Jerusalem, where the largest number of highest ranking ministers was located.

God, through His Holy Spirit, LED THIS CHURCH to settle this doctrinal dispute GOD'S WAY. The decision of the Headquarters Church WAS NOT THE DECISION OF PETER AND THE APOSTLES—it was the decision of GOD, as He led them to understand, and to settle it. The brethren at Antioch WERE REQUIRED TO ACCEPT THIS DECISION, and Church was kept in UNITY, all speaking the same thing—and the thing inspired by GOD!

Today God has His Headquarters Church, where the largest number of highest ranking ministers are located.

One subject the members could not all see alike, or agree on, was that of women wearing lip-stick and make-up. The leading ministers of God's Headquarters Church went into a very thorough study of this question. We had no set opinions of our own. We sought only GOD'S truth.

God led His Church into His TRUTH. But we did not command the women to follow OUR personal ideas, like human dictators. We rendered GOD'S decision, as He revealed it to His Church—and we published a long article in The GOOD NEWS, explaining fully the Scriptural teaching so that every member could see this in his or her Bible. But when the CHURCH settled it or rather when GOD settled it through His Church—that is FINAL, unless one can bring to the Church evidence of error, and the CHURCH OFFICIALLY alters its decision.

Another example: One of MANY things the Church MUST do, where there is no definite Scriptural direction whatsoever regarding some phase of it, is this: We are COMMANDED to take the Passover. We are COMMANDED to take the wine, as well as the unleavened bread. That much is PLAIN TO ALL. But one phase of doing this which is NOT made plain in the Scripture is HOW, or by WHAT METHOD, the wine is to be passed and taken by each one.

Many will say: Since Jesus "took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves" (Luke 22:17), therefore Jesus meant to divide it into several small glasses, and each drink of it from a separate glass.

But this year at the Passover, one member

declared there should be just the one great big Texas-size cup, and all 792 who took of it should have put their lips to this same big cup—no matter if it took all night and all the next day to pass the one cup to so many!

In such cases, the individual member does NOT have authority to determine God's will—THE CHURCH has authority to determine the procedure FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH!

God did not give us one absolutely plain Scripture on HOW this wine was to be divided among us. Jesus did say: "DIVIDE it among yourselves." Therefore, GOD has shown His CHURCH that, since God is not the author of confusion, and all things must be done decently and in order, that the ORDERLY way to DIVIDE the wine among 792 people is to divide it into 792 small glasses, provided specially for this very purpose. There is NO BIBLE TEACHING saying, as this man said, that all must put their mouths to the same one and only cup! Therefore, the CHURCH HAS RULED! That ruling has the AUTHORITY OF GOD! Every member is COMMANDED, by the government of GOD in His Church, to partake of the Passover as the Church has been inspired to rule. Any member is perfectly free to come to the Headquarters Church to present any reasons he may have why he thinks the Church ought to rule otherwise.

But, so long as he remains a member in the fellowship of God's Church, he is NOT free to voice his contrary doctrine to any other members, or to do otherwise, but obey the Church's commands, which, in such a case, ARE THE COMMANDS OF GOD! Otherwise, he is coming with a different doctrine—he is causing division, tending to stir up strife and introduce confusion—and he must be MARKED, and disfellowshipped, and refused permission to be in the fellowship of any of our brethren!

This is GOD'S WAY of preserving UNITY! This is GOD'S WAY of leading us all to SPEAK THE SAME THING, and insuring that it be the very thing GOD wills, not our human will.

The Church at Eugene, Oregon, was split over a division of human opinion on HOW to count 50—and on setting the right day for all the Church to assemble for the Feast of Pentecost. This split was STARTED by TWO WOMEN! Only the CHURCH has authority to determine such matters for ALL THE CHURCH. Otherwise there is confusion. Those carnal minded members who rebelled are no longer in God's Church. But the Church of God goes joyfully on, and on, constantly GROWING, and as God's instrument,

doing the Work of God WORLD-WIDE, producing FRUIT, having God's continued and abundant BLESSINGS!

These things, dear Brethren, we speak to you, that all may understand, and that we may be drawn closer and closer to the TRUTH, in harmony, and the SPIRIT OF GOD and GOD'S LOVE! Thus, and only thus, do we have God's blessing!

