

**THE
WORK
OF GOD**
Its Final Chapter!

by David C. Pack

THIS BOOK IS PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE AND IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST BY THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD.

It is made possible by the voluntary, freely given tithes and offerings of the members of the Church and others who have elected to support the work of the Church. Contributions are welcomed and gratefully accepted. Those who wish to voluntarily aid and support this WORK OF GOD around the world are gladly welcomed as co-workers in this major effort to preach the gospel to all nations.

Copyright © 2007-2012, 2016 The Restored Church of God®
All Rights Reserved.

Printed in the United States of America

Herbert W. Armstrong ANNOUNCED the kingdom of God to the world and proclaimed the special warning to the modern nations of Israel for 52 years! Did he teach that his death would end this commission, believing both duties to be his own “private work”?

How did he instruct his successor? Does “the kingdom shall be preached in all the world” (Matt. 24:14) before the “end come” still apply? What of “go...and TEACH all nations...ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20)? What about “prophecy again” in Revelation 10:11?

What is the gospel? Is Christ part of it? Did Mr. Armstrong teach—or does the Bible—that God’s people should give to relief organizations and disaster victims? What did Jesus say? Also, what about “local” or “personal evangelism”?

Why has The Restored Church of God rewritten *all* the literature of the Worldwide Church of God? What was our STRATEGIC PLAN? What are our two OPERATIONAL PLANS?

What does prophecy say about the final Work of God?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
CHAPTER ONE – WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?	17
CHAPTER TWO – WHAT DID MR. ARMSTRONG TEACH?	31
CHAPTER THREE – OTHER QUESTIONS—MORE CLARITY	39
CHAPTER FOUR – WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?	53
CHAPTER FIVE – MORE GOSPEL ERRORS	79
CHAPTER SIX – MASS AMNESIA	97
CHAPTER SEVEN – REMEMBERING ANOTHER DUTY —THE EZEKIEL WARNING!	121
CHAPTER EIGHT – WHAT ABOUT “LOCAL EVANGELISM”?	131

CHAPTER NINE – OBJECTIONS, EXCUSES AND OBSERVATIONS	149
CHAPTER TEN – THE “SHORT WORK”—AND A “REMNANT”	171
CHAPTER ELEVEN – THE “GREAT MULTITUDE”	193
CHAPTER TWELVE – TIME IS RUNNING OUT!	211
CHAPTER THIRTEEN – THE “LITTLE BOOK”—AND “PROPHESY AGAIN” ...	229
CHAPTER FOURTEEN – “MEASURE THE TEMPLE”	251
CHAPTER FIFTEEN – THE RCG STRATEGIC PLAN	303
CHAPTER SIXTEEN – A PERSONAL STORY – REWRITING MR. ARMSTRONG’S LITERATURE	319
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN – THE GREAT COMMISSION OPERATIONAL PLAN	331
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN – THE SECOND COMMISSION OPERATIONAL PLAN ..	347
CHAPTER NINETEEN – FINAL POINTS—FINAL QUESTIONS	361

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Armstrong wrote and spoke thousands of times about The Great Commission given to God's Church. Everyone knew his thinking was driven almost solely by a single verse—a prophecy—he referenced time and again: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14). Mr. Armstrong and the ministry shortened this commission to the phrases "God's Work," "The Work of God" or just "The Work." Everyone knew what the terms meant. No one was in doubt.

Why would the subject of God's Work need to be addressed? Is it really big enough to command a large book? And what is at stake in answering key questions about it in the twenty-first century?

You may find this the most interesting—and perhaps most astonishing!—book to the splinters. But this will only be true if you read it all. It will not be what you expect—or could have anticipated. It will expand your mind as almost nothing else could. In fact, if you pay really close attention you will find it a life-changing experience!

There is much—MUCH!—more to this topic than meets the eye!

Many are unaware that the apostasy produced new positions in thinking about the Work of God. Many independents and others, usually but not always in the smaller splinters, now believe there is no longer an ongoing *commission*, nor any need, to either ANNOUNCE the kingdom of God to the world or to WARN the nations of Israel. These believe that all such responsibility ceased at Mr. Armstrong's death. Most others believe God *has*

commissioned His Church to fulfill His purpose—to continue His Work—but have become confused as to what that is.

For instance, the Philadelphia Church of God (PCG) believes its main purpose is to “warn Laodicea.” Its offshoots then see a duty to turn and warn PCG! Most others see no need to warn the final, lukewarm era, thinking this arrogant and presumptuous. Similarly, they would give little or no emphasis to a SPECIAL WARNING to the great nations of Israel—what Mr. Armstrong often referred to as “the Ezekiel Warning.”

“Jesus,” Growing the Church and Evangelical Protestants

Over time, the apostates slowly conditioned the Church, without most recognizing it, to think the above approach was “unloving,” and that a different emphasis—one of “helping” people and “leading them to Jesus”—should be employed. They felt this should replace what was seen as an old approach of “doomsaying,” “sundowning” or offering a “save your skin” gospel connected to *warning* nations.

If I told you that most who think they are doing God’s Work today now believe it primarily consists of, or at least includes, Jesus’ role is central to the gospel—the Church or individuals giving to disaster victims and relief organizations—warning, particularly whole nations, is judgmental—or the Work as we knew it is finished, you would surely believe I am speaking of today’s Worldwide Church of God. Sadly, to one degree or another, these are the splinters. Worse, most who attend them have not grasped how far their leaders have departed from the commission that over 150,000 people helped carry out as recently as the mid-1980s.

This confusion has produced yet another related school of thought, and it is equally visible in both the bigger and smaller splinters, or those I call “slivers.” These think there is a new task—to “grow the Church.”

This idea derives almost solely from Christ’s instruction in Matthew 28:19 to the apostles to “Go...and teach all nations, baptizing them...” While this part of their approach is generally correct, their thinking also carries a near complete emphasis on just being sure those “called” understand the Sabbath and certain larger doctrines. Verse 20—“Teaching them to observe *all things*”—is lost in their equation. This “new” position is little different from the thinking of modern fundamentalist evangelicals.

Evangelical Protestants see a duty to “spread the good news about *Jesus Christ*”—not the KINGDOM OF GOD—without much concern over details of belief and practice. The main difference in the splinters is that the Sabbath, a few other doctrines, and possibly a little about the kingdom is attached to a message about “Christ.” You will learn that this

“Christ” has actually become the substitute “another Jesus” brought by “another spirit,” exactly as Paul warned in II Corinthians 11:3-4. You will also see this spirit is systematically destroying basic understanding once held by those who supposedly escaped the apostasy.

You will learn *why* the growing emphasis among the splinters on assisting the world’s relief organizations in the wake of disasters, now of course becoming more frequent and worse in intensity as prophecy advances. You will learn how this represents a kind of *mass amnesia*. You will also learn about a related condition I describe as “Alzheimer’s in reverse,” and how this is badly complicating the recovery process for those who want to do God’s Work, but have lost sight of what it is. Then, you will come to understand the profound—and truly chilling!—*spiritual implications* of this stunning change now sweeping the splinters.

All of the above-described ideas and emphases are radically different from what Mr. Armstrong taught for over five decades. Tragically, most have not noticed nor cared if they did!

These astonishing changes in priorities require this volume be written in a blunt fashion. Its language is neither for the faint of heart, nor the merely curious. The topic it covers is much more important than most realize. Therefore, it begins with a powerful statement from Mr. Armstrong’s September 1965 *Plain Truth* “Personal” to set the tone:

“The world has sunk into a complacent, indifferent slumber...The world is too busy enjoying this new-found prosperity, basking in the comfortable sunshine of luxury, to be much concerned about the on-coming NUCLEAR World War III that *WILL*, unless prevented by Almighty God, simply erase human life from this planet!

“Soft words and pretty speeches do not arouse people out of this pleasant dream. It takes a *jolt!*”

Such straightforward statements fulfilled God’s command through Isaiah: “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice *like a trumpet*, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins” (58:1). Mr. Armstrong *always* did this. He *never* feared the opinion of people, the “critics.” Similarly, I will not spare!

Isaiah continued: “Yet they seek Me daily, and delight to know My ways, *as* a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of Me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in *approaching* to God” (vs. 2). Israel’s conduct was a CHARADE—they *appeared* “as” God’s people, but were *not* in conduct and faithfulness. They enjoyed “approaching” God, not *doing* what He said. This passage describes most brethren today—*spiritual* Israel—who *think* they are following God’s will in regard to His Work, but are not!

Tragically, this has become the case with so many clear points of Bible teaching that were once understood by the whole Church.

The Largest Splinters—and Their “Work”

Only a few organizations are making an attempt at the Work. Yet, *none* are even close to “holding fast” (Rev. 3:11) all God’s doctrines—including those at the front edge of the Work. However sincere, these are works of men, not led and directed by the living Christ who would only use those who will not compromise restored truth. *These* would fulfill the Great Commission under GOD’S GOVERNMENT. It will become obvious God could not use those who compromise to perform His Purpose.

Only those who will *return* to—or who come to *believe*—*all* of the truths that God taught His Church are candidates to join His final Work. Those firmly rooted in different ideas should attend one of the organizations that may still want to do some kind of “work,” but not be concerned about doctrinal precision. We bear such people no ill will, but know they will be more “content” elsewhere.

Partly because they do not see the crucial importance of doctrinal purity, all the big splinters also do not grasp the colossal importance of what is at stake in the *true* Work of God today. Only one or two organizations even *begin* to remember, let alone comprehend, that a powerful WARNING must reach 600 million Israelites throughout many nations and territories. And, again, no one seems to recognize another *related* warning must reach over 35,000 in the splinters or holding to some truths at home, with both of these to occur before the Tribulation. For this reason, this book will, at least briefly, reference the roles of “watchman” to Israel and “messenger” to Laodicea.

The destructive “spirit of error” (I John 4:6) that has entered all the groups is why so many now believe contributing to disaster funds and relief efforts is the more “loving,” “compassionate” and “Christ-like” approach to gaining “disciples.” Warnings are “too harsh.”

The apostle Paul wrote, “For [God] will *finish* the work, and *cut it short* in righteousness: because a SHORT WORK will the Lord make upon the earth” (Rom. 9:28). Misunderstanding crucial verses like this, many—I repeat—now believe the Work as the Church did it for decades is finished, with all responsibility COMPLETED. These people have usually also come to believe the “famine of the Word” has arrived—and that this at least generally occurred from 1986—thus ending *any* duty to announce God’s kingdom to all nations or to warn Israelite nations. That two decades have passed and Christ’s Return has not occurred means some think that in the world’s most awful age (now *much worse* than Mr. Armstrong’s time),

when a message of hope with a thunderous warning is more needed than ever, God's servants are to stand mute, spectating without comment. They are to ignore the most basic common sense, and what Mr. Armstrong taught about preaching the kingdom and warning those headed to tribulation right to the end, and bite their tongue in silence. However sincere, such misguided thinking could not be more wrong!

These people also believe that, because the Revelation 3:8 "door" temporarily closed after Mr. Armstrong's death, this nullifies any need to even attempt to preach the gospel—especially a warning to now more decadent, degenerate, sinful and lawless Israelite nations. This thinking comes from Mr. Armstrong being quoted out of context as believing God's Work *would* end with his death. Incredibly, this reasoning even suggests it is *rebellion* to proceed against his *supposed* "stated will" before he died.

We will see the opposite is true—that Mr. Armstrong *never* believed any such thing! In fact, as Paul foretold, a final, closing, immensely powerful "short work" remains, and God's true Church is completing it!

Understand! All the elements of God's truth and Work have their own attraction to those who love them (II Thes. 2:10). Those who truly love these things will run through fire barefoot over broken glass and jump deadly snakes to reach them. Nothing will stop them! Conversely, if one does *not* love true doctrine, nothing will change him. If one does *not* care about precision of belief, you cannot "sell" him on why he should. Truth, including each of its facets, carries its own attraction intrinsic to its value. The convicted seize it like a pit bull a bone!

The same is true of how people feel about the Great Commission. As this book will demonstrate, Mr. Armstrong taught that God's people must be deeply convicted about what is *a duty*. But if a person never internalized this commitment early on, it is unlikely he can do so now. Such people will likely not be moved by what is written here. But those once convicted about the towering importance of the Work of God *are* candidates to recapture that same sense of commitment and responsibility!

The Book's History

Much longer and much more comprehensive than earlier editions, and with a new title, this book contains nineteen chapters. An advance chapter-by-chapter summary of this particular volume is helpful.

The first chapter examines what the Bible teaches regarding what is, in reality, the DOCTRINE of doing the Work as it is addressed throughout God's Word. The second and third chapters detail, through lengthy quotes, what Mr. Armstrong *taught* about the Work of God.

The extensive fourth and fifth chapters address the changing gospel in the splinters, and how this is *automatically* altering understanding of the Great Commission. These chapters give emphasis to how the Living Church of God (LCG) teaches a gospel blatantly false in at least three ways.

Chapter Six explains the multiple ways that spiritual mass amnesia is afflicting thousands. Chapter Seven re-introduces and amplifies the special warning to Israel that must be issued before the age closes. Chapter Eight then looks at a whole new way of thinking about the *brethren's role* in the Work, first taught by the apostates, and then absorbed into the splinters without the remembrance of where it came from. This chapter steps on toes, but this is necessary to understand not only the scope of what has happened, but how almost none recognized the process.

The ninth chapter closely examines various objections, excuses and arguments, many of which are raised by people in the smaller groups, particularly those who left PCG. Virtually all these small groups lack the resources and know-how to go forward. In addition, many have become too tired to put forth the effort. These groups are forced to invent excuses, in some cases exotic, about why Mr. Armstrong finished the Work. Also, we will learn that inaction has much to do with the insufficient training and experience in their leaders. But this chapter covers other vital points.

What follows Chapter Nine is beyond anything you could expect! You should find the book difficult to put down after this point.

Chapters Ten through Fourteen work together. And they are the point at which the book takes on an incredible dimension for which the reader has only by then been prepared.

Chapter Ten is one of the book's most interesting. It involves a mammoth—and absolutely fascinating—prophecy referenced all through the prophets. Yet virtually no one hears or thinks about it—certainly not in any of the splinters. This is despite the fact that it has directly to do with everything remaining to be done in God's Work. Chapter Ten leads into Chapter Eleven, which is about a more familiar but now largely *forgotten* prophecy in Revelation 7. The reader will again have difficulty breaking away.

Chapter Twelve brings the book to a gripping personal level!

Chapter Thirteen re-introduces another huge New Testament prophecy having to do with Romans 9:27-29 and Revelation 10. While either forgotten or terribly perverted by the one organization that still points to it, this towering prophecy carries potent meaning. Chapter Thirteen, with Ten and Eleven, describe the backbone of the remaining Work of God in this age. Chapter Fourteen brings an unexpected culmination of information. An inset, it is perhaps the book's most important chapter!

These five chapters define the book, and must be read as a block. But remember, you are only ready for them after reading *all* earlier chapters!

Chapter Fifteen was once a booklet—*The RCG Strategic Plan*—which explained WHY, *before* expanding the Work, we had to rewrite all literature from when the Worldwide Church of God was on track. I am not just speaking of what Mr. Armstrong wrote, but also publications by others, and entirely new ones. You go “Behind the Work” in our early years, and learn the what, when and why of things we did.

Chapter Sixteen originally was included in the “Strategic Plan” booklet, which came to carry an article titled “A Personal Story – Rewriting Mr. Armstrong’s Literature.” It relates a miraculous story I decided several years ago to share with the brethren: the experience—actually the process—of what it was like to rewrite thousands of pages of books, booklets and articles in such a short period. This was the most personally inspiring miracle I have ever experienced. Our brethren appreciated it, so it is included as Chapter Sixteen.

Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen look at our two Operational Plans—for the First or Great Commission and the Second Commission, feeding the flock. (In “military speak,” Operational Plans overarch *Strategic* Plans, which in turn overarch *Tactical* Plans.) These present a comprehensive picture of support functions inside the Church and Work. They take the reader into internal goals, plans and programs, with emphasis on how The Restored Church of God is making unprecedented progress toward a surge in the Work never before seen in history, as well as explaining our plan for more pastors to serve God’s expanding flock around the world.

Chapter Nineteen is a compilation of important final points, coupled with crucial personal questions the reader has been prepared to address.

Modifications

Realize that because some chapters once stood alone, a little helpful overlap has been retained, particularly in the beginning portions.

Those reviewing the book should be aware that this version is so different, it is unrecognizable from the first edition. Changes appeared as God made clearer my role and responsibility, particularly as our fruits became apparent. No man led of God would presumptuously vault himself into an office, let alone high office—and even further, into the position of human leader under Christ of His Church. Mr. Armstrong taught, and so does the Bible, that it is exclusively the FRUITS that demonstrate whether God is using a man, and in what office. As with Mr. Armstrong, it took years for me to fully compre-

hend these matters, including what is the office into which I was placed. Certain changes reflect this.

Long as it is, appreciate that this book could have become much larger. This is because of the mass of material that could have been included as additional proof in every chapter. Mr. Armstrong had much to say—straight from the Bible—about God’s Work in the last days. Recognize also that, by its nature, the subject necessarily involves related topics: What is the gospel? What is the kingdom of God? What and where is the true Church and the Body of Christ? What is the role of Church government—the government of God—and how does one determine where Christ is leading? Is there only one organization where He is Head? To whom should one pay God’s tithes? Who is authorized to continue the Work? What about key prophecies?—and more.

“*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” details many topics covered in this INTRODUCTION in the context of the overall test facing all Christians from now until the Tribulation. Parallel here is the need to read our book *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?* Mr. Armstrong taught (straight from the Bible)—and he was *emphatic!*—that understanding Christ’s Body directly connects you to the *only* place His Work is being done, and under God’s TRUE government!

Our *Splinter Packet* includes another book titled *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*. It takes a thorough approach to a multi-faceted subject so few now barely even remember—and perhaps never truly understood. This is evidenced by a willingness of the majority to exchange the Bible pattern of government for a variety of unworkable, failed counterfeits. It is supremely important to recognize the offices, duties and responsibilities Christ has placed within the New Testament Church, including when the *need* exists for Him to “give” a particular office (Eph. 4:11). This is related to who is *authorized* to continue God’s Work. Of course, these things are then connected to—are actually inseparable from—*where* He is leading, and then on to *what* exactly are the central components of the remaining Work of God today. All of this is interrelated to finishing the Great Commission. This volume connects the dots within a comprehensive picture, and only “*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” and *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* are as important.

The Work Means WORK!

So many today no longer want to put in the *effort* to carry on the Great Commission. After all, the Work IS WORK! Mr. Armstrong did not call it “the play” or “the recreation” because it involves *work*—sometimes

much long, hard WORK! It requires a *spirit of sacrifice*, and involves long detailed prayers, driven by the understanding of a special purpose for which brethren were called in this age. And yet, fulfilling God's purpose, on *any point*, is always deeply satisfying. This may be most true of watching and enjoying the many exciting developments continually announced in God's Work across the world!

Many are now determined to focus solely on *themselves!* They will not share what was so generously shared with them by the unselfish labor of Mr. Armstrong and others. Tragically, these people completely missed the most basic teaching he emphasized for 52 years—the transcendent principle of “give” versus “get.” So, this book is written to those who are *confused* about what God requires, not those with closed minds.

Solomon wrote, “The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men who can render a reason” (Prov. 26:16). Some will render one “reason” after another why they are no longer obligated to: (1) Help announce the kingdom or (2) warn Israel. Never mind will they (3) assist in the message to the final era (Rev. 3:14).

Let it be known that The Restored Church of God will be found by Christ “so doing” all *three* crucial aspects of His Work (Matt. 24:46)—as well as diligently “feeding the flock of God” (I Pet. 5:2).

The Full Picture

How many who read will be honest with the vast array of facts from the past presented throughout? You will see they are plain, clear—and *MANY!* They leave no wiggle room to “halt between two opinions.” Will you read, remember—and re-accept!—all that has been forgotten, and *return* to what you and over 150,000 others once knew?

Begin to contemplate this question now.

Like other books to God's people, important groundwork is laid in the early chapters—the book's first half. These cover more basic subjects before building to AWE-INSPIRING UNDERSTANDING that will make little sense without this “building” approach from one chapter to the next. You cannot receive the full impact or achieve full understanding of the diverse array of material covered in *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!* unless you read it *all*. If you are unwilling to do this, close it now.

Prepare to see AWESOME PROPHECIES uncovered!—do not miss the book's many key messages—focus on the knowledge given!—capture the INCREDIBLE VISION presented!—stay the course!—and you will be very thankful you did!

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

Get clearly in your mind that many now sincerely believe the Work of God has been finished for this age—and that it concluded in 1986. Is this true? Or is there still an “open door” before the remainder of Philadelphia? What about the “famine of the word”? Who is permitted to continue the Work? Has the role of the individual laymember changed? Should Philadelphians now focus solely on “preparing for the Wedding Supper”? Does the Bible reference in any special way a *reconstitution* of God’s Work in the twenty-first century—in the period that would follow the apostasy?

The approach to any doctrine begins with God’s Word. What then does *the Bible* teach on these and a host of other matters and questions connected to the Work of God? The nineteen chapters that follow take a comprehensive look at all of them, and how they interrelate to what Mr. Armstrong taught.

In an astonishing reversal of understanding and conviction, a significant and growing number of brethren no longer believe that *any* obligation remains to carry out the Great Commission. But worse, some have even adopted the view that to continue or even *attempt* to continue taking the gospel to the world or to warn Israel of the coming Tribulation is actually *rebellion* against Mr. Armstrong’s final instructions to his successor and to the Church. Naturally, a variety of reasons have been floated to justify this thinking: Mr. Armstrong was Zerubbabel and *he* finished the Work—“God’s people” are too scat-

tered, and organizations are too divided for a meaningful Work to be done—there are not enough people left to do a great Work—the Laodicean age supplants Philadelphia’s commission—only an apostle may preach the gospel to the whole world or warn nations, among others. Further, most brethren who think the Work is over believe Mr. Armstrong declared just before his death that the Church’s focus from that point forward should be exclusively on individuals preparing for the Wedding Supper with Jesus Christ.

The Bible has much more to say about doing the Work of God—and exactly what this is—than most EVER realized. You will soon believe this, as well as why Mr. Armstrong spoke about it almost unceasingly. Yet, how many pick up their Bibles and look for what is there? This constant Bible theme is why Chapter One will look at virtually every Old Testament figure used to record God’s Word. In part for dramatic effect, I have chosen to devote extra time to this foundation for all the understanding that follows. This includes some unusually long scriptural text to retain both depth and strength of context.

Keynote Statement!

The following defining statement from Mr. Armstrong forms the backdrop for reviewing what the Bible states about who can and who cannot preach the kingdom of God and warn Israel—and who and how many can spearhead the Work of God in any age. He opens by referencing the Work of the Church during his time. Beginning with this paragraph, ask yourself if you still believe what Mr. Armstrong taught. (All emphasis is his):

“And a century of time cycles after the first birth of the Church was a TIME that God *DID USE* as a time to start a REBIRTH of His Church, when once again just before the close of the 6,000-year duration of the ‘day of man,’ and the ushering in of the day of the LORD, His Gospel of the Kingdom would be proclaimed worldwide (Matt. 24:14).

“We need to understand a PRINCIPLE by which God always has worked through humans. He has always worked through ONE MAN at a time. He worked through Abraham. He worked through Moses, through Joshua, through one “judge” at a time, through Samuel, through David, through Solomon. He worked through Peter and when Peter had left the Middle East, through Paul. These men had, in greater or lesser number, staff assistants under them, but God’s WORK was through the ONE MAN AT A TIME!”

“Just What Is ‘The Work’?”, GN, April 1981

What do you think of this statement? Do you feel Mr. Armstrong exaggerated—or worse, was plain wrong? Let's ask a related question: Is it correct to state that God spread the gospel in past ages through chosen men who were *not* apostles? Were you under the impression that this message has only been spoken of since the beginning of Christ's ministry and the New Testament Church, and then only by *apostles*? Of course, it is understood that apostles take the lead and are the *primary* office God uses.

What does the Bible reveal?

Acts 3:19-24 makes a comprehensive statement. In this eye-opening passage, Peter refers to Christ's Coming (vs. 19)—“the presence of the Lord”—and that He (God) “shall send Jesus Christ” (vs. 20). Verse 21 describes the establishing of God's kingdom under Christ as the “restitution of all things,” corroborating Mr. Armstrong's statement! Next, Peter states that this “restitution” (again, Jesus Christ establishing God's kingdom) is something “God has spoken by the mouth of *all* His holy *prophets* since the world began.”

This is a stunning passage! Consider it—with all its implications.

Could God have actually used *prophets*, not just apostles, to announce His kingdom—as well as men, we will see, who held neither office? Unless both God and Mr. Armstrong exaggerate—of course, I am being facetious—then this statement is true. But let's examine a number of specific biblical figures.

Let's examine whether and how each of these men, in one manner or another, preached the coming kingdom of God. And let's see if God's Word is plain on this matter.

The Old Testament “Preachers of Righteousness”

Enoch was Noah's great-grandfather. Jude 14-15 declares plainly, “Enoch...the seventh from Adam prophesied...saying, Behold, *the Lord comes* with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all...” This man was a *pre-Flood* preacher whose “sermon notes” have been preserved in Jude for us to see. He obviously refers in this message to the same things that constitute the gospel.

For clarification, Noah in II Peter 2:4-5 is called “the *eighth*... preacher of righteousness.” Notice how Jude recorded Enoch was the “*seventh* from Adam.” This is why Noah is referred to as “the *eighth*.” These pre-Flood servants were apparently known as “preachers of righteousness” and, beginning with “righteous Abel,” there were *five other men* before Enoch who fulfilled this role. The service of these eight men

(apparently only these three named were converted) spanned the entire period between Adam and the Flood, with Noah transitioning to the post-Flood world.

Further review of Enoch's message reveals that these men taught about *sin* and *righteousness* in the very strongest terms. This means they issued a stern and powerful warning to a sinning, lawless world, which culminated in the greatest punishment to date—the Flood! A careful study of the Bible demonstrates that God always warns before punishment—captivity, destruction of Nineveh, Sodom and Gomorrah, the Flood, individual kings, etc.

While much more could be said about this sixteen-and-a-half-century period before the Flood, suffice to say that every one of these early “preachers” brought the same message. Remember, Peter stated, “since the world began.”

What I have mentioned here is not my invention. The Church and Mr. Armstrong have long understood the role of these pre-Flood “preachers,” and their commission and work was taught in exactly this way in the late 60s, when I attended Ambassador College. I still remember spending hours in my freshman year meticulously transferring all the details of this information to a blank page in my Bible. Also, the old *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course* taught it the same way!

Abraham, Moses and Samuel

Next, we ask: Was the gospel of the kingdom preached in the centuries *following* the Flood by those who would have succeeded Noah? If so, what biblical evidence exists?

Notice what God told the patriarch Abraham: “In you shall *all families* of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). This same promise is referenced in Galatians 3:8, but phrased a little differently there: “In you shall *all nations* be blessed,” stating also there that the “gospel” was “preached before...unto Abraham.”

This is fascinating knowledge! Not only did Abraham hear of the kingdom of God (from Christ, Melchizedek), but it is also preached in Genesis through *Moses'* writings!

Moses was neither a “preacher of righteousness” nor an apostle. This first leader of ancient Israel was also a prophet and a judge. Have you previously thought of *Moses* as expounding the gospel? The Bible says that he did—to ancient Israel in the wilderness. Genesis records it, as does Numbers 24:17-19, also recorded by Moses.

Taken together, Hebrews 3:9 and 4:2 reveal that Moses preached the gospel to Israel in the wilderness. Notice: “For unto us was the gospel preached, *as well as unto them* [Israel]” (4:2). Acts 3 demonstrates that this practice continued through Samuel!

Note that Acts 3:24 mentioned Samuel: “And all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after.” So then even Samuel preached Christ’s Coming to bring the “restitution of all things.” Of course, this man was not an apostle, but rather also a prophet.

These are straightforward passages that cannot be glossed over. Carefully reflect on each of them. But the picture grows much larger.

David

No one doubts that David was a king—and many would know he was a prophet. This prophet/king also spoke about the kingdom of God, with seemingly few aware of this. In Psalm 67:4, David wrote, “...for You [the Lord] shall judge the people righteously, and *govern the nations* upon earth,” and he also recorded, “For the *kingdom* is the Lord’s: and He is the *governor* among the nations” (Psa. 22:28).

Both of these passages are most plain, and can only refer to a time in the future when the kingdom of God is reigning over all nations. No other timeframe fits.

Isaiah

Isaiah the prophet wrote, “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the *government* shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His GOVERNMENT and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His KINGDOM, to order it, and to establish it with *judgment* and with *justice*... even forever” (9:6-7).

This well-known passage, read at every WCG Feast of Tabernacles site for decades, needs no explanation! It obviously references God’s coming kingdom under Christ.

Jeremiah

The prophet Jeremiah wrote this: “Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and a *King shall reign* and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice *in the earth*.”

In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (23:5-6, also 7-8).

The meaning of this prophecy is equally obvious!

Ezekiel

Ezekiel recorded this: “For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land” (36:24). The next ten verses describe a national rebuilding and prosperity only possible *after* the Return of Christ and the establishment of God’s kingdom!

Though not as direct as the other so-called “major” prophets, Ezekiel clearly reflected the central point of the gospel. Take time to read the rest of the context.

Daniel

The prophet Daniel recorded much more: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a *kingdom*, which shall never be destroyed: and the *kingdom* shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (2:44).

Further, in Daniel 7, verse 18 adds, “But the saints of the Most High shall take the *kingdom*, and possess the *kingdom* forever, even forever and ever,” with verse 22 adding more: “Until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the KINGDOM.”

Verse 27 of the same chapter further confirms with a third equally clear statement that Daniel preached God’s kingdom, stating, “And the *kingdom* and dominion, and the greatness of the *kingdom* under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose *kingdom* is an everlasting *kingdom*, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

How plain!

Hosea and Joel

The next several sections will look at a number of those often referred to as the “Minor Prophets.” These are offered to demonstrate God’s thorough emphasis given to the powerful “kingdom of God” theme throughout the Bible.

Here is what Hosea wrote: “Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days” (3:5). Also see chapter 2, verses 16 and 19. This and the next several longer passages also plainly reference the kingdom of God.

Joel, another of the so-called “minor” prophets, recorded this long prophecy about Christ’s coming millennial rule: “Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. Be not afraid, you beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree bears her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for He has given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust has eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you. And you shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that has dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed. And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed” (2:21-27).

It is obvious this prophecy can only be fulfilled when the kingdom of God is established.

Amos and Obadiah

It is important that the reader not be able to miss the Bible’s constant emphasis about the coming, world-ruling SUPERGOVERNMENT to be established over all nations, under the reigning leadership of the FAMILY—or the KINGDOM—of God. I repeat, it is worth the time taken to lay this foundation early in the book.

Now let’s look at what the prophet Amos recorded: “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by My name, says the LORD that does this. Behold, the days come, says the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will *bring again the* [back from] *captivity* [a later chapter will look closely at passages that reference this event] of My people of Israel, and they shall build the

waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, says the LORD your God” (9:11-15).

One of the most inspiring passages in the entire Bible about the kingdom of God is also one of the shortest on the subject, and is also found in one of the Bible’s shortest books—Obadiah. It explains what God’s people once knew to be a part of their future as they worked with people around the world, beginning in the Millennium: “And SAVIORS shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the KINGDOM shall be the LORD’S” (vs. 21).

This passage references “saviors” (the newly-resurrected saints in the God Family) who “come up” at a certain point within God’s government in Jerusalem. The meaning here is unmistakable—this is at the time when “the *kingdom* shall be the LORD’S.” Any kingdom that is “the LORD’S” would have to be the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Micah and Habakkuk

Let’s now look at what two more prophets recorded. The following familiar passage in Micah was also read for decades at WCG Feast sites (it is repeated almost verbatim in Isaiah 2:1-4):

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain [kingdom] of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills [small countries]; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god [the now divine saints ruling with Christ], and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever” (4:1-5).

The prophet Micah also recorded this about both Christ’s nativity and perhaps greatest future role: “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, You be little

among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall He come forth unto Me that is to be *ruler in Israel*; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (5:2). Matthew 2:6 quotes this same verse in a parallel form that offers an even clearer meaning: “For out of you [Judah] shall come a *governor*, that shall rule My people Israel.”

There is no question about the topic in these two passages.

Considering the state of spiritual ignorance in the world today, Habakkuk also carries one of the most inspiring passages in the entire Bible—this one for the world and not just for the saints: “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (2:14).

Of course, the fulfillment of this passage could only be possible if *one central government* were ruling all nations. This verse perhaps best illustrates how the kingdom of God can be described in terms helpful in a variety of ways.

Zephaniah

The next passage, from Zephaniah, highlights what must be considered one of the inspiring portions of Scripture about the future of the twelve tribes of Israel. Shattered by the Great Tribulation and her resultant captivity around the world, Israel will soon hear these words:

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of you: you shall not see evil any more. In that day [when Israel’s captivity ends] it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear you not: and to Zion, Let not your hands be slack. The LORD your God in the midst of you is mighty; He will save, He will rejoice over you with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over you with singing. I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly, who are of you, to whom the reproach of it was a burden. Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict you: and I will save her that halts, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I *turn back* [bring to an end] *your captivity* before your eyes, says the LORD” (3:14-20).

Again, later, in one of the book’s most inspiring chapters, you will see in a much, much grander way the events talked about in this passage. A seed has been planted here about the Work of God remaining for this age that is beyond what you can envision or even imagine.

Remember these words!

Zechariah and Malachi

Let's conclude with two final prophets, beginning with Zechariah: "... and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with you...And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and His name one" (14:5, 8-9).

The kingdom of God arrives at the same time Christ comes with the saints. This passage highlights one of the first things God does and describes the entire earth under His authority.

Let's conclude by examining from Malachi one final familiar passage, perhaps quoted by Mr. Armstrong as many as any other near the end of his life: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in: behold, He shall come, says the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appears? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness" (3:1-3).

No question this prophecy speaks of events at Christ's Return.

All the "Minor" Prophets

With the exceptions of Jonah and Nahum (who both would have preached the gospel outside of their books, which were both directed against Assyria), it can be easily demonstrated that every one of the Minor Prophets preached the kingdom of God in one way or another.

Of course, we have seen that the phrase "gospel of the kingdom of God" is not the only way of describing this message, as Genesis 12:3, Galatians 3:8 and quotes like Habakkuk's demonstrate. But each of these Old Testament servants preached what the New Testament describes as "the gospel."

Taking the time to read from all these prophets should deepen your conviction about the Great Commission of which so many have at least partially lost sight.

Peter Was Correct!

The apostle Peter knew what he was talking about: “God *has* spoken by the mouth of *all* His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:21). Other prophets referenced in Scripture (and apparently all others God may have used) would have announced the kingdom of God.

Another point arises from Acts 3. Recall it stated, “*God* has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets...” The gospel is a message *from God* through whatever human servant He is using—prophet, patriarch, judge, preacher of righteousness, king or apostle. God *always* spoke the SAME MESSAGE through whomever He used!

Now take a moment to internalize the big picture. Meditate on what you have learned from the *Old Testament*. God’s servants ALL do the SAME THING, and we will see this means Old Testament and New. They describe the coming of a world-ruling *supergovernment* under Jesus Christ and the resurrected, Spirit-born saints.

Yet, before going to the New Testament, we must at least briefly pause and recognize that a fundamental change occurred with the arrival of Christ’s Church, as per the kingdom of God. Notice that God’s servants emphasized in their personal teaching something else: “The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it” (Luke 16:16).

The responsibility to formally announce God’s kingdom to the whole world, including preaching about it, did not begin until Christ and the apostles came on the scene. Prior to their arrival, the emphasis was always on the meaning of the law and the prophets, with God’s coming government emphasized within that framework.

Christ and the Apostles

So then we arrive at the New Testament. Obviously, and this is included for the record, Jesus preached the kingdom of God throughout His ministry. No *true* Christian doubts this. Mark 1:14-15 states, “Now after that John [the Baptist] was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the GOSPEL of the *kingdom of God*, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the *kingdom of God* is at hand: repent you, and believe the GOSPEL.”

These very first recorded New Testament words describing Jesus’ message—and ministry!—and *what* was the gospel!—firmly establish His personal commission—“Jesus...came preaching...the kingdom of God.”

There is not space here to demonstrate that the theme of Christ's ministry never wavered! Other materials referenced do this.