NSE RESPONSE: It could not be plainer: God's headquarters church was in Pasadena, it had authority to make decisions on what the scriptures said, and the only way to have God's blessing is to do what Mr. Armstrong said.

This following article claims people are baptized into the "True Church," and that the "True Church" is an "organized, visible body"—obviously the Radio Church of God. The several Church of God 7th Day groups or the many scattered believers could not possibly be classified as an "organized, visible body". Obviously, Mr. Armstrong's teaching is quite different than the New Testament which does not call the Church an "organized, visible body", by a "little flock" that was sometimes scattered because of persecution, and later became somewhat doctrinally diverse (Rev 2 & 3).

GTA QUOTE: What Is Your Obligation? from the Good News, November 1961 by Garner Ted Armstrong:

Mr.[Herbert] Armstrong and I are merely TWO of the MANY true ministers of the Almighty God, through whom He is carrying out HIS, not our, WORK!

We are ministers in a highly organized, bona-fide, registered, recognized, official, CHURCH! That Church is the TRUE CHURCH OF GOD founded by Jesus. It is NOT "Armstrong's Church." It is NOT the church of some new "method" of government, called the "Methodist" Church. It is not a church emphasizing the second "advent" of Christ and so adopting the name "Adventist." It is not the church of John the Baptist, not a church of any man, woman, or group of men and women!

It is THE CHURCH OF GOD!

You Are a Member of a CHURCH!

IF you have REALLY repented, and have been baptized according to God's commands, then you are a member of a Church!

That Church is ORGANIZED. It has many ministers, local congregations, and its members are RESPONSIBLE for certain DIVINELY imposed OBLIGATIONS!

Among those OBLIGATIONS which God makes plain THROUGH His Church are ATTENDANCE REGULARLY, tithing, and complete and total submission to GOD'S government He has placed in His Church.

Jesus said, "... I will build my Church"

(Mat. 16:28). HE, Jesus Christ Himself, is the HEAD of that Church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22; 5:23).

There is only ONE True Church of which Jesus is the Head—THIS Church!

NSE RESPONSE: What does he mean by "THIS Church"? Is there any doubt that it is the RCG, his church?

GTA QUOTE: "There is ONE BODY [the very body of Christ—the Church] and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith [body of belief—system of doctrine—God's own TRUTH] one baptism ..." (Eph. 4:4-5).

Yes, IF you have been truly repentant, and have been duly baptized by God's own chosen servants, God has PUT YOU INTO His own TRUE CHURCH.

NSE RESPONSE: Is not the "True Church" here the same as the "True Church" above—his organization?

GTA QUOTE: "By ONE SPIRIT are we all baptized INTO ONE BODY ..." (I Cor. 12:13)

Peter said only when we REPENT and are baptized can we RECEIVE of God's Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Paul was inspired to write, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His" (Rom. 8:9).

It is only through receiving of His SPIRIT—the spiritual BEGETTAL to potential God-life that YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN!

AND—NOTICE IT—IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED HIS SPIRIT, YOU HAVE AUTOMATICALLY BECOME A LITERAL, RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF AN ORGANIZED, VISIBLE BODY—A CHURCH!

NSE RESPONSE: There are numerous other quotes like the two above. I know of no cases where Mr. Armstrong or any other person speaking for the RCG/WCG ever publicly retracted any of these statements. As late as 1994, Rod Meredith told a person who was "baptized by the Global Church of God" that he could lose his salvation by going to another group.

Thank you for your consideration for "my healing", but I am not sure exactly what you expect the Eternal to do for me. When I worked for the WCG (1975 to 1992), for most of the time I firmly believed Herbert Armstrong's teachings that "God would correct the problems from the top". I spent very little time studying my Bible to see if the WCG's teaching on doctrines like "government" was correct. During the late 1980s and early 1990s when Joe Tkach began to change doctrines, I began to study my Bible as never before—and have not stopped since. I feel much more dependent upon Christ and His Word today than I was during most of my WCG years. The whole

Continued on page 28

“Clergy’ and ‘Laity” from page 1 they were priests to Him. They were given cities in which to dwell, but no large land portions like the other eleven tribes. They were to receive the tithe from the other tribes who had land given to them by lot for serving as his priests. “Hence the Christian clergy”, it is believed, has this continuing “lot” from God to be his priests now, instead of Levi.

But is that what the New Testament scriptures indicate? Hebrews. 7:12 does say “the priesthood being changed...” Christ was not of Levi and according to verses 26-28, He alone is our High Priest now in an unchangeable priesthood. What of the rest of the body of believers? Note 1 Peter 2: 5-10. “**You** are a holy priesthood (vs. 5), a royal priesthood.(vs. 9)” Notice that the verse is in the present tense—“**you are**”, not “**you will be**”, and it is addressed to all believers.

But does the New Testament give any indication of a “lot” belonging to God?

(This research was a little more involved due to the bias of past translators to select words that appear to support a hierarchical approach, but with the advent of the personal computer, word search engines can search the NT database for Strong’s numbers as well. This can uncover the original intent of the entire body of scriptural evidence and reveal this tendency.)

In searching for the Greek word “lot”, (kleros- Strong’s #2819) we find a discourse by Peter in 1 Pet. 5:1-3 that is very revealing. Note, he is talking to elders, and tells them to “feed the flock of God” taking oversight not because they’re forced to or because of money and **not as lords** over God’s “**lot**” (#2819).

Notice how KJV used “heritage” instead of “lot”. Why? Because this verse is plainly stating that all believers are “God’s lot” (Kleros = clergy), not just the leadership.

You might well remember at the end of the book of John how Christ tells Peter three times to “feed” or “shepherd” my sheep. Notice how 1 Peter 5:4 mentions that they (the elders) were to be an example to the flock, not its “lord”. They would then receive a crown from the “Chief Shepherd” when He shall appear. This is also a clear statement that Christ alone is the “Chief Shepherd” or as could be alternately translated “Pastor General”.

Let’s consider the term “lay” member. Webster’s gives the following:

Lay3 *adj.* [ME. *lai* < OFr. <LL. (Ec.) *laicus*, lay, not priestly < Gr. *laikos* < *laos*, the people] 1. of or consisting of the laity, or ordinary people, as distinguished from the clergy...

Is it in scripture? First, in checking its definition, we find it is derived according to Webster’s from the Greek word *laos*, (Strong’s # 2992) which means “people”. Yet the definition states “ordinary” people as distinguished from the “clergy”. The question is, are we not all the people (laity) of God? Including the including elders? (1Pet 2:10.). The use of this word in its present context is necessitated by the restriction of the “lot” (clergy) to the leadership only: a Catholic invention!

This has nothing to do with God setting overseers in a congregation selected from among elders who fit the requirements (1Tim 3). It has everything to do with “lording it over”.

This is a radical departure from the current religious view of who is among the clergy. But it is the original view of scripture. The word *cleric* (Lat., *clericus* from *clerus*) is derived from the Greek *kleros*, a “lot”. In the Septuagint, this word is used in the literal sense quite frequently, though not in its later technical sense. In the First Epistle of St. Peter (v. 3) it is applied to the entire body of the faithful. The use of the word in its present restricted meaning occurs, however, as early as the third century. It is found in Tertullian (De idol., c. viii), Origen (Hom. in Jer., xi, 3) and Clement of Alexandria (Quis dives salvetur, c. xlii) in this sense.

It is not easy to determine exactly how the word came to have its present determinate meaning. The “Pontificale Romanum” refers to clerics as being those whose “lot” is the Lord Himself, and St. Jerome explicitly derives the name from that fact. These statements do not give us, however, the steps by which *kleros*, “lot” became “clergy” or “cleric”. Probably the best suggested explanation is, that from “lot” or “portion”, it came to mean a particular lot or office assigned to someone, and finally the person himself possessing the lot or office.

First note the restriction of the “Great Commission” to the hierarchy’s leadership: “feed” is changed to “rule” (Acts 20:28) Then note that the second paragraph on the derivation of the word states that it “applied to the entire body

of the faithful”. Finally note that the present restricted meaning didn’t occur until the third century.