Luke 10:1, 9 record that Jesus sent 70 men (*not* apostles, and not even converted) to preach the kingdom of God. In other words, He allowed at least 82 *unconverted* disciples—including the 12 who went on to become apostles—to preach the gospel! (It is at least worth stating that Jesus had previously made it clear these men *were* apostles.) Of course, the book of Acts records throughout that the then converted apostles continued preaching the kingdom of God after the Church was built.

Compared to Mr. Armstrong

Also, and of course this is obvious, Mr. Armstrong preached the kingdom of God for 52 years. And it should also be noted he probably did a greater Work in reaching people than all of God's servants over the last 6,000 years *combined*! (Mr. Armstrong should at least be referenced here among the apostles. As with Christ and the twelve, this should at least be stated for the record. Peter Waldo, also an apostle, could be discussed with demonstration of the same.)

But the magnitude of what God did through Mr. Armstrong is no excuse not to continue. Why? Because some assert that anyone seeking to continue the First Commission expects to do a *greater* Work than Mr. Armstrong did. Of course, this is ridiculous—no Work will ever again repeat that exact pattern (but Chapter Seventeen will stun you), even if there were enough time. But that was the case *before* Mr. Armstrong's ministry, and all these others before him always pressed on as they could.

Because of the terrible punishment foretold to come upon the nations descending from ancient Israel if they do not heed and repent, the FINAL WARNING to these almost 600 million Israelites will be the greatest WARNING message in history. You will learn later that there is powerful biblical evidence of this. That warning is underway—and The Restored Church of God is issuing it!

The last paragraph and the entire chapter introduce a question about which a seed ought even this early be planted in the mind of the reader. First, an apostle is merely "one sent," the literal meaning of the word. Now the question: Has another been sent—would another need to be sent—to finish God's final Work, one that you will learn is to be of colossal proportion?

In summary, history demonstrates that every one of God's leading servants, from Abel to Mr. Armstrong, preached the *same* message—did the *same* Work. Of course, as Mr. Armstrong often said, the true

gospel did not go out to the *whole world*, from the time of the apostles until God raised him up to re-establish it in the sixth era of the Church. It is also critical to note again how Mr. Armstrong taught that, from the original apostles to the end of the age, God's Church *was* in fact preaching the gospel, but in only limited scope, generally restricted to local areas because of intense persecution.

But Mr. Armstrong taught more concerning the specifics of doing and continuing the Work than most seem to recognize—or remember. Actually, he taught much, much more—and was most explicit. We will carefully examine what he said.

Hallmark Statement!

This chapter closes with another quote from Mr. Armstrong about the Work of God. I consider it among his “hallmark” overview statements, those that transcend the others cited from him, either in this book or in others to the splinters. Under the subhead “Your Part in GOD’S WORK,” this inspiring quote is how he concluded his booklet *What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?*:

“In my over fifty years’ intensive, rich, active experience, since God changed MY direction into HIS WAY, I have observed that the *very first* need of every Christian, who is to GROW and develop this spiritual character, is to have his heart completely in THE WORK OF GOD, which the *living* Christ has called His servants to do, as His instruments! Our ‘WORKS’ are our part in GOD’S WORK—getting His true Gospel to the whole world *as a witness*—preparing the way for Christ’s coming. We are merely His INSTRUMENTS. It is GOD’S WORK! Those who condemn ‘WORKS’ are condemning the Great GOD who is the actual DOER *through us* as His instruments and Co-Workers! It is not, after all, *our* works!

“Those who are self-centered, caring nothing for the WORK OF GOD, having not enough *outgoing concern* to want to help GET CHRIST’S MESSAGE out to this blinded, deceived, dying world, fall away. Those who center their whole ‘Christian’ life and activity on developing *their own selves* spiritually, whose hearts are not in or concerned about this great OUTGOING worldwide WORK OF GOD, actually directed by the *living* CHRIST, develop only INWARDLY, until they shrivel up spiritually and fall by the wayside! Those whose hearts, their active, constant, earnest, fervent PRAYERS, and their tithes and offerings are in GOD’S WORK continue to EXPAND spiritually—they become HAPPIER—they become greatly

BLESSED—their lives become richer and fuller—and their faces beam in smiles. They RADIATE! They PROSPER!

“The New Testament is literally *filled* with instruction on *Christian living*—leading a new, different, sparkling, joyous life—or, perhaps more correctly, allowing Jesus Christ to live such a life—GOD’S WAY in them!

“How WONDERFUL is *God’s Way*!

“SALVATION comes—if we are willing—as God’s FREE GIFT—by GRACE!

“But we *must be changed*. There is DOING, not hearing only (Rom. 2:13). There is development of a new righteous CHARACTER. Yet, even that is CHRIST *IN* YOU actually DOING it! Actually, even the ‘works’ are primarily done by HIM! But how WONDERFUL that there *are* righteous “WORKS” in the true Christian life—opportunity for *more* than salvation, priceless though that be—opportunity for higher position, rank, opportunity to SERVE, higher GLORY!”

We are now ready for the particulars—the vital specifics—of what Mr. Armstrong taught about the Church’s Great Commission...

WHAT DID MR. ARMSTRONG TEACH?

Beginning this chapter, the next several demonstrate that many of the principles Mr. Armstrong taught are strengthened by the fact that he repeated them often, and in different ways. He understood that repetition underscores and ingrains important knowledge, and at the same time reduces misunderstanding.

The next four chapters cover a series of central questions. Each of the first five, answered in the next two chapters, are addressed by quotes from Mr. Armstrong. The sixth question, the subject of Chapters Four and Five, follows by taking another look at what *is* the gospel and what *is* the Work as he taught it—and contrasts it to big changes occurring in the splinters. Read and internalize Mr. Armstrong’s words and meaning.

1. Did Mr. Armstrong believe the Work was to be done exclusively by him and would end at his death?

It is amazing the numbers who now believe that Mr. Armstrong thought preaching the kingdom of God was to end when his life was over. Many of these find ingenious ways to put such words on *his* lips. Three particular statements are usually cited as confirmation—either from *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*, *The Incredible Human Potential* or the March 19, 1981 *Worldwide News*—by those trying to prove this is what he believed—or supposedly came to believe near the end of his life. The book must address this thinking early on.

People determined to focus only on *themselves* assert that Mr. Armstrong instructed his successor to concentrate *exclusively* on “preparing the Bride for the Wedding Supper.” Near the end of his life, Mr. Armstrong certainly did put important emphasis on this task. And let it be understood here that most people, including whole organizations, *have* largely ignored this vital instruction.

It is true that the splinters attempting to continue the Work do not really grasp the importance of *properly* feeding the flock. It is as though several of them believe that doing the “Work” is basically their *only* commission. Seeing this, some people react to this *unbalanced* emphasis and, true to human nature, taking a view that is equally unbalanced, jump to the other ditch, believing the Church’s commission to be over or of relatively minimal importance today. They seem to conclude that—at least if it continues in the manner these splinters focus on it—the flock is not going to be fed correctly nor will the bride be fully readied for her Wedding. Sadly, people in both of these opposing ditches smugly decide the *other* approach is wrong—and seem unwilling to recognize *both* forms of thinking are terribly harmful, just in different ways!

The need to accuse trumps right understanding on both sides.

An Illustration

A letter I received from a local church elder aptly demonstrates the assumption that those continuing the Work must *automatically* be neglecting the Church—meaning not properly feeding the flock. Notice that the writer seems incapable of understanding how I could possibly be “preparing the Church” *and* “getting oneself ready” *if* I continue to do the Work. He wrote, “You said in your reply, not doing a Work is an easy path to take, but *as I see it*, preparing the church, getting oneself ready is a much, much harder task than falling back into doing the Work and not moving any farther than we were in ‘86...” (emphasis mine).

The writer actually believes that presenting the good news of the kingdom of God or warning great nations facing disaster is *falling backward*. This alone is astonishing! He has convinced himself that abandoning the Work was “moving...*farther* than...‘86 [when Mr. Armstrong died].” This absurd statement elevates a complete focus on SELF as going *beyond* the enormous Work, ministry and purpose of what Mr. Armstrong accomplished!

Having the gall to then attribute this kind of outrageous thinking to his teacher makes it even more appalling. I marvel that Mr. Armstrong’s

students could have fallen so far from the understanding that he gave them. Bear in mind that the writer was an elder for many years during Mr. Armstrong's lifetime. It should be embarrassing to such people in their shameful pretension of following and respecting the teachings of this great servant! They apparently never understood either him or the mind of God. God help these to repent of rebellion, stubbornness, pride, selfishness, laziness and BLINDNESS before it is too late!

So, one ditch is characterized as preaching the gospel above all else, while at the same time ignoring both correct doctrine and the proper feeding of the flock. The other is best summarized as *claiming* to hold to all true doctrine, while rejecting one of the greatest *doctrines* that Mr. Armstrong taught—I repeat, taking the true gospel to the world and fulfilling the special Ezekiel Warning to the nations of Israel. Invariably, over time, these latter groups also drifted into *other* false doctrines, as Mr. Armstrong warned, so their claims ring hollow.

The fact that some organizations have *neglected* to correctly feed the flock and prepare the bride could never be a reason to ignore continuing the Work of God. Because some no longer *tithe*, should God's people conclude the *Sabbath* is done away? Because some think believers can *marry outside* the Church, should others eat *unclean meat*?

There is no difference in the illogic.

Only One Purpose

We have seen that the only Work or business God has *ever* had His servants perform is either announcing His kingdom or bringing a special warning to an individual, a city or a nation. The following quotes emphatically demonstrate that Mr. Armstrong continually taught this! If some will not believe me, will they believe him? Read his own words written at the end of his life proving he believed continuing to have one's heart in the Work was the single greatest key to keeping on track and to preparing for the Wedding Supper! (All emphasis is his):

"I am now in my 94th year. God may grant that I continue in this very limited manner to direct the work for some time, but the occasional heart pains that I have endured have made me feel the necessity of letting our coworkers know of the condition as it is.

"Remember, this is the work of the living Creator God.

"I thank God that He has organized this present work of his so thoroughly that regardless of the outcome of my present illness, the work will continue right on to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ...Christ is

the Living Head of this work, and He will continue guiding those He has chosen right up to his Second Coming, which grows daily nearer at hand.”

Letter to brethren, Dec. 23, 1985

“This is my first letter to you in 1986, and could very well be my last. It may be that the Work God has given *me* to do is complete, but not the Work of God’s Church, which will be faithfully doing God’s Work till Christ, the True Head of this Church, returns.

“Remember, brethren, this is not the work of Herbert W. Armstrong... or any man. It is the Work of the Living Creator, God...The greatest work lies yet ahead.”

Last Co-Worker Letter, Jan. 10, 1986

The last phrase above will take on much greater meaning in later chapters! In fact this single short reference will come to be seen as the defining description of the Church at the end.

“Brethren, if we are to continue to grow—and to grow SPIRITUALLY as well as in numbers—we must remember that the PURPOSE of the Church is, first, to GO INTO ALL THE WORLD and preach Christ’s GOSPEL. The FIRST commission to the Church is just that. Anyone who looks on that Great commission of Christ as ‘Armstrong’s private work’ is just not a member of GOD’S Church. Anyone who does not have his whole heart in that work IS NOT A MEMBER OF GOD’S TRUE CHURCH, and has no right whatsoever to attend or fellowship in any of its local congregations.”

“Why Local Assemblies?”, GN, March 1954

The last statement is most instructive! Mr. Armstrong felt very, very strongly about those whose heart was not in preaching the gospel. He offered no apology for stating they should not even be permitted to “attend or fellowship” with God’s people. Carefully reflect on this for its application today! The above quotes span nearly 32 years—including to the end of Mr. Armstrong’s life. Do you really believe that these statements (with the next two) reflect a diminishing of importance from what he placed *throughout* his ministry on continuing the Work? Absolutely not. Now continue:

“The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the message that Christ proclaimed. That message was the Good News or the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

That is the message He preached, the restoration of the Government of God by the coming Kingdom of God.

“The apostolic Church from A.D. 31 proclaimed it.

“Today we carry on God’s Work in a world multiplied vastly larger in population, a mechanized, mechanical, complex world with instrumentalities to work with that were never dreamed of in the first century.

“If anything happened to me I would expect the Church to continue right on and the local churches and the local church ministry.”

“Congress of Leading Ministers,” WN, March 6, 1981

“We CANNOT AFFORD TO BECOME LUKEWARM! We cannot afford to let our minds drift from the intense NEED for this very special mission of this particular time in world history, so shortly before Christ’s coming and HIS KINGDOM! [Author’s note: Yet, this has become so descriptive of most of God’s people today.]

“Now about the Work itself.

“Few understand just what IS the Church. There are so many churches in the world. People just take churches for granted. But more than 1,953 years ago, Jesus Christ said, ‘I will build My Church.’ Few know WHY He built it—for what PURPOSE. The purpose, primarily, was dual:

- 1) to proclaim to the world the Gospel Message God sent to mankind by Jesus as God’s Messenger (Mal 3:1) of the coming Kingdom of God,
- 2) to call and prepare a chosen people...

“I have NEVER SAID I expect to live until Christ comes.”

Co-Worker Letter, March 19, 1981

Lesson Learned

In a phone conversation with Mr. Armstrong (in about 1980 or 1981), I suggested to him that God would not permit him to die “before he finished the Work.” He made it clear to me—in no uncertain terms!—that he did not want me to “encourage” him in this way. He went on to explain that he did not want members of the Church to put their faith in the idea that he could not die *before* the Work ended. He fully understood that his life could come to an end, and that finishing the Great Commission transcended his presence!

I will never forget Mr. Armstrong thundering at me in this call and making reference to an evangelist whom he had just admonished about this very point. This man had been regularly traveling around the world

declaring with authority that Mr. Armstrong would live until Christ returned. I am not denigrating this man, because I believed and said the same thing. Probably most did. But Mr. Armstrong did not want this false hope taking root.

For the record, history proves that at about this same time, this man did greatly alter his usual, several-hour sermon. The only proof I have of this conversation are the above quotes, and the timing of the appearance of his new, softer presentation in this regard. You may decide if I am presenting the truth of this.

Needless to say, I never repeated this mistake with Mr. Armstrong!

2. When did Mr. Armstrong teach that the Work would end?

The following statements, particularly when coupled with the previous ones, prove Mr. Armstrong absolutely understood that he could die before Christ returned. Do not forget that his last several co-worker letters were written with this reality heavy on his mind. Of course, he knew that he was gravely ill. But he also knew that a faithful Church of God would continue to do the Work of preaching the kingdom and warning Israel up to the *start of the Great Tribulation*. Anyone who disputes this point, after reading these next statements, is simply not honest with the facts (emphasis his):

“Brethren, this world is being destroyed for lack of knowledge of and from GOD, as we read in Hosea 4:6. Through my personal visits, and the PLAIN TRUTH magazine, on TV and radio and through other literature, we are proclaiming that knowledge in POWER and AUTHORITY. Some listen. It is God’s last witness against those who do not. BUT WE MUST DRIVE RIGHT ON UNTIL CHRIST COMES!”

Co-Worker Letter, Nov. 18, 1984

“I ask you, brethren, in Jesus’ name, to put whatever you are able into God’s Work in this crisis hour before the...Tribulation that will cut off our work just prior to the soon-coming of Christ and the World Tomorrow.”

Co-Worker Letter, Nov. 25, 1985

“Our labors in GOD’S WORK will be ended soon after the resurrection of the impending United States of Europe!”

Co-Worker Letter, Aug. 14, 1978

“Brethren, time is running out on us. When this great European power emerges, our great Work will be just about over. The day shall have arrived when ‘no man can work,’ as Jesus said (John 9:4).

“NOTHING ELSE MATTERS NOW. We must sacrifice and devote our all that is reasonably possible to GOD’S WORK in these closing days.”

Co-Worker Letter, July 16, 1982

“...brethren and co-workers, the prophesied Great Tribulation (nuclear World War III) will start soon after the European unification. That means OUR WORK OF SPREADING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE FINISHED! We have not now much more time. Soon shall come a FAMINE of hearing the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11).

“God says, work while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work—in the Work of God!

“Nothing else is important in our lives, now, but this all-important Work of God.”

Co-Worker Letter, Nov. 22, 1982

Be Careful

The last statement above, when put with the others, proves conclusively that Mr. Armstrong believed “the famine of hearing the Word” would take place *during* the Great Tribulation, and not *before*, or if so by only a little. There is no other way to view what he said. Make yourself be honest about his belief concerning the *timing* of the famine of the Word. (I address this in greater detail later.)

I once believed there was a possibility that the *beginnings* of this famine could be here now, simply because the *massive scope and size* of the extraordinary—and unique!—Work of the Philadelphian age was over. But this is the most that anyone can possibly acknowledge without altering and redefining what Mr. Armstrong understood would trigger the famine of the Word, and without perverting the truth about how the famine will occur.

The subject of the famine of hearing the Word (Amos 8:11) is covered as “Event 16” (sermon #21) in my extensive prophetic sequence sermon series, available on our website. If you have not heard this continuing series, you should find and listen to it. It presents the correct developing march and still future sequence of prophecies just ahead as no one else will preach them.

So I know that an absolutely immense work still lies ahead. Watch us *very* closely because it is well underway! And later chapters of this book PROVE this is no idle dream. It is based on bedrock solid Bible prophecies and understanding supporting what Mr. Armstrong wrote just before his death, as well as obvious fruits. Now notice:

“We draw daily nearer to the end of this age. Time is growing shorter daily. The Bible warns us the time is just ahead when NO MAN CAN WORK—in the Lord’s Work. We must sacrifice now as never before for this Work that we may FINISH the Work that Christ has called us to do.”

Co-Worker Letter, Oct. 23, 1980

Think! How would it be possible that the Work was to end in 1986, or at any time later, but before the end, since it was foretold by Christ to continue until “no man CAN work” (John 9:4)?

Brethren, recognize that men—the Church—still *can* work!

No one and no thing—governments, persecuting accusers, the Beast, the Great Tribulation—or even the economy—has yet been permitted to block or stop the Work of God. Men and organizations CAN still preach the kingdom of God and warn nations.

The question was always whether they WOULD!—and whether YOU will help...

OTHER QUESTIONS —MORE CLARITY

There is much more to cover of what the Church previously understood about the Great Commission. The content of what Mr. Armstrong taught about the ongoing responsibility God gave His Church requires several chapters to cover. This one answers three more central questions.

3. What importance did Mr. Armstrong place on doing the Work within the scope of a Philadelphian’s *conduct*?

Mr. Armstrong did not mince words when connecting compromising the importance of one’s participation in the true Work of God to LOSING ETERNAL LIFE! Notice this:

“Unless we fulfill God’s SPECIAL PURPOSE for our calling *now*, we might never go into His Kingdom. This fact must not be taken carelessly!

“How many of us become unmindful of God’s purpose and assume we were called and put into God’s Church only to GET our *personal salvation* and to ENJOY the fellowship and social life of our local church?

“Brethren, do we not find ourselves taking for granted that the churches in what is called ‘Christianity’ are also God’s churches—that WE are just *another* of the many denominations, the only difference being that we hold to some different doctrines?

“That is simply not true! We in GOD’s Church are not just one of all these churches. They are of this world. They do not have, or know, or proclaim, Christ’s gospel—the message God sent to the world BY CHRIST, as the MESSENGER.

“When [Christ] returns [Luke 19:11-24], He will demand of each of us to show how we have used the GIFT of His Holy Spirit—how much we have CONTRIBUTED to His Work—the PURPOSE for which He put us in His Church NOW!...Those who prove disloyal or drop out of the Work—the only purpose for which you were called now—will find themselves in the position of the one described in verses 20 and 24. They will lose the very salvation they were trying to GET!

“You are each admonished to ‘make your calling and election SURE!’”

“Why Did God Put You In His Church?”, GN, May 1974

Did you notice in the last large paragraph Mr. Armstrong’s references to *“His [God’s] Work—the PURPOSE for which He put us in His Church NOW!”* and *“the only purpose for which you were called now”?*

Do you—will you—still believe this?

The next statement is especially important. It summarizes Mr. Armstrong’s view of the one true Church, God’s Work, true Christian love, unity, his view of scattered, divided brethren and the Marriage Supper. It also clarifies how these issues are *all* effectively overarched by continuing and finishing the Work, here linked to continuing to practice the “give” way of life.

Notice each point:

“What about the ‘loner’ Christian who says, ‘I will serve Christ in my own way’? What about the one who leaves God’s Church to have his own private relation with Christ—to get his own salvation—without giving his part of the Church’s effort to send the true gospel into ALL THE WORLD?”

“Or, what about the one who follows a MAN because of that man’s personality, charisma or attractiveness, or some other group?”

“Stop and THINK!

“Is Christ going to marry a number of differing groups, not in complete harmony with each other—yet all ‘professing CHRIST’?”

“Jesus said, ‘He that is not with me [and since He is the Head of God’s one and only Church, He plainly meant with Him where HE is working—in God’s one Church] is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad’ (Matthew 12:30).

“Jesus Christ is going to marry THE ONE AND ONLY TRUE CHURCH – not a number of scattered groups or scattered individuals.

“God’s law and way of life may be summed up in the one word ‘LOVE’—which is outflowing—the way of ‘GIVE’—while Satan’s way is that of ‘GET.’ The one who tried to GET his salvation apart from the one Church Christ is going to marry is on the ‘GET’ way. Those loyally in the Church are GIVING of their prayers, loyalty, encouragement and support to Christ’s chosen apostle in GIVING the GOOD NEWS to the world—its ONLY HOPE.”

“7 Proofs of God’s True Church,” PT, Sept. 1979

“Give” vs. “Get”

Could any forget how often Mr. Armstrong stressed the importance of “*give* versus *get*”? He believed that brethren who neglected the Work were plain *selfish*. Now think how selfish it would make Mr. Armstrong if he had believed that *he* was the only one permitted to “give” good news to the world—particularly during the most sinful, awful and blinded age in history. Mr. Armstrong would have been teaching God’s people that after he died it would be “okay” to return to *getting*—to focus on “getting” oneself into the kingdom, “getting” a higher reward, even “getting” headquarters to do things the way people wish as so many now do—rather than in continuing to *give* the same treasure he was used to give to us—to you—and so many others!

Philadelphia is defined as the era of *brotherly love*. Its members care about their fellowman—in both the Church and the world. These brethren are not selfish—they are not people unwilling to *share* what they have. It deeply insults Mr. Armstrong’s teaching, understanding, character and memory to suggest that “Philadelphians” no longer need to give to others the hope-filled message and marvelous truth that was so freely given to them.

Let me repeat that it is a shameful embarrassment that supposed “brethren” who claim to “hold fast” all restored doctrine have abandoned perhaps the *greatest doctrine* that Mr. Armstrong taught. They bring a reproach on the entire life and work of this incredible leader and servant of his fellowman.

Plain Doctrine

Make no mistake—and this is also repeated—the *ongoing* obligation to announce God’s kingdom is DOCTRINE! Let none kid themselves—

rejecting the continuance of the *true* Work of God is PLAIN HERESY! Though many today have found ways to fool themselves that it is not, God is not fooled. If this applies to you, I do not mean to hurt you, but rather to *exhort* you—and to RE-AWAKEN your former love of doing God’s Work!

Also, what if Mr. Armstrong had viewed leaving Sardis as so many view leaving the big, doctrinally-compromising splinter groups—as an excuse to isolate themselves, not any longer assisting in the Work where Christ is leading? If he had left Sardis, but *not* carried out the Great Commission, simply because most at the time (those in Sardis) were unwilling to participate in it with him, then you and I would never have learned the truth. We would still be in the world. Thank God that Mr. Armstrong did not think like so many former brethren today who claim to follow his teachings, but who have become entirely selfish and inwardly focused! Hopefully, it has become clear how ridiculous and *dangerous* this thinking is. Those slipping into it will lose God’s Spirit.

Be alert, and do not fall for it!

“The Work of God was originally started by ONE man—Jesus Christ. But on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, the same Holy Spirit that had carried on God’s Work through his individual body entered into and empowered his apostles, and the entire COLLECTIVE BODY, which on and from that day constituted God’s Church.

“But, after proclaiming that gospel MESSAGE to the world of that day—after the Church had grown and multiplied in number and power, the headquarters Church at Jerusalem fled in the face of advancing Roman armies shortly before A.D. 70, became scattered, and under persecution—and because of discouragement because Christ had not yet returned in power and glory—the Church WENT TO SLEEP ON THE JOB of proclaiming Christ’s true gospel message!

“We are in a spiritual WAR—on the firing line with CHRIST as our general—firing spiritual bombs of GOD’S TRUTH—the message of Christ’s own GOSPEL—to make this whole world CONSCIOUS of the GOOD NEWS of Christ’s soon coming and his KINGDOM, to rule the happy, peaceful WORLD TOMORROW! There can be no letting down—no slacking—no quitting in this war!

“What would happen in a war if an army, by a sudden burst of effort, surged forward to win a single battle, then laid down their arms and decided to take it easy or go on furlough? They would then LOSE THE WAR! Christ said it is only he who endures to the end who shall be saved! LET US CARRY ON, more determined than ever—more dedi-

cated and devoted to Christ's great mission than ever! We must not win a partial battle, and then lose our war. LET US NOW PLUNGE ON HARDER THAN EVER TO FINAL VICTORY!"

Co-Worker Letter, Oct. 25, 1985

Mr. Armstrong wrote the above statement just *eleven weeks* before his death. He understood that the still living Jesus Christ, not himself, initiated the Work in the New Testament era, and that it was a COMMISSION (Matt. 28:19-20) to God's leading servants throughout the entire New Testament era. All of the above statements testify that he recognized God's Work superseded the duration of his own life. Notice that Matthew 24:14 reveals the gospel is preached until "...the end come."

Found "So Doing"

Perhaps most important, verse 46 of Matthew 24 shows that faithful servants are found "so doing" when Christ returns. The context (established 32 verses earlier in verse 14) makes clear that, among other things, they *must* be found *so doing the Work!* And how could a commission supposedly ceasing well over twenty-five years *before* "the end come" fit Christ's description of until "the end come"? It could not, and He could not expect His people to think it did. Later chapters investigate this further.

Further, Matthew 10:1, 6 and 23 add that Christ's servants are actively going over the cities of Israel "*till* the Son of man be come"—or, more properly understood, when the time of flight arrives. The next statement clarifies that *this* understanding of Matthew 24:14 and 46 was *exactly* what Mr. Armstrong believed Christ meant. His view of the time remaining in the age reflected urgency, and that "faithful" and "wise stewardship" were involved.

Now notice:

"I want to hear the living and soon-coming Jesus Christ say: 'WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!' Don't YOU?... We may have only one more year—we may have two years—we may have five.

"What I DO KNOW is that Jesus said, in regard to knowing or NOT knowing the time of His coming: 'Who, then, is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over His household...? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find SO DOING.'

“If Christ should yet cut our work short one year from now, I want Him to find me SO DOING carrying on His Work right up to the last minute!”

Letter to brethren, Jan. 21, 1971

The answer to question three in this chapter is not complete without a capstone statement. May it hit like a sledgehammer. Mr. Armstrong knew that Philadelphians would be continuing God’s true Work no matter what, while Laodiceans would grow “weary” (remember, the Work *is work*) and “spiritually destitute,” because they were “indifferent...lukewarm...lacking in zeal”

Again, read carefully:

“Brethren, WHO is preaching the same Gospel Jesus taught, the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, to the world? Do you know any other Church fulfilling this prophecy as to the WORK OF THE TRUE CHURCH for this very day and time?

“Of the ‘Philadelphia’ Church, Christ says, ‘I know...you have but little power.’ It is probably the WEAKEST in numerical and physical strength and power—the smallest in membership, of any of the Churches from the time of the Apostles until the Second Coming. *It has but few ministers.* [Author’s note: My italics. And how much more true today is this compared to the biggest splinters?]

“And THIS is the Church Christ uses as HIS INSTRUMENT in proclaiming His GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM—the GOVERNMENT of God—to the world. He sets before this Church an ‘OPEN DOOR,’ for the proclaiming of this Gospel to ALL THE WORLD. The meaning of this ‘DOOR’ is explained in II Cor. 2:12-13. Paul said: ‘I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a DOOR was opened to me of the Lord.’

“But SOME of those in the Church today will grow weary with well-doing. They will brag about being the true Church [Author’s note: This certainly describes many in the splinters today.]—thinking they are spiritually rich, when they are, in fact, almost spiritually destitute. Because they are indifferent to the real WORK OF GOD, lukewarm, lacking in zeal, Christ will spew them out of His mouth. THEY cannot be used in His work. THEY shall lose the very salvation they boast of having unless they repent! God help you never drift into the LAODICEAN church!”

“Must God’s Ministers Be Ordained By...Man?”, GN, Oct. 1962

How many today can still be moved by the powerful message in statements such as this one? Sadly, thousands *did* drift into Laodicea.

4. To whom did Mr. Armstrong attribute the thinking that the Work is either over or unimportant?

With the thinking in mind of who it is that seeks to end the Work, and this next point has been referenced, I occasionally receive letters from sincere but misguided people trying to convince me that I am actually *rebell*ing against Mr. Armstrong by continuing to preach the gospel. They hope I will “comply with God” and stop the Work. Almost all of these people left PCG—the organization that has professed since December 1989 that it holds to *everything* Mr. Armstrong taught.

Those with even the most basic understanding recognize that this organization has almost certainly departed *farther* from Mr. Armstrong’s teachings than most all others. But the majority there simply cannot recognize it, having been deceived for too long. Sadly, it was initially many of PCG’s confused *ex-members* who have in some cases in our early years implored me to “move on” or to “grow up” or to “come to the new prophetic understanding” they think they have. Some openly flattered me and told me how I was holding fast in “every way but one.” They even thanked me for standing firm, while expressing hope that I would abandon my futile attempt at the Work. Having seen the anemic efforts of others became their excuse to do *nothing*. These are rarely able to be jolted back to reality.

In fact, it was these people who, more than any others, inspired the first abbreviated version of this book. Some are sincere, so I hope I can awaken a few to the danger into which they have placed themselves. A letter from a married couple demonstrates this reasoning: “Please do not be upset with us bringing up these matters. We truly don’t understand why you can be so close doctrinally to what we were taught under Mr. Armstrong...and yet still feel that you have to go to the world again.” This couple also quoted *The Incredible Human Potential* (pp. 116-117), attempting to prove Mr. Armstrong said *only apostles* can preach to the *entire* world.

I know this. As explained, I know that Restored will lack the time, size and resources to do the *same kind* of slowly developing Work that Mr. Armstrong did. But Chapters Ten through Thirteen, and even Fourteen, will explain why the final Work occurring today will almost exactly parallel what was accomplished under Mr. Armstrong. In any event, this man stepped out in faith and went forward preaching to the world. And are we not all glad he determined to take the gospel to the world *long before realizing he was an apostle*? It must be understood

that it was only later, *after* powerfully preaching for many years (about 19), that Mr. Armstrong even recognized—through fruit—that he *was* an apostle. Few seem to know this story.

This fact is most critical to grasp. Mr. Armstrong did not wait for a sign from heaven to go forward. As Paul instructed regarding ordaining deacons—that they must do the work of even that physical office *before ordination* (I Tim. 3:10)—apostles would do the same! (Mr. Armstrong’s experience was exactly the same as mine. I also learned much later—after several decades in the ministry—the final office that Christ had given.)

Also recall that Matthew 10 describes Christ sending 12 *unconverted* men to preach the kingdom of God, and that it only became truly evident *later*, on Pentecost, what it had meant that they had been chosen to be apostles. And recall that Luke 10:9 stated that Jesus sent 70 more to do the same. Presumably, most or all of these never became apostles.

In Acts 8:12, Philip, a *deacon*, preached the kingdom of God to Samaria. Though Scripture shows that he later rose to evangelist (and history indicates possibly an apostle after that), he entered Samaria as a deacon. The Acts account does explain that he did not do this on his *own* authority—nor can any deacon today. Philip had authority *from the apostles* to baptize, because they followed up later in Samaria in laying hands on those baptized so that they could receive the Holy Spirit. But it records this was *after* Philip had “baptized many.” This deacon also cast out demons and performed miracles (vs. 6-7), a sign of apostolic authority standing above and behind him.

In chapter 7, consider that the deacon Stephen preached the kingdom of God so powerfully to a group of Jewish elders and scribes that it got him stoned to death on the spot. This mere *deacon’s* powerful preaching also included a strong warning and an indictment of those hearing it! How many deacons today are still impelled by the same zeal and conviction?

But, and this is obvious, Stephen and Philip were not freelancing outside authority and direction from the apostles. Other passages put the full picture into perspective.

Mr. Armstrong’s Successor

Consider carefully. When Mr. Armstrong appointed his successor, he was well aware that this man was *not* an apostle! He still instructed him to continue doing the Work because, as he explained, everything was in place to *carry on*. Against Mr. Armstrong’s instructions, and evi-

dencing no fruit whatsoever, this man almost immediately took the office of apostle *to himself*. (He did this with the assistance of his Church Administration Director, who freely admitted to me that he crafted the announcement to the Church and ministry making the supposed “case” that appeared in *The Pastor General’s Report* for ministers and *The Worldwide News* for members.)

Some facts of history: Shortly before his death, in a series of private discussions, Mr. Armstrong repeatedly and emphatically denied his successor the office of apostle. Mr. Armstrong explained more than once that *this* office was not his to give!—that he simply could not do this!—that it was BEYOND HIS AUTHORITY! (It is fairly well known that this man vehemently sought the office of apostle through repeated requests to Mr. Armstrong.) However, Mr. Armstrong could and did officially confer on his successor all of his *other* titles and responsibilities. Mr. Armstrong told this man, before numerous witnesses, that only *Jesus Christ* could put him into that office—and that it would be evident if and when *Christ* chose to do this! He explained that, if this were to occur, it would only happen because the FRUITS of that office would be evidenced *first*. Remember, *apostle* means literally “one sent forth”—by JESUS CHRIST! (Again, *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* book covers this in much greater detail.)

Most who abandon helping to finish *any* of even the “works” of men have fallen into a kind of “creeping prophetic junk trap,” which slowly corrupts their basic understanding of Bible prophecy. A variety of splinter leaders have been ensnared by this trend. Sadly, when people escape these groups, they often seem unable to free themselves from this trap.

The Devil’s Role

The next statements demonstrate how strongly Mr. Armstrong felt about the *real* origin of “the Work is over” thinking. He clearly believed and repeatedly taught that the idea of discontinuing—or altering—the Work comes from *Satan*—because the devil most hates *any* message depicting his dethronement as the “god of this world” and his subsequent 1,000-year imprisonment!

II Corinthians 4:4 proves Mr. Armstrong’s insight into Satan’s attempts to thwart God’s Work. Let’s read it: “In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the GLORIOUS GOSPEL of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

None should *ever* lose sight of how badly Satan would love to block, attack and hinder God’s *true* Work today. His goal is to confuse or defeat outright those who once understood the Great Commission. No tactic should be considered beyond his reach.

Carefully mull the almost prophetic description Mr. Armstrong offers for what is occurring throughout the splinters today. We have certainly felt such attacks here:

“Today, as in the time of the first apostles, MANY DECEIVERS are gone out into the world. They will ACCUSE God’s Church and His Work. It is Satan the devil who is the accuser of the true brethren (Rev. 12:10).

“MUCH of the New Testament is WARNING God’s people of these snares of Satan to hinder—to attempt to DESTROY the very Work of GOD—the very Work which is THE REASON God has called you NOW—before He undertakes to SAVE THE WHOLE WORLD!

“Remember, Jesus taught us to LOOK TO THE FRUITS BORNE!

“Are they who falsely accuse—who seek to draw a following away from God’s Church for selfish purpose—proclaiming the Kingdom of God to the nations of the world? Are they fulfilling the PURPOSE for which God has called us now?”

“Why Did God Put You In His Church?”, GN, May 1974

Much of the division *now* existing between so many of God’s people, and within the organizations they attend, has little to do with the WCG’s false leaders. It is coming now from wolves, tares, flatterers, spiritual murderers, false prophets, hate-mongers, slanderers, libelers, accusers, politicians, destroyers, even entire small groups, as well as the outright lawless, all of whom also left the apostasy for the splinters! You must come to see that Satan sent his most effective agents to attack, confuse and divide *there*—where they could do the most damage going forward. This begins with the leaders, whom I have addressed in Chapter Twelve and elsewhere in this regard. (This is thoroughly examined and proven in our book *Should Accusers Be Answered?*)

My ministry is a living testimony to the relentless nature of their false accusations. For instance, one of the biggest lies, coming from the modern Diotrefes leading the Living Church of God (LCG) is that The Restored Church of God is not doing the Work. Others state that we do not actually *print* our literature—that we are nothing more than an “online/Internet” ministry. These know we are both reaching growing millions *and* printing literature—and outperforming all other organizations by far.