Now if Tertullian or Origen or Clement rank high on your list of doctrinal authorities then I suppose you might well accept their altered view of clergy as “rulers of the flock” rather than the “lot” itself.

As to “lording it over” God’s lot, did Christ have anything specific to say about those aspiring to leadership? In reference note Luke 22:24-26. In response to their strife over who would be greatest Christ responded: “kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship...**but it shall not be so among you.** He who is greatest let him **be as the younger** and he who governs as he who serves”.

How does a “younger” person act? Do they insist on titles? Do they interrupt or dominate a conversation? Do they expect respect? Note that the word “serves” at the end of that verse (Strong’s #1247) is the word we derive “deacon” from. And literally means “a domestic or servant—one who would wait on guests”. That is where our word “minister” comes from. But is that how you see the leadership in the churches act?

In a parallel account in John 13, we find Christ “after supper” trying to demonstrate this kind of servant leadership. Notice Peter’s reaction. “You’re going to wash my feet?” What a shock that must have been. Christ was the leader. Peter thought he should be washing His feet. They were expecting a strong political leader to throw off the Roman oppression and “restore the kingdom to Israel”.(Acts 1:6) But that’s not the kind of leadership Christ wants. That’s not what our training is all about; developing humility and patience is. It is rare to see those attitudes displayed by a “clergy versus laity “ mentality—an “I out rank you” mentality of the sort displayed by the “sons of thunder” (Luke 9:54).

What is the “fruit” of this approach to leadership? **Division!**

Note Paul’s discourse to the Corinthians on the body. There is one body but many members. The head can’t be arrogant to the feet that support it (1Cor 12:21). In fact, more honor should be given to the less honorable members. Why? So that there won’t be a **schism** (division) in the body (1Cor 21:25). The simple fact of human nature

is: **pride of position causes division.**

A fact of leadership any farmer can tell you is that you don't drive sheep (or goats, etc.) with a whip. You gently lead them. You draw them to you with life-giving nourishment—lush pasture, plenty of water. Flocks in narrow enclosures, tightly fenced in easily become sick. A pastor or minister is to be a helper of our joy not a ruler of our faith (2Cor 1:24).

And notice again in 1 Corinthians 12 that diverse gifts are given to all, not just "ordained" leaders. For those who think verse 28 is a "rank list", then why is governments next to last? (What rank is miracles or tongues anyway?) The one gift that we should "covet" is the subject of the next chapter—godly love. Love isn't puffed up, proud, or arrogant, it's humble and patient.

The Bible does talk about leaders, and "ruling well", but it does not divide the leadership into a complex system of rank, and then divide it from the body. There were "overseers" (bishops- episkopos) selected from the elders (presbyters) in a local congregation, and even that done by vote! (note the derivation of the word "ordained" in Acts 14:23, Strong's # 5500—"to raise the hand")

"Deacons" (Strong's # 1249) means simply "minister" or "servant". Those selected in Acts 6 were to "minister" tables for widows (true religion!) so that the twelve would not have to leave "min-

istering" the word, and at that, they were selected by the brethren.

"Elders who rule (Strong's # 4291: preside over) well are worthy of double honor especially those who labor in word and doctrine." (1Tim 5:17) Notice however that this implies elders who labor in other areas i.e., tables, etc., but none the less elders and ministers.

The Bible isn't specific about the form and administration of "Godly" government. For those who believe that "**Jethro's**" advice to Moses in Ex. 18:21-24 is the "Godly" form: a pyramid of "rulers of 1000's, 100's, 50's & 10's; please note **in just a few short years it failed miserably!** Moses states; "I'm not able to bear it!" (Num 11:11-15), whereas Jethro said "If you do this... you will be able to bear it" (Ex 18:23). Notice why it failed: "...and **God so commands you...**" Moses never asked God! He simply "heeded the voice of his father in law." Also note God's solution: "Gather [not appoint] to me 70 elders [already known to be such] and I will take of the spirit upon you and I will put the same upon them" (Num.11:16-17). This is the all-important factor of God's Holy Spirit guiding his leaders: it's what makes "Godly" government work!

The system of captains of 1000's, 100's, 50's etc. is the way the Kings of the Gentiles exercise their governments

and lordship. You can note God's view of that in 1Sam. 8, where Israel wanted a king like all the other nations. God told Samuel to warn them (vs.12): "He will appoint Captains of 1000's & 50's.... and when you cry out because of your king The Eternal won't hear you!" Worldly Kings exercise lordship: setting up hierarchies of rank and delegating authority. God's true leaders serve!

This is the subject of "administrations" and "operations" discussed in 1 Corinthians 12, and worthy of a separate study of its own. Please note though, that this is talking about the use of "spiritual gifts" to serve in the body, and God does the placing or setting (verse 28). Suffice it to say, that the basic description of God's government in the Bible is found in 1 Corinthians 11:13: "the head of every man is Christ". We need to learn to submit to one another in humility (Eph 5:21), and that is impossible for those who are "rank" oriented, who love preeminence (3Jn 1:9).

We are all part of the same body. My head doesn't "outrank" me, it's part of me. If it were divided from me, I would be dead. And I certainly hope it wouldn't think familiarity with the rest of my body might somehow give my head contempt for it. Let's expose "rank" for what it is: **rank!** And realize from where the "clergy versus laity" mentality comes: **The Adversary.** 

We, Pharisee

I blow a horn so folks will know
That I've come to start my show.
I do good works for all to see
Thank you, God, for making me.
As you can tell, I'm great and good;
I do all the things I think I should.
I fast oft and tithe much too;
It's clear that I do more than you
Or him or her, so thank you Lord,
That I'm not like the common hoard:
Sinners, bums, and pagan scum
Of your truth they're clearly dumb.
But my eyes see you've blessed me so,
There's just not much that I don't know.

There are some folks alive today
Who claim things aren't the way I say.
"You hypocrite!" I've heard some shout, but
I'm in *control*; I'll put them out!
Disfellowshipped from friends and church,
For food and fellowship they'll search....
But, Oh, not!! My seat's secure
And it's up front, you may be sure.
My descent I claim through Abraham.
In his son's stead he slayed a ram

That I might live and claim my boast:
It's clear, Oh Lord, you love me most.

Today, dear Lord, I come to you
To receive the honor that I'm due.
For I've condemned unrighteousness;
These are my works, so now please bless.
Oh Lord, *My Lord*, do you not hear?
Can you not see that I've drawn near?
What do you mean my name's not found
In your book and that I'm bound
And tied up in iniquity?
My God, I say that just can't be!
Years now I have used your name,
And all my friends have done the same!
For fruits you've asked, that we be known,
Therefore I think it can be shown
Our numbers and our coffers swelled
With blessings such as these we've dwelled.
"Thou Fool!" You say, "to have relied
On fruits of riches multiplied."

Woe, woe, woe is me!
The works we've done he just won't see.
Lazarus, Lazarus, speak for us!
Hurry, please! The blood! The puss!
This flame's so great; can't bear the pain.
My days have waxed; God curse this wane!

And so beloved, we gather here
That all may learn and all may fear.
When we appear before the Lord,
"Self-deceived" none can afford.
Of his good works he did insist;
Sadly, though, the point he missed.
When his day came before the throne
What tragedy! he was not known.
He gnashed his teeth, he did wail;
All that remains is this sad tale.

Most folks think him just a Jew,
But he was an *Israelite*, like You!
With quaking and with shaking knees
Let us repent as "Pharisees"
Who had the Truth, and *knew* we did!
Yet from our hearts was mercy hid.
We thought we knew what was required,
But in jots and tittles we were mired.

Let's now on matters weighty dwell;
Let mercies flow that they might tell
Our God and Master up above
The law we seek to keep is Love:
Love of neighbor, not of strife,
Which if kept will lead to Life.

—David Paul Bankson (SN subscriber)

“Laying on of Hands” from page 1 repentant when they baptized and laid hands on them, but I used to think that it was important that the person doing the baptizing and hands laying have the Spirit himself.

Fortunately, the miraculous begettal that takes place after a person repents and is baptized is the result of direct action on the part of God—irrespective of the spiritual standing of the men performing the ceremony.