The above book goes much more deeply into the subject than you have ever gone before. In fact, you have never read anything like it. (You may also wish to read the thorough brochure *Do You Know “David Pack”?* – *My Life and Ministry—Rumors and Lies vs. Facts and Truth.*)

Now notice:

“Jesus did not raise up His Church merely to form various local social clubs with NO PURPOSE other than to enjoy each others’ fellowship. He raised up the Church for a PURPOSE—to proclaim His GOSPEL—not merely in their own community, but AROUND THE WORLD—ALL NATIONS.

“But SATAN now influenced a great PERSECUTION against the Church to STOP the proclaiming of the KINGDOM OF GOD. He knows that Kingdom will remove him from the earth and from deceiving the world into accepting him as the god of this world.

“And THAT’S the ONE MAIN THING Satan wants to STOP! The HEAD of this Church, the living Jesus CHRIST, wants us always to keep the Great Commission FIRST in our minds—and NEVER to let other things crowd it out! For THAT’S what this is ALL ABOUT!

“Repeatedly, all through the Bible—especially in the New Testament, we are warned that our REAL ENEMY is Satan! He tries to get our minds OFF of our BIG Commission, by getting them on physical and material things that loom up as MUCH more important...until we CAN’T SEE THE REAL ISSUE.

“Then we shall, if loyal NOW to God’s Government, rule ALL NATIONS under, and with Christ, each having our part in that GOVERNMENT, and working with and under Christ as our HIGH PRIEST in then SAVING THE WHOLE WORLD, with no Satan around to attack us!”

Letter to brethren, March 18, 1974

“Satan will never let up trying to DESTROY the Work of the living God. It’s all recorded in the Bible—in prophecy. I have looked into God’s Book to see how it all comes out at the end...I find that WE (in God) WIN!”

Letter to brethren, June 25, 1985

It is fitting to conclude the answer to this question with the above exhortation. Everyone enjoys repeating the closing “win” portion of it, and I have referred to it often. The problem is that so few seem to remember the all-important context in which it was given! Also, notice

this admonishment to the Church came less than seven months before Mr. Armstrong died. After having spent 52 long years battling Satan's influence through those who attacked his every decision and action, Mr. Armstrong seemed to realize that he needed to warn all of God's people one final time about Satan's ongoing efforts to destroy the Work of God. His message was to be more prophetic than we could have then realized!

5. How did Mr. Armstrong view the correlation between the one true Church, doing God's Work and paying tithes *only* to the organization where God is working?

Another central issue cannot be avoided. The next three statements make absolutely clear that what are *God's* tithes (remember, all tithes and offerings belong to God, not the one paying them) must be sent to the Church doing the Work and preaching the FULL RESTORED truth—the only organization Christ would be leading. They show the grave responsibility that *individual brethren* have to carefully put God's tithes *only* where He is working, where the government of God is present. The next quote shows people must “come out” of unproductive “split up and divided” organizations of men.

Mr. Armstrong seemed to think that Philadelphia could become a smaller Work at the onset of the Laodicean Era because so many would have grown weary in “well-doing.” My other books directed to the splinters make plain that he placed *uncompromised doctrinal truth* as the only proper STARTING POINT for those remaining Philadelphian!

This must be clearly established and proven to the tithepayer before sending God's tithes to an organization! Yet, so few give thought anymore to the fact that tithes belong to God—meaning to where *He is working!*

Mr. Armstrong understood even Sardis did a small, though terribly divided, “work.” So do Laodiceans. He wrote this after leaving Sardis:

“We ought to be ASHAMED of the pitiful, puny, weak, feeble work that has split up and divided brethren, reached but so very FEW with the message, with almost no real conversions! All this, while leaders desiring power to RULE send out misleading, exaggerated, deceiving statements designed to convince tithe-payers that ‘the work is progressing.’ What a mockery! What a tragedy! What a pity!

“We praise God that many of the more spiritual HAVE COME OUT!”

“*Did Christ Reorganize the Church?*”, GN, Feb. 1939

“Some ministers are called of God, used of God—many are not.

“The tithe is HOLY. It is THE LORD’S—for HIS WORK. It should be placed where He IS WORKING...Ask God for WISDOM!”

“*Are You Being Tested on this Point?*”, GN, Feb. 1939

The following longer statement summarizes these points by stating that God’s *organized* true Church—the same as the Body of Christ (Col. 1:18-19, Eph. 1:22-23 and 5:23, 30)—loyally stands *together* and finishes His Work. (This subject is thoroughly covered in my splinter book *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?*) Those who do not could lose salvation. They will not GET what they sought for *themselves* because they fell into *getting* and stopped trying to GIVE God’s wonderful truth to *others*! Now notice:

“What is the PURPOSE of the Church—its divine Commission? To proclaim this Gospel as a witness to the world. In other words, to carry on the WORK OF GOD, which Jesus, in person, started.

“After His resurrection, He gave His disciples this commission: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature’ (Mark 16:15).

“First of all, the true Church of God is a spiritual organism. It is NOT a human organization. This spiritual organism is the ‘Body of Christ’ existing for the PURPOSE of carrying on THE WORK OF GOD.

“Is it possible that one who has joined a sect, church, or denomination NOT doing God’s Work, might be truly converted, and led by God’s Spirit in him? The answer is YES—I have known of a few. But in every case, either they came INTO the organized spiritual organism Christ is using in the real Work of God—or, when their eyes were opened to further light and truth, they rejected it and LOST the Spirit of God. And this was amply demonstrated by the fruits. [Author’s note: All with God’s Spirit or who were baptized in a splinter—any splinter—had better grasp this message.]

“Jesus said that His sheep do hear and RECOGNIZE His voice and His truth, and that they will follow Him!

“God has specially called and chosen you! And WHY? To stand loyally behind Christ’s apostle and HELP in whatever way He opens to you in spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom of God! Yes, you were specially called for a JOB to do! Not JUST to ‘get saved’—to receive eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

“Jesus pictured Himself (Luke 19) as a man going to God’s throne in heaven to be crowned and officially given God’s Kingdom. He gave each of 10 servants...a pound each. This represented giving each one at conversion one unit of the HOLY SPIRIT.

“On His return...He called each to accounting. One had increased the one unit of God’s Holy Spirit, in standing solidly back of God’s apostle in proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and helping, praying fervently and remaining loyal—in Bible study, increasing his own spiritual knowledge, 10 times what he started out with.

“...one had not grown in grace and in Christ’s knowledge nor had he contributed to GOD’S WORK by tithes, fervent praying or loyalty. HE HAD THE ONE UNIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ORIGINALLY GIVEN AS GOD’S GIFT TAKEN AWAY. HE DID NOT GET HIS SALVATION OR ETERNAL LIFE.”

*“Now Christ Moves Swiftly to Make Church Ready,”
GN, June-July 1979*

There are other important things Mr. Armstrong taught about God’s Work, but they are so vital to understand, and in some cases involve so many related issues in which basic understanding has been corrupted within the Laodicean splinters today, that they require their own chapters.

The most badly corrupted doctrine is where to begin...

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

Referenced in the INTRODUCTION, a new question has arisen in most of the splinters, particularly the larger ones: Just what *is* the gospel? Is the role of Jesus Christ separate from or part of the gospel? Do those claiming to fulfill the Great Commission still teach the correct gospel?—and why does one large organization now list within its mission to actively “witness for Jesus”? Is healing part of Christ’s gospel? Do the splinters still understand the Great Commission given to the Church? Is the subject of the gospel separate from who warns Israel? What did Mr. Armstrong teach?

All these questions and more require that this section be the longest in the book. In fact, the subject commands two chapters, and beyond.

It is hard to believe that confusion over the most central and fundamental doctrine and understanding in God’s Word could have arisen, but it has. Most today, having been conditioned to believe the apostates’ “gospel,” which focuses exclusively on the personage of a “Jesus,” have *merged* the role of what is (when correctly understood) a different Jesus *with* the kingdom of God, creating a new kind of hybrid “gospel.” In most cases, because this has been subtle, it has been missed by God’s people. (Of course, some have noticed but do not care.) This fogged thinking is now also developing among those who form the growing “evangelical wing” of the smaller splinters, briefly referenced at the book’s outset. But the large splinters have also moved much closer to a focus on *the* “messenger,” with his “message” increas-

ingly subordinate to this new priority. Again, some of these now also actively “witness” for their “messenger.”

It is important to take significant extra time to make perfectly clear the distinction between the role of the *true* Jesus Christ and what is the correct gospel. *Much* more is at stake here than meets the eye—and most in the splinters are now being badly fooled on this very CENTER-PIECE of the entire Bible! It is critical that the reader understands how all of this is connected to where and with whom you should be found doing the Work. It is also enormously important to see how this wrong approach has permitted a kind of creeping indoctrination in, and involvement with, the popular “social gospel” and “another Jesus” of the world’s churches.

As I have decried the false gospel circulating in the splinters, the subject of the gospel has become a hotly contested, much more serious issue to those teaching various errors. This has meant my coming under direct attack for defending the Bible and Mr. Armstrong regarding this truth.

The apostle Paul declared, “I am *set* for the DEFENSE of the gospel” (Phil. 1:17) and he admonished all future generations of the Church to “*strive* together for the faith of the gospel” being “in nothing *terrified* by your adversaries” (vs. 27-28)!

This becomes instruction for me—and YOU!—and should be received as a veritable COMMAND to every true minister alive today. I, too, am set to defend what hundreds of ministers seem to no longer even *understand*, let alone DEFEND!—and I do this without apology in the pages ahead. I am certainly not “terrified” of being attacked for exposing the false leaders who are in plain violation of what Mr. Armstrong taught and of all that is written here. They will not like what comes next.

Study carefully everything in these two chapters. They are of near incalculable importance to your life—and your SALVATION!

Only the Kingdom of God!

The New Testament is most plain about the true gospel, and prior to the apostasy all of God’s people were very clear on this. Literally, in scores of scriptures, the gospel is referenced—explicitly defined!—as “the *kingdom* of God,” “the *kingdom*,” “the *kingdom* of Christ and of God” or “the *kingdom* of [not *in*] heaven.” Nowhere, and in no sense, is the gospel described as involving “Jesus,” “Christ” or “Jesus Christ”—and not one of the over 10,000 people I worked with, either in the Worldwide Church of God or in the years after, over a 30-year period, asked about this or evidenced confusion about it! Nor did I ever even

hear of one WCG pastor having to address this as a local problem. Never mind the idea of whether the Church should witness—profess!—Jesus to all nations.

These “kingdom” phrases are consistent with what Mr. Armstrong taught throughout his 52-year ministry. And you have noticed in his statements throughout this book so far that not once did he reference Jesus as part of the gospel—NOT ONCE! Neither did he in his booklet *What Is the True Gospel?* I would challenge the reader to find even one book, booklet, article, letter or sermon in which Mr. Armstrong EVER even *suggested*—or *speculated*—that the Person of Jesus Christ was part of the gospel. (Also, the original correspondence course certainly never taught this.) There is good reason for this and, in fact, he both taught *and stressed* precisely the opposite. (Those claiming he privately believed or spoke otherwise are PLAIN LIARS!) You will see this momentarily within the avalanche of proof about to be offered.

Of course, Mr. Armstrong thoroughly understood every one of Jesus’ roles as Savior, High Priest, Captain of our Salvation, Apostle and Great Shepherd, as well as all of His future titles and roles. And he knew when and where—in what context—to stress these. He was neither “obsessed with the kingdom message” (as some claim), nor ignorant of the need to stress the vital roles of the true Christ of the Bible in a Christian’s life. And those who are aware of the full picture of all that he preached witnessed this!

The majority of ministers and professing Christians of the world have tried to say “the gospel *of* Christ” is a gospel *about* Christ. So many in the splinters have forgotten they once knew otherwise. This thinking is both false and ignorant—because “of” merely connotes possession. This is basic English grammar. As the kingdom of God is *God’s* kingdom, so the gospel of Christ is *Christ’s* gospel. The message about the kingdom of God is Jesus’ gospel—and this is all most basic past understanding.

How could so many forget it? How could so many so easily be pulled back into what they repudiated when God called them?

Mr. Armstrong Makes Plain

Mr. Armstrong was absolutely emphatic on the enormous difference between the *Messenger*—Jesus Christ—and the *Message* He brought—the KINGDOM OF GOD (the future, world-ruling SUPERGOVERNMENT under the God Family).

Most brethren today simply do not understand the tremendous—the SUPREME!—importance of understanding and believing the correct gos-

pel. They have forgotten what should have been *impossible* to forget—and this is only part of the *mass amnesia* connected to the many elements of the Work of God that will be discussed later. They should have remembered bedrock statements such as the one that follows.

Here is how Mr. Armstrong opened his booklet on the subject of the true gospel. The subhead within it is his:

“WHY should there be such perplexity—such *confusion*—in every phase of life today? It should be the function of religion to point the way. Yet here, too, we find only confusion of tongues — hundreds of religious denominations and sects, in a Babylon of disagreement.

“Even in the professing Christian religion of the Western world, we find different sects and denominations preaching a variety of different GOSPELS! Some designate their gospel as ‘The Gospel of Jesus Christ.’ Others call *their* gospel ‘The Gospel of Salvation.’ Still others profess ‘The Gospel of Grace,’ some ‘The Gospel of the Kingdom.’ And many now blossom out with a modern ‘Social Gospel,’ while others call their gospel ‘The ISRAEL Message.’

“WHY HAVE THEY LOST THE ONLY TRUE GOSPEL WHICH GOD SENT BY JESUS CHRIST? WHY?

How Many Gospels Are There?

“Does it make any difference which Gospel we believe? Listen to the answer of the Eternal God as inspired in Paul’s letter to the Galatians, the first chapter, the 8th and 9th verses:

“‘But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any *other* gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed.*’ And it is made a *double* curse! For the next verse says: ‘...So say I now *again*, if any man preach *any other* gospel unto you than that ye have received, *let him be accursed!*’

“WHY, then, has the world lost sight of *that* Gospel? WHY do people believe *different* gospels today?

“This is an astounding, incredible situation! It ought to shake you out of passive indifference. YOUR eternity is at stake! This is not a non-consequential, unimportant matter!

“Jesus Christ said it is necessary to BELIEVE THE GOSPEL to be saved! Yet the *many*—the hundreds of millions—today, do not know what *that Gospel is!* Again, His parting commission to His apostles, being sent out as His ministers to build His Church, was this: ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach *the Gospel.*’ They were to preach THE GOSPEL.

“Jesus then said: ‘He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned’ (Mark 16:16). Notice! Jesus said, He that BELIEVETH. Believeth *what?* Why, BELIEVETH that which they PREACHED, of course—THE GOSPEL! Not *a* gospel. Not *any* gospel. THE Gospel! *On the authority of Jesus Christ*, it is necessary to believe THAT PRECISE IDENTICAL GOSPEL in order to be saved! And to BELIEVE the true Gospel, we must first come to KNOW what it is!”

What is the TRUE GOSPEL?, pp. 3-4

Did you realize—have you remembered?—that a person, any person—this includes YOU!—cannot receive salvation unless he believes the one correct gospel—and this means “THAT PRECISE IDENTICAL GOSPEL”?

What could be more important? What words could Mr. Armstrong have chosen to crash louder on the ears of his listeners? Make yourself grasp and remember his warning!

What then did Mr. Armstrong teach *was* the correct gospel? Beginning with this quote, let’s hear it in his own words from a later portion of his booklet that appeared under the subhead “Kingdom of God to Be Preached TODAY”:

“Yes, JESUS proclaimed and taught the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. But did He command His ministers, in BUILDING HIS CHURCH, to preach this same Gospel? Quickly let us notice the Scriptures.

“Luke 9:1-2: ‘Then he called his twelve disciples together...and he sent them to PREACH THE KINGDOM OF GOD.’

“Luke 10:1, 2, 9: ‘After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them... heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The KINGDOM OF GOD is come nigh unto you.’

“In Jesus’ prayer, so commonly called ‘The Lord’s Prayer,’ He prayed, ‘THY KINGDOM COME’—then it wasn’t here yet, and it isn’t here yet, today—but He taught us to pray for it to COME, for His KINGDOM and that ALONE shall bring PEACE and HAPPINESS to this sin-sick, war-weary earth! ‘Thy Kingdom COME—THY WILL, BE DONE *on earth*, as it is in heaven.’ The FATHER’S WILL.

“What Gospel did the early evangelists preach, in first sending out the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED? How did the early Church carry out the commission?

“Notice PHILIP preaching at Samaria! Acts 8:12: ‘But when they BELIEVED Philip preaching the things concerning THE KINGDOM OF GOD,

and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.’ Philip preached the things concerning THE KINGDOM OF GOD. [Author’s note: It is absolutely clear from Mr. Armstrong’s highlighting or special emphasis, and *lack* of emphasis, on the words he wrote, that he did not consider “the name of Jesus Christ” to be part of the gospel. Reread this paragraph to be clear and notice the same emphasis in the next one.]

“Paul? Acts 20:25, 21: ‘I have gone preaching THE KINGDOM OF GOD...testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ.’

“And notice the Gospel Paul preached to GENTILES, *after* he had turned completely away from the Jews.

“Acts 28:30-31: ‘And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.’

“And, WHAT GOSPEL did Jesus say should be preached TODAY?

“Matthew 24:14, speaking of the PRESENT: ‘And this GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached in ALL THE WORLD *for a witness*’—*for a WITNESS*—‘unto ALL NATIONS; and then shall the END come’!—the end of this AGE.”

What Is the True Gospel?, pp. 10-11

This second quote leaves no room for confusion. It holds no ambiguity—*no way* for the sincere and honest seeker of truth to misunderstand what the gospel includes, and *excludes*!

However, we cannot go on to other elements of this doctrine until all doubt is removed about what Mr. Armstrong taught consistently for 52 years. This happens momentarily.

Christ’s Role Entirely Separate

First, take serious warning! The idea that Jesus Christ is, or is part of, the gospel is entirely Protestant thinking. The second error of “witnessing” or professing Jesus is classic *evangelical* Protestant thinking. As mentioned in the INTRODUCTION, the attempt to bring Jesus into the gospel is not only wrong, but it derives from a much greater danger—that of importing “*another* Jesus,” borne of “*another spirit*” (II Cor. 11:3-4) into the Church’s fellowship. This very passage describes the Corinthians—God’s own people!—as having fallen into belief in “another gospel” and “another Jesus.” And if Jesus *is*, or is part of, the gospel, why did Paul list these as two separate and distinct problems of belief within Corinth (and that these problems were both connected to a

third problem—that of following “another SPIRIT”)? Would you have thought these things remotely possible within God’s Church?

History demonstrates they are!

First, for instance, The United Church of God, terribly misunderstanding I Corinthians 15:1-4 (we will look more closely at this passage in the next chapter), and possibly a couple other passages, through careless reading, and states in its “gospel” booklet that the gospel of the kingdom includes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Though carefully worded, it describes the apostles as having gained “enhanced” understanding of Christ’s message—His “gospel”—about the kingdom. This organization’s purpose from the beginning seems to have been to include Christ’s role in helping people enter the kingdom as something that is part of the gospel. Their media philosophy statement once declared this openly. Here is what it said: “Preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God is a divine commission given to the Church...The gospel message, which includes God’s offer of the gift of salvation...”

But the role of Jesus Christ is entirely separate—distinctly different!—from the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD.

The Living Church of God goes much, much further, and actually lists Christ’s role as the first element of the gospel. They describe the gospel this way in their public mission statement: “The Gospel of Christ is the ‘Good News’ of the forgiveness of our sins through Christ’s sacrifice, and of the soon-coming Kingdom and government of God.”

This is fiction, invented entirely from outside God’s Word—and from *inside* the churches of Satan’s world. This organization also declares in its mission statement that its first purpose is “To *preach* the true Gospel of the Kingdom of God...AND the *name of Jesus Christ...as a witness* to all nations” (emphasis mine). When understood, this “witnessing” error is inseparable from the wrong gospel. No wonder this organization has now also gone into a *third* “gospel” error—teaching that *healing* is part of the gospel. (This will also be examined in the next chapter.) Remember, Paul describes false teaching as like leaven—it spreads.

This means their gospel is wrong in *three* distinct and separate ways!

Why? We will learn later that an emphasis—*any* emphasis—on Christ within the gospel *leads* to the NEXT STEP of “witnessing Jesus,” wherever “He” is preached. You will see that the drift into this *automatic* next step is not accidental. Neither is accepting the third error.

So many seem perfectly willing to be *lied* to about these things by their leaders. Why? How could they have forgotten all that is at stake on just the truth of the gospel? Why are they not “prosecuting” the argu-

ments and blatant deceit of their leaders? Why are thousands in the Living Church of God (and others) not asking whether *another spirit* could be present and leading where they think *God's Spirit* is guiding?

How could so many so quickly copy the apostates and the Protestants, and in such BIG WAYS?

Beyond ANY Reasonable Doubt!

Certain splinter leaders have made their shift to another gospel by asserting that Mr. Armstrong taught what they teach. We will see that this is a patently false claim.

First, Roderick Meredith, the man leading LCG, is a prime case in point. By “cherry-picking” a single statement that, after carefully ellipsing crucial portions, makes Mr. Armstrong *appear* to include Christ in the gospel, thousands can be fooled. Doing this requires that *gross deceit* be employed. The mass of contrary facts must be covered up, ignored and denied.

But you need to see PROOF of this. That comes now!

Mr. Armstrong spoke about the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD literally *hundreds of times* in books, booklets, articles, co-worker letters and sermons. He considered this one of the two most vital truths re-established for the Church during his ministry—with the GOVERNMENT OF GOD—and said this many times, including more than once in *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*. But the reader needs to see this constant theme and emphasis for himself. More important, the reader must see Mr. Armstrong did not—EVER!—place Christ within the gospel. You will also notice that he never spoke of witnessing for or professing Jesus, discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Any subheads from this point forward are Mr. Armstrong's, as is all emphasis. My comments generally appear in parentheses as author's notes. Any bold is mine. The early quotes establish two vital points: (1) *What* Mr. Armstrong said constituted “Christ's whole gospel” and (2) Christ is never included in his or the Bible's definition.

Do not speed read. Read everything carefully. You will see there has been no “cherry-picking” quotes. Mr. Armstrong taught that one of the greatest rules of Bible study is to always start with the clearest scriptures on a subject to establish the truth of a doctrine, and to only then look at less clear scriptures. The same should be done with his statements on a doctrine. We should start with the clearest ones, and only then move on to others. We begin with two very short paragraphs five pages apart in *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*, and two others:

“His gospel is the good news of the now soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD—the only hope of this world and its mixed-up mankind!”

“His gospel is the MESSAGE he brought mankind from God the Father, the good news of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD! That is the ONE thing above all Satan wants to defeat.”

pp. 51, 56

“Now what Gospel did Jesus preach? He proclaimed the Gospel of THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Mark 1:1, 14-15). Paul preached only the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to gentiles (Acts 28:30-31).”

Co-Worker Letter, January 22, 1982

“Jesus preached a definite Gospel. That and that alone is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was a Gospel message about the Kingdom of God—the begotten and finally to be born family of God—a family of divine persons, begotten and finally to be born of God.”

*WWN, Recent History of the Philadelphia Era,
June 24, 1985*

Let’s pause to make a point. None of these quotes have said that the kingdom of God is “part of” or “most of” or the “key component of” the gospel, but rather always that it IS the gospel. Keep this understanding in mind as you continue to read. In fact, before returning to more statements from Mr. Armstrong, let *him* make plain himself this point (again, the bold is mine):

“In other words, not one of them knows what spiritual salvation really is, what the KINGDOM OF GOD (**Christ’s whole Gospel**) really is, WHY God put humanity here on earth: WHAT is our real ultimate human POTENTIAL, or HOW we shall reach it. They know not God’s PURPOSE, nor His MASTER PLAN for working it out. They do not know why we are here, where we are going, or THE WAY. Those are the BIG, MAIN branches of the tree of knowledge. They are the MISSING DIMENSION in knowledge.”

Co-Worker Letter, November 19, 1976

The Story From History

Let’s return to a longer sequence of statements, and allow Mr. Armstrong to complete the big picture. At this point, he adds more to *how* Satan replaced the truth and injected his COUNTERFEIT gospel:

“I realize that when ministers and evangelists of this world and its organized denominations claiming to have the ‘CHRISTIAN religion’ preach ABOUT CHRIST, urge people to accept Christ, to believe on Christ, to ‘make their decision for Christ,’ etc., that they are ‘preaching the Gospel.’ BUT THAT IS NOT THE GOSPEL! Christ is NOT the Gospel—He was the Messenger who BROUGHT the Gospel! The GOSPEL was the MESSAGE He brought from God, as the MOST IMPORTANT AND SENSATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT ever made to mankind.”

Co-Worker Letter, July 30, 1973

“What did Jesus say? That many would come in His name, claiming to be His ministers, saying that Jesus was the Christ, and deceiving the MANY. This is what happened. They preached CHRIST, but they DENIED HIS MESSAGE—His GOSPEL! Even the ministry was deceived. The GOSPEL is the MESSAGE God sent for mankind by His Messenger who was Christ.”

“It is THE GOSPEL—Christ’s own Gospel—which points THE WAY to world peace. The Kingdom of God is the GOVERNMENT of God, which soon will replace ALL the governments of ALL nations and bring us world PEACE.”

“But what the world has been deceived into accepting as the Gospel has been preaching a Christ WITHOUT ANY LAW—a different Christ who is supposed to have done away with His Father’s Law. Those who have ‘preached CHRIST’ to the world have said ‘the Law is done away.’ The missionaries have not taught anything in these big Gentile nations about GOD’S LAW. And yet God’s Law is THE WAY that will CAUSE world PEACE!”

“And THAT MESSAGE IS THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD! It is CHRIST’S Gospel, that has NOT been proclaimed before in those nations.”

Co-Worker Letter, October 25, 1973

“The MESSAGE God sent by Christ was the GOSPEL—and that Gospel was the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. It was the Message of the Covenant, which Covenant, as I said, shall establish the KINGDOM OF GOD on earth. The KINGDOM OF GOD is the GOVERNMENT of God which shall rule all nations. But also it is the FAMILY OF GOD into which we may be BORN—the DIVINE FAMILY which becomes a SPIRIT-NATION, ruling all nations on earth—a WORLD-RULING GOVERNMENT!

“Jesus was sent to ANNOUNCE that message—not to force men to accept it, believe it, and act on it. NEVER DID JESUS PLEAD WITH A SINGLE ONE TO BE CONVERTED. He merely announced the GOOD NEWS of the Kingdom of God, and He left it to people to decide whether to believe it and whether to act on it. He did not come THEN to CONVERT the world! He did not start a ‘soul-saving’ crusade—the Protestants did! He came to ANNOUNCE the GOSPEL—the GOOD NEWS of His coming KINGDOM! [Author’s note: No witnessing for or professing Jesus, as only the true eyewitness apostles could—and need—do.]

“But people hated His message. Many BELIEVED on Him—realized and BELIEVED He was the Messiah. But they did not believe His message—His Gospel!”

“When the curtain lifts on that ‘LOST CENTURY’ of Church history, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God was no longer preached to the world. Jesus and His apostles had carried on a dual ministry—proclaiming the Kingdom of God and healing the sick. But after that ‘Lost Century’ neither the Gospel of God’s Kingdom nor healing was going out to the world.” [Author’s note: The gospel and healing are listed as separate subjects by Mr. Armstrong.]

“That happened. They claimed to be the ministers of Jesus Christ. They said Jesus was the Christ. They preached CHRIST (the Messenger) to the world, but NOT His message—His Gospel—the Kingdom of God. And they indeed have deceived the MANY—the MILLIONS and hundreds of millions!”

Co-Worker Letter, February 21, 1974

“The Gospel was GOING OUT! These thousands of brethren coming in were either carrying out the Gospel, or backing those who did. And WHAT GOSPEL? The Gospel GOD SENT BY JESUS—the Gospel of the Kingdom of God—which is both the FAMILY of God and the GOVERNMENT of God. (Mark 1:1, 14-15, Acts 1:3, etc., etc.) Philip went to Samaria proclaiming the KINGDOM OF GOD. (Acts 8:5, 12.) Paul proclaimed the KINGDOM OF GOD. (Acts 20:25, 28:23, 31.)”

Co-Worker Letter, March 18, 1974

“Jesus’ prophecy for NOW—our very time now—says, ‘This gospel OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the END [of the world] come’ (Matt. 24:14). The Church of God was founded in A.D. 31. About A.D.

53 the apostle Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia that they had already turned to ANOTHER Gospel! At that time a fierce controversy arose over whether the gospel to be preached was the gospel OF Christ, or ABOUT Christ. [Author's note: History is repeating itself. This chapter is proof.] The Gospel OF Christ—that is, the Gospel he proclaimed, was the good news of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1:1, 14-15). That Gospel (or 'good news' announcement) was not preached from about A.D. 53 until 1953—a century of 19-year time cycles—when God opened up the most powerful radio station on earth, Radio Luxembourg in Europe, to me.”

Co-Worker Letter, January 15, 1984

“This Work is the direct and one and only fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24:14 for this very time: ‘This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the END [of this world] come.’ [Author's note: Again, the Living Church of God specifically adds witnessing Jesus to Matthew 24:14.] The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is the ONLY true Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the first 20 years of the founding of the true Church in A.D. 31, a fierce controversy arose as to whether the gospel to be preached was the Gospel OF Christ or a gospel ABOUT Christ. A false church rose up, teaching a gospel of false prophets, ABOUT Christ. See II Corinthians 11:3 and verses 13-15. Also both Jude and John, writing in the 90s A.D., warned of false prophets already changing the truth of the Gospel, and warning brethren to turn back to the true faith once delivered to the saints. Also, Paul wrote the churches in Galatia, about A.D. 53, that they already had turned to ANOTHER gospel.”

“From that time on, a false gospel ABOUT Christ was preached in the name of traditional Christianity, by which (Rev. 12:9) Satan deceived the whole world.”

Co-Worker Letter, April 18, 1984

“But what is the gospel of the kingdom? It is the gospel OF JESUS CHRIST. In Mark 1:1, ‘the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ’ and in verses 14-15, it is ‘the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD.’”

“Traditional ‘Christianity’ has been deceived and has deceived the world with a false gospel ABOUT Christ, instead of the gospel OF Christ, which Jesus preached. He was a messenger sent from God with a message, and that message is the GOSPEL. The word gospel means ‘GOOD NEWS.’ It was an ANNOUNCEMENT about the coming king-

New Testament Kingdom Passages

It is worth taking at least a little time to see from the scriptures how often Christ and the apostles talked about the kingdom of God. Here are just a few passages. Also, notice how often the message of the kingdom is accompanied by healings:

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the KINGDOM, and *healing* all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Matt. 4:23).

“And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the KINGDOM, and *healing* every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matt. 9:35).

“Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD; And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the KINGDOM OF GOD is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14-15).

“And He said unto them, I must preach the KINGDOM OF GOD to other cities also: *for therefore am I sent*” (Luke 4:43).

“And it came to pass afterward, that He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the KINGDOM OF GOD: and the twelve were with Him” (Luke 8:1).

“Then He called His twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to *cure* diseases. And He sent them to preach the KINGDOM OF GOD, and to *heal* the sick” (Luke 9:1-2).

“And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and *healing* every where” (Luke 9:6).

“And the people, when they knew it, followed Him: and He received them, and spoke unto them of the KINGDOM OF GOD, and healed them that had need of *healing*” (Luke 9:11).

“Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go you and preach the KINGDOM OF GOD” (Luke 9:60).

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them...into every city and place, whither He Himself would come...*heal* the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The KINGDOM OF GOD is come nigh unto you” (Luke 10:1, 9).

“To whom also He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the KINGDOM OF GOD” (Acts 1:3).

dom of God—that we can be born into that kingdom, and that kingdom IS the divine FAMILY of God.”

Co-Worker Letter, August 23, 1984

MYSTERY OF THE AGES

So far our focus has been on Mr. Armstrong’s constant theme in co-worker letters of how the gospel was the KINGDOM OF GOD. You saw that he never added anything else to what was always an unwavering description. He repeated these references because he wanted God’s people, as well as all those who were contributing to the Work (many thousands of co-workers), to never lose this focus.

Obviously, Mr. Armstrong spoke in many other places about the kingdom. The reader is certainly aware that the final, largest and defining work of his life was the book *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*, already cited briefly. Time and again in this book he referenced not only the gospel of the kingdom of God, but also more of the history about the raging controversy surrounding what the Bible said was the true gospel. Here are just six more quotes from the book. Read each carefully to gain the fuller picture of what Mr. Armstrong explains:

“On this point the entire world of traditional Christianity has been deceived. Here is a most important truth: Satan sitting on earth’s throne tried to kill the Christ child. He then tried to tempt and disqualify Jesus just before the Christ started his earthly ministry (Matt. 4). Satan caused the martyrdom of most of the apostles. He caused intensive persecution against the Church. He caused a violent controversy to flare up in the early months and years of the Church disputing whether the gospel to be proclaimed was the gospel *OF* Christ, or man’s gospel *ABOUT* Christ. Satan caused the latter to win out, and in less than 20 years a false and counterfeit gospel *ABOUT* Christ was being proclaimed by all but the persecuted *FEW* who loyally remained as the small and persecuted true original Church of God.”

pp. 129-130

“[Jesus] came also with a message from God called the gospel. The word *gospel* means good news. And actually, his gospel—the message sent by him from God—was the good news of the kingdom of God. And the kingdom of God, as we shall see, is to be the restoration of the government of God over the earth and the ousting of Satan from that throne.

“Prior to the begetting and birth of Jesus, God had said to his mother-to-be, Mary, by his angel: ‘And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his KINGDOM there shall be no end’ (Luke 1:31-33). His gospel was the good news of that kingdom—the kingdom of God.

“Now another vital prophecy. In Isaiah 9:6-7: ‘For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.’ Notice the government would be on his shoulder. Jesus is going to be King over all the earth. And one of the purposes of his coming was to announce that kingdom. Jesus’ gospel was not only good news—it was an announcement or good news proclamation of the coming kingdom of God. What a tragedy that a ‘traditional Christianity’ has forsaken and lost that vital and glorious gospel message and substituted their own gospel about the person of Christ.”

“His human birth was the arrival of the ‘second Adam.’ He had come 1) to qualify, where the first Adam failed, to replace the former archangel Lucifer on the THRONE OF THE EARTH, ruling with the GOVERNMENT OF GOD. He had come 2) to announce the future establishment of the KINGDOM OF GOD and teach that prophetic good news (gospel) to his chosen future apostles. He had come 3) to take on himself, as our direct Creator, the penalty for our sins by his death on the cross—that we might share in that world. And he had come 4) to be resurrected from the dead by God, making possible ETERNAL GOD-LIFE for the people of God and after his Second Coming for all who are willing, of all humanity, who have ever lived on this earth. And he had come 5) to establish GOD’S CHURCH, to be trained to rule under him.”

Ibid., pp. 209-211, 215

“We read of it in Mark chapter 1: ‘The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God...Jesus came into Galilee, preaching [proclaiming, teaching] the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel’ (Mark 1:1,14-15).

“And, from Matthew, ‘And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom’ (Matt. 4:23).

“This prophetic message (gospel) of the KINGDOM OF GOD will be explained in detail in Chapter 7. It was the GOOD NEWS of the future establishment on earth of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, restored and administered by the divine GOD FAMILY—the KINGDOM OF GOD, to replace the present evil world of Satan.

“Jesus’ proclaiming of this amazing future NEWS—combined with his miracles of healing, turning water into wine and others, caused great excitement. [Author’s note: Notice that miracles, obviously including healings, are separate from the gospel.] Immense crowds followed him and his disciples. He was teaching his disciples to become the future apostles, while he preached this message to the public.”

Ibid., pp. 222-223

“Satan is a great COUNTERFEITER! He appears as ‘an angel of light’ (II Cor. 11:13-15). And he has his counterfeit CHURCHES! His ministers are deceived by him into believing they are ‘ministers of righteousness’ and of Christ (II Cor. 11:15; Matt. 24:5).

“‘But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him...For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works’ (II Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15).

“Notice these deceived but false churches believe they are the true church, and their ministers ‘are transformed as the ministers of righteousness’—in other words, appear to be the true ministers of Jesus Christ. And indeed, many of them may be entirely sincere, being themselves deceived. Yet they have neither known nor preached Jesus’ true Gospel of THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Matt. 24:14). Nor do they comprehend what is written in this book about the CHURCH OF GOD!” [Author’s note: What a powerful message in this paragraph for those who will heed.]

Ibid., pp. 250-251

“For that training—that spiritual development of God’s CHARACTER, God has given his Church a DUAL responsibility:

“1) ‘Go ye into all the world’ and proclaim the GOOD NEWS—announcement—of the coming kingdom of God.

“2) ‘Feed my sheep.’ [Author’s note: There is no *third* commission! The Ezekiel Warning is part of the First Commission at the end of the age.]

“But in FEEDING the ‘sheep,’ developing in them God’s spiritual CHARACTER, God has given them THEIR PART in supporting, backing up, the great commission: ‘Go ye into all the world.’

“This first and great commission was given to the apostles. To a lesser extent evangelists were used in carrying forth the message. Other leaders—ordained ministers—were stationary, yet even the local pastor of a church may hold evangelistic services in his area—not the ‘soul-saving crusade’ type, but lectures ANNOUNCING and PROCLAIMING as a witness the coming KINGDOM OF GOD (the true gospel)!

“This ENTIRE GREAT COMMISSION—proclaiming the GOOD NEWS of the coming kingdom, and ‘feeding the sheep’—is a COMBINED administration and function of the Church.”

Ibid., pp. 265-266

“It seems that today all churches have lost the gospel of Jesus Christ. They preach primarily their gospel ABOUT Jesus Christ.

“Jesus Christ came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. Yet *few* preach about the kingdom of God today, for they have lost all knowledge of what it is! But does any, except God’s true Church, proclaim the true gospel of the kingdom of God today?

“A prominent evangelist said to a worldwide radio audience that the gospel of the kingdom of God is not for us today. Some denominations proclaim a ‘gospel of grace’, some what they call a ‘gospel of salvation’; most a gospel *about* Christ; some a social gospel; some the ‘Science of Mind’ or ‘Religious Science.’” [Author’s note: Take note of the reference to the “social gospel” for later.]

CHRIST’S Gospel

“What is the one and *only* gospel of Jesus Christ? THE WORLD DOES NOT KNOW! It has not been preached for 19 centuries, strange as that may seem. Look into your BIBLE. Look at it from the very beginning!

“‘The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ’ you’ll read in Mark 1:1. ‘Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, The time is

fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel' (Mark 1:14-15).

"It is necessary to *believe that* GOSPEL to be saved! And how can you *believe* it, unless you know what it is? And for 1,900 years, the world did not know. That gospel was suppressed and replaced by man's gospel about Christ.

"Jesus went everywhere preaching the GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD. He taught in parables about the KINGDOM OF GOD. He sent out seventy men preaching, and commanded them to preach THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Luke 10:9). He sent the apostles, on whom the Church of God was founded, to preach only THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Luke 9:1-2). After the resurrection, before ascending to heaven, Jesus taught his disciples about the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3).

"Isn't it amazing that the world has LOST the knowledge of what it is?

"The apostle Paul preached THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Acts 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31). And God Almighty, through Paul, pronounced *a double curse* on man or angel that would DARE preach any other gospel! (Gal. 1:8-9.)

"Why, then, do so *many* DARE to preach so many *other* gospels? The good news of THE KINGDOM OF GOD is something you must *understand*, and BELIEVE, in order to be saved! Jesus Christ said so! You had better be finding out *what it is!*

"That gospel—the kingdom of God—is the subject of this chapter. It follows the chapter on the mystery of the Church, because the kingdom of God follows the Church. The purpose of the Church, remember, is to prepare 'called-out-ones' to teach and to rule in the kingdom of God.

Ibid., pp. 294-296

Much, much more of *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* could have been included. You may wish to reread this book just to see Mr. Armstrong's constant focus on the gospel of the kingdom. In fact, every one of God's people should consider rereading this vitally important book at some point, anyway. (Be sure to get an unaltered copy.)

THE INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL

But *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* and his booklet about the true gospel are not the only publications in which the gospel received special attention from Mr. Armstrong. *The Incredible Human Potential* included almost as much as either of these. In fact, the book's entire first chapter could

be included as one long statement here. Also consider rereading that chapter. He explains that the gospel involves a vast expanse of knowledge. I have brought just one section, under the subhead “What Christ’s Gospel Was All About,” so you can at least understand the broader nature of what he knew the subject of God’s kingdom included. Christ’s role is conspicuously absent:

“I say Christ’s gospel – the message He brought from God – was the advance good news of the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

“But just what does that include?

“And why is the Kingdom of God necessary?

“Just how does it affect and relate directly to your personal and individual life?

“Actually, Christ’s message of God’s coming Kingdom is directly concerned with world conditions as they are – with human nature – its source and origin – with world evils, suffering, unhappiness – with world peace. It’s concerned with government – with the reason present human governments fail to be the benefactors of their peoples they are supposed to be.

“His message hits directly at the very roots of individual personal happiness and at the awesome transcendent potential of each human life. It is concerned with the CAUSES of present conditions that affect every human and with the WAY that will solve all problems.

“But it is concerned with far, far more.

“It is concerned with God’s tremendous, overwhelming, overall purpose as Creator of the entire universe. It’s concerned with the entire vast universe, filled with its uncountable galaxies, nebulae, suns, stars, planets, and with God’s purpose for them. It’s concerned with all the angels – with the fact that one third of all God’s created angels turned to SIN from which there can be no redemption, and God’s great purpose and plan to prevent such a catastrophe happening to the other two thirds.

“Most of these things are never remotely considered in religious teachings in this world. God’s message is concerned with overall truth.

“What has been covered so far should be considered as merely the introduction to the entire story of Christ’s gospel message.”

pp. 18-19

Other Publications

The reader cannot possibly miss the unwavering emphasis that Mr. Armstrong gave to the gospel of the kingdom of God in virtually every-

thing that he wrote. How interesting that in their longer, more detailed description of the gospel is *nothing* about the person of Jesus.

I have included a few more quotes from other publications to complete the chapter. First is one more brief statement from his gospel booklet, and the chapter closes with another:

“Now, HOW do we enter into that glorious KINGDOM? Jesus came preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, REPENT, and BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.

“Just TWO things *we* do — REPENT, and BELIEVE. We must BELIEVE the Gospel, and that means [Author’s note: The *believing* means, not the *gospel* means.] also believing on JESUS CHRIST, the KING of the Kingdom of God, and coming KING *of* kings over all the families of the earth. It means believing in Him as personal SAVIOUR, as High Priest now, and as coming KING.

“But to repent is to completely CHANGE THE MIND in respect to SIN, and ‘sin is the transgression of the LAW’ (I John 3:4) — the Law of GOD by which God RULES the Kingdom.

“It means a total, complete CHANGE OF MIND AND OF LIFE. It means we REPENT of transgressing the rule, the will, the laws, of GOD. What did Jesus say to the young man who asked Him HOW to inherit eternal life? He said, ‘If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS’ (Mat. 19:17).”

What Is the True Gospel?, p. 10

“It’s about time that SOMEONE speaks out, in this world, and tells the world that the very GOSPEL of Jesus Christ was the advance ANNOUNCEMENT of this very world GOVERNMENT — a government, NOT by selfishly motivated man but by the living all-powerful God.

“Jesus Christ’s message — His Gospel — was the Kingdom of God — the GOVERNMENT of the living God!”

Ibid., p. 12

“We are not to convert everyone in the world in this age, but to declare the Gospel. What Gospel? The good news of the Kingdom—the good news of the thousand years of restitution of all things when Christ returns to reign in power and great glory!”

Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which?, p. 36

“Let me explain a very important fact here. Soon after Christ’s ascension to heaven and the founding of the church in A.D. 31, a vio-

lent controversy arose, according to church history, as to whether the gospel to be proclaimed was the gospel OF Christ, or a gospel ABOUT Christ. [Author's note: The number of times that Mr. Armstrong mentions this ought to serve as a sobering warning for every one of God's people today. Since "there is nothing new under the sun," Satan would never give up his attempt to pervert Christ's message. Read carefully his even more sobering next words.] The latter won out. False prophets did arise in the first century, saying Jesus was the Christ, but omitting altogether Jesus' gospel which was the message of the coming world ruling kingdom of God to rule all nations after Christ's Second Coming."

Are We In the Last Days?, p. 8

"There ensued 'the lost century' in the history of the true Church of God. There was a well-organized conspiracy to blot out all record of Church history during that period. A hundred years later, history reveals a 'Christianity' utterly unlike the Church Christ founded.

"It had taken the NAME of Christ and applied it to the Babylonian mystery religion. It had replaced the MESSAGE Jesus brought from God with a 'gospel' *about* the person of Christ—proclaiming the Messenger but suppressing the entire missing dimension from His message.

"And for at least eighteen and one-half centuries the true gospel was not proclaimed publicly to the world."

Your Awesome Future – How Religion Deceives You, p. 5

"WHY do people not understand the very Gospel Jesus Christ taught? He taught the KINGDOM OF GOD. So did the apostles, including Paul."

Just What Do You Mean...Conversion?, p. 8

"Today you hear preached many different gospels. Some call what they preach the gospel of salvation—some the gospel of grace. Some the gospel of going to heaven. Some preach a message ABOUT Christ—about His PERSON—but although they may CALL it the gospel of Christ, it is NOT the Gospel Christ TAUGHT and preached.

"Note it! The Gospel Jesus said it is necessary to believe is 'the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD'. A kingdom is a GOVERNMENT. So Jesus preached the Gospel—or GOOD NEWS—of the coming GOVERNMENT OF GOD being restored to the earth!

"It is VITAL that you establish, clearly once for all, WHAT Gospel Jesus brought from God—WHAT Gospel God also sent to the Gentiles.

For ‘traditional Christianity’ HAS PREACHED A DIFFERENT GOSPEL. And your Bible says THE WHOLE WORLD—ALL NATIONS—have been DECEIVED!

“Have YOU? Better make SURE!

“Now I want you to notice TWO important points.

“1) The Message Jesus taught was SENT BY GOD.

“2) Jesus was powerless, OF HIMSELF. The WORK OF GOD, which He started, was carried on BY THE POWER OF GOD’S HOLY SPIRIT. It was that Spirit, IN HIS PERSONAL HUMAN BODY, which carried on GOD’S WORK.”

The Plain Truth, Personal from the Editor, April, 1968

Before concluding this chapter, we need to look at one more absolutely crucial—and definitive!—statement from Mr. Armstrong. He removes all doubt concerning whether the gospel includes the understanding about Jesus Christ’s role—about whether believing the gospel involves believing in or on Jesus. It also comes from his gospel booklet and appears under the subhead “Which Gospel Did Jesus Preach?”:

“And what do we read? ‘Jesus came into Galilee, PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the KINGDOM OF GOD is at hand: REPENT YE, and BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.’

“Notice, Jesus said, ‘Believe *THE GOSPEL!*’

“WHAT Gospel? The one He was proclaiming — ‘the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.’

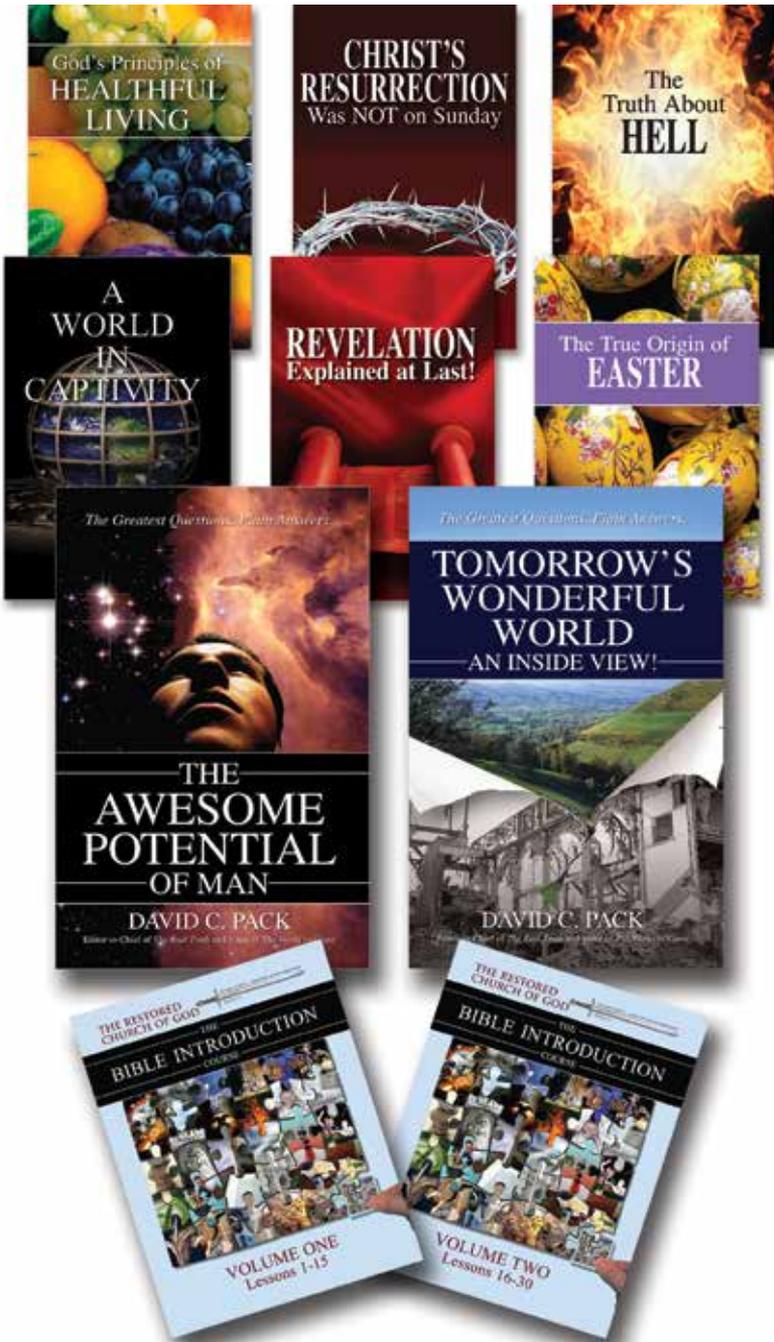
“But, one may ask, don’t we need to believe on Jesus? Of course. **Other scriptures teach that.** But at *this* particular time Jesus said we must believe *Him* — believe what He said — believe the Gospel of the Kingdom of God! [Author’s note: This is one of the most important paragraphs in the book. Get this! In regard to “belief on Jesus,” Mr. Armstrong bluntly explains, “**OTHER SCRIPTURES** (meaning, *not* the gospel) **TEACH THAT.**”]

“Some believed *on* Jesus, but did not *believe Jesus* — did not believe *what He SAID* (John 7:31; 8:30, 31, 46).”

“We hear a great deal today of the gospel of MEN about the PERSON of Jesus Christ — confining the message solely to the things ABOUT Jesus. As a result, *millions* believe *on* Christ, *who do not* BELIEVE CHRIST! But Jesus’ *Gospel* IS HIS MESSAGE!”

“And so now, WHAT IS that Gospel?

“The English word Gospel comes from the word ‘God-spell,’ and means GOOD NEWS. Daily, we read the NEWS of world happenings —



Comprehensive Literature: The Restored Church of God offers to the public a wide range of free books, booklets and *Bible Introduction Course* lessons that thoroughly explain the incredible future awaiting every human being.

mostly BAD news! We live in a troubled, chaotic world. And the very BEST news you can hear in this day, or any other, is the GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD.” [Author’s note: Not the “GOOD NEWS of the forgiveness of our sins through Christ’s sacrifice,” as the Living Church of God declares.]

What Is the True Gospel?, pp. 6-8

Understand that a vast number of additional quotes could have been included. (There will be more later.) But everything in life has a reasonable and natural limit. If you are not yet convinced the gospel is solely about the kingdom of God, you probably never will be. Such people are doomed to suffer the curse of accepting—or tolerating and at least tacitly *supporting*—ANOTHER GOSPEL!

Sent to Reveal the Father

The churches of the world routinely speak about Jesus Christ. How often did you hear about the Father in the church you attended before you were called? Probably never or almost never.

Remember Christ explained that His purpose was not to speak of Himself, but rather to reveal the Father to mankind for the first time. In fact, He said this: “He that speaks of himself seeks his own glory: but he that seeks His [the Father’s] glory that sent Him [Jesus], the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him” (John 7:18).

Consider what Jesus was saying. If the gospel of the kingdom of God was either an equation with the Person of Jesus Christ or He was a major component of the gospel along with the kingdom, then Christ would have had to speak of Himself almost continually, meaning as often as He preached the gospel. How many have thought of this? And how many have recognized that Christ would have had to routinely violate His own acknowledgement every time He preached the gospel?

Of course, Jesus certainly did explain His role as mankind’s Savior when He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me” (John 14:6). Even this revelatory information given to His listeners was intended to show that He was the way to have access to the Father. Matthew 11:27 is plainer, stating, “neither knows any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will *reveal Him*.” Jesus understood that He must both *reveal* the Father and *point* people to the Father. *This* is what He always did!

Now remember the “Lord’s prayer.” Jesus explained that it was to teach people how to pray *to the Father*. Sadly, most in the world ignore

this and pray primarily to Christ (or Mary) and they speak almost continually of “the Lord this” and “the Lord that.” Few pray to the Father, and even fewer regularly speak of the One who is the ultimate Head of a Family into which we are called to be *His* sons, not Christ’s.

In John 6, Jesus also called Himself the “Bread of life” (vs. 48). Then, later in this chapter He spoke of how *the Father* must do the calling of anyone who comes “to the Son” (vs. 44, 65).

This is all very, very basic understanding that the entire Church once seemed to understand. Why will not the entire world of Christendom understand that the Christ who spoke the gospel everywhere He went also uttered what He did in John 7:18? Much more important, why will not the splinter leaders remember what they once knew? But the greatest question may be why so many thousands in the splinters seem so willing to believe that Christ (if He *were* part of the gospel) must have talked continually about Himself.

Jesus Christ did not do this, because He is *not* part of the gospel!

Four Keys to Deception

You have seen the plain, unmistakable teaching from Mr. Armstrong, quoting the Bible, about what is the true gospel—that it is the KINGDOM OF GOD, and nothing else!

This requires mentioning again the vital principle forgotten by so many: One of the 12 rules of Bible study is to *always* begin with the most basic, plain scriptures, and only *then* go on to verses which are less clear. We have applied that principle, only this time we employed it with what Mr. Armstrong wrote about a *doctrine*.

Understand a most basic point: When leaders deceive, they have to employ a *methodology*—an often predetermined LOGIC OF DECEPTION—to the process. False teachers today *must* do FOUR THINGS (wittingly or unwittingly), with the latter three employed when they cite Mr. Armstrong as the authority for the error—any error—that they teach:

- (1) Ignore (or twist) the clear weight of scripture.
- (2) In this case, ignore the mountain of crystal clear—absolutely plain—and conclusive statements from Mr. Armstrong emphatically stating, for instance, that the gospel is *only* about the kingdom of God.
- (3) Isolate *one* less clear quote from him to make their point.
- (4) Carefully ellipse that one statement because even it demonstrates, if shown in its entirety, that the gospel has nothing to do with Jesus Christ’s sacrifice or anything else. LCG has done this in the most egregious fashion when they offer the *only* quote they could find to suit

their purpose, which is to alter the gospel, baldly lie to God's people about it and continue seizing His tithes for themselves!

The subject of how splinter leaders deceive is of colossal importance to the twenty-first century people of God. Chapter Twelve will take you much deeper into why and how God has permitted their presence as one of the final great tests for His people.

More Problems

God attaches such enormous importance to believing and preaching only the true gospel of the Bible that this subject is simply too big for even one large chapter. There are other errors being taught in regard to the mixed-up counterfeit gospel believed by many thousands today...

MORE GOSPEL ERRORS

You may have supposed that adding Jesus' person is the only error today pertaining to the gospel. This is far from true. Chapter Five contains three more big ones.

Another Confusing Error

The first statement begins with a paragraph used in the previous chapter. It is repeated to give the setting of a larger statement that best introduces another “gospel” error—one that always must eventually accompany the mistake of placing Jesus into the gospel. (All bolding is mine):

“In other words, not one of them knows what spiritual salvation really is, what the **KINGDOM OF GOD (Christ’s whole Gospel)** really is, **WHY** God put humanity here on earth: **WHAT** is our real ultimate human **POTENTIAL**, or **HOW** we shall reach it. They know not God’s **PURPOSE**, nor His **MASTER PLAN** for working it out. They do not know why we are here, where we are going, or **THE WAY**. Those are the **BIG, MAIN** branches of the tree of knowledge. They are the **MISSING DIMENSION** in knowledge.”

“Of course I always did, from the very beginning of this **WORK OF GOD**, proclaim the good news of the **COMING KINGDOM OF GOD**.”

“The original apostles proclaimed the **KINGDOM OF GOD**, but they also put **very special emphasis** on something that **speciall**

applied only to their time, right then. They were personal EYE WITNESSES to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In THEIR day, the chief opposition and persecution came from those Jewish leaders who rejected Christ as the promised Messiah. [Author's note: In other words, if the apostles did not first establish that Christ was the Messiah, no one would even *consider* the message that He brought. The Bible—God's RECORDED WORD—now witnesses what the apostles had to *personally* report. Mr. Armstrong will momentarily make this point, with the last paragraph of this quote adding more.]

“DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND. The Jews as a whole did not reject Christ. Indeed, virtually all His followers—the 120 that were WITH HIM and the apostles (Acts 1:15) from which the church started—all were Jews (or proselytes). The church BEGAN as almost 100% JEWISH. The Apostle Paul always went first to the Jews, and most of his churches started out as Jewish. The persecution was not so much from the rank and file of Jewish people, as from their Jewish RULERS, who held political jobs under the Roman government—the Pharisees—and also the scribes and Sadducees.

“Nevertheless, the EARLIEST opposition and persecution the apostles faced at the BEGINNING of the church was from these officials who REJECTED Christ as the promised Messiah. **The apostles were EYE WITNESSES to His life, death and RESURRECTION.** They spent 40 days with Him AFTER His resurrection.” [Author's note: Remember this paragraph.]

Co-Worker Letter, November 19, 1976

“Originally there were **12 apostles.** The principal work of the 12 apostles, **if you will read carefully** in the book of Acts and **if you will analyze** their sermons, included not only the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, but **they put emphasis** on the big question **at that time** in Judea—**Jesus' messiahship.**

“The Jews had been influenced by the Pharisees and Sadducees to not believe in the existence of Jesus as the Messiah. Now the Pharisees knew, as Nicodemus said in the third chapter of John, that Jesus was the Messiah. But they feared Him because they had government positions over their own people.”

“Now the common run of the people were not told that Jesus was the Messiah. And the 12 apostles—**God needed 12 because they were eye-witnesses of the resurrection**—put main emphasis during the first years of their ministry on the fact that they were eyewitnesses of the resurrection, proving that Jesus was the Messiah.”

“So, though the Church is a spiritual organism, it is organized not on a carnal human pattern, but on God’s spiritual pattern. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the message that Christ proclaimed. That message was the Good News or the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. That is the message He preached, the restoration of the Government of God by the coming Kingdom of God.

“The apostolic Church from A.D. 31 proclaimed it. They proclaimed that message **but with special emphasis**, as I said, on **the resurrection of Jesus Christ** of which they **were eye-witnesses. It required 12, as in a 12-man jury, to make it absolutely certain and to convince the people in Judea.**” [Author’s note: Also remember this most important paragraph.]

WWN, Congress Of Leading Ministers, March 6, 1981

A Stark Contrast!

This is all very clear. Now notice how LCG has perverted all that Mr. Armstrong explained by inserting the idea of witnessing Jesus today as part of the gospel. This is made more incredible by the fact that Roderick Meredith constantly describes how he knew Mr. Armstrong better than everyone else, bragging time and again of having “spent thousands of hours with him.” Of course, this is gross exaggeration, and Mr. Armstrong deliberately avoided this man almost entirely for the last 14 years of his life. But as you read, ask—what was this man hearing from Mr. Armstrong? Here is what this “presiding evangelist” wrote:

“After His resurrection, Jesus added **a further dimension to the gospel** message. He **told the disciples** that they were **to be witnesses** to the world that His **suffering, death and resurrection** were necessary for the forgiveness of sin (Luke 24:44-49). Yet even after His resurrection, Jesus *continued to focus* on the Kingdom of God, as did His disciples (Acts 1:3, 6). The apostolic Church understood and taught both about the coming Kingdom of God and the things concerning Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12; 28:23, 31). Sadly, the ‘mainstream Christian’ world has lost sight of the gospel of the kingdom, and has mistakenly focused only on **the life and person of Jesus Christ**. Many churches have missed **half of the gospel** message because they have followed misguided leaders who have lost the proper focus.”

Living Church News, Nov.-Dec. 2006

Does this unscriptural, half-and-half, witnessing-Jesus “gospel” sound remotely like what Mr. Armstrong taught? In fact, with the last

sentence above in mind, it reduces MR. ARMSTRONG to a “misguided leader” who “lost the proper focus.” The first sentence—the premise—is utterly false. Without it, the rest of the paragraph would be true—until the last sentence. This conclusion—written with the typical cunning wording we saw so often with the apostates—is also completely false. In other words, written to *appear* to disagree with, and distance itself from, the Protestants, it in fact *endorses* them. Reread it until this is clear—and see the dangerous mixture of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” at work.

Rejecting and Retaining the Wrong Things!

Mr. Armstrong’s statements explaining the 12 apostles’ role as eye-witnesses introduces a curious confusion that grips almost the entire world of Christendom—and this now includes thousands following leaders like Roderick Meredith. It has to do with the definition of apostles and their early additional responsibility to personally witness events surrounding Christ’s last days.

Let’s understand. Virtually no theologians or ministers of the world’s churches will accept that there could be apostles after the first century. This is because they define this office solely as men who were *personal eyewitnesses* of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. Ironically, on the other hand, they *do* believe there remains a responsibility beyond the apostolic age to “witness for” or to “profess” Jesus Christ, or more accurately as this is done today, to witness or profess the *name* of Jesus Christ everywhere. Obviously, even such misguided religionists recognize that no one can now speak as a direct eyewitness to what only the apostles saw. But they read instruction that should be seen as solely given to the original apostles, such as Acts 1:8-9, 22, 2:32, 4:33 and others, and use it as authority for their own re-invented “witnessing Jesus Christ” agenda.

So, they have it backwards on both counts. The world’s churches threw out what they should have kept—and kept, but with a twist, what they should have left behind for application 19 centuries ago!

Let’s make this more plain: There *can* still be apostles after the first century (God’s people certainly recognized Mr. Armstrong was one), because the office of “one sent” involves infinitely more than being an eyewitness to events immediately surrounding Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. However, while there is *no further need* to establish Christ’s Messiahship through eyewitness accounts (the Bible now does this), there has *never* been either any instruction or a command to profess—or

witness—Jesus Christ! After all, what would be the point, since people must be *called* to Christ by the Father (John 6:44, 65). The practice of modern witnessing became a *necessary invention* that was the *automatic next step* for those who placed Jesus' role into the gospel. If Jesus *were* the gospel, they had to “preach” their “gospel”—i.e. “witness” Him. (Instead, Christians are to *confess* Christ, but only when put to the test—I Pet. 3:15; Matt. 10:32-33; Phil. 2:11; Rom. 10:9-10.)

Can you see this? Do you see *how* Satan's spirit is leading LCG, and others, straight toward the thinking of *his* ministers and *his* churches? Can you see *why*—*how*—and in what way—these Laodicean organizations are falling further into error?

The Protestants in Their Own Words

Now let's compare Mr. Armstrong's explanation of the true gospel and the correct view of the apostles “eye-witnessing” Jesus Christ to the “witnessing” that LCG *and the Protestants* practice. Notice how these denominations connect witnessing “Jesus” to their gospel. Will you be sobered at the *spirit* these quotes reveal is being mirrored in your organization?:

United Methodist Church:

“As United Methodists, we have an obligation to bear a faithful Christian witness to Jesus Christ, the living reality at the center of the Church's life and witness...striving to express faithfully the witness we make in our own time.”

“What does it mean to create a culture of witness in our churches, society, and world?...The answer is contained in one Name: Jesus the Christ!”

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

“All ELCA mission personnel are called to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ through their work.”

Presbyterian Church (USA):

“Who are we Presbyterians? As far back as 1837 the General Assembly declared that the church, by its very nature, is a missionary society whose purpose is to share the love of God in Jesus Christ in word and deed and with all the world. Witnessing to the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world...preach the gospel, heal the sick, and educate new generations for the future.”

Episcopal Church:

“Let’s look more closely at what Jesus said. It’s true that the apostles had been witnesses of all that Jesus said and did during his earthly ministry, but what Jesus says in today’s reading is, ‘you will be my witnesses.’ Our testimony is about him, not just about what happened long ago and far away. We are to give evidence about what we ourselves have heard, seen, experienced. We can’t be witnesses unless we have met the Risen Christ—unless our lives have been transformed by him. If we could in good conscience go before a notary and sign a paper attesting of the presence of God in our lives and in the world, then, and only then, can we be his witnesses.

“This is something that we, as Christians, probably do a lot more often than we know. St. Francis of Assisi said it well: ‘Proclaim the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words.’ How many persons in your own life have been witnesses, silent or otherwise, to you?...We are called to do the same, and this call is not issued just to teach us individually, but also to us as members of the Body of Christ—and, more specifically, to us as members of this congregation. We should be seriously considering how we are called, in this place and at this time, to be his witnesses.

“Probably we don’t think of ourselves in that way. Nevertheless, if the Lord Jesus calls us to be witnesses, we’d better not think of this as something optional.”

These mission statements leave no ambiguity about the intent of witnessing Jesus. But tragically, they could as easily have been written by certain splinter leaders. How long will it be before these men, like the apostates, urge their members to practice “personal evangelism”? (UCG has long condoned this, and its “gospel” is not nearly as far wrong as LCG’s.)

The larger splinters also seem to no longer preach against use of the cross—once clearly understood to be a pagan sex symbol.

Under the apostates’ influence, and the Protestants who taught those men, the supposedly at least generally faithful splinter leaders were *conditioned* to believe Christ’s command to the 12 apostles still applies today. Remember, Mr. Armstrong described the original apostles as having the *additional* responsibility, applicable *only* in the first century and in Judea, to prove Jesus Christ was the Messiah—to serve as a kind of “jury of 12” in this regard, as Mr. Armstrong put it—or the Jews would not believe the message He taught.

This is just not difficult to understand.

Also remember, this responsibility applied before the New Testament was written! The recorded “gospel accounts” are *our* witness to Jesus Christ. Actually, some of the apostles are *still* eyewitnesses to Jesus Christ through the pages of the Bible. No one needs to witness this anymore because the Bible does this. Mr. Armstrong recognized this—and so should YOU! Of course, the roles of Jesus Christ must still be taught and explained, just not as part of the gospel—and not with the wrong, misguided nonstop *emphasis* given by the Living Church of God and by what are becoming their *Protestant brothers*.

One Classic Illustration

This section would not be complete without at least one well-known and classic example of how careless Bible reading inserts conclusions about Christ’s suffering and resurrection that are not in the text, and how some of these get merged into the “witnessing Jesus” thinking and practice.

Many get confused when they read I Corinthians 15:1-4, thinking that Paul contradicts himself from other passages we have seen by stating that “the gospel” (vs. 1) is “how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day” (vs. 3-4). Get your Bible and simply notice that the gospel reference in verse 1 is not connected in context to Christ’s death for our sins and burial in verses 3 and 4. Careful reading reveals this! When correctly understood, rather than saying that Christ is the gospel, this passage confirms the opposite, and supports Acts 8:12, 20:21-25, 28:31 and II Corinthians 11:4!

LCG now openly cites I Corinthians 15 to prove the same thing in the exact same way the apostates did when they *completely* replaced the kingdom of God with Christ’s role as the gospel.

Since Jesus preached “repent and believe the gospel,” it should now be clear WHY He emphasized both. His role must certainly always be preached in *conjunction* with the kingdom of God, because one cannot enter the kingdom unless he understands and accepts that “Christ died for our sins,” and that person has *repented* of his sins.

It would be helpful to offer a clarification at this point regarding Paul’s reference several times in his epistles to the “gospel of salvation” or “gospel of grace.” While these are being used today to bring Christ’s role into the Christian being able to receive salvation, they are merely other ways of referring to the *gift* of membership in the God Family. “Salvation” means being in the Family of God. The chief meaning of “grace” is unmerited pardon. Salvation cannot be earned on merit. It is

a free gift of God for those who meet the *qualifiers*. (The previous chapter carried an inset showing how much literature we offer that teaches the truth of salvation.)

Does the Gospel Include Healing?

Some in the world have preached a gospel of *healing* or one including healing. Did you notice that the Presbyterians include healing *with* their gospel—meaning *alongside* it, but not part of it?

Roderick Meredith, in his article “A ‘Missing’ Part of Christ’s Gospel,” makes another giant leap away from the truth of the gospel by asserting that healing should be part of it. (Recall that even the Presbyterians do not go this far with their gospel!) His rationale: Since Christ’s sacrifice is part of the gospel—and part of that sacrifice was Christ’s physical beating, which made possible forgiveness of physical sins—and also since Christ healed the sick—then healing must be part of the gospel.

The problem? This thinking cannot be found anywhere in Scripture! Healings and other miracles certainly did *accompany* the gospel message, but these were to show that Christ and the disciples bore God’s AUTHORITY for preaching what they did. The Bible nowhere states that they are part of the gospel.

This drift in thinking is what always happens where Satan is able to lead an organization into even a *partial* focus on Jesus Christ as within the gospel. Next naturally comes “witnessing” Him. Then could come healing. After that could be “personal evangelism,” and then on to anything else into which the devil—at this point established firmly at the helm for those looking—wants to take an organization. Later in the chapter we will see the next step involves a “social” connection, tied to the gospel.

How soon before more of God’s people recognize all of this as a walk down memory lane, when it was the apostates teaching the things they are now hearing for the SECOND TIME?

Nowhere did Mr. Armstrong ever suggest, or even speculate, that healing or other miracles are included within the gospel. I was warned 40 years ago (as were all other students) of this pseudo-“gospel” by my first Bible instructor at Ambassador College—the very man who wrote the above article!

The above leader openly bemoans in his article a lack of healing in his organization, while testifying to healings in the Worldwide Church of God. Here is what this leader acknowledges about the past:

“We must remember that when Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong led the Church, *thousands* of people were healed of all kinds of sicknesses, ailments and maladies. I *know*. I talked to them. I read the letters that came pouring in during those days.”

This report is true! But how incredible that this man cannot connect the many healings of the past to Mr. Armstrong’s defense of the true gospel, to his unwillingness to compromise it by adding *any* other elements—Christ’s person, witnessing, healing, social improvement or anything else that does not belong—that dilute the announcement of THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Mr. Armstrong could read the Galatians 1:6-9 curse! And he FEARED GOD! But he also understood a key biblical connection. The following, partially-repeated statement from earlier becomes Mr. Armstrong’s last one in this chapter:

“When the curtain lifts on that ‘LOST CENTURY’ of Church history, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God was no longer preached to the world. Jesus and His apostles had carried on a dual ministry—proclaiming the Kingdom of God and healing the sick. But after that ‘Lost Century’ neither the Gospel of God’s Kingdom nor healing was going out to the world.”

Co-Worker Letter, February 21, 1974

How many leaders will read this and correctly place blame for a lack of healings in a matter Mr. Armstrong well understood was a problem with a SPECIFIC IDENTIFIABLE CAUSE? He knew “the Gospel of God’s Kingdom” must be preached, or healing will not “go out to the world”—or, I would add, occur in the Church. Again, this is just not hard to understand.

On Christ’s authority, and in agreement with Mr. Armstrong, I tell you that the splinters—any splinter—focusing on these wrong ideas will never receive the gift of healings. And here is ANOTHER great reason: The Bible lists healing as a gift given *within the Body of Christ* (I Cor. 12:9). LCG (with UCG and other groups) has adopted the world’s view that the true Church and Christ’s Body now consists of *many organizations*. Of course, this thinking is totally false! More on this momentarily.

In contrast, The Restored Church of God sees—and its brethren experience—healings (some dramatic), and on a regular basis. But then the gospel of God’s kingdom *IS* going out to the world from THIS CHURCH! We also still recognize Christ leads and therefore gives the gift of healing—of course, not in every case—to only ONE ORGANIZATION! (Again, read *THE TRUE CHURCH* for more on this topic.)

“Another Jesus”—“Another Spirit”

I repeat: The inclusion of Jesus Christ—and anything else!—within the gospel of the kingdom of God is very, very different from what Mr. Armstrong taught in his booklet, and from what you have seen in his many statements just quoted, and throughout this book. Other “gospels” are COUNTERFEITS—simply *not* biblical—and this was easily demonstrated as not what any of God’s servants from past ages announced. Chapter One offered only some of that proof.

First, take a moment to read Galatians 1:6-9, and the curse (stated twice) connected to bringing “another gospel.” Then pause and grasp the additional seriousness of *what else* doing this means—the GRAVE DANGER springing from what is actually being brought into LCG, UCG and other groups with this revised “gospel.” You must understand WHY God places a curse on those who pervert the gospel—those who blur or confuse His “Genesis to Revelation” announcement about His now imminent WORLD GOVERNMENT under the God Family!

Next then, turn to II Corinthians 11:3-4. Again, I repeat for emphasis: This passage explains and connects the world’s different, false “another Jesus” to “another gospel” about *their* “Jesus,” and all of this, in turn, is connected to “another *spirit*” (and then also to a host of doctrines associated with this worldly “Jesus”). The apostle John labels this alien spirit the “*spirit* of error” (I John 4:6).

This is the SAME SPIRIT guiding the churches of professing Christianity, and it is identified and exposed in Ephesians 2:2!

Understand the extreme gravity here. Comprehend why it is VITAL to get this point straight! This very different, but very REAL, “another *spirit*” directly introduces—and is importing into the two largest splinters (and into several other groups)—the Protestant harlots’ (Rev. 17:5) whorish counterfeit definition of the “body of (their) ‘Christ.’” You must not let this escape you!

Extreme Danger!

Another critically important element ties in here, and it is directly connected to where the true Christ is leading His Work and Church. Both of these splinters (with virtually all of the other groups in agreement) teach that Christ no longer works exclusively in—is Head of—one organization—no longer leads only ONE unified, organized, uncompromising Church. Since the apostasy, many seem to find themselves almost forced

to believe that Christ's Church—the same as the biblical Body of Christ, as has been mentioned and as was seen in Mr. Armstrong's statements—now supposedly consists of *many* “fellowships,” “communities of believers,” “branches,” and so forth.

This is totally contrary to I Corinthians 1:10, 13 and 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:2-16, John 15, Matthew 12:25-30, among numerous other passages—and to all that Mr. Armstrong taught about the Body of Christ. (Prepare for Chapter Fourteen to shock your thinking in a related, but unexpected, regard.) This substitute idea asserts, in effect, that Christ and His Body are *now divided* among MANY ORGANIZATIONS. This is exactly what the “harlot daughter” churches (Rev. 17:5) believe and what they taught to the WCG apostates. The apostates, in turn, taught the Protestant “Jesus” and his counterfeit “body” and “gospel” to the splinter leaders before they fled the apostasy.

All elements of this are literally the doctrines of WHORES! Yet almost no one noticed.

Here is what the reader must recognize: The Protestant world believes in a completely *different* (counterfeit) “body” of a totally *different* (counterfeit) “Christ,” emanating from an entirely *different* and alien “SPIRIT”—*not* the Spirit of God. All of these churches are led by the “*spirit* of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2) shown to be sent from the “god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4)!

To summarize, when the splinter leaders (while still back in the WCG) unwittingly accepted the apostates' “harlot” teaching about the “body” of *their* “Jesus,” this set up the large splinters they lead to also unknowingly be thrown OUTSIDE the *true* Body of Christ and directly TOWARD the *false*, Protestant, counterfeit “body of ‘Christ.’”

Remember, Paul taught, “for by one Spirit are we all baptized into *one body*” and “for the body is not one member, but many” (I Cor. 12:13-14). Obviously, the early protestors were able to read this passage—and it presented them with a big problem. After Luther rejected Rome, each new protesting leader (Calvin, Wesley, Henry VIII, etc.) was forced to accept a new teaching compatible with the divided, competing and rapidly multiplying picture of denominations that the Protestant world was becoming. These men and others who followed had to reconcile the idea of *one* “body of Christ” with *hundreds* of denominations, and more appearing all the time! Think of it. Since they had rejected Rome's position that *it* was the sole true church, these differing groups had no choice but to greatly broaden their definition of Christ's Body.

Just as obviously, within this overall understanding must come the reminder that, no different from the Catholics, the Protestants are led by the

spirit of the “god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4). The alien spirit that John and Paul spoke of—which is the leaven (I Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9), cancer and gangrene (II Tim. 2:17) that Paul referenced in his epistles—is truly the COUNTERFEIT SPIRIT through which the Protestants’ “baptisms” place *their* members into *their* re-engineered and counterfeit *substitute* “body of Christ.”

This is the plate from which the apostates dined! And it is the poisonous diet they served to the splinter leaders, who in turn are serving the same to their organizations—and YOU!

Grasp this thoroughly! Tapping into this spirit—SATAN’S SPIRIT—is what *quickly* destroyed the Worldwide Church of God. This SAME SPIRIT has entered and is now *slowly* seducing and destroying the splinters. Those with God’s Spirit—even those who never fully escape Laodicean thinking—must leave this environment to be saved. Do not permit this to escape your thinking.

It transcends everything that is happening in the splinters!

(To learn more about *why* the splinters have fallen into such error, listen to my sermon “The Synagogue of Satan Identified—and Marked!”)

PROOF Satan’s Spirit is Present

Before leaving the subject of how another (the Greek means “different”) Jesus and his gospel is being taught in the splinters, one final point—and it is really a VITAL PROOF for the reader!—must be covered. It can be *demonstrated* that the “Jesus” within the splinters’ “gospel” cannot possibly be the *true* Christ of the Bible, and it can be absolutely PROVEN that this inclusion is tied directly to Satan’s spirit at work. Let’s see this made plain. Follow carefully what is explained! Consider how each element now referenced is tied together to present the big picture.

Some might see the splinters’ inclusion of “Jesus Christ” into the gospel of the kingdom as a mere technical error, an innocent mistake, one that should not be seen as connected to a *different spirit* present in the thinking of the leaders who teach this.

Therefore, the following greatest of questions emerges: Would the Spirit of God, the one emanating from the *true* Jesus Christ, be responsible for—in other words, would it be behind or guiding—the inclusion of the *true* Christ into the gospel? The obvious answer is OF COURSE NOT! And the true Jesus Christ would never *permit* HIS CHURCH to insert Him into the gospel, thereby creating one that He and the apostles never preached. Think. THINK! This would *require* Him to curse His own Church. He simply could neither guide nor permit this to happen.

Get this straight before continuing.

Where “another spirit” is at work bringing “another gospel” with “Jesus” in it, THAT spirit would *always* bring “another Jesus” (with his *other* false doctrines)! So, by contrast, the god of this world *does* want *his* “Jesus” included in *his* gospel, and he would have no interest in the inclusion of the TRUE Christ in it. In other words, Satan wants to create two huge false teachings in one: (1) Pervert the gospel of the kingdom, and invoke the Galatians 1:6-9 curse, and at the same time (2) turn God’s people away from the true Christ of the Bible!

What could be better? From Satan’s perspective, pulling off such a doctrinal coup is “better than perfect.” But he knows that there are also two additional advantages—two more natural byproducts—of his strategy: (1) The many OTHER doctrines of *his Jesus* are automatically able to follow, and (2) the effectiveness of the Work as anything that could be directed by the true Christ is destroyed in this equation! And this would be true even if the pattern of correct government were present anywhere in the splinters, and it is not.

Can you now see the *three* elements of deception and counterfeit listed in II Corinthians 11:4 in their true light? The whole thing becomes a “package deal.”

Reread this section until it becomes plain—until it becomes crystal-clear *proof* of which spirit has lead the splinters away from some of the Bible’s most important truths—the gospel, the definition of the Church and Body of Christ, and then necessarily how God’s government can lead only one organization, as well as which Jesus to follow, the basic elements comprising the Work of God, and so much more.

Then—Slipping Into the “Social Gospel”

There is perhaps no greater illustration of how the spirit of error that drives the churches of the world—Satan’s churches—has entered the splinters than in the case of their growing acceptance of the popular Protestant “social gospel” on top of the already-existing emphasis of “leading people to ‘Jesus’” by “witnessing” His “name.” (Recall Mr. Armstrong’s *social gospel* reference.)

Let’s understand the “fingerprints” of the other Jesus.

Invariably, in the wake of a tragedy or a natural disaster, the governments, organizations, relief agencies and churches of men swing into action to help the victims in all the ways that men do in such circumstances. Some of the splinters who, again, were indoctrinated in the apostates’ thinking, which they, I repeat, derived from worldly Christian “theologians,” now usually offer assistance. For instance, this happened

in the wake of devastation from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as in the aftermath of the tsunami of late 2004.

How It Works

The social gospel is best summarized in this way: The world's churches believe they have a duty—an obligation—to improve *this world*, to address its problems, and to strive to fix them. Of course, this is synonymous with the idea that they are to spread “Christianity”—“Jesus”—throughout the world. This idea, in turn, derives from the belief that the kingdom of God is now on Earth. (Recall that the apostates emphasized this.) Thus, it is the task of the world's churches to spread this “kingdom” in whatever way they can. This naturally tends to involve addressing disease, poverty, ignorance, race relations, depressed economies, “human rights” and wars, including civil wars. Of course, their efforts would next just as naturally include helping in all manner of humanitarian crises in the wake of earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, tsunamis, droughts, calamities and other disasters. (It is in these kinds of events that evangelical Protestants have been conditioned to see as opportunity to “witness” Jesus.)

This introduces an interesting email written in response to an article we had posted about Hurricane Katrina just after it struck the American Gulf Coast. It is a classic example of how most professing Christians see the role of churches in the wake of such calamities:

“I found your article on New Orleans very informative. However, nowhere did I see any suggestion on how to help the unfortunate people, who can not help themselves. As the rebuilding will take many months and longer, where will the children go to school, or play? Myself and many thousands of my countrymen, would only be too glad to open our home, for as long as it takes, to afford them a safe abode and a chance to continue their education. Could you be instrumental in initiating a campaign?”

This email is understandable, but it is not, and never has been, the purpose of God's Church and His Work to in any way try to “repair” or “fix” or “improve” a world cut off from God by sin (Isa. 59:1-2; Jer. 5:25)—a world and a sinning Israel whom He is punishing. God's people are supposed to recognize—and deeply understand from the very most basic elements of prophecy (Jer. 30:7; Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21)!—that what has been happening to America and other Israelitish nations is that a loving God is beginning to set up a vastly greater punishing of His disobedient (Israelite) children in the Great Tribulation, with one year of WORLD PUNISHMENT to follow.

God's people *must* comprehend—and remember—this!

Like any parent chastising his child for wrongdoing, God does not want interference with the punishment of *His* children. More than any others, true Christians should understand this! God's people must not FIGHT HIM, meaning His long understood purpose. No matter how sincere, they must never put themselves in a position of unwittingly thwarting that purpose. What *human* parent, when he is disciplining his child, wants a neighbor interrupting by trying to comfort the child in the middle of the process, thus muting—directly countering, in effect—at least some of the punishment?

Regarding the world, with its affairs, difficulties and disasters, Jesus taught, “Let the dead bury their dead” (Matt. 8:22). The Church once plainly understood that this meant to let the *spiritually* dead bury the *physically* (and spiritually) dead! Further, Christ is also saying, “Do not interfere with any so-called ‘love,’ when PUNISHMENT is the kind of *real* love necessary now” (Prov. 3:11-12; 13:24).

The Kingdom Is Not Here

Let's understand more. Since the churches of the world generally believe the kingdom of God is *present* now in the Person of Christ at work in individual lives, therefore, wherever “Jesus” is spread, in other words wherever people are “led to Jesus Christ,” the kingdom has been advanced. Their strategy then is designed to be inseparable from spreading the popular “social gospel,” which includes addressing problems of every kind around the world to get a foot in the door in order to present—spread—their “Jesus” to the afflicted masses. Of course, both Catholics and Protestants (including every type of modern evangelical Protestant) have been doing this for centuries. The only difference is that the Catholics believe *their church* is God's kingdom on Earth. Therefore, they put more emphasis on spreading the church!—with “Jesus” as the vehicle to get people into *their church*, and thus into the “kingdom.”

The Church of God does not preach a kingdom already here. It ANNOUNCES one yet to come. We pray, “Thy kingdom *come*.” The job of God's Church is also to WARN about and explain *why* the punishment coming upon modern Israel—and to do this in the spirit of Isaiah 58:1! Few any longer will address CAUSE and EFFECT—*law* and *sin*—and explain that “love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom. 13:10), that it is “keeping the commandments” (I John 5:3). While the world wants to address the *bad effects* through relief organizations and helping disaster victims in order to spread—to “witness”—their “Jesus,” God's Church is to explain the CAUSE of the world's evils, ills and troubles—BROKEN SPIRITUAL LAWS!

In addition, recognize that God does not want what are *His tithes and offerings*, which are designated solely for preaching the true gospel, for warning modern Israel and for feeding Christ's flock, to be spent directly FIGHTING HIS PURPOSE!

Sloppy Reading

If only God's people would more carefully read—actually reread from the past—the oft-used by the world, but badly butchered and misunderstood, scriptures supposedly telling people to give to relief efforts for what these passages truly say instead of for what professing Christians of this world, led by Satan, think they mean—and what the apostates told the Church and convinced the splinter and sliver leaders that they mean! I am speaking of scriptures such as Matthew 25:31-46, about helping “brethren,” and Luke 10:25-37, about the good Samaritan. Any number of others are cited and equally misunderstood.

And so few seem to notice.

For instance, look at I John 3:17. It warns against “shutting up one's bowels of compassion” toward the needs of others. But the whole verse reads, “But whoso has this world's good, and sees his *brother* have need, and shuts up his bowels of compassion from *him*, how dwells the love of God in him?”

The entire passage turns on the words “brother” and “him.” If one does not understand who is his “brother” and who is *not* his “brother,” he has no hope of understanding how to apply this verse (and many others). One must first read Romans 8, starting with verse 9, followed by verse 14, followed, in turn, by verse 29. Then he must turn to and carefully read Hebrews 2:9-12 to remove ALL doubt about who a Christian's “brethren” are—the exact same people who are brethren TO CHRIST!—or he will never exit the confusing maze of bad theology long trapping the world's ministers, and now the majority of the splinters. Put another way, if one does not know who and what a Christian is—one led by the Holy Spirit, making him a son of God (Rom. 8:9, 14)—he will not be able to identify his brethren or understand passages such as I John 3:17 or Matthew 25:31-46.

It is these kinds of verses that are so badly mangled and used to assert that Christians should aid disaster victims and support relief organizations.

The Human Perspective

Starting with the assumption that God's teachings have been ignored or forgotten, and that one is going to merely take the human perspective, it

is not difficult to understand how God's people could so naturally fall back into thinking that they should practice giving after the pattern of the world and its churches, described earlier.

Think of this. Some in the splinters simply cannot stand the pain in their hearts at what they see in the aftermath of a tragedy, calamity or national disaster. Forgetting how the overall plan of God is to play out, the images on television of "innocent suffering" literally become too much for them. Then, like the local or national citizenry around them, going strictly by *feelings* or *impulses* that may be terribly troubling them, they *feel* the need to "do something," they *feel* that they have to "help people" in some way so that they are "doing their part." In short, they fall into the trap of following "a way that seems [feels] right unto a man..." (Prov. 14:12; 16:25). Instead of seeing disasters and calamities as a loving God spanking His disobedient children, and keeping their focus on all that is occurring from God's point of view, many of God's people now cave to the world's approach—completely forgetting what they once believed!

A related category, this one primarily of leaders, but clearly including brethren, consists of those who are *embarrassed* to not be accepted by the world's churches or even other splinters because they are not seen to be "doing their part"—or in a *church* that is doing its part. Surrounded by an environment of millions in the world rallying to help their own—"the dead burying the dead"—it is easy to feel guilt, even tremendous guilt, if one does not also "get involved." This build-up of pressure to "give" or to "contribute generously" is also fueled by the nonstop reports and media coverage in today's "24/7" news environment. Weak-kneed splinter leaders are caving to the pressure of the worldly pseudo-love that is bombarding them. Of course, "witnessing," or even appearing to witness, "Jesus," as do their evangelical Protestant counterparts, serves to further improve acceptance by Satan's churches. This can even be done at an unconscious level in leaders who have unknowingly lost the zeal and urgency Mr. Armstrong taught the Church to maintain regarding God's Work.

A similar problem occurs for the same reason. No longer firmly anchored in *God's* view of what is happening, so many just permit basic HUMAN REASONING to take over—and they copy those of the world around them. Similar to getting caught up in "the spirit of Christmas," the result is many get *seduced* by the ever-present pull to "help the suffering masses."

Gone from the thinking are verses in which Christ described that the greatest way to help the needy—"the poor"—is to take the gospel of the kingdom of God (of a coming *better world* under the God Family) to them. Gone and forgotten are Christ stating that "the poor have *the*

gospel preached to them” (Matt. 11:5) and His reference to “[the Father] has anointed Me to preach *the gospel* to the poor” (Luke 4:18) and “to the poor *the gospel* is preached” (Luke 7:22)—all of these passages replaced with the *human feeling* that we must “do something”—we must “show love.” Nowhere did Christ instruct the apostles to feed or clothe or build homes for the poor. They were to follow His example by giving to the poor the most important thing they could—the precious knowledge of the KINGDOM OF GOD!

End All Confusion

If you are still confused, I urge you to read our booklet *Which Is the True Gospel?* Written for those being called now, and who are only familiar with the “Jesus *is* the gospel” idea, it reflects Mr. Armstrong’s booklet, but expands on usually overlooked passages. Further, I came to see the confusion over what the gospel is had become so great it was necessary to give an extensive series that could bring God’s people back to the truth of this subject of colossal importance. Titled “The Gospel—Kingdom and Christ?”, this is the strongest and clearest series you have heard—or will ever hear—on the subject of the true gospel of the Bible! There may never have been a series so thorough.

In addition, an extensive *extra* document about the gospel has been prepared for those in LCG. It is available on the “Understanding the WCG Apostasy & ‘Splinters’” page of our website. It carefully details the multiple errors in what that organization labels as the gospel. But certain of its key elements and quotes have been included in Chapters Four and Five here.

Both the booklet and sermons cover a great many New Testament passages further explaining and *proving* how the apostles preached the role of Christ *only in conjunction with* the kingdom of God. Both of these will make plain how they taught the role of the *true* Jesus Christ alongside the gospel of the KINGDOM—not as something part of it.

You should not be in confusion about what the Bible makes so plain. If you are uncertain when you start the booklet and series, and possibly the special document referenced, you will not be when you finish! You will also better understand the tragedy of *how* so many have forgotten so much. And you will see that with very salvation at stake, God would never—and *could* never—permit the smallest doubt to remain regarding *exactly* what gospel His people must believe!

But human beings naturally forget...

MASS AMNESIA

Everyone has experienced forgetfulness at one time or another. Any problem that results is usually minor, and most of the time there is none. However, forgetfulness can be serious, with very bad consequences, if the event, time or item forgotten was important. People can get hurt—think of appointments missed, jobs lost, car keys misplaced, purse or wallet containing all of one’s credit cards, identification and personal effects forgotten, etc.

The problem of forgetfulness can grow worse if one *permanently* “forgets that he forgot.” In other words, while most people eventually remember what they forgot to do...or bring...or say..., some completely lose track of these things until someone else brings them back to mind. Of course, this can be very embarrassing, depending upon what was forgotten and the problems caused.

This has been the case with God’s people regarding certain elements of the Work of God—elements that most would have once believed could not possibly be forgotten in the first place.

“Those who sigh and cry”—But Over What?

We just read about those who are overwhelmed with feelings and human reasoning about how they must *do* something for disaster victims and others in the world who are in need. God is aware of this natural human tendency and gives instruction for how to direct it. At

this point we will return to elements of the social gospel, but in a different context.

The true Christian certainly does *feel* the suffering of the world in a very deep way, and actually this should be with greater depth of anguish and understanding than do his worldly counterparts. This is why God inspired Ezekiel to record, “Set a *mark* upon the foreheads of the men that SIGH and CRY for all the *abominations* that be done in the midst [of the modern nations of Israel, and, to some degree, the world at large]...” (9:4).

This passage certainly does describe a real and heartfelt response that God expects from His people to what they are witnessing. I have previously mentioned that those of brotherly love truly care about their fellowman. (Of course, these brethren are also to have the LOVE OF GOD [*agape*] toward all others.)

A Christian is not to be unfeeling—far from it! However, sighing and crying over national SINS is one thing. But to in any way mitigate—soften—mute—neutralize—God’s punishment because of them is entirely another, and not something that He desires—or tolerates! God knows that human solutions to man’s big problems have never worked, and that only *His* solutions bring *real*, long-term relief—and He expects His people to remember this!

A closer look at Ezekiel 9:4 offers the vitally important *key* for the Christian to keep in mind. Let’s more carefully examine a point in the last paragraph about exactly what it is that causes the anguish in those who receive God’s mark.

On the one hand, this verse describes those who feel compassion—who can hurt when the masses hurt—who can mourn when the masses are mourning—but...BUT...the passage—and this is plain!—describes godly people who are reacting to, and are horrified by people’s (and nations’) “ABOMINATIONS.” This means they are horrified by lawlessness—evil—wickedness—debauchery and degeneracy—SINS!—not merely by the resultant travail or plight of people and nations who have brought on themselves punishment (including natural consequences from broken laws) from a longsuffering God.

There is a difference and God’s people discern it!

Special, Detailed Sermon

All of the understanding from God’s Word on this subject requires the correct explanation of *many scriptures* to explain why God’s people are not called to assist man’s efforts to address his problems through human solutions, and why this blurs and diminishes the Church’s task. If you are

confused about this subject or do not remember what Mr. Armstrong taught straight from the Bible about it, take the time to listen to the sermon “Do Christians Give to Relief Organizations?—What Jesus Actually Taught!” If you do, you will no longer be confused, even a little bit. The sermon examines this subject in detail and merely reteaches from God’s Word all that the Church once understood, but that the splinter leaders and most of their followers have forgotten. Together with what is written here, it explains how a hypnotic, powerful MASS AMNESIA overtook God’s people. The sermon goes far beyond what can be addressed in this book and includes more of what Mr. Armstrong taught.

You must hear it!

The “Blessings and Cursings” Chapters

Members of the Worldwide Church of God used to hear regularly about the “blessings” and “cursings” listed throughout the long chapters of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. These were foretold to come on latter-day Israel depending on whether she obeyed or disobeyed God over the long haul. That punishment was to come after God fulfilled a prior promise to Abraham about national greatness. While many have forgotten what these chapters reveal about what is at stake for the blessed, powerful nations of the West, God has not! His plan for His people (Israel) is sure—it will not fail—and someone has to warn these nations of the consequences of their actions. Of course, Mr. Armstrong saw how this was directly tied to the Ezekiel Warning, mentioned earlier and explained in more detail later.

How often do you read and remind yourself of this extraordinary and very explicit prophecy? Ever? When was the last time you even thought for a moment about these two chapters of 46 and 68 verses, respectively? How often has your pastor preached about them? When was the last time this happened? Do you remember that intense punishment was to come in *three*, successive, seven-fold *waves* after the fulfillment of Israel’s birthright, which began in the early 1800s? Do you recall exactly *why* punishment would occur—what would trigger it? How many of the particulars that God foretold can you recite? Can you remember the all-encompassing and absolutely horrific and unceasing nature of the famine, disease, wild beasts, war and other plagues and curses that God will use to bring complete devastation and, ultimately, *captivity* to these nations?

Periodically reread these chapters for the bomb-blast reality check they deliver. If you permit, they will always bring your thinking back to

ground zero within God’s plan for the nations of Israel, and then all of the nations of the world.

God’s people recognize that He knows when to show pity and when *not* to show pity. They remember that four chapters earlier in Ezekiel (in chapter 5)—and this establishes the all-important context of chapter 9—God had said that what He was going to do was because of “all your abominations.” He had said that He was going to “diminish” the House of Israel and that when He did “neither shall My eye spare, neither will I have any pity.” God would never permit the suffering that He saw to cause Him to pull back from what these rebellious peoples *need*—the intense punishment that He foretold would come millennia ago. And He *will* bring that punishment!

Of course, we should not take delight in what is happening to the world’s mightiest nations. But the people of God should take the position that GOD is taking, and not try to have more “love”—more “pity”—than He has!

Spiritual Alzheimer’s, But in Reverse

I have likened the mass amnesia afflicting God’s people to a kind of *spiritual Alzheimer’s*. But this is a severe memory loss with a curious twist—or what I call “Alzheimer’s in reverse.” Let’s understand what has happened.

In the case of those with *actual* Alzheimer’s disease, people can for some few years generally recall things from the distant past—20, 30, 50 years ago—often with seemingly every detail intact. The problem is that they cannot remember things that occurred five minutes ago—or sometimes even one minute ago! (I had an uncle with Alzheimer’s and this was his condition. He could discuss childhood experiences by the hour with my father, his brother, and yet ask me identical questions minutes apart.)

In the splinters, this is occurring in reverse. Many readily retain teachings that they learned relatively recently, those picked up during and after the apostasy, but they cannot remember that they did NOT believe these things *decades ago*! Part of the problem is that they cannot remember WHO it was that taught them what they now believe. The result is that many fall into the idea that it must have been Mr. Armstrong. Moreover, some will staunchly—even adamantly!—defend their *current* doctrinal positions, thinking that they have *always* held them as they now do, and that “Mr. Armstrong believed these things!” and that “the Church always taught—or practiced—it

this way!” Incredibly—and so tragically—they seem to have absolutely no idea—have completely lost track of—from whom they obtained their now firmly-held belief on a matter. Reverse Alzheimer’s has set in. This is exactly what has happened when God’s people believe they should give to relief organizations and disaster victims. (Of course, others have *knowingly* changed positions.)

But just remembering and applying John 14:26 would have solved this problem. If people had done this, they would never have permitted themselves to lack an abundance of God’s Spirit in their lives.

A Related Problem

There is another part of this problem being reflected within the splinters and slivers.

The anemic, even pitiful, public “responses” to disasters, such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Asian tsunami and “9/11,” for instance, that have become the pattern from every major splinter, have been SHAMEFUL. But they were predictable, given the splinters’ subtle shift to the social gospel of “another Jesus”! The tepid words and obvious fear of criticism and repercussion have been evident in the soft, purring tones used in what could only be called *commentaries* about these events. Incredibly, one leader spoke of “*encouraging* the nations to repent.” (Reread Isaiah 58:1. “Encourage” is not found in the text.) However, brethren of an era that needs to *receive* a warning themselves are neither capable of nor about to *issue* one!

Those who understand the horror foretold to come on national Israel should deeply desire to participate—to do their God-ordained part!—in warning these great nations before it is too late. And we must hurry—time is short! And make no mistake. God’s warning is going out NOW! The Work being done here has already mushroomed in size!—has already grown very large!—and will continue to grow much, much larger and more POWERFUL!

The result has been that more and more hundreds of brethren are recognizing where the true Christ is at work and truly empowering the effort put forth!

What Mr. Armstrong Taught

Many today may not know that Mr. Armstrong spoke often in the early years about the purpose—the COMMISSION—of the Church, and therefore whether it was to participate in and contribute to relief organizations and

efforts to aid disaster victims, whether it was to be part of programs to fix or assist *this* world or to announce a better world to come, and whether it was a “charity,” per se.

Here are just two statements. The first one identifies exactly what the Church IS—and is NOT. (All emphasis Mr. Armstrong’s):

“I reply, first of all, the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD is NOT a ‘charitable trust.’ It is NOT a public CHARITY! It is a CHURCH!”

“WHAT IS a CHARITY—in the public sense? Webster’s dictionary defines it: ‘Charity: an institution engaged in relief of the poor; public provision for the relief of the needy.’

“WHAT IS a CHURCH? Jesus Christ said, ‘I will build my Church.’ The CHURCH was built by JESUS CHRIST—not by the public! The first place the word ‘church’ appears in the Bible is quoted above from Matthew 16:18. In Acts 2:47, ‘The Lord added to the church daily.’ It is that Body of believers to which THE LORD adds members! The Church is the spiritual organism (NOT a secular or political or public ORGANIZATION). The CHURCH is subject to Christ—not to the political attorney general of California!”

“Jesus Christ built His CHURCH on the FOUNDATION of the apostles and prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20).

“What is the function, PURPOSE, great commission of the Church? Jesus said, ‘Go ye into ALL THE WORLD and preach the Gospel’ (Mark 16:15).

“The CHURCH is NOT a public CHARITY or a ‘CHARITABLE TRUST.’”

Co-Worker and Brethren Letter, July 28, 1980

It is impossible to miss the intent of Mr. Armstrong’s statement. Of course, churches in America and other western nations do generally enjoy “charity” *status*, thus permitting their members a tax deduction for tithes, offerings and donations. But this is different from strictly being a charity.

The next quote is one of the longest I have included in any of the splinter literature. This is because there is no way to break the context without losing some vital parts of its message. It is very comprehensive, and powerfully addresses the BIG PICTURE in explaining what men and governments try to do in calamities—with churches and charitable foundations often connected to churches almost invariably the spearhead—but why they have no hope of success. Mr. Armstrong leaves no

ambiguity about the responsibility of *Christ's* Church—and precisely where he understood that responsibility STOPPED! As you read, notice how many elements of what has been explained in this section that Mr. Armstrong addresses:

“We saw native Chinese living natively as the Chinese masses have for centuries. We saw degenerated wretchedness, squalor, filth, ignorance and poverty beyond description. Words can't fill your nostrils with the smells. We saw hundreds upon hundreds of the rickety wretched sampans—small sailboats—on which whole families live. Many have been born, lived a lifetime and then died on one of these dirty filthy sampans without ever having stepped on land. We saw dingy, dilapidated, old six- and eight-story apartment buildings, without elevators, where large families live in one or two small bare rooms—thousands of dirty, decrepit, decaying shacks.

“Leaving Hong Kong, we flew over Vietnam. But we made stops at Bangkok, Thailand (Siam); Bombay, India; and Tehran, Iran (Persia). The pitiful, poverty-stricken, diseased, starving people in these populous areas of the world beggar description. One sees people begging food, starving, dying, right in the streets. Starving mothers trying to nurse emaciated babies which have little chance of living. IT MADE US SICK AT HEART!

“What could we do to help these pitiful, miserable people?”

“Of course, in all these countries, there are the upper classes—but they are the small minority. I want to tell you that it was driven forcibly into my consciousness how most of you, here in prosperous America—as well as our readers in Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Europe—have NO CONCEPTION of how more than HALF of all the people on earth are living—in half-starved and starving squalor, filth, stench, and degenerated ignorance. Did I say living? No, not really living—eking out a miserable, degenerated, and probably disease ridden existence!

“WHAT could we do to help them?”

“Authorities in Hong Kong have a program for improving conditions. The United States is sending wheat, food, clothing, and hundreds of millions of dollars in relief to India and other such countries. Yet this is hardly a drop in a bucket. It isn't going to solve the problem of human degeneration, ignorance and misery. All the nauseating filth and degradation remains.

“But honestly—wouldn't you like to help CHANGE all this? I WOULD!

“When you are right there—when you are SEEING it with your own eyes—yes, and smelling the stench, it becomes REAL! You are filled with mingled disgust and compassion. You want to DO something about it—but you can’t.

“And yet WE CAN! And WE WILL! But not in our own power.

“With all of man’s efforts, this problem can’t be solved...No matter what we try to do for them, in our human strength and wisdom, they are going to remain illiterate, diseased, filthy, indolent, poverty-stricken, degenerate. WE can’t change their status, NOW. But it will be changed—and SOON:

“The Almighty GOD—and He ONLY—has the solution. He has sent me and those associates who with me are Co-Workers with the living Jesus Christ to proclaim to the whole world the GOOD NEWS that the TIME is just ahead—now, just a VERY FEW years: That GOOD NEWS is the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the GOOD NEWS of divine INTERVENTION, of restoring the GOVERNMENT OF GOD—of the coming again to earth of Jesus Christ, this time in all the SUPREME POWER and the GLORY of the living GOD: He is coming to RULE! He is coming to RESTORE what has been taken away—PEACE, HEALTH, HAPPINESS, UNIVERSAL PROSPERITY.

“But NOW?

“A famous evangelist was asked if there was any solution to this world’s mounting tragic ills. He answered, ‘Yes! JESUS CHRIST!’ But if one interprets that to mean by your ‘receiving Christ’ by merely professing Him as Saviour—well, that is NOT the way the world’s wars, crime, diseases, poverty and unhappiness are going to be abolished. It will take more than just your professing Christ...”

“But the Gospel OF Jesus Christ is not merely man’s preaching ABOUT Christ—about the babe in a manger—about a dead Christ hanging on a cross. The Gospel OF Christ is the dynamic Message Christ BROUGHT and TAUGHT His chosen disciples. It is the GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD! And the KINGDOM of God is the GOVERNMENT—the RULE by divine force and power over all the nations of the earth.

“And when I saw all that indescribable human wreckage, degeneration, filth and wretchedness—and thought of the present efforts of human governments that are making no noticeable change—I was simultaneously OVERJOYED at the realization that the living Jesus Christ IS very soon going to return in ALMIGHTY POWER and DYNAMICALLY CHANGE this world!

“HOW?...There is a CAUSE for every effect.

“This world, in ignorance of right CAUSES, travels THE WAY to war, strife, violence, sickness and disease, unhappiness, frustrations, emptiness, and death. Then it TREATS WITH THE RESULT, vainly attempting to remove the PENALTIES of inexorable physical and spiritual LAWS.

“In THE WORLD TOMORROW, first of all, blinded minds will be OPENED to a KNOWLEDGE of God’s PURPOSE in placing human life on this earth. They will be led to REPENT. They will be governed—forced to turn around, and begin pursuing THE WAY into peace, prosperity, health, and the full, abundant, enjoyable, interesting, HAPPY life.

“Secondly, by divine power, Jesus Christ will CHANGE human nature! Human nature, blinded to the true values and ways, deceived into following the ways of strife, war, jealousy, envy, greed, hatred—the ways of vanity and self-centeredness—is the root CAUSE of the world’s ills.

“In a word, the living Christ will cure the CONDITION by dealing with the CAUSE, instead of foolishly and vainly striving to prevent the natural and spiritual LAWS from inflicting their inexorable penalties.

“The very knowledge that this is coming very soon is the greatest GOOD NEWS in the world today!

“And so, in the midst of the degradation, stench and human wretchedness, I was simply OVERJOYED by the absolute ASSURANCE that this pitiful state of affairs will not last much longer—a VERY FEW years at most!

“And I was DOUBLY overjoyed at the realization that my Co-Workers and I have been DRAFTED to become Co-Workers with the living CHRIST who is the DIRECTING HEAD of the very Work of God, in which we are privileged to be His human instruments!

“This world’s tragic and supposedly unsolvable problems WILL BE solved—and SOON! Not by man—but in spite of man’s rebellion! There IS hope—hope that is a CERTAINTY! The living God IS working out HIS PURPOSE here below! There IS design—so tremendous that the actual potentiality of man is transcendently beyond anything the natural mind can comprehend! Soon blinded minds will be opened to that REALITY!

“This very soon-coming WORLD TOMORROW is going to drastically affect YOUR life! And very happily so!

“Who are we—who proclaim the BIG NEWS of the WORLD TOMORROW on the most powerful radio program on earth, worldwide? Who are we who publish The PLAIN TRUTH, read by two and

a half million all around the world? Who are we that operate the three beautiful, cultural campuses of AMBASSADOR COLLEGE in California, Texas and England—where students scintillate, radiate happiness, enjoy a foretaste of the World Tomorrow? We are a voice in the wilderness of ignorance, deception, frustrations and lost hopes, preparing the way for the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God. We are a light in the darkness, realizing fully that men, as in Jesus' day, still love darkness rather than the light—but proclaiming the TRUTH as a witness, none-the-less, in spite of opposition, persecution and false accusation.

“WHAT A PRIVILEGE! Yes, we are painfully aware of the pitiful conditions of so much of suffering humanity—we are heartsick and moved with sorrow and deep compassion. Yet we are PRIVILEGED to herald, in the power of the living GOD, the GOOD NEWS of the deliverance and healing of these wretched peoples, thus helping SPEED that day—helping in the only way humans may help, now. And so we REJOICE and are OVERJOYED also!

“Many times, in these Semi-Annual letters, I have answered the questions we are always being asked: WHO is back of us?—WHO sponsors us?—What denomination are we?—‘What’s the catch?’—etc., etc. There is no ‘catch.’ We are not denominational, even as Jesus Christ was not. This great worldwide Work of God is sponsored only by the LIVING GOD, who some mixed-up, deceived and ignorant people seem to think is dead. It is conducted HIS WAY. There is nothing else on earth like it—and that’s why we do have some persecutors—but we never persecute in return!

“We have been blessed with TRUTH and UNDERSTANDING that is bringing undreamed-of happiness and well-being to uncounted thousands. We want to SHARE the blessed TRUTH and all these blessings from God with as many as desire it. We rely solely on the living GOD for guidance, direction and support. We never solicit the public for financial help. We have nothing to sell. Incredible? Yes, but that’s the way it is!”

Plain Truth subscriber letter, June 2, 1966

Mr. Armstrong recognized that God’s Church offers the most important assistance!—aid!—relief!—of all, that of RIGHT KNOWLEDGE and TRUE UNDERSTANDING—the TRUTH!—of *why* the world’s problems, troubles, evils and ills. He knew of the three passages in which Christ said that the poor of the world were to be given the gospel. (One verse is *repeated* from Isaiah.) He never considered for a moment that the

Worldwide Church of God should involve itself in the world's "social gospel," which, again, essentially seeks to fix *this* world, in addition to bringing what we have seen is "another Jesus." (We will revisit a little later, in this chapter and the next, more of what Mr. Armstrong taught about the social gospel.)

It Only Grows Worse

It is most critical to recognize that the *spirit of error* will only grow stronger and more pervasive wherever it has been permitted to enter. Mr. Armstrong strongly warned against letting the devil into the Church even "a little bit" (as he put it on one occasion), because Satan would "push open the door since he is stronger than we" (again, his words). This has been more *visibly* apparent in the big splinters, but all other groups are included!

I repeat yet again: The reader is strongly urged to read my book *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?* to get the fuller picture that no one else has explained, *could* any longer explain, or would be even *willing* to address. The proof given in this book is astonishing, and includes *many* detailed, crystal-clear statements from the Bible, Mr. Armstrong, the Catholics, the Protestants, the apostates—and others straight from the lips of the leaders of the splinters who happily parrot the apostates and the Protestants. You will be forced to decide whether or not you will act on what you learn! It will simply not be possible to halt between two opinions on this matter.

It is crucial to understand I am not saying that all the attendees in the splinters now no longer have God's Spirit. Some or many do! As stated, the problem is that two different spirits—God's and Satan's—are now at work in these groups. ("*ANOINT YOUR EYES*" spends several pages covering how this process inevitably *destroys* unsuspecting individuals.) Where Satan's spirit is present (as spiritual leaven or cancer)—again, beginning with the "door being thrown open"—God's Spirit will diminish and eventually disappear, with the spirit of Satan ultimately taking over *completely*, both in individuals and entire organizations. Another Jesus, another gospel and *another spirit* are taking all of the splinters and splinters directly **BACK TO THE WORLD** and its empty, counterfeit doctrines and pursuit of materialism!

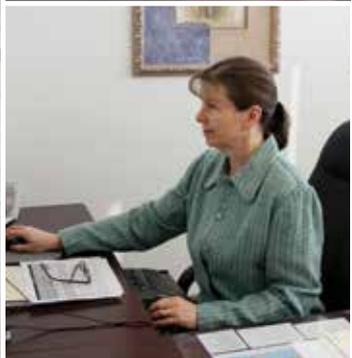
This has been the oft-repeated message—truly the broken record—of 2,000 years of New Testament Church history—of Church eras! And, as has been stated, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."



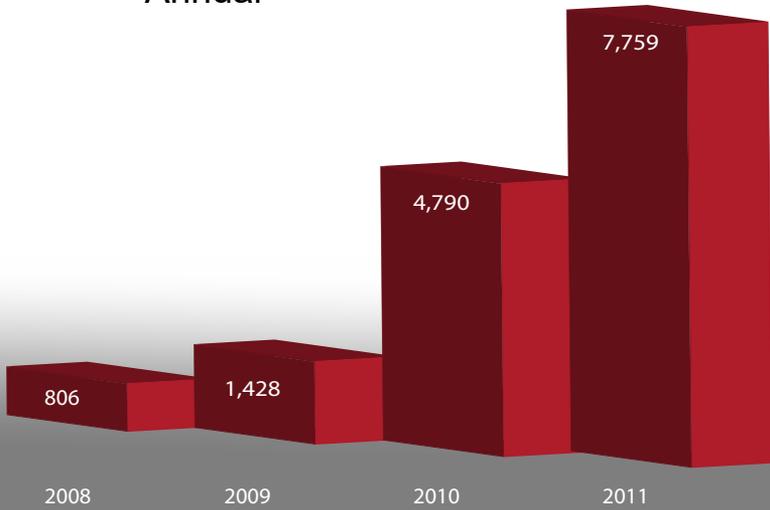
A typical day at Headquarters is filled with numerous projects—editing articles, magazines and websites; in-house publishing; preparing for regular mailings; writing letters and articles; returning phone calls to brethren, prospective members, news media inquiries; organizing; planning future projects.



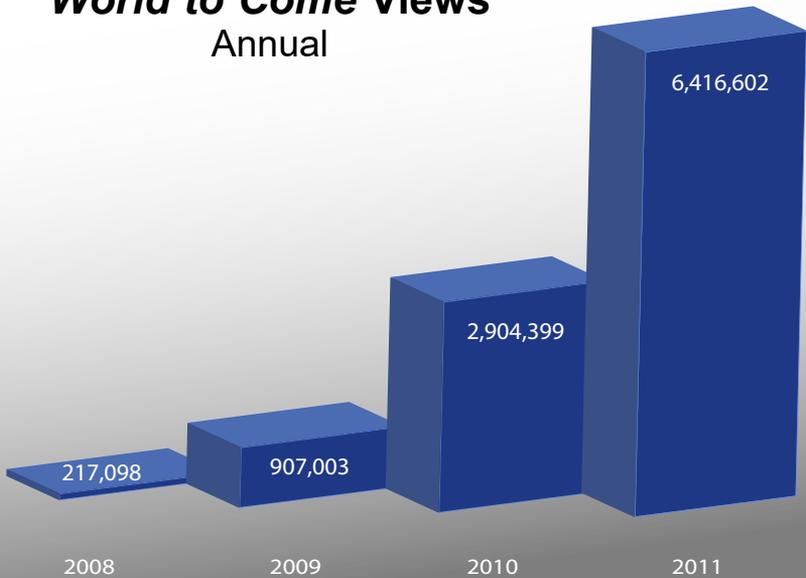




Church Inquiries Annual



World to Come Views Annual



Remember, Christ's *true* sheep know—can recognize—the *true* Christ's voice, and can distinguish it from a *strange* voice spoken by a different "Christ." Get this straight! I repeat: The Spirit of the true Christ, who taught only one gospel, would never direct the "work" of those bringing *another* gospel (and with many other false teachings), always derived from *another* spirit, which invariably introduces *another* Jesus, leading *another* counterfeit "body of Christ." This necessarily always includes slipping into involvement within the "social gospel" of the world, tightly connected to its phony "Jesus."

(Our *Splinter Explanation Packet* could have easily included a sermon titled "Another Jesus," but it is available on our website. The listener will be absolutely stunned to find out that this *other* "Jesus" has been known by *many names* throughout history, and is over 4,000 years old—long preceding the true Jesus of the New Testament!)

Read and reread all that you have seen in this chapter and the previous two until their points become crystal clear—until it is impossible to misunderstand what is at stake regarding what the Work is and where you join yourself to continue it. Remember, the TRUE Christ is not divided—meaning there is only one TRUE Work of God!

Discern if you have found it!

More Mass Amnesia

We have described the hypnotic and pervasive "mass amnesia" now afflicting God's people in regard to giving to the world's relief organizations and aiding disaster victims. But this is not the only aspect—or *large* aspect—of how the Great Commission is to be carried out that many brethren have forgotten. *Another* case of directly related mass amnesia has overtaken God's people on a colossal point of understanding having to do with the commission to the Church. But this second "amnesia" is best introduced by yet a *third* fundamental teaching connected to doing the Work that so many today seem to have also forgotten.

As you read take note. Recognize how both of these *additional memory losses* become more proof of how the spirit of error always spreads until it engulfs previous understanding with new thinking that eventually supplants even the *remembrance* of the old belief.

For decades, all members of the Worldwide Church of God understood and practiced Christ's instruction in Matthew 10:8 to His disciples to "Freely you have received, freely give." As a mail reader during my later student employment in Pasadena, I was instructed (and this was routine with all mail readers) that any person who tried to *pay* for the

literature—and we were to look for certain key words or phrases in letters—was to automatically have his check returned to him. Everyone knew there were to be no exceptions—and there never were to my knowledge. Of course, again, the entire Church at least generally knew this policy and it was one of the great differences that made us unique from all the churches of the world! In fact, virtually every *World Tomorrow* radio and television program, and every magazine or piece of literature the Church published, made clear that no one could pay for what was offered. This policy was simply impossible to misunderstand.

Now consider. Thousands in the splinters who were once members of the WCG read and love our literature—and tell us so. Incredibly, many of these brethren write to us and ask if they can “buy” or “pay for” or “make a donation to cover the costs of” whatever items they want us to send. While they should know better, and once did, many have *forgotten* that we cannot do this.

Of course, it should be stated that we recognize some of these—and this is perhaps worse than forgetting—are inquiring about purchasing the material because they feel guilty asking for such wonderful free material from a smaller organization that produces much more than the bigger, wealthier organizations they attend. In other words, they *know* what they are doing, but do it anyway. These seem to hope that we will compromise so that they can obtain the material through purchase, thus allowing them to remain where they are, but to enjoy our literature at the same time. This is made even more astonishing because they are willing to freely pay God’s tithes and give offerings to an organization—their own—doing very little with what is, in some cases, many millions of dollars available annually to pay for printing and with scores of potential writers present to produce the material. It is possible, however, that—and we can only wonder whether—some with this thinking believe they are also paying their own church for “services rendered” (to be discussed in Chapter Nineteen in a fascinating way), so why not do the same with us? But either way, such is the forgetfulness, indifference—and BLINDNESS!—of the final age of God’s people.

Why Mr. Armstrong Sold Some Books in Bookstores

Related to this is another bigger problem—in this case, an OUTRAGE!—occurring in the splinters.

Many will remember that Mr. Armstrong sold his larger books in hardcover form in bookstores. Few remember the reason he did this—

and what he would never do. Before discussing the problem, here is some history to refresh the reader, all but one statement taken from Co-Worker Letters by Mr. Armstrong and working backwards in time. The first quote is introducing his final book *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*:

“It is named MYSTERY OF THE AGES. Actually it might be called a synopsis of the Bible in the most plain and understandable language.

“But first, before I tell you more about it, let me say I am overjoyed to be able to send you one of the very first copies off the press, hard-bound—the same beautiful copy that will be sold in bookstores all over the United States—in gratitude for your cooperation and financial support of this wonderful work of the great God.

“All baptized members will be given the book, one copy to a family, at the coming annual Feast of Tabernacles. All nonmember co-workers are being mailed your copies, but allow a few weeks for delivery, for this kind of mail goes much slower than this letter.

“We want to reach the largest audience possible with this book. I know you will feel the same way when you read it. There is a very large audience which would never request this book if offered free—who would never send their name and address to us—but would gladly buy a copy in a bookstore. By putting it in the bookstores we will reach a very great audience that we can reach in no other way. We will not sell the book ourselves, but it cannot be made available to this large audience of book buyers unless the bookstores do put a price on it.”

September 12, 1985

“Now comes getting the Gospel out in print. That includes ‘The Plain Truth’, the Correspondence Course, booklets and books. And again, I am the editor-in-chief, I do the chief writing, especially in the area of the booklets and the books that are now going on sale in the bookstores all over the United States.”

Worldwide News, Special Edition, March 6, 1981

“We cannot solicit the public for contributions—we cannot have anything to sell (with the one exception of my hardcover books in bookstores to reach a reading audience hitherto unreachable). Even so, we have given, gratis, these books to those who request them of us direct. This is a WORK OF GIVING, NOT ‘GETTING.’ This is the Work of the living GOD!”

August 27, 1980

“This year I have planned to publish five new full books, to be available in bookstores and shops all over the English-speaking world.

“The first book, which many consider the most important book since the Bible, **THE INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL**, will be available in bookstores in February”

“I am close now to finishing another book, **A VOICE CRIES OUT AGAINST RELIGIOUS CONFUSION**. I believe it will be equally important but it will not reach the bookstores until next fall.”

“But, in the meantime, three other important books will appear in the bookstores. Coming later this spring will be the revised and enlarged book, **TOMORROW—WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE**. Another, a revised edition of **THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY**, and another, a greatly enlarged edition of **THE SEVEN LAWS OF SUCCESS**.”

December 27, 1978

“My first full length book—good quality, hard-cover—to appear in bookstores all over the English-speaking world—is in the hands of the publishers, our own Everest House, and is scheduled to be delivered to all U.S. and Canada Feast sites for the Feast. This is the book titled **THE INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL**. I feel God has inspired it to be the most important book since the Holy BIBLE.

“The second full length hard-cover book is also completely written and in the hands of Everest House. It is an updated and enlarged edition of **The Wonderful World TOMORROW—What It Will Be Like**.

“Another new hard-cover edition of **The United States and Britain in PROPHECY** to go into bookstores around the world is completely written and in the hands of the publishers.

“A new, enlarged updated booklet on **This IS the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD** is already turned over to the publishers. Now, I plan to combine that with the new book, which is still being written, **SEVEN PROOFS of the TRUE CHURCH**, making a full size book in hard-cover and put it into bookstores the world over.

“I am working on an enlarged edition of **The Seven LAWS OF SUCCESS**, also to go, in hard-cover book form, into bookstores around the world. The new edition will contain brief yet interest-absorbing comments on the biographies of such men as Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Sir Fredrick Henry Royce who produced the **Rolls-Royce**, and others considered as examples of **SUCCESS** in the world.

“Then, also a new edition of **The Missing Dimension in SEX**, and possibly later a completed edition of the **Autobiography**.

“Millions of people constantly buy books in bookstores—and these are people we may not be able to reach in any other way. THIS OPENS TO GOD’S CHURCH AN ENTIRE NEW MEDIUM FOR PROCLAIMING CHRIST’S GOSPEL TO THE WORLD.”

September 25, 1978

“This book—full book length—will be available in virtually all bookstores in the United States and the English speaking world. It will reach an entirely new audience with God’s Message, heretofore unreachable!”

July 25, 1978

Mr. Armstrong came to see that it was not wrong to sell books for the reasons explained and under the circumstances given, and if this were done in bookstores. He made clear, however, that these books, with the same content, could also be obtained for free upon request.

A Worse Problem!

We are ready to discuss the bigger problem referenced above. The splinter leader claiming to offer “vision” to the world *finally* wrote one book. After over eight years of waiting for him to produce a single book or booklet about God’s truth, he has authored one *at last*—and SELLS it for \$65.

First, how absolutely incredible that such an outrageous price is charged—and for a relatively small book besides! One wonders who is benefiting from what must be a gigantic profit margin. I am well acquainted with business and publishing, having written and published 80 books and booklets (plus over 30 by others of our writers), and the profit garnered on each book sold, in his case, must be *very* great!

Second, this point introduces what is most different about this man’s approach from what Mr. Armstrong did: No one can obtain this material for free. A simple call to this headquarters reveals this. The caller is told that “the publisher is selling it; you must contact them.” When asked why church members and others could not receive it for free, the same words were repeated.

This describes “God’s” work done *for profit*—pure and simple!

Third, and this is beyond incredible, is that in the book the author presents his own SOLUTION to the Mid-East problem. What? This region of the world involves a millennia-old controversy literally *impossible* for any but the returning Jesus Christ and the saints to resolve. Of

all world problems, this one perhaps most defies *any* human solution. Dozens of prophecies trumpet this.

Ask: How could this man have permitted himself to fall so far in understanding? How could he have come to believe that God wants His servants offering what are *at best* mere stop-gap *human solutions* to issues long recognized as insoluble apart from God's intervention? The answer parallels why many of the splinters now contribute to relief organizations.

Finally—and this is the most astonishing point of all—how could this “leader's” over one thousand followers let themselves approve of what he did? The smooth cunning used to sell this to his organization must have been a wonder to behold. I cannot decide which is worse—the act itself, or the membership's collective willingness to buy the seduction and support the act!

Here is another example of the same thing. Gerald Flurry's son also sells a book. In this case, charging a somewhat more reasonable \$14.95, the book is about his organization's pretension of rebuilding from the “ruins” of the Worldwide Church of God.

Recognize that neither of the books these men are selling were written to present God's truth to the world. One *sells* an opinion, the other sells a story. Each of these was conceived with an entirely different purpose in mind than that of teaching great Bible truths in the way Mr. Armstrong's “bookstore” book editions did.

One hopes these “leaders” simply *forgot* Christ's plain instruction to “freely give,” and *forgot* Mr. Armstrong's example and explanation of to whom certain books could be sold, and why.

Copying the Apostates, *Again!*

Looking back, none should have been surprised when the apostates began to charge for a subscription to *The Plain Truth* and to their youth magazine, along with other items they chose to market for profit. After destroying the Church's revenue base—remember, they threw out tithing—they found themselves forced to charge subscribers for the shallow junk they offered, which no longer of course presented solutions to the world's problems. Of course, they had lost sight of “give” vs. “get.” But many of God's people—as well as certain “leaders”—have also lost sight of the vital need to *give* the knowledge of the kingdom of God to the world as the Church once did.

The apostates sold the literature because they had put themselves in a position in which they had to. (Of course, they also wanted the money.)

These other leaders did it to *make money*—to make “merchandise” of the brethren (II Pet. 2:3). What other motive fits their actions?

Let’s move away from specific examples and understand the apostle Peter’s choice of words. First, here is what he wrote, “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make *merchandise* of YOU: whose judgment...lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not.”

Everyone understands that merchandise is sold to make money. In retail, consumer products are a source of *revenue*. Of course, such transactions are “what makes the world go ‘round.’” Peter is explaining that when the brethren are reduced to merchandise—and this is the term *God* uses to describe His people when misused—they have been reduced to a source of money for someone, and nothing more. In fact, these have become “*stolen merchandise*” that must be “fenced” (pawned) at *below market value*. This is what leaders have made of God’s people when they, through deceit, unlawfully take brethren away from the true Work of God—and ultimately from God Himself!—so they can use skills learned in Christ’s ministry to garner financial profit—TITHES!

On the other hand, and this is where you have a personal responsibility, those who willingly empower such leaders have *chosen* to be “merchandise”—mere “tithe-payers” bought and sold by false ministers!—allowing, in fact providing, deceived leaders with a position of authority to enrich themselves or their organizations.

Surely you have not previously seen the problem explained in this way!

“The Thief Comes Not...”

Think of all the terms that Jesus Christ uses to describe false ministers entering among His sheep—enemies, strangers, false apostles, false christs, false teachers, hirelings, wolves, slow bellies, Cretians, dogs, foxes, serpents, etc. The 10th chapter of John describes unauthorized men entering Christ’s sheepfold as “thieves and robbers.” It is interesting that verse 10 of this chapter summarizes any false leader as simply a “thief.” While Christ’s words in the second half of this passage—“I am come that they might have LIFE, and that they might have it more *abundantly*”—are quoted most often, the first half is perhaps more instructive for this age: “The THIEF comes not, but for to STEAL, and to *kill*, and to *destroy*.”

You are left to ponder the motives OF SPIRITUAL THIEVES at work throughout the splinters, using God’s people as cheap merchandise! Men willing to divert for themselves millions of dollars in tithes

that belong to God for the sole purpose of doing His *true* Work will have no problem selling personal opinions and stories in books for profit.

When I think of how such leaders will react upon being confronted with what is written here, I cannot help but recall the story of Christ's account in Mark 11:15-18 of when He entered the temple and "overthrew the tables of the moneychangers," calling it "a den of thieves." The result? When "the scribes and chief priests heard it," they "sought how they might destroy Him." The account contains no record of contrition or repentance. Expect the same today!

Summarizing, many have forgotten Christ's Matthew 10:8 instruction to freely give what has always been priceless, anyway.

We have now come to the other infinitely greater mass amnesia, mentioned earlier...

REMEMBERING ANOTHER DUTY— THE EZEKIEL WARNING!

This book has continually referenced two elements of God's Work: ANNOUNCING the kingdom of God to the world and WARNING the modern nations descended from ancient Israel.

The second aspect of responsibility has been largely forgotten—another victim of “amnesia.” Only rarely does one any longer hear people talk about addressing and warning the descendants of ancient Israel of impending war, famine, disease and captivity—if national repentance does not occur.

This volume would be incomplete without a chapter carefully re-explaining this special warning as an ongoing and vital part of finishing God's Work.

Mr. Armstrong was on fire with and absolutely consumed by the duty—the truly GRAVEST OF RESPONSIBILITIES!—to warn certain nations, and he continually reminded the Church that this was an ongoing obligation until the end of the age. His book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* detailed what is at stake for the still prosperous great Israelite nations of the West if they did not change their ways. This electrifying longer book was the Church's most often-requested piece of literature. Its message should have become a driving reality in the life of every single member of the Worldwide Church of God. I remember how in 1966 just the early smaller edition hit me like a thunderbolt and changed my life forever. Most of you would likely say the same.

Will you anoint your eyes and experience this feeling again?

Ezekiel 33

In addition, Mr. Armstrong continually reminded God’s people of Ezekiel 33:1-9. Speaking of the HOUSE OF ISRAEL in modern times, this passage, and actually the entire chapter, speaks of a “watchman” who “sees the sword come” and chooses to either “blow the trumpet” or “blow *not* the trumpet.” The context also includes a very specific and stern warning directly *to the watchman* of “blood” that will be on *his head* if he does not warn of what he sees is coming. I personally tremble at this warning. Do you? (And can you grasp that no one of Laodicea—the BLIND!—could fulfill this role? They cannot see their own deplorable spiritual condition. How could they WATCH—SEE!—on behalf of others?)

Will You Remember?

Allow Mr. Armstrong to explain again to all who will hear what the Ezekiel Warning is, as well as its profound importance to the overall Work of God. May God help you grasp what is written here. Read most carefully (all emphasis is his):

“About this time God impressed on our mind His real meaning of the prophecies in Ezekiel 33:1-19 and 3:17-21. The true significance of the entire Book of Ezekiel had been revealed for some time. But now, suddenly, it took on *immediate* and *specific* and *personal* significance.

“I had seen that Ezekiel was a *prophet* with a message for the FUTURE. He himself was in the captivity of the House of JUDAH...But he was *not* sent a prophet with a message to these people.”

“His message was a warning of *invasion* and *total destruction of the nation’s CITIES*. That invasion was for the future. That prophecy came more than 120 years *after* Israel [the House of Israel] already *had* been invaded and conquered.”

“So now I saw Ezekiel was set a WATCHMAN—to *watch* international conditions as well as God’s prophecies—and *when* this invasion is preparing, and near, shortly prior to Christ’s coming to RULE THE WORLD, he is to WARN the people who had migrated, in Ezekiel’s day, to northwestern Europe and the British Isles! But Ezekiel *never carried that warning!* It was not for HIS TIME! He was used *merely to write it!* It now became plain to me that God was to use a modern 20th-century ‘Ezekiel’ to shout this WARNING.”

“I had no illusions that I was chosen to be the ‘modern Ezekiel’ to proclaim this message. But I did know that no one was sounding this alarm. I did plainly see this sword of destruction and punishment coming. I knew the time was near. Perhaps, with World War II well under way, it was even then *upon us*. We could not, then, foresee that God would grant another recess period in the series of world wars before the final round to end at ‘Armageddon.’

“And I did see plainly, that God said: ‘If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned’ that God would require the blood of the people—and now *whole peoples*—at the watchman’s hand!

“That was a stern warning to *me*.”

*The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong,
Volume II, Chapter 42, pp. 36-38*

“In those early days I was especially interested in the book of Ezekiel.”

“The message in fact is for today—and contained a WARNING of things to happen to Britain, America and the Western European nations NOW in OUR DAY.

“I saw clearly, back in those early days, that Ezekiel’s prophecy was a message to be taken by some MODERN TWENTIETH CENTURY servant of God—a ‘modern Ezekiel’ to America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

“I dwelt in hundreds of broadcasts on this book of Ezekiel and its WARNING of things IMMINENTLY NOW to HAPPEN to Britain, the United States and Western Europe.”

“And so it was that Christ, the Head of this Work, caused me during the first 20 or 25 years of this Work to put special emphasis on Ezekiel’s warning TO OUR PEOPLE, IN OUR DAY.”

*“How I Came to be Going to Kings and Heads of Government,”
PT, Feb. 1977*

“This is the most seriously-in-earnest article I have ever written for *The Plain Truth*. Our beloved country—yours and mine—now faces TOTAL DESTRUCTION!”

“A third of our people—white English-speaking people and minorities with us—will die in a disease epidemic such as the world never experienced—resulting from imminent FAMINE! I do not know whether in two or three years—or in another decade or more—but sooner than people think!”

“Why do not theologians, doctors of divinity and of theology, evangelists, religious leaders shout this warning to you? THEY SIMPLY DO NOT UNDERSTAND God’s prophecies! They do not preach what God’s Word says—they take a piece of a sentence or a paragraph here or there out of context—yet leave about 98 percent of the Bible unread and unpreached!

“WAKE UP! Readers of *The Plain Truth!* If they have not the courage to tell you, I HAVE!”

“The lamentations and woes of the message to be carried to Israel never occurred in Ezekiel’s time or later. They are to strike America and Britain in our time.”

“America the Beautiful. America the Condemned,”
PT, June-July 1980

“In OUR TIME, God showed me in the New Testament where He sent His disciples FIRST to the same ‘lost sheep of the House of Israel’ (Matt. 15:24). And so it was that Christ, the Head of this Work, caused me during the first 20 or 25 years of this Work, to put SPECIAL emphasis on Ezekiel’s warning to OUR PEOPLE, IN OUR DAY.”

“The Apostle John in his vision is told to take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel, and eat it up.

“HOW LIKE EZEKIEL’S PROPHECY!

“It was sweet as honey in his mouth but BITTER in his stomach.

“The message of the little book seems to be what the angel next said, ‘Thou must prophesy [proclaim-preach-foretell] again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and KINGS!’

“Now WHEN?”

“The message of the little book written on both sides of a roll, to be eaten and swallowed, takes us directly back to Ezekiel’s prophecy. Ezekiel himself, as I have shown, NEVER WENT TO ISRAEL, NEVER DELIVERED THAT MESSAGE. It was not a prophecy for the Israel of his day—but for OUR DAY, NOW. Ezekiel’s prophecy was NOT a message to MANY NATIONS, speaking different languages, and to their KINGS. It was to the REBELLIOUS PEOPLE of the House of Israel and it was emphasized to Ezekiel they were NOT of strange speech—NOT foreign Gentile nations.”

“Could it be possible, after proclaiming the Gospel of THE KINGDOM OF GOD, as well as Ezekiel’s warning to the people of Israel, that, beginning January, 1972, when my PRESENT CAMPAIGN of walking through the doors God said He would open (Rev. 3:8) to KINGS, and many NATIONS of DIFFERENT LANGUAGES com-

menced, that it is the FULFILLMENT OF THIS PROPHECY OF REVELATION 10?”

Co-Worker Letter, November 19, 1976

Even the Apostates

The final quote that follows does not come from Mr. Armstrong, but rather from his successor who had instructed the Editorial Department to write a tribute to Mr. Armstrong. It demonstrates that even the apostates once clearly understood who Israel was, as well as the overall framework of prophecy, at least up to seven months after Mr. Armstrong died. This necessarily would have included the need to continue the Ezekiel Warning. Even *these* men once worried the Church could one day forget this.

Here is how this was described and listed in *The Worldwide News* as number 15 of what were called “the 18 truths” restored under Mr. Armstrong. The part in bold is as it originally appeared:

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

WN, August 25, 1986

This article carried both a photo of all Mr. Armstrong’s major books on prophecy as well as the familiar portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong together, with a caption stating, “In the early 1930s, God began to use the Armstrongs to restore these 18 essential truths to His Church. Could we, today, *lose sight* of them?” (Emphasis mine.)

Tragically, many more than the apostates lost sight of the basics—and the urgency—of Bible prophecy, and thus the need to continue the WARNING MESSAGE to Jacob (Israel) before his “trouble” began. What happened to cause this? Why do so few brethren today discuss something so central—so absolutely FUNDAMENTAL—to what was once understood to be an integral part of the Great Commission? How did so many forget all of the kinds of statements that we have just read?

The answer is that Satan’s spirit is confusing the splinters and causing memory loss on a matter he wants de-emphasized and *permanently forgotten*. He knows what this warning means to his future. It is much more attractive to him if God’s people can be diverted into, and become preoccupied with, fixing *this* world—HIS world!—through his social improve-

ment gospel, rather than announcing the arrival of the WONDERFUL WORLD TOMORROW, when he will be bound and the KINGDOM OF GOD is ruling.

Make yourself remember this!

Crying Aloud

The book has several times referenced Isaiah 58:1 without focusing on what this scripture once meant to the Church. In fact, in a sense, this lone passage set the tone for how Mr. Armstrong led God's Work throughout his ministry. When he needed to correct the Church on matters of great importance, he did it in the spirit of this verse. Naturally, when he needed to speak out in warning to powerful nations, he also did it in the spirit of this scripture.

The INTRODUCTION stated that this subject would be covered in the tone of Isaiah 58:1: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." By now the reader recognizes the book fulfills this promise, and yet the strongest material—the most exciting and inspiring points *by far*—remain for later chapters. We are still laying groundwork—FOUNDATION!—for what you will learn, including why I can state now that you will be moved profoundly by coming knowledge.

Here is the point. You must recognize how the special warning to Israel is being, and will continue to be, issued. What *tone of voice*—what *clarity of issues*—and what LEVEL OF VOLUME!—God expects His servants to use. In fact, we will even see in those later chapters *why* God compares the voice of His Work, and of His chief servant at the end of the age, to that of a TRUMPET! (See my thorough article on this subject, "'Cry Aloud, Spare Not'—What ALL Forgot!")

An Uncertain Sound?

Paul wrote, "For if the trumpet give an *uncertain sound*, who shall prepare himself to battle?" (I Cor. 14:8). Ask yourself why your organization, either in written or spoken form, does not speak with the clarity, authority and blast of power described in Isaiah 58:1 and in this chapter. Ask why there is not the same urgency in its words and "tone of voice" as Mr. Armstrong used—and as I am trying with all my might to use with you RIGHT NOW!

The United Church of God has used a variety of approaches to their telecast. These tend to almost resemble "fireside chats," in which the sometimes two different men who "broadcast" together exchange "inter-

esting” questions and ideas. Certainly nothing in their approach or manner remotely resembles the way Mr. Armstrong’s literally “trumpet-like” tenor voice pierced the airwaves as though it was coming from a charging bull elephant!

Another larger splinter quite literally prides itself, and this thinking emanates directly from the leader, in presenting the truth as an intellectual “vision,” a view he declares Mr. Armstrong failed to realize was the more correct way to take the gospel to the world, never mind any kind of a warning to Israel.

A side note: Any number of slivers and individuals can claim that they are “doing the Work.” I can think of several groups who have anemic and almost pitiful websites, which are invariably badly conceived and poorly maintained. That they are far from speaking with the tone and volume of Isaiah 58:1 to be used by the watchman is apart from the fact that God is not leading them. Just their paltry store of material and lack of quality reflects this much.

On the other hand, one leader bellows and rages, primarily attacking those of Laodicea as though brothers and sisters in Christ are “enemies” in a way no true servant of God would *ever* do. He actually takes pride in thundering, “We are AT WAR with Laodicea!” Obviously, God is not at war with His own people, and neither are His servants. He certainly does want to warn those of Laodicea because of what lies ahead for all who do not repent of their spiritual condition. This begins by returning to God’s Church. By no definition is this strange man’s self-proclaimed “responsibility” related to the true Work of God today! It is simply alien to everything of God.

Sadly, and so very tragically, the remaining majority today seem to have fallen into believing and preferring that their leaders, whom they *suppose* to be used of God, should practice what God used Isaiah to CONDEMN: “Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us *smooth things*, prophecy *deceits*” (30:10).

I urge the reader to read the tone and language used in our books, such as *America and Britain in Prophecy*, *Who or What Is the Beast of Revelation?*, *Are These the Last Days?*, *Why Man Cannot Solve His Problems*, *Tomorrow’s Wonderful World – An Inside View!*, *War, Killing and the Military*, as well as *The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out*—and so many more.

To understand the principle behind Isaiah 58:1 is to understand why we write as we do—why I speak with a spirit of *warning* to both national physical Israel and the majority of God’s people, in spiritual Israel (Laodicea). Both are in *deep trouble*, and a fair, just, loving, merciful God

wants them to awaken before it is too late! Given the terrible time just ahead, the Great Tribulation, does any believe soft, purring tones and “commentary” about it will get the job done?

By no stretch! And each of God’s people will have to decide the manner in which they will support who and what this chapter describes.

The Devil’s Role

Remember that it is *the devil* who seeks to thwart God’s Work in every possible way. And he is not particular about *how* he does it. He does not care if he destroys the Work outright—as with the outcome in Pasadena—or merely destroys the brethren’s understanding of what the Work is—the case in the splinters. He knows that once either has happened, he can divert people into other priorities, including a re-engineered definition of what *is* the Work and what *is* the gospel, for those who even still believe *something* should be done!

Some time ago, I spoke for many hours with one of the most senior evangelists from the early years, ordained in 1952. It was an astonishing conversation. I was appalled to learn that he did not even *remember* the term “Ezekiel Warning.” He had no recollection whatsoever of Mr. Armstrong having used this term. I could not believe my ears, and that I had to carefully explain it to him *several times* in the *same conversation*. He proved that complete amnesia can strike anyone.

Jesus promised His disciples that “the Holy Spirit...shall teach you all things, and *bring all things to your remembrance*, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:26). As with the true gospel, and so many other points, if you have forgotten how Christ, through Mr. Armstrong, taught this enormous doctrine—the special warning is certainly one of the very greatest doctrines, involving a whole book of the Bible and other passages—and its vital importance to the Church, ask God to help you remember both.

He will answer you—and He will also help you understand how John 14:26 and receiving more of the Holy Spirit is a crucial part of the process OF ANOINTING YOUR EYES!

A Conclusive Statement

The final statement that we will read from Mr. Armstrong describes how God’s Church will remain a “little flock, persecuted, despised by the world.” However, this will not deter it from continuing to announce the kingdom of God and to warn Israel until the Great Tribulation.

Remember, the former has *always* been the Church's responsibility—and the Church is STILL HERE! Christ promised the “gates of the grave” would never prevail against it, and that He would “never leave nor forsake it.” So, the Church will be here until He returns, meaning until the Tribulation arrives! Only *then* will the Work cease.

I mentioned how some have misquoted *The Incredible Human Potential* (pp. 116-117), portraying Mr. Armstrong as contradicting his own many statements above. In that book, he *appears* to say that only apostles—exclusive of the Church as a whole or of one of lesser rank—can take the gospel to the world. You may wish to get the book and carefully read his statement to see that he is actually saying that *the Church* was not established by Christ to “*persuade* the whole world into a spiritual salvation, now...to evangelize and *save* the world—NOW!”, as he put it. This statement is being misused and circulated by a few people as supposed proof that only apostles were commissioned to preach the gospel—that the *Church*, if *initially* led by one of lesser rank, cannot do this. It has also been explained that Mr. Armstrong only saw his office as that of apostle after a full 19 years of the Philadelphian age had passed.

This is another example of how some ignore clear statements, reflecting Mr. Armstrong's *true* perspective, while taking a single statement out of context to distort for their own purpose. Ultimately, certain people do this in order to conclude that they need no longer exert the *effort* to do the Work. But others seek an excuse to keep for themselves—to plain STEAL! (wittingly or unwittingly)—God's tithes and offerings!

Again, the above thinking parallels the violation of a key rule of Bible study. I repeat from before: All of God's people were taught, as a basic rule of studying God's Word, to always *start* with the most *basic*, *clear* scriptures to understand an *entire* doctrine. The same must be done when understanding ALL of what Mr. Armstrong taught about carrying on with the same Work until the age ends. Carefully reflect upon this before continuing.

Notice how this final quote incorporates virtually all of the critical elements that we have discussed, including the all-important tie-in of what is the true Body of Christ, the purpose of that Body or Church, and what is the only gospel that Church will be taking to all nations:

“God *started* His Gospel WORK—proclaiming the Gospel (good news) of HIS KINGDOM—through the individual human BODY of Jesus. But after His resurrection, Jesus sent the same HOLY SPIRIT on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 31, and thereafter, to enter into the COLLECTIVE BODY of those constituting GOD'S CHURCH.

“The CHURCH, then, is the COLLECTIVE BODY Christ uses as HIS INSTRUMENT, empowered by God’s Spirit, to carry on GOD’S WORK. Jesus Christ heads and directs it from heaven!”

“But WHAT is the divine MISSION of that Church? What is its PURPOSE? The answer is to *do* the WORK OF GOD, which Jesus started and now continues *through* His Church.”

“Wherever God’s true Church is—the ONE Church that is CHRIST’S—it will be preaching THAT GOSPEL to the whole world—over *all continents*—today. For we are *near* the END! That is the Gospel of the *living* Christ! It is the GOOD NEWS of the *coming* KINGDOM OF GOD to *RULE THE WORLD!*”

“But wherever that ONE *true* Church is, it will be named *the Church of God*...But that is not all. Many have appropriated God’s name, but are not proclaiming the KINGDOM OF GOD...

“That true Church is preaching the imminency of the coming of CHRIST as King of kings and LORD of lords, to RULE all nations for a thousand years on earth.

“There is only ONE such Church! [Author’s note: Can you—will you—believe this once again?]

“It is doing THE WORK OF GOD. It is, as Jesus said it would be, a ‘little flock,’ persecuted, despised by the world.”

“Personal,” GN, Aug. 1983

In contrast to this clear picture of the Church painted by Mr. Armstrong, most of the “church” today—I am speaking of the splinters—came to take on a completely different look—and thinking. We now examine it to learn of yet one more astounding memory loss suffered by most of God’s people—the role of the brethren within the Work...

WHAT ABOUT “LOCAL EVANGELISM”?

It was promised earlier that we would revisit the subject of the social gospel in a different context, and include more of what Mr. Armstrong taught about it. That happens now. Let’s understand *how* the Church, through “cunning sleight of hand” (Eph. 4:14), was sold a “bill of goods” that was another central part of the apostates’ sinister agenda to condition God’s people not just to believe as, but also to FUNCTION like, the world’s churches.

Missionaries the world over, both clergy and laymen alike, generally describe themselves as called to participate in the “work of the Lord.” Many of you either have come from such a background—you grew up in a church that strongly emphasized this. If you did, you know the sincerity—the genuine dedication—of those who seem to so selflessly give themselves to one or another form of this endeavor. Some, like Mother Teresa, spend an entire lifetime making it their personal mission to “save” as many of the “unwashed” as possible. This is all part of the world’s social gospel, which is linked to improving *societal* conditions wherever “believers” have “accepted Jesus.”

“Announcing” or “Spreading”?

Now thinking in a more narrow sense, there is a popular approach—practiced throughout the world—to “spreading the gospel” within one’s community, neighborhood, workplace or circle of friends. This

phrase is often linked to the terms *evangelism* or *evangelizing*. Apart from the fact that the “gospel” being spread is the wrong one (and, as we have seen, one that focuses on a very different “Jesus”), generally believed throughout most of Christendom, a secondary question arises: Is the *method* of “empowering” or permitting individual brethren or members of the Church to “preach the gospel” on their own, as they see fit, a biblical concept?

An inset thought applies here: Mr. Armstrong spoke often of *announcing* the kingdom of God to the world, and you have seen this referenced in the book. He never spoke of *spreading* the kingdom. There is good reason. I repeat for emphasis: He understood that basic Protestant theology has the kingdom of God already on Earth, found in the hearts of men—“within you” (Luke 17:21)—or wherever “Christianity” is practiced. Of course, and I repeat again for emphasis, the kingdom of God is *not* yet here and “Christians,” therefore, cannot spread it. It is as impossible to spread a kingdom not on Earth as it is to spread jelly on bread without jelly. Mr. Armstrong carefully selected the phrase “*announcing* the kingdom” because he knew it was future.

Here is the problem: Seeing oneself as “spreading the kingdom” is a powerful elixir to human nature! It is being “proactive for God”—and “making the world a better place.” Of course, all of this is much the same as “witnessing for Jesus,” discussed earlier. So recognize that there is more than one way to describe this worldly approach.

Uneating the Apple

Most people involved in missionary work or personal evangelism are almost completely unwilling to believe that what they are doing does not have God’s blessing. Believe me, I have tried to convince more than a few who have been involved in this kind of work (and who seemed *at the time* possibly called of God) that God has *not* authorized them to act on their own. I explained they must be careful not to “cast pearls before swine.” Many of you can remember yourselves being similarly cautioned early in your calling. In addition, the ministry would typically explain the simple difference between “*confessing*” Christ when under fire and “*professing*” Him where there was no interest. We would also talk in terms of “being ready always with an *answer* to every man that ASKS you...” (This is why The Restored Church of God has prepared an article, “Should You Preach to Others?” and another, “Are You Being Called?”, to explain these and related principles in more detail than can be covered here.)

From time to time, people have sought membership in Restored after having developed a personal website for the purpose of “doing the Work”—or they have become involved in various efforts to “spread Mr. Armstrong’s literature”—or to in some way give public “tribute” to him, all done through their own authority, and in their own way. Other brethren have taken it upon themselves to write and post, on their own websites or those of others, their commentaries about world news or opinions about the fulfillment of prophecy. It is as though many have come to believe that what was once done exclusively by Mr. Armstrong and headquarters may now, primarily because of the apostasy, be done by *anyone*. Convincing these people that they have taken authority not given them (Jms. 3:1-2) is no less difficult than telling a Methodist missionary that he does not have God’s approval. In effect, so many today have “grown a voice.” And it is extremely difficult to get these people to “uneat the apple” of personal evangelism.

Therefore, we must ask again an old question: Does God *approve* of and endorse such efforts by *His* people? Are individuals or local congregations, apart from headquarters’ direction—or even the general approval of headquarters—permitted to “do the Work” when and where they wish—and through the method or methods of their own choosing? What did Mr. Armstrong teach?

“Local” or “Personal Evangelism”

Some review. In the early 1990s, as the apostasy was shifting into high gear, the false leaders of the WCG introduced a concept that should have been familiar to all those in the Church with Evangelical Protestant roots. Having already thrown out the true gospel, and so many having come to believe that Jesus *was* the kingdom of God, and then that this kingdom was already on Earth, again, WCG members were taught that it was now their duty to “*spread* the kingdom.” This was characterized in classic Methodist or evangelical fashion, meaning through the concept of employing “local evangelism,” sometimes referred to as “personal evangelism.” Many of you will not forget having heard these terms for the first time—and wondering what they meant.

At the same time, the apostates denigrated the idea of a warning—*any* kind of warning. Mr. Armstrong’s understanding of the need to warn Israel was reduced to and derided as the “gospel of warn and walk away.” While he always saw the warning message to Israel as something entirely different from the gospel, the apostates’ catchy phrase was a way—a word gimmick—designed to associate the idea of a warning

with something that was “unloving,” “unmerciful” or “unchrist-like.” (The concept of a supergovernment coming to SMASH all the governments of men—see Daniel 2:45—was seen as much the same.) In addition, the use of the term “walk away” was a second gimmick employed to make brethren feel guilty if they did not “lend a helping hand” to those they were now “leading to Jesus” in the fashion of the world’s churches. They were told that God had always wanted His people to “do their part in improving the world.”

Over time, as with so many other doctrines, resistance (and there was little by the ministry) to this completely alien theology eventually collapsed, and the Church became conditioned to it. Most accepted the new principle as correct, and it occurred to almost no one to research what Mr. Armstrong had taught. Yet again, a staggering memory loss overtook scores of thousands.

The result was that many brethren fled the apostasy and took this thinking with them into the splinters, where it is practiced much more widely—in fact it is almost universal—than you may be aware. Consider. With the enormous power of the Internet, this ultimate tool of “personal evangelism” gives *any individual person* today the potential to take the gospel—and this could be the true gospel, a hybrid gospel or an entirely false gospel, and could also include any version of a “warning”—to every nation!

Does God just look the other way when this happens?

Mr. Armstrong Was Plain!

Let’s at least briefly cover—and *remember*—what the entire Church seemed to once understand so clearly. I thoroughly covered this topic as early as 1993 in *There Came a Falling Away* (changes 35-37). Here are several statements from Mr. Armstrong and others:

“The individual lay member HAS HIS VITAL ROLE in proclaiming the GOOD NEWS (gospel) to the world. How? Not by going out and himself proclaiming Christ’s message to the neighborhood or to the world. That is primarily done by the apostles, to some extent by evangelists, and to even a lesser extent in local areas by local pastors.”

MYSTERY OF THE AGES, p. 266

“The Worldwide Church of God is completely nonproselytizing, and always has been. We have no missionary program, have no program... for training missionaries.”

“It is emphatically contrary to our belief and practice for any minister or representative of this Church to directly or personally solicit any potential member or urge anyone to become a member.”

“*Update: AICF and WCG,*” GN, Oct. 1975

“Jesus said none *can* come to Him (spiritually—religiously) except the Spirit of God *draws him*. We are humans. We cannot draw them. That is not our job—it is God’s.”

“Our No. 1 commission is to proclaim Jesus Christ’s GOOD NEWS *as a witness*—not to try to force conversion of any. Only God can convert.”

“*Personal,*” GN, Oct.-Nov. 1984

“The GREAT COMMISSION was given to the APOSTLES...NOT the lay members of the Church.”

“Their part was to *back up* the apostles—stand behind them with their prayers, encouragement, tithes and offerings.”

““And his gifts were, that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers’ (Ephesians 4:11, RSV).”

“*Why The Church?*”, WCG Reprint Article, 1978

“The Church members, as a whole, are not called to ‘GO FORTH’ with the gospel message, but to back up, help, support the apostle in carrying the message into all the world.”

“The twelfth chapter of I Corinthians reveals that there are various offices of administration within the Church – and that God gives various spiritual gifts for those various functions.”

“*7 Proofs of God’s True Church,*” PT, Aug. 1979

Like everything from Mr. Armstrong, these statements are unambiguous. Either Mr. Armstrong understood the role and work of his office, and the brethren’s complementary role of backing him up, or he did not. It cannot be both. Of course, some today who think they are holding to the truth seem to believe the apostates they rejected and left behind had a better understanding of their role than did the man who taught them the truth they now seek to spread on their own through personal evangelism. By now you see there is much more to the subject of personal evangelism than the surface suggests. This becomes one more memory to be recaptured—one more topic toward which the anointing of the eyes restores sight.

These quotes re-introduce a question that cannot be avoided—that of whether God has sent another apostle to finish the Work.

How All This Changed—and By Whom

Notice that the previous two quotes explained that various functions in the different offices of the ministry involve gifts that God must give for His Work to be accomplished. The following statements demonstrate how this teaching was changed. Have you been taken in by the shallow deceit of what are no more than simple assertions directly contrary to scripture? I have included ten quotes from the apostates so the reader can understand how relentless they were in repeating their new thinking over and over again. They understood the power of repetition. Let's read:

“Is spreading the gospel just for the headquarters of the Church to do? Or is it something every one of us as individual Christians needs to be involved in too?”

“Shouldn't we be involved in the same kinds of works of service that our Lord and Master Jesus Christ was? Jesus proclaimed the gospel and demonstrated its meaning as he gave mercy to those in need.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Aug. 27, 1992

“How easy it is to pass up a prime opportunity to share our faith with another person, simply because we are timid, afraid of what the person might think, or wondering if it is really the right thing to do.”

“God has called us out of the darkness of this world and into his kingdom, and has given us a job to do.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Dec. 23, 1992

“We have always narrowly defined proselytizing as recruiting by inducement. Since we believe God must call, our approach has been not to solicit people for membership or money.”

“The [*World Tomorrow*] announcer will...explain that interested viewers can request [Church] addresses along with the literature being advertised.”

“I've already spoken with each pastor in the market areas affected by the test. These men will prepare members in their congregations for visits from viewers.”

*J.W. Tkach, “Members Are Vital Part in Reaching Out to People,”
WN, June 16, 1992*

“...it is time that our local congregations begin taking an active role in the spreading of the gospel in their communities, *supported* by the

collective work through headquarters.” [Author’s note: Notice how headquarters is now to support the brethren instead of the other way around. This tail-wags-the-dog thinking directly paved the way for the Laodicean age when the people rule, in place of Christ through His leader.]

“We have too long seen evangelistic work as something that should primarily be done at headquarters by headquarters.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Feb. 23 1993

“God has provided the ministry...to help equip and prepare his people so that they will be wise and faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Mar. 9, 1993

“Now, God is opening up new avenues for us to be witnesses of his kingdom—reaching out in the love of Christ as his ambassadors in our own communities...” [Author’s note: Recall that, like the world’s churches, it was taught that this was a “kingdom” already here.]

“We have a lifetime of work to do. So few people know what it means to believe on Christ, and to devote one’s life to him.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Mar. 25, 1993

“Personal evangelism can be put into two categories: 1) confrontational; 2) relational. Relational evangelism...Maybe we have never known that this is the proper term for the kind of evangelizing that the Bible describes.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Aug. 24, 1993

“Discipling (personal evangelism or sharing your faith) centers on the good news about Jesus Christ. Strictly speaking, making disciples does not mean advancing the claims of a specific church or ideology.” [Author’s note: Many doing this today do not remember how they were conditioned to practice the world’s form of evangelism, which places little emphasis on doctrine and a great deal on “Jesus.”]

Jeff Zhorne, “Lighting the Way,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“In putting on Christ, a Christian has the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel to others. In the early church, even in times of persecution, individually members did not shirk that responsibility (Acts 8:4). One church has a unique method of reminding those newly baptized of their God-given duty.”

“A part of the act of baptism in the Church of India is for the candidate to place his own hand on his head and say, ‘Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.’ This is part of the baptismal service of new members, not the ordination of ministers!”

*E. Paul Hovey, “Baptism into Jesus Christ,”
Reviews You Can Use, Mar.-Apr. 1994*

“A...way our local congregations can be involved in evangelism is by all members...feeling free to invite [people] to attend a Church function...”

“Not every member has the personality or the motivation to evangelize this way.”

“It just means that God has not given them the talent for knowing how to wisely invite someone to a Church function.”

“God gives each of us gifts as it pleases him...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Mar. 9, 1993

The Great Switch—Flattery and Gifts

The contrast in teaching is unmistakable—and far-reaching. It seems impossible that so many brethren never stopped for even a moment to ask themselves *who* they were choosing to believe, and *why*. Did you notice in the final quote that Mr. Armstrong’s successor so easily inserted the very flattering idea that members who take doing the Work into their own hands are “gifted”? How easy would it be for human nature in people to yield to the temptation to conclude that they must do the Work themselves because they are GIFTED?

Now try to imagine Mr. Armstrong permitting anyone, anywhere, at any time, and in any fashion, to preach the gospel or warn nations—and then assert that they are doing it because they perceive themselves as gifted. He would never allow or even consider allowing such devilish confusion (I Cor. 14:33) to enter the Church, and the New Testament simply reflects no such pattern. Such thinking unleashed nothing more than unbridled vanity from thousands.

Let’s discuss this confusion problem a little further. If the Church allowed “open season” for doing the Work, every member would “do that which is right [or seems best] in his own eyes” (Jdg. 21:25). Uniformity of approach throughout the Church would be impossible—and one could ask, “What would be the point of having everyone’s website look exactly alike, anyway?” Absolute chaos would ensue throughout the Church—and so would disagreement and competition. Virtually

everyone would have reasons for seeing his way as the “best” or “most professional” or “most appropriate.”

This partly explains why the chaotic, disagreeing, competing confusion that forms the collective picture that is the splinters and slivers. God is not the author of confusion, and all of this could be avoided if brethren sought to find GOD’S Work, and where CHRIST is leading—and knew what to look for in their search!

Mr. Armstrong spoke often about how God had *trained* him for the job he was called to do. God does not train the lay membership of the Church in the same way He trains His top leader. Brethren are simply not equipped—not qualified—to take either the gospel to the world or God’s warning message to Israel. They lack both vital preparation and experience necessary for a host of duties they cannot even understand, let alone perform. (Even the training of pastors and evangelists, never mind local elders, limits how God can use them.)

In short, however sincere, lay members simply do not know what they are doing. Their job is to support, not spearhead.

Social or Church “Activism”

Most of God’s people have long understood that the Church tends to take on the nature of the age in which it finds itself. This has been the case throughout history. This tendency has a direct bearing on what we are discussing. Some material in this section is similar to a portion of Section II of *Why The Restored Church of God – Should You Join?* Though it is somewhat different from the subject of local evangelism, the thinking it describes is related, and this is why it is included.

In the modern age, many take up “causes” in an attempt to reverse real or perceived “injustices.” This has always been true in a world where there *are* many injustices. Yet, the Church was *always* different.

But a *new* activism has arisen among God’s people. Most brethren have been wounded and betrayed, some many times, and have been the recipients of injustices—some real, some perceived. This, coupled with Protestant “do-gooder” thinking taught to them before leaving the WCG, has caused many to take up “causes” for which they seek solutions, actions or remedies. Many have come to think that things are “out of control” in God’s Church or Plan—and that God now needs *their help* to return them to their former condition of happiness, doctrinal unity, peace, etc.

Of course, God’s Master Plan has *never* been even a tiny bit out of control! It is very much *under His control!* People’s lives and beliefs may be out of control. The beliefs and conduct of *leaders* are out of

control. *Organizations* are out of control. But God’s Plan has *never* been out of control—not for even a split second of the last 6,000 years!

God’s people once knew that God is not trying to fix the world. Under Mr. Armstrong, the WCG never participated in ecumenical programs to change the world or make its Christianity “better.” Similarly, The Restored Church of God is not trying to change all the splinters in some pre-determined way. We do not have an “activist” agenda for *improving* the seventh era. We are not seeking to unify all the groups through this or that “joint effort” or “cooperation.” It is *Christ’s* job through use of His voice—John 10:3-5—to gather Laodiceans back to His Church! (Christ is calling those with God’s Spirit, who will anoint their eyes, OUT OF THE SPLINTERS!) All such *human* efforts to do this *will fail miserably*—no matter how sincere the activists may be. Incidentally, this includes any “peace” and “unity” anticipated as a result of UCG and LCG’s efforts to discuss “mutual concerns.”

I have explained before that some, in the name of holding fast, have actually used the “scattering” to justify rejection of some of the most basic Bible truths. This is an opposite problem. They have sought to convince God’s people it is actually *wrong* to be part of *any* organization! In some cases, people have come to believe that the truest Philadelphians almost become a law unto themselves. These reject God’s government, the one true Church doctrine, doing God’s Work and any need to assemble regularly with those of like mind, among other things. (But, I repeat, Christ *is* calling *individuals* to “anoint their eyes” and return to His Church and Work.)

Members of The Restored Church of God do not write letters on the Internet or to various church newspapers or websites bantering back and forth about “what needs to be done” with this or that problem (I Tim. 6:3-5)! Many of God’s people must learn *again* not to take up “causes,” following the democratic tradition of “the people have power.”

All those who are determined to pass on emails, maintain personal websites for “doing the Work” or to “fight to make things better” or to “unite the churches” or just to post personal opinions or ideas would never fit in God’s Church. We do not participate in these efforts, and this is why you may have noticed our brethren do not engage in ongoing Internet arguments that accomplish nothing.

What Mr. Armstrong Taught About “Activism”

Let’s take yet another look at what Mr. Armstrong taught about trying to fix or improve the world through human effort and human solutions, once again contrasting it to what the apostates replaced it with.

The second quote below describes a misguided proposal given to, but rejected by, Mr. Armstrong. It could easily have been written by any number of splinter leaders today.

Also, and this is related to the problem, many today do not seem to understand, or perhaps never understood, the true purpose of the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation (AICF), which Mr. Armstrong began in 1975. In light of various splinters giving to relief organizations, I decided to include some of his explanation of AICF’s *real* purpose. Be sure to read very carefully Mr. Armstrong’s description of its *exact function*—that of assisting his unique ministry.

You will see that Mr. Armstrong also spoke of “personal evangelism,” and it was so important to him that he had it included in the Church’s constitution and bylaws, as you will see in its point number four. But this phrase had strictly to do with *his own* (as we saw previously) prophesied *personal commission* involving kings, presidents and heads of state around the world. When understood, and put together with all the rest of what we have seen that he taught on this matter, the very constitution and bylaws of the Worldwide Church of God under Mr. Armstrong reflected the membership’s role as one *of support* for what God was doing *through him!*

One could not find statements from Mr. Armstrong more plain than these. Read and reread them until their meaning jumps from the page:

“Did Christ become divided, taking part in the politics of this world, taking part in this world’s affairs, trying to clean up this world, and make it a better world...? Is that the Church that Jesus founded? Go back and look at the Church as it started out. You’ll find it in the book of Acts.

“Did they try to reform Caesar’s government and try to show him what was wrong? And to make it a better world? Or did they just try to pull people out of the world and make them better individuals without trying to make the world itself better?”

“*True Church,*” *WT Radio Broadcast*

Of course, these are rhetorical questions. Mr. Armstrong did not answer them because the answer was so obvious.

“A 22-page typed proposal has been submitted to me...by [former WCG attorney].”

“Its purpose: to...provide a more workable solution to [the world’s] problems...”

“Brethren, this is exceedingly important. It leads me to begin a review of all the projects in which we are participating through the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation. These have been entered into *to a limited extent* in various parts of the world...I am bringing the Advisory Council of Elders into this review.”

“...For example, our project with the king of Thailand for the support of portable schools for the education of their mountain people has been very successful.”

“In Israel we have excavated in the area of the ancient throne of King David...Yet in so doing we did not try to do OURSELVES that which ONLY CHRIST CAN, AND WILL SOON DO! It only helped me proclaim Christ’s soon coming to bring us world peace—AS THE ‘PRINCE OF PEACE.’

“True, these projects we have supported in a LIMITED manner are the projects of carnal-minded men—and secular activities. The sole value to the Work of God in our participation is in giving leverage to proclaim Christ’s Gospel to more millions of people, and to encourage noted examples of world leaders in doing GOD’S WAY NOW—even though the world will not.

“I feel that many of our brethren have not fully understood some of these *limited* secular projects of the AICF. Besides, the AICF has given me a prestige and standing in the eyes of world leaders MAKING POSSIBLE THE SPREADING OF CHRIST’S GOSPEL! We are called to take Christ’s message *TO* the unconverted secular world. Yet we are forbidden to be *OF* the secular world. That precludes us from entering on such a project as outlined.

“We will honor all actual commitments made through the AICF. But we cannot, of course, start a project ourselves in which WE, as HUMANS for the benefit of coming generations, will try to correct the world’s evils, solve its problems and bring in world peace. That is going to require TWO THINGS: 1) Get rid of Satan the Devil, and 2) change human nature. ONLY CHRIST CAN DO THAT.

“God has called me to proclaim GOD’S WAY, call the world to REPENT of transgressing that way and proclaim the coming soon (IN *THIS* GENERATION) of Jesus Christ in supreme POWER and GLORY. Then, with Satan gone, *HE* will do what we are NOT CALLED TO DO—change human nature. Instead of imbibing Satan’s nature of ‘GET’ and SELF-LOVE and VANITY and hostile competition, people will begin to be partakers of THE DIVINE NATURE!”

“Proposal of an Armstrong Peace Foundation,” WN, April 6, 1981

The final paragraph of this quote adds two elements to preaching the gospel—(1) “proclaim GOD’S WAY” and (2) “call the world to REPENT.” Is

your organization proclaiming number two in the list? If not, why not—and why are you supporting it?

Making Plain the Work

This next and final statement from Mr. Armstrong was part of one of the longest Co-Worker letters he ever wrote. He was explaining to the Church the injustice of the court-appointed California receiver who illegally entered the Church in January 1979:

“THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS:

“The object and purpose of this Church of God according to Constitution and Bylaws says in the very first paragraph: in order to carry the great commission of Jesus Christ, to preach and publish the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to all nations as a witness. That is the main purpose of the whole Church. And that requires the expenditure of money for:

- “1) radio broadcasting;
- “2) television broadcasting;
- “3) magazines, booklets and other means in print;
- “4) personal evangelism, even around the world into all nations.

“The Church was established in order to do those things, which requires the expenditure of money.

“The entire court suit, it seems to me, is centering on whether we are expending funds for the PURPOSES for which we incorporated. That’s why I had those PURPOSES included above in this letter—to proclaim the Gospel to the world, by radio, TV, print, personal evangelism. When we have expended the smallest amount of money of ANY DEPARTMENT IN THE WORK, ON OUR BUDGET, for proclaiming Christ’s Gospel Message around the world by my personal evangelism, they try to MISREPRESENT that as siphoning off money for my own pocket. Perhaps I will have a steward on our jet plane write an article of what he actually SEES me...do on trips around the world. We are busy every minute. I am writing articles, letters, or proclaiming THE GOSPEL on my typewriter on the plane, in my hotel rooms almost every minute I am not out preaching to big crowds in Ghana, Liberia, Kenya, India, Japan, Thailand, Holland, South Africa, Jamaica, the Bahamas, the Philippines (many times), Costa Rica and many other countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, South America.

“Am I too old? Am I ‘senile’? Who else do you know at near 87 years of age who in one year turns God’s Worldwide Church around,

rooting out the dissidents, the false doctrines, being used of GOD to set His Church BACK ON HIS TRACK? IT IS NOT I WHO DOES IT—IT IS GOD using me as His instrument. God brought me back to life from complete heart failure and death, in August 1977 FOR A PURPOSE. That PURPOSE is to FINISH proclaiming His Message around the world—to be used in setting His Church back on His track—and in leading you brethren of His Church into a condition where you are finally PREPARED, and MADE READY, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but HOLY—the Bride of Christ who shall have made herself READY! I will have MUCH MORE ABOUT THAT to write you or say to you later.”

Brethren and Co-Workers Letter, April 16, 1979

There is so much in this final statement that could be discussed. First, there is Mr. Armstrong’s plain explanation of his *personal* work. Then, notice how he was completing putting the Church “back on track”—“rooting out the dissidents and false doctrines.” If only God’s people could recall just one such exhortation from him.

Also, did you notice that Mr. Armstrong believed in 1979—and was already teaching the Church at that time—that God’s people were to be getting ready for the Wedding Supper? Obviously this did not equate in his mind to an end of the Great Commission.

The Great Switch

Of course, those who took control of the Church after Mr. Armstrong’s death blurred the plain meaning of his words and teaching about the Work, and replaced it with all the elements of the classic view taken by the world’s churches. And you will see that these men had no fear of overtly sneering at and directly attacking Mr. Armstrong’s understanding that his and the Church’s task was to announce God’s coming kingdom rather than seek to change *this* world for the better. Here is a tiny sampling of what these men taught, and what their still loyal “disciples”—those now leading the splinters!—perpetuate so faithfully:

“The old excuse, ‘People don’t need do-gooders, they need God’s government on earth,’ is nothing more than a cop-out to justify inaction.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 12, 1993

“If we don’t participate in our community we are self-centered and self-righteous. Good grief. We were told to come out of the world and let

our light shine and we didn’t know how to do it. A bitter, Satanic mind doesn’t want to accept these new truths.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, sermon taped on Nov. 21, 1992,
sent to be played in all churches*

Think of what this in-your-face attack on Mr. Armstrong’s teaching was actually saying *about him*. Yet, who noticed?

While Mr. Armstrong did not specifically talk about trying to unify or reunify those of the seventh era—how could he?—even he could not have envisioned the appalling division existing among those professing to still believe what he taught as the truth of the Bible. But his comments on the previous page speak in principle to the idea of “activism,” both within the Church and in the world at large.

“Be Subject to the Higher Powers”

There is another problem—actually a form of *illegal conduct*—that is connected to the posting of Mr. Armstrong’s literature on personal websites by those who are not the copyright holders.

All of God’s people in His Church are quite familiar with this issue as it went before the American courts, beginning in the late 1990s. The Restored Church of God has had to address it in the most difficult and draining way that could be imagined. Because of basic legal constraints, the entirety of God’s truth had to be rewritten for His Work to be able to continue. Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen work together to tell this remarkable story. It was evident after the courts had ruled (including appeals) that the principle described in Acts 5:29—“we ought to obey God rather than men”—had absolutely no bearing on the matter. As much as we might have wished it to be so, all of us in Restored had to recognize that there is no biblical command whatsoever that we must fulfill Matthew 28:19-20 and 24:14 by using the *exact same wording* in our literature as did Mr. Armstrong, no matter the law or any court ruling. This command is just not there—and I had to accept that no amount of mental gymnastics could put it there. (Chapter Sixteen also looks at this moment more closely.)

Some have ignored this fact and have, in certain cases, recklessly and willfully chosen to disregard—with no apparent fear—God’s instruction on this matter! Let’s examine what He says to such people.

Understand! All Christians have contact with, and live under, human governments. So then, how does God tell His people to view and respect those governments?

Here is what the apostle Paul wrote:

“*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.* For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are *ORDAINED OF GOD.* *Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ORDINANCE OF GOD:* and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. *Will you then not be afraid of the power?* Do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil.

“*Wherefore you must needs be subject,* not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay you tribute [taxes] also: for *they are God’s ministers* attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor” (Rom. 13:1-7).

This passage contains a great deal to consider. It leaves no question that all people (it says “*every soul*”)—this certainly includes Christians—are subject to the “higher powers” of men’s governments, because they are “ordained of God.” To resist them, God says, is to “resist...GOD.” This is most serious, brethren! God asks, “*Will you then not be afraid of the power?*”

Many are not, but they *should be!*

Two Sides of the Coin

The apostle Peter also gave important instruction about what God expects of Christians in their responsibility toward civil governments. He recorded this:

“*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man FOR THE LORD’S SAKE:* whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with welldoing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men...Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” (I Pet. 2:13-15, 17).

As Christians we *must* “submit ourselves” to civil authority. The term “for the Lord’s sake” clarifies that it is *God* who expects us to submit to “every ordinance” of men’s governments.

Note that Peter did not state, “OBEY every ordinance.” Why? Because some ordinances are contrary to God’s direct commands and cannot be obeyed! But we must submit to punishment for them.

But there is another side to this, and since Peter was also involved, he knew the difference. The following account from the book of Acts illustrates this important point, and gives an example of when one *should* “Obey God rather than men.”

In Acts 4, the apostles had been commanded by the authorities (vs. 16-18) to no longer preach anything about Jesus Christ, or to invoke His authority. Here is how they responded: “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge you” (vs. 19). The account continues in the next chapter, after the disciples had been arrested, imprisoned and called to account for disregarding the command to cease preaching Christ’s name. Acts 5:29 states, “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, *We ought to obey God rather than men.*”

A conversation ensued. Gamaliel, a respected teacher of the law, urged the Council to stop further harassment of the apostles. The account continues, “And to him [Gamaliel] they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, *and beaten them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go” (vs. 40). The apostles correctly *submitted* to the beating. And they did *not* lash out and hurl accusations and epithets of every conceivable kind against those who had so unjustly dealt with them. They willingly accepted—submitted to—the consequences of putting God’s Way before the wrong-headed instructions of blinded men. Then they continued right on with what brought the beating.

They obeyed God rather than men!

When obedience to the Sabbath, Holy Days, tithing, clean meats, or any other law of God, is in question, each of God’s people must discern Acts 5:29. But this passage has no application to those who would violate, and in the most fundamental way, basic federal copyright laws. God help those who break such laws thinking that they are “doing the Work.” No matter their protests, they are doing an EVIL work in direct violation of PLAIN biblical passages—and of their God-ordained position of support. In fact, they are *themselves* fighting God! And this would be the case even if they *were* authorized to preach the gospel themselves.

The People Rule

By now the reader realizes that the word *Laodicea* means “the people rule, judge or decide.” I can think of no better living fulfillment of this word than what is practiced by lay members, but also ministers of various

ranks, attempting to do the Work on their own authority, because they have “decided” or “judged” themselves qualified to act on their own. They may be sincere, but such are sincerely WRONG!

This is a presumptuous age, in fact the most so in history. Many people *presume* that they have the “right” to do anything they want—express opinions, alter doctrines, accuse whom they will, and tell leaders how to act and what to decide. This includes taking matters into their own hands whenever they see fit. No doubt Satan knew that the introduction of *local* or *personal evangelism* would take deep root in the Laodicean era. I can envision few things being more natural to all those converted but lukewarm minds looking to do things their own way...especially if one feels “gifted.”

As in the Worldwide Church of God under Mr. Armstrong’s *human* leadership, in The Restored Church of God, it is GOD who rules and decides! If God’s people truly believe that Christ is “the Head over all things to the Church” (Eph. 1:22), they will understand that it is neither I nor any group of men who are “running the Church.” This is *God’s* Church, *God’s* Work, acting under *God’s* government and proclaiming *God’s* truth and gospel to the world and *God’s* warning message to Israel!

May the all-powerful, living God help everyone to comprehend what is written here—and to never forget it!

But other important questions remain, and they must be addressed...

OBJECTIONS, EXCUSES AND OBSERVATIONS

Special prophecies apply to the Work of God at the end of the age. We are almost ready to examine them. But we must first address a final assortment of the now well-developed “cottage industry” of reasons so many will no longer carry on the *true* Work of God. There are several.

“We” Are Also God’s “Work”

We are prepared for a more in-depth analysis, if we acknowledge a long-understood biblical truth. The apostle Paul wrote this about the “work”: “WE [God’s people] are His workmanship” (Eph. 2:10) and “He which has begun a good work in *you* will finish it” (Phil. 1:6).

Yes, individual Christians are also God’s “work.” But this is not in any way a new or replacement definition of the New Testament Work of God as you have seen it described. After all, Mr. Armstrong wrote a large book—*The Incredible Human Potential*—and other booklets that greatly expand Paul’s statement. But he never let these verses blur his thinking about the Great Commission given His Church by Christ.

Apparently, only now are some discovering these passages, and seeming to think that Mr. Armstrong never noticed or understood them, believe that they hold the *corrected* view of what God’s Work is. Let’s understand: “WE”—all true Christians—have *always* been God’s Work. Therefore, those Paul wrote to in Ephesus and Philippi were also God’s Work 2,000

years ago. God has always done a Work both *through* and *in* those in whom He is building His character. *This is not new!* Far from it. It is basic truth that all should have learned when FIRST CALLED.

Paul certainly knew this, because he said of *himself*, “I also *labor* [work], striving according to His *working*, which *works* in me mightily” (Col. 1:29). He knew that God works in *all* Christians and also does special works through certain chosen servants in a remarkable or “mighty” way, as with Mr. Armstrong or Paul.

Do not let any confused deceiver convince you that making this *old* (always true) understanding today’s focus is what *Mr. Armstrong* decided—or should have decided—was to be the *new* priority! One must ask: Were those who have only recently discovered these passages not previously permitting God to “work” within them? Proponents of such narrow thinking should be more careful, lest they expose the shallow nature of their own conversion.

Rebellion and Heresy

Again, I mention that we have received letters declaring that I am *rebel-ling* against Mr. Armstrong’s instructions to his successor if I do not immediately stop the Work. And again, some flatter me because, in their eyes, I hold to all the truth, except on this point.

Now for a direct statement said without apology to all *elders, pas-tors, leaders* and others who teach that the Work is finished, and ended with Mr. Armstrong’s death: It is you who have rebelled against Mr. Armstrong and Christ when you falsely teach the Great Commission and warning work ended in 1986!

Mr. Armstrong’s statements prove I have authority to add: Unless *you* repent, *you* are an ENEMY of God’s Work. Mr. Armstrong would not permit you to attend services—and would DISFELLOWSHIP and MARK you! Your actions are heretical, selfish, stubborn, rebellious, shriveled in fruits and outright lazy! Further, you are *stealing* God’s tithes by receiving (or paying) them to where there is no real or active Work, let alone *God’s* Work! For the moment, never mind that any work occurring in your group *must* be a WORK OF MEN. Just focus on the big picture in the discussion.

If this is you, I sincerely pray you will *awaken* and not LOSE SALVA-TION. As mentioned, and this is incredible, many “brethren” who have adopted this belief also believe they have achieved the very highest pinnacle of holding to the “Philadelphian standard” of Christianity, and assume they will be protected in the years ahead at the Place of Safety.

Do not let pride and smugness destroy you—or those who may be following you, trusting your leadership. The same applies if you have *altered* the definition of God’s Work to suit your own agenda.

Woe to all foolish enough to follow such ego-driven “leaders!”

The Dilemma

It is important to see a hidden factor in *how* some ministers and elders come to believe the Work is over—and *how* they come to conclude that they should lead their own organizations.

Recognize first a variety of ministers and even local church elders erroneously believe they either lead God’s one Church, or are “ministering” to unaffiliated scattered brethren. At some point, when tithes start rolling in, these men face the question of whether to continue preaching the gospel, writing literature, structuring a headquarters, etc.

Here is their dilemma—and most of them recognize it—they are neither *trained* nor *qualified* to continue Christ’s Commission! Again, most are also too *lazy* and *selfish*—this is its own problem and Mr. Armstrong has addressed it. But, in the end, these men have a choice of two clear paths: find and subordinate themselves to the senior minister that Christ has sent to lead His Work, or devise an exotic “theology” full of human reasoning, including twisting of statements from Mr. Armstrong to prove the Work is finished!

FIRST, the *greed* of such men keeps them from releasing God’s tithes to a higher authority. SECOND, a *rebellious attitude* will not allow them to subordinate themselves to where they may be periodically corrected by unwanted government. THIRD, *laziness* keeps them from doing the Work themselves. FOURTH, coming under Christ’s chosen servant would expose their *pet doctrinal ideas!* Perhaps above all, they have decided *this* will not occur—they will not accept restraint!

May these repent and stop accusing and attacking, by character assassination, the faithful Church and ministry holding fast and continuing the Work of the living God, as the leader of the supposed “living” splinter—and others—love to do! Such murderous lies are heard by God. These “leaders” will answer for their deceit—and soon—if they continue to be the “blind *leading* the blind”! Will you be fooled by them?

The Role of Local Church Elders

Local church elders were never considered *full* ministers in the WCG. Most brethren were probably unaware of this—that there was a great

difference in their function and scope of authority. Hundreds of ordination certificates are testimony to the fact that Mr. Armstrong did not consider these men to be ministers in the sense of having *full* vestment of Christ's authority, but rather, as their office reveals, they were LOCAL church elders. He only considered preaching elders and above to be *full* ministers. Those who doubt this should ask any elder and any minister of greater rank to show you his certificate(s). I have shown any number of people my own copies of these two formal certificates, both signed by Mr. Armstrong. The wording and authority are PLAIN!

In other words, all ministers are elders, but not vice-versa. Translated, this means Mr. Armstrong did not (God does not) authorize local church elders to either approve or perform ordinations. (Actually, Mr. Armstrong taught as early as 1957 that only *apostles* could *approve* ordinations!) This was well-known policy to the ministry for decades, and was integral to our understanding of government in Christ's Church. However, most brethren probably never knew this either.

Here is the point: Because local church elders are not empowered to independently either *train* or *ordain* a ministry to care for the flock (but neither is any office below apostle), recognize that Christ could never lead His Church through one! You will need to undertake some honest research to prove these things to yourself.

From this comes an irony about certain local church elders. These claim to most properly uphold the understanding of God's *government*, and that it only exists in their tiny "true Church." While possibly sincere, they are sincerely—and tragically—*wrong*! Why? That they seek to lead the Church as local church elders demonstrates that they have lost even the most basic understanding of *how* God's government works in His Church in the first place, and specifically in regard to their *own office*. Realize that, of necessity, these men *must* work alone—or ordain assistants *without God's authority*. Grasp the fact that they are not authorized by God to take the gospel to the world *by themselves*, because their function and service was always to be "local."

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD carefully covers this subject in greater detail, offering extensive proof of understanding and policies referenced in this short synopsis.

**Doing the Work Is *Not* Equivalent to
Saying, "My Lord Delays His Coming"**

One elder who believes the Work is finished also believes that all baptisms occurring today are invalid. His clever reasoning, and he speaks

for a certain school of thought, goes like this: If one believes there is *time* to do a Work, such a person must also think “our Lord delays His Coming.”

Notice this from a letter he sent me, representative of others with this thinking. Incidentally, this man also considers himself a prophet, as becomes evident (emphasis his):

“When HWA died the GOAL of preaching and publishing the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to the World as a witness to all nations was accomplished! The TEMPLE was completed! No one else would be called by God (John 6:44) except a very few from the ‘highways and hedges’ to replace those who have thrown away their crowns (Luke 14:23).

“All of the ‘lively stones’ were called. Now the TEMPLE can be measured BEFORE the Two Witnesses’ ministry and the Great Tribulation begins (Rev. 11:1-4). Now Christ could ‘Suddenly Come’ to his Temple to DISCERN who are His Faithful ‘Special Treasure’ in the DAY of the LORD (Mal. 3:1-3; 16-17). If you do not believe HWA completed his commission you are saying we have years and years left to finish the ‘work.’ In effect you are saying, ‘the Lord delays his coming’ (Matt. 24:48). Of course, this thought of a long delay evidently stems from [blank’s] influence over you.” (Note for later in the book his reference to the Temple being measured. His confusion will become evident.)

Incredibly, and I repeat, a significant number of people follow this misguided man. Notice he suggests that I do not believe Mr. Armstrong finished “his” commission merely because I want to continue the all-important Work of the living God. Of course I believe Mr. Armstrong finished *his* commission. But this man obscures through assumption that one cannot believe Mr. Armstrong finished *his own* commission and still want to announce the kingdom and warn Israel.

Remember, Mr. Armstrong believed, and wrote many times, three key things: (1) God’s Work would continue until the Great Tribulation, (2) it was *not* his private Work and (3) he *could* die before the Tribulation arrived.

Does anyone seriously think Mr. Armstrong would have felt that God would permit him to die before finishing *his*—meaning *his own*—commission? Of course not! He had much more faith and understanding to ever believe such a thing. When his extraordinary prophesied role was completed, along with a powerful ministry, he died. It is that simple. Do not be fooled by irrational leaps of logic by carnal minds masquerading as faithful to what Mr. Armstrong instructed. Finishing his *personal* commission certainly *never* precluded any other preaching the gospel after him! These points are simply not related.

Understand! As I have stated, I do *not* believe there is time to do a big Work—meaning in terms of *conversions!*—remotely comparable to what Mr. Armstrong did. Never assume that if one wants to continue the First Commission, he must believe time permits a Work rivaling Mr. Armstrong’s *in size of Church growth*. That will not happen, and I am not naïve or arrogant enough to think God wants us to mirror this!

Again, however, a thunderous WARNING message—the greatest in all history—WILL be given! The gospel will also be preached with *awesome* power and scope, and perhaps even beyond imagination. Those who doubt or scoff at this will soon doubt no more. These will also be forced to acknowledge where the all-powerful, living Christ was at work all along.

This argument emerges: Some point to Zechariah 4:9, which foretold that Mr. Armstrong would lay “the foundation” of the Church, but then go on to assert that this means the Work is finished. This verse has nothing to do with the Great Commission. Mr. Armstrong was used by God to bring TRUTH, and this includes the truth that we must continue and do God’s Work in an ongoing way. God certainly did use him to *lay* the *foundation* and *finish* the temple, which *is* the Church (wait for Chapter Nineteen)! While these points are true, it is a leap from facts, logic, basic scripture and prophecy to conclude the Work is complete. The honest person will see these ideas cannot be connected!

Consider! *Every* false doctrine has a deceptive series of theological “arguments” and “explanations” to support it. Name one false teaching brought into the Church by either the apostates or splinter leaders, and I will show you the arguments they use to promote and propel it. Do any think the notion that God’s Work has ended would come without *many* convoluted, subtle, deceptive—and tortured—arguments necessary to sell it to the unwitting? Of course not!

What About Incorporation?

There is a somewhat related argument that must be addressed in regard to the tiny slivers that came from the first splinter that formed (PCG).

A school of thought now exists among at least a few that *incorporating* God’s Church is somehow wrong. This idea springs from the fact that the apostate leaders were able to seize the *corporation* (The Worldwide Church of God, Inc.) and, the reasoning goes, could *then* destroy it. The argument continues that the real problem was not entirely that of false doctrine or false leaders, but also of a false under-

standing of the purpose, or even need, for the legal entity known as a *corporation*.

How shallow and ludicrous! But let's understand.

During his 52-year ministry, Mr. Armstrong led three separate corporations, including the Radio Church of God until 1968, and the Worldwide Church of God until 1979. He was then forced to temporarily establish a Corporation Sole in Arizona to thwart the court-appointed receiver who had seized *corporate* headquarters in Pasadena. Some time later, Mr. Armstrong resumed his active leadership position in Pasadena over the Worldwide Church of God, Inc.!

Though he never placed any *spiritual* value on corporations, Mr. Armstrong certainly did understand their *practical* value in "Caesar's world." He understood that incorporation gave the Church non-profit, tax-exempt status so that contributors could legally deduct tithes from their tax liability. Also, in the end, tax-exemption permitted the work of the Church to be much greater. Of course, a variety of other legal advantages exist in the United States, where churches can work under a "corporate umbrella." This is a truly wonderful *blessing*, not something that is WRONG! In fact, if Mr. Armstrong had never incorporated, the power and impact of the Work would have been reduced to a fraction of what it became. This would have meant a great many fewer would have been converted—probably including YOU!

As an aside, many today have blurred Mr. Armstrong's view and statements about the WCG as a corporation, and its immense difference from the Body of Christ, in order to conclude that that Body *is* able to be divided today. (*THE TRUE CHURCH* addresses and clarifies in extra detail the truth of this confusion. So do my books "*ANOINT YOUR EYES*" and *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*.)

Certainly, leaders *can* abuse corporations, and this happens every day in the world. But that does not make *corporations* intrinsically evil. People get drunk, but *alcohol* is not sin. Some gamble, but that does not make *all* decks of cards wrong. Are *all* movies wrong because some are pornographic? Is *all* dancing wrong because some is sexually suggestive? Is *all* music wrong because some is no more than rotten lyrics set to noise? Are *all* cars wrong because some people drive recklessly? Is the *Bible* evil because some misquote it?

Those few who have come to believe that incorporation is wrong have unwittingly become tools that divide God's people—and prevent a certain few who believe this idea from feeling they should ever again come under one "corporate umbrella" to do or finish the Work. Of course, these people know that this means coming under a central gov-

ernment—under “restraint” and “intrusive” AUTHORITY!—something many are determined never to do again.

Baptizing During the “Scattering”—and What This Means

Let’s revisit an earlier question. Some have written me explaining that no one else can be *converted* after Mr. Armstrong “finished” the Work. The recently reviewed letter is one example. Notice the writer had elevated himself to the status of “lively stone.” All others called later apparently fall into a lesser category known only to him!

Some now believe that a kind of “dispensational door” has been shut and no one else can be called in this age—that Christ can no longer add to His Church as before (Acts 2:47)—all because an apostle died. The truth is that God will yet call some to *replace* the carnal minds who have devised this ludicrous, illogical thinking, a thinking that will disqualify *them* from the very salvation they would deny *others*.

We have baptized many hundreds of people since we began (more every year), and these have been baptized into the *very same truth and understanding* as were people called 30 years ago. They were counseled *thoroughly*, evidenced the gift of repentance and received God’s Spirit as Acts 2:38 describes, with fruits of conversion following. While many are surprised at this, half coming with us are completely new to God’s truth.

It is dangerous, foolish, presumptuous and PLAIN WRONG to suggest God is no longer converting people in this age! Jesus warned the Pharisees about a blasphemy that would *not* be forgiven, this “against the Holy Spirit,” in other words, against the work of that Spirit (Matt. 12:31-32). Mark these words well. Anyone believing he can arbitrarily decide that others can no longer receive God’s Spirit risks committing this sin! So does anyone who ascribes the God-inspired Work of The Restored Church of God to the devil, as so many splinter leaders do.

Verse 30 in Matthew 12 sets the context for how Christ defines those in danger of committing the unpardonable sin. Mark well His words: “He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that *gathers* not with Me *scatters* abroad.” This is most serious! (Statements from Mr. Armstrong in this regard form a significant section of *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*. It must be seen *how* and *why* some LEADERS today are in fact *directly* opposing Christ.)

Be careful of limiting—through *artificial* explanations that bypass Him—how Jesus Christ may work today.

Prophecy Not an Endorsement

Consider this carefully. Some think the Daniel 12:7 “scattering” is actually *God’s will* merely because He *prophesied* it. I have read letters from some who believe that brethren should not come together to do the Work for the single reason God *foretold* this end-time “scattering.” This ridiculous logic also has some people at least bordering on the unpardonable sin, or worse, committing it! Look at how.

God prophesies that there will be much *murder* in the end-time. Is this an endorsement to kill? He prophesies rampant *adultery* and *covetousness* at the end of the age. Should brethren commit these sins to harmonize with prophecy? Terrible lying, deceit, theft and violence are foretold to occur on a massive worldwide scale from now on. Is this a “prophetic license” to participate? Because wolves were prophesied to enter the flock (II Thes. 2:3), with the predictable and natural result being that the sheep would flee to escape, should brethren embrace the trend? To quote Paul, I speak as a fool. Do not forget Matthew 12:31-32.

Prophecy is never an automatic *endorsement* to help fulfill the prophecy, to do wrong or to in any way oppose God!

Remember, many declare that the Work ended at Mr. Armstrong’s death. Supposedly, his successor was secretly told to focus the Church *entirely* on preparing for the Wedding Supper. Consider this. Did the fact that Mr. Armstrong gave instruction to get God’s people ready after his death mean that while he did the Work for 52 years the Church was not *simultaneously* preparing for the Wedding Supper all through those years? Of course not! He merely told his successor to give *greater emphasis* to this.

What of Later Conversions?

Here is a worse problem flowing from the “Great-Commission-ended-with-Mr. Armstrong” fallacy. What about the many thousands of baptisms that occurred *in the WCG* in the years *following* Mr. Armstrong’s death? Dare any suggest that all *these* baptisms (after the Work was supposedly finished) could not be valid—simply because they occurred contrary to Mr. Armstrong’s supposed instruction? Remember, this idea purports, in effect, that all these earlier baptisms were also products of rebellion. (The book on *THE TRUE CHURCH* explains in greater detail the way to approach the validity of baptisms occurring today in God’s Church and some *few* in the splinters.)

Further, many of these late-80s baptizees entered a splinter and stood up for at least much of the truth. Whether they go on to fall away, or become zealous after anointing their eyes and join themselves to Christ's uncompromising Church and Work (this includes those who return but remain lukewarm), their fruit makes obvious that many of these were converted. But, it is equally true that thousands in the splinters, converted *during* Mr. Armstrong's ministry, would say that they were *already* working toward the Wedding Supper long *before* his death. I was.

Would you not say the same?

It certainly could be said that brethren should have begun working *harder* on this personal development after Mr. Armstrong's death. So, there is a two-way problem here, both with baptisms after 1986 and with already-occurring preparation for the Wedding Supper *before* his death.

Consider. I have baptized more than 600 people in my over 40-year ministry. Frankly, I am more certain of the conversion of people I and our other ministers counsel for baptism *now* than those from the early 70s forward. Because of events that the Church lived through, I have a greater appreciation of how precious the truth is, and my counseling today—and more that of our entire ministry—reflects it.

Thousands of people with no Church of God background are contacting us from around the world. Their interest and sincerity has been real. As time has passed, we have found that baptisms of brand new people have *increased* in number. And their fruit has evidenced real conversion. Many are "on fire." We have expected this to continue and even to speed up. So far it has.

Therefore, for this additional big reason, the idea that the Work ended in early 1986 is terribly flawed thinking!

The "Famine of Hearing the Words" and Philadelphia's "Open Door"

Recall that Amos 8:11 prophesies the long-awaited "famine of hearing the words of the Lord." This said, Revelation 3:8 states that God set an "open door" before either Philadelphia *or* its leader.

Mr. Armstrong wrote the following in *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*: "To this era—or to its human leader—God had set before it an open door...this Church and/or its leader had but little strength" (p. 238, softbound edition). You may want to take time to read this quote for context and accuracy. Clearly, Mr. Armstrong was not sure *which*—the Church or its leader—had the open door, and his statement permits no firm conclusion.

But either way, the door *is* still open before the organization into which Philadelphia is being gathered. It does have “little strength”—and obviously less now in numbers than when Mr. Armstrong was alive.

Going further, some have come to feel that if one continues the Work, he either does not believe that we are even on the front edge of the famine, or believes that a door for a GIANT Work *capable of producing thousands of conversions* still exists before Philadelphia’s remnant—or possibly both. Because of unique circumstances ten years ago, and because I did not yet grasp *how* God would rekindle His Work, I did then believe we could be in the *beginning* of the “famine of the word.” But few seem to recognize that just the time limit now governing the age precludes vast numbers of conversions.

Mr. Armstrong taught, and I believe, that the famine will come at the outset of the Tribulation. (The next chapter examines this more closely.) It is worth repeating, however, that I have never—and I repeat NEVER!—believed that any of this is an excuse to not attempt to both continue the First Commission, or to neglect to innovate in order to expand through every possible means. In fact—and this is another subject—I feel that it is probably most true that those who continue the Work will in the end be rewarded more for their effort than for what they actually see in *number of conversions*. The Work will grow large, the number of conversions will not. Again, I do not think that God’s Church today will yield more than a fraction of the fruits of Mr. Armstrong’s ministry *in this regard*. To believe otherwise IS to think, “Our Lord delays His Coming” for many years—a *belief trap* we avoid!

Nevertheless, and I repeat this once more, the size of the WARNING to Israel and the ANNOUNCEMENT of the kingdom to all nations will stagger the imagination!

Make yourself focus on what this means to you!

Grasp this. When Christ sends an apostle, a large Work is intended! The Two Witnesses—two prophets—will certainly also do a powerful *witnessing* Work, but neither are they a “work of Elisha.” These men will not baptize or convert anyone! Their arrival ushers in the famine of God’s Word—meaning the end of our Work.

What If...

Let’s speculate. If—and only *if*—the *beginnings* of this famine were here, then we should at least consider what a famine *is*. Rarely does famine mean *no* food available, but rather a *scarcity* of it. Even the

most severe famines have survivors—those who find food. This is not trick reasoning, but simply the nature of famines. God understands famines—He has seen thousands. Do not presume that He has redefined what they are for our time to mysteriously suit prophecy. Mr. Armstrong also understood this. Think about this when declaring your *supposition* that the “famine of the...word” has arrived, meaning no more preaching of the gospel or warning Israel. This is another irrational leap in logic, based neither on history nor the teachings of Mr. Armstrong and Scripture! It is 180 degrees off reality.

Consider. In an actual famine, people have to work *much harder* to produce and procure food or *they will starve*. A famine is not a time to take it easy, but rather to work harder to grow and harvest food—so lives can be saved! (This reflects exactly the zeal and near nonstop innovation of The Restored Church of God staff in its preparation of “food” for the Work and for the Church.)

The following parallel may help you see this. Daniel 12:7 prophesied a “scattering” of the Church. We saw some have used the scattering as license not to be *governed* by anyone—and to believe, as we also saw, that Christ’s Church is now *hopelessly divided*! Thus, they assert that no minister has the authority to ever again tell anyone what to do—and many know I am not exaggerating the picture!

Jesus promised that His Church would *never* cease and that He would *never* forsake it. Thus, its enduring responsibility to announce the kingdom of God could also never cease. The scattering is a prophesied *natural result* of APOSTATE leaders, *not* a license to rebel against FAITHFUL ministers. That God foretold a famine is no more a license to rebel against doing the Work than the prophecy of a coming “scattering of the Church” is a license to rebel against the direction of Christ’s true ministry, where HIS GOVERNMENT is present.

When the Tribulation comes, it will be *impossible* to do the Work (John 9:4). Of course, the famine will be *complete* throughout this three-and-one-half-year period, except for the unique purpose to be fulfilled by the Two Witnesses.

At least you now see the terribly flawed “logic” of those who do not carefully examine God’s Word—and who recklessly throw around terms they do not understand!

I will restate that since Mr. Armstrong was uncertain whether the ongoing open door was before Philadelphia or himself, I will not presumptuously declare it one way or the other. I sincerely do not know. But it does not matter. Either way, it is open before those of Philadelphia.

Because he was the final Moses (Mal. 4:4—we will revisit this in the next chapter), fulfillment of the Great Commission was necessarily given in a specific and prophesied fashion to Mr. Armstrong. But we are determined to never allow the fact that we will not have time to grow to 150,000 people to become an excuse to ignore our ongoing obligation. We *must* take the full, UNABRIDGED truth (Matt. 28:19-20) to the world in the same way Mr. Armstrong did—and we are!

We Have Rewritten God's Truths

By the summer of 2003, The Restored Church of God had rewritten virtually all of the hundreds of truths Mr. Armstrong taught, with all completed in 2005. They are available on our website to hundreds of millions throughout the world. We also reprint them in hardcopy form for mailing upon request. (Again, this is a subject in Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen.)

Humanly speaking, those who will not do the Work should at least grudgingly respect us for tackling this daunting task. I would think that potential accusers would take care not to attack the only Church both doing the Work *and* teaching every truth God's people *all* once believed—that none would dare risk “being found even to *fight against God*” (Acts 5:39; Matt. 12:30-32)! But I am not naïve enough to believe many will heed this advice.

Nevertheless, The Restored Church of God will use every possible means made available, within the funds that God sends, to continue the Work of the living God. Nothing but the Tribulation and our flight to safety will stop us. Come the proverbial “fire, hail, wind or storm,” we will do God's Work while we have time and breath. And no one should doubt the strength of our resolve! Truly, we *are* “set for the defense of the gospel” and are “in nothing terrified by [our] adversaries” (Phil. 1:17, 28)!

In terms of the Church's size—its numbers—there is simply no such thing as “too small to do the Work.” This attitude “despises the day of small things” (Zech. 4:10). *Everything* that grew large started small. We preach the gospel whether few or many help us, and whether few or many are converted as a result. It has been *God's* job to grow the Church and Christ's job to decide how many He will “add to the Church daily” to be “saved” (Acts 2:47). We do not forget John 6:44, 65, and that the Father must first draw people to Christ. People decide *whether* they will do the Work—*God* decides how large it will become or small it will remain. *God* decides how much time we have to do it. How big we

grow—or small we are—is irrelevant to being found “so doing” (Matt. 24:46).

It is always that simple!

Remembering Jeremiah 48:10!

In the late 60s, I was introduced to a powerful scripture indicting those who did not *zealously* carry out God’s Work. My Bible margin notes reflect what was standard Ambassador College teaching on this passage.

Jeremiah 48:10 warns, “Cursed be he that does the Work of the LORD deceitfully...” While the second half of this verse refers to chapter 47, verse 6, and to those used to wield God’s sword in the Day of the Lord, the first half has always been understood to reference and apply to the Work of preaching the gospel and to warning national Israel.

Examining the Hebrew word translated “deceitfully” helps make the passage clearer. Bible margins reference “negligently.” Other acceptable translations are “slackly,” “idly” and “slothfully.” People who have fallen into *this* approach to the Work have also come to view continuing it—or what it has supposedly now become—through a series of “deceitful” arguments and reasonings, allowing themselves to feel comfortable in rebellion. Therefore, how much greater the condemnation—the “curse”—on those who will no longer do *anything*!

One way to “do the Work” deceitfully is to tell people, “Yes, we *do* need to preach the gospel, but we need *not* be concerned with doctrines we think are not *basic, core* or *essential for salvation*.” Every other organization doing the “work” does this—and in a big way! This also “deceitfully” attracts and keeps brethren where the Work is done very, VERY negligently! Organizations that believe false doctrines invariably *teach* them within their “Work”! And make no mistake. This greatly limits who might be genuinely converted as a result. But those relative few who are would *always* eventually be brought to the unified Body of Christ, or would lose God’s Spirit if they will not come—and this is exactly what Mr. Armstrong taught. *THE TRUE CHURCH* and “*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” clarify this.

Ask again: Why did Christ say, “You shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come” (Matt. 10:23), if none are striving to do this just prior to His Return? It can only mean that there *are* people trying to cover Israel with the gospel *and* the special warning to her, until the Tribulation. This verse did not change or go away with the death of Mr. Armstrong.

Prayer Is Work!

God's people are to always pray "effectually" and "fervently" (Jms. 5:16) for more "laborers" in the harvest (Matt. 9:38). Take a moment to review this latter passage. Consider it carefully. If there is no remaining Work to be done, then God's people no longer need to really *work in prayer* about it. Remember, the Work *is* work. Effectual, fervent prayers (about anything) are WORK. Also, God's people have to be "laborers/workers" in this way for His Work.

Referenced earlier, many understand the labor—the REAL WORK!—that this kind of prayer represents, and will no longer put in the required *time* and *effort* to do it. We saw that their focus turns entirely to themselves and getting salvation for self. They would rather pray about *themselves*—*their* growth, *their* development, *their* problems, *their* needs, *their* wants, *their* families—and *their* salvation. In theory, if carried to the extreme, such people might even conclude that if more laborers were called to join in the work of the harvest, then at the resurrection these new converts would take "cities" (Luke 19:11-27) away from those set on *getting* salvation.

Also referenced earlier, most today have also forgotten almost all semblance of sacrificing financially for the Work. Yet, virtually 100 percent of Mr. Armstrong's Brethren/Co-Worker Letters spoke of this—using the most urgent of terms. But with time, now shorter than ever, those with real *urgency* to sacrifice have never been harder to find.

Make yourself see through all this lazy, deceitful human reasoning. The devil has carefully designed it to keep more people from being reached with the truth—and the truth of the gospel—so that they can achieve the Sonship in God's Family that he knows he can never have. Of course Satan wants you confused.

Jesus declared, "I and My Father WORK" (John 5:17). A true Christian is one who *copies* Jesus Christ (I Pet. 2:21) and the Father (Matt. 5:48). Jesus also said, "My meat [food] is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to *finish His work*" (John 4:34).

How many remember this passage—and connect it to how *our* food must also be to finish God's Work?

If You Cease Doing the Work...

Study carefully this statement from Mr. Armstrong, returning often to read its wisdom. May it sober and send chills through you. Strive to never forget it (*italics mine*):

“I have always noticed that those whose hearts—and their pocket books as well—are really in the work of God are the ones who remain spiritual, close to God, and who are growing spiritually. And, without exception, every single member of God’s Church who has ever lost interest in this WORK OF GOD—this work of carrying the Gospel to the world...begins to fall backward spiritually. *Soon such people go off into false doctrines. Their understanding is closed. They begin to believe errors and lies.* They become more and more bitter, unhappy, and they either go back into the world or they go into *some false offshoot movement which bears no fruit*, and fails totally to carry out the Commission of Christ—THE WORK OF GOD!”

“More Growth in the Church of God,” GN, March 1960

Since early 1993, when I was terminated from the WCG, it has been terribly painful to see so many depart from God’s Work, only to fall into seemingly endless, crazy prophetic ideas and false doctrines—exactly as Mr. Armstrong warned! Invariably, once people abandon the Work, they *do* go off into strange, odd, even bizarre theories and thinking. It has also been my experience that they *do* become bitter and unhappy. And they *do* cease to “bear fruit,” because they fall into self-righteousness, criticism, attacking and outright condemnation of others. Their self-centered view contracts their universe to an inward focus, leaving them believing themselves right and all others wrong!

Amazingly, people who break off from supporting the Work, thinking they are “holding fast,” fall into serious false teachings that they *cannot see*. Also, I find it an astonishing irony that many still in the WCG believe that *they* must still do the work—albeit as Protestants do it, and without the truth—and, at the same time, many who at least *profess* to believe the truth will no longer do *anything*!

This is another of the great ironies of the Laodicean age.

Fatally Flawed—and Faithless—Logic

The question is how could this happen? Here is how such people fool themselves:

First, despite Mr. Armstrong’s teaching about the restoration of God’s government to His Church, these believe that His government can *no longer be found*. In effect then, they at least tacitly believe that the WCG’s apostate leaders held the power to destroy the government of God—to erase it permanently from Christ’s Church. Yet, false leaders could *never* destroy the government of God! Do you think that the

omnipotent Christ of the Bible would remotely consider permitting wolves to hold the power to unseat Him as Head of His Church and Work? Believe me, there are faithless people of such thinking!

Second, and similarly, these people believe that the one true Church doctrine is no longer applicable in our time. In other words, they believe Christ now “*is divided*,” and that wolves also hold the power to do this—that the Body of Christ can be divided into hundreds of organizations and groups, contrary to the plain teaching of the Bible and Mr. Armstrong. Again, there *are* such faithless people (Matt. 16:18). Take a moment to read Hebrews 11:6.

The reality is that because of doctrinal compromise, brethren of the *seventh era* who are still *outside* Christ’s Church and Body are divided. While these must eventually return to God’s Church, the division in these organizations will remain and grow worse.

Third, they then conclude that, if there is no longer a single organization in which God’s government resides, they need no longer pay Him His tithes, let alone offerings. After all, if Christ is not present leading any *one* organization, there can really exist no further obligation to pay Him what is His. This time, read Leviticus 27:30, followed by Malachi 3:8-10, to remember one of the reasons that the end-time nations of Israel are cursed—and to be reminded of another reason *you* were called to assist in warning them! Now take a moment to carefully read both parts of I Samuel 15:23 about rebellion and stubbornness.

Fourth, these false teachings carry an automatic disregard of Hebrews 10:23-26, which explicitly warns that “forsaking the assembling of [oneself] together” is a *willful*—UNPARDONABLE—sin! Take a moment to read and reread this blunt passage. As with tithing, government and continuing God’s Work, some reason that if there is no one unified organization in which Christ is working, there is no further obligation to *fellowship* each Sabbath with *any* group—one can bounce around at will between organizations, “picking and choosing.”

Fifth, if there is no remaining government of God in place, comprised of qualified, faithful ministers and elders, under one servant whom Christ has chosen to lead it, there is no requirement (or need) to permit *any* minister or *any* ministry to ever again admonish, correct, train or teach anyone. How wonderful, natural, easy and convenient is this reasoning for deceitful human nature (Jer. 17:9), which hates being corrected and ruled, anyway (Rom. 8:7)! Take a moment to review Hebrews 12:6-12, focusing on verse 8 and the word “bastard.”

As with the beginning of this book, this section concludes with a similar, sobering warning from Mr. Armstrong—and works in concert

with all his previous statements. He felt that as time grew shorter God's people must press *harder*—not let up or quit because they grew “weary in [the] well-doing” of preaching God's kingdom to a sick, dying world. Notice:

“In my over forty-six years’ intensive, rich, active experience, since God changed MY direction into HIS WAY, I have observed that the very first need of every Christian, who is to GROW and develop this spiritual character, is to have his heart completely in THE WORK OF GOD, which the living Christ has called His servants to do, as His instruments! Our ‘WORKS’ are our part in GOD’S WORK getting His true Gospel to the whole world as a witness preparing the way for Christ’s coming. We are merely His INSTRUMENTS. It is GOD’S WORK! Those who condemn ‘WORKS’ are condemning the Great God who is the actual DOER through us as His instruments and Coworkers! It is not, after all, our works!

“Those who are self-centered, caring nothing for the WORK OF GOD, having not enough outgoing concern to want to help GET CHRIST’S MESSAGE out to this blinded, deceived, dying world, *fall away*. Those who center their whole ‘Christian’ life and activity on developing their own selves spiritually, whose hearts are not in or concerned about this great OUTGOING worldwide WORK OF GOD, actually directed by the living CHRIST, develop only INWARDLY, until they shrivel up spiritually and fall by the wayside!”

What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?, pp. 26-27

Looking Ahead

At this time, The Restored Church of God has gone on to experience an even more massive explosion in the scope and size of the Work that God is doing here. But this rapid increase has been underway for quite some time. You must recognize that there will come no other organization even close to being in position for God to *later* do what He is *already* accomplishing in His Church. Here is why this is true. I will briefly whet your appetite for Chapter Seventeen.

First, understand that we are now experiencing a growth curve that could only be described as unprecedented in the history of the Work of God through all ages. This means that we are giving away millions of items annually on our websites as of this writing, having almost *tripled* in size for six straight years. But, more importantly, it means we are almost certainly on our way to tens or even scores of millions of pieces of literature distributed annually across the world on the *very near* hori-

zon for this Work. Again, time has been proving this statement true for at least several years. This also means we have distributed more material annually since 2006 than all of the big splinters put together—almost certainly BY FAR!

All of this has meant a TREMENDOUS increase in the number of daily inquiries that we have been receiving, and of course greater growth in the Church has been occurring as a result. Restored itself actually grew by almost 26% in 2006 over 2005. Growth in 2007 was just over 16%. 2008 saw more than 28%, 2009 was just over 22%, 2010 was above 29% and 2011 was almost 21%. Such growth can only mean that the Church's ability to expand its impact will grow exponentially. More laborers (ministers) in the harvest translates into even more laborers in the harvest after that—and thus grows both the Church and Work at a greater rate. Because of what THIS WORK must yet accomplish, it could hardly be any other way.

What will happen in the years beyond simply defies projection! All those whose hearts are in the Work will find that there is no better and no more exciting place to be than RIGHT HERE!

Powerful Technology

Technology in the twenty-first century has offered a very special vehicle—the Internet—for doing the Work on a worldwide scale that has never been available to the Church of God before now. Strangely, most seem unable or unwilling to grasp this or to truly comprehend the potential that this medium carries.

The Internet is a tremendously efficient, and very inexpensive, means of doing the Work on a grand scale. Coupled with our overall efficiency, and our ability to make and implement decisions quickly because of God's form of government, we are able to respond almost instantaneously to what is happening in the world at any moment and put it before many scores or hundreds of thousands—and this within just the first few days, or even hours, after an event. (Of course, we do the Work around the world also by several other means, and this is covered in Chapter Seventeen.) An extensive—and very informative—Chapter Seventeen inset explains more about the power of the Internet.

What about Television?

Sadly, some seem to be stubbornly entrenched in the idea that “television is the *only* way to do the Work,” because “Mr. Armstrong did it that

way.” Most do not seem to realize that Mr. Armstrong did not feel compelled to preach the gospel in the exact same fashion that the original apostles did—and no wise leader and faithful steward of God’s tithes would feel bound to do this in the exact same way that Mr. Armstrong did, merely because it was the best way in a previous age. He himself would never want that, and would consider it foolish. *How* the Work is carried out—the vehicles and mediums selected—has never been a matter of DOCTRINE or TRADITION, but rather always one of wise *administrative judgment* after considering the avenues available to God’s Church at any given point in time. We do this. After all, Mr. Armstrong was an advertising man. This means he had been trained to be imaginative. My training also involves advertising—and it is extensive.

Be assured that we will NEVER be afraid to be creative!

Further comments about how we are using television are found in Chapter Seventeen.

The Irony!

How sad and ironic that *all* of the splinter leaders are so willing to freely change doctrines and traditions, when Christ instructs them to hold fast both (Rev. 3:11; II Tim. 3:13-14), but at the same time, some of these same leaders remain strangely rigid in their approach to doing the Work. They seem equally willing to ignore the fact that other very efficient means are now available to spread the good news of the kingdom of God around the globe.

Some other factors that have a bearing on the scope of the Work that God is now doing here should be addressed.

You have read and come to understand by now that we have produced the largest amount of literature—books, booklets, articles, magazines, Bible lessons, form letters, brochures, etc.—in the history of the Church of God. (This is also covered in more detail in Chapter Fifteen.) Apart from the ongoing need to produce our three regular magazines, *all* of the literature of the Church when it was “on track” under Mr. Armstrong’s leadership is now complete, plus much, much more. This has meant that The Restored Church of God has developed into the largest religious publishing operation on Earth today—and in history! This is why our websites are perhaps the largest in volume offered of ANY KIND of religious websites!

This has not gone unnoticed by certain mass media outlets that have noted our storehouse of material, and the quality of our reporting on world news and conditions, and approached us for information and assis-

tance. With the passing of time and the increase in the scope of the Work, this interest in us can only grow greater.

The “fruits” of this Work are PLAIN for those who have anointed their eyes to see where Christ is working. There is no other organization on the face of the earth like this one. Truly, we are the continuation of the Work that Christ did through Herbert W. Armstrong in the Philadelphian age. I urge you to examine most carefully all that we are being used to do.

There should at least be a brief reference to the truly extraordinary staff that Christ has assembled at His Headquarters. While none of us are the “great” of this world, He has selected people with a wonderful and unique array of skills, training and experience necessary to carry out all that must be done on a regular basis to serve the Church and do a wide