HWA was baptized by a Baptist clergyman. What you’ll find after examining all the scriptures that relate to the laying on of hands is that it is a symbolic act, a formality. It is a way to elevate a prayer to an event, where individuals pray for someone while physically present with them, together.

As an example, we understand that there is no advantage of a person anointing another, over using an anointed cloth, when seeking to be healed—but we probably all prefer the former. **Laying on of hands is a course of action open to anyone who prays.** It is not the exclusive province of only part of the Body of Christ. In terms of seeking God’s healing, James wrote that we are to call for the elders (plural), and obviously that is where we would look when seeking someone able to offer the prayer of faith for the reviving of the sick.

What you will **not** find in searching the scriptures is “raising someone in rank” in connection with laying on of hands. There are only 2 examples in the scriptures which can be misunderstood to support a greater-than-formality role for laying on of hands. We must guard against this mystical view. The first of these 2 examples is Timothy, to whom Paul wrote:

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership (1Tim 4:14).

This verse could be referring only to Timothy’s receipt of the Holy Spirit at the time of his baptism—and admonishing him to exercise the Spirit. Or, if we look at the greater context from verses 11-16 we could conclude that Timothy was gifted to teach, and this gifting is connected with “the laying on of the hands of the eldership.”

If we conclude that the second interpretation is correct, then we realize that

it is scriptural, fitting and proper to lay hands on individuals and ask God to further empower them for more effective service in the Body. We still need to be careful not to move our focus away from God and onto the assembled elders.

The biggest obstacle to God dispensing the gifts that He desires to bestow on His people is **not** whether various elders are of a mind to pray for a specific person’s empowerment and lay hands on them. The problem is the **lack of yielding to God**, of each of us—and whether we are willing to use any gifts He may provide for His glory, and not our own.

God is not limited by the decisions of the elders in terms of who He chooses to gift. Paul also admonished Timothy in I Tim 5:22 “do not lay hands on anyone hastily” but this was not because he feared that Timothy would somehow over-commit God in dispensing His favors prematurely or unwisely! It had more to do with advising Timothy to proceed carefully, and not damage his own credibility by how and whom he prayed for and laid hands upon.

Studying “Laying on Hands”

The easiest way to study this topic is with a computer Bible, searching on something like:

hand* and (lay* or laid*)

The exact line to type varies depending on the computer Bible that you use. The “*”, above, is a “wild-card”—represents any characters.

Also, you can use an exhaustive concordance to look up “hands” or “lay”, “laid”, “laying”, etc.

The second scriptural incident that can be misunderstood if viewed from the perspective of a hierarchial mindset is how Joshua was designated as the successor to Moses; and the prominent role that laying on of hands played in this:

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him (Deut 34:9, KJV).

If we look at this verse alone, it appears to say that Joshua had the Spirit as a result of Moses laying hands on him, rather than just mentioning the formality of laying on of hands in this connection. But notice Num 27:18 which tells us that Joshua had the Spirit

before Moses laid hands on him:

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him” (Num 27:18, KJV).

Moses laid hands on Joshua in a public ceremony to declare him as his successor—chosen by the Lord, not Moses. Some may feel that we have an apparent scriptural contradiction to resolve here, with Num 27:18 saying that Joshua had God’s Spirit prior to Moses laying hands on him, and Deut 34:9 seeming to say that he received God’s Spirit as a result of Moses laying hands on him. Let’s look at the entire verse this time:

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him; and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses (Deut 34:9, KJV).

Now, since punctuation does not appear in the original Hebrew, and this verse is one long messy complex sentence (reminds me of how I write sometimes); let’s see how we can make a judgement call (like the uninspired translators are forced to do) and make 2 sentences out of it (like some other translations do).

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom. For Moses had laid his hands upon him, and the children of Israel hearkened unto him and did as the Lord commanded Moses.

Presented this way, there is no conflict between Deut 34:9 and Num 27:18. What do you think? This would mean that the result of Moses laying hands on Joshua was that the Israelites acknowledged him as their leader.

Certainly the Lord is in no way prevented from granting gifts at the exact time that hands are laid on a person, and some brethren may believe that it has happened in exactly that way to them. However, we are on very shaky scriptural ground if we try to use Timothy and Joshua as types to claim that the Lord is bound by some formula to “come across with the gifts” in such cases. Aside from these accounts of Joshua and Timothy, no other scriptures provide an opportunity to side with Simon Magus and his mystical view of laying on of hands—study them all for yourself. 

"Letters" from page 24

purpose of these *Servants' News* issues is to objectively study what Mr. Armstrong taught about himself and his organization and to determine if we can best serve the Eternal by identifying ourselves with Mr. Armstrong's work, or by starting afresh as Bible believers willing to teach and work with whomever will listen.

Thanks for reading the December 1998 issue. I realize that you have studied RCG/WCG history quite a bit. Please let me know if you see any other errors in the rest of the issue.

—NSE

Obviously, you have a Jewish background and have had to learn that there are many things that the Rabbis say that were not in the scripture. Similarly, those of us with a Worldwide Church of God background have our own traditions and doctrines some of which are not in the scriptures. Our Creator is looking for people who love Him and His word. May His Name and His Wisdom be praised forever!

I intend to print your letter as it will be good for former-WCG members to see the diversity of learning that occurs apart from their groups.

—NSE

to 26 last Sabbath. I believe the success of the study is because we choose topics ahead of time and everyone has the opportunity to prepare and share with the group what they have learned. We also have a time set aside for the young children (about 10 minutes) at the beginning of the study. They also have a separate study in which volunteers take turns so that the parents do not have to miss every study and it gives others an opportunity to serve. In the children's study we are starting on the life of Christ in an attempt to teach them that they are important to God and Christ.

Most of the people that attend have ties to WCG but there are some that attend occasionally that do not. Some have come from the Church of God International and Seventh Day Adventist background. Two ladies came having heard Ron Dart. One family of five are "sacred name" people. Last week a man, woman and their teenage son came with no COG background. I personally want anyone that attends to feel welcome and take part in the study.

This is probably more than you wanted when you asked for "religious background."

Thank you,

—NB, North Carolina

RESPONSE: I ask about religious backgrounds of new subscribers so we can better serve them. Our subscribers are as diverse as those who have attended your Bible study. I believe that studies like yours are the main area of growth of new believers for the future. Many people are seeking the Eternal and are tired of church organizations, doctrinal statements, programs, and the paraphernalia of religion. They want to simply study the Bible, know what the Eternal has to say for their lives, and do it!

Please keep up the good work!

—NSE ☞

From Judaism, Seeking Bible Truth

LETTER:

March 9, 1999

Shalom!

Thanks for sending the back issues and adding me to your mailing list.

I am now Messianic Jewish. I was baptized one year ago this month. I attend a home fellowship—the elder there came out of the Worldwide Church over 20 years ago. We observe the Sabbath, use the Hebrew Names (which I really like! (Smile!)) We observe the feasts of Leviticus. 23, observe the dietary laws (Scriptural, not Rabbinic!) and we don't believe that the Messiah did away with the Law.

It was hard for me to get used to saying the Father's Name and to distinguish Scriptural truth and law from Rabbinical teachings but I am learning! I love to study and I want to learn all I can!

Thanks for caring!

—Gaylene Murphy, Kentucky

RESPONSE: Thank you for your letter. It is always encouraging to see people learning and growing in the way of our Father.

Penalized for Conducting Bible Study

LETTER:

March 18, 1999

I grew up in the Southern Baptist church with a single parent situation. I stopped attending while in college. In 1968, after asking for a visit and receiving four from two different WCG "ministers", I started attending in Fayetteville, NC one Sabbath prior to Trumpets. Years later, I realized that God was allowing the WCG's leader to continue on his chosen path of 'destruction'. I quit the WCG after fulfilling some obligations.

I started attending UCG when a local congregation was started in the Raleigh area. I didn't feel right speaking and asked to be taken off schedule about 2 years ago. I still attend but am not permitted to do anything that might cause local brethren to perceive me as a leader. Why? I am part of an interactive Bible study which is perceived as a "splinter church" by the local UCG pastor.

The Bible study has been in existence for almost a year. The attendance varies from as few as 2 people on one occasion

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.

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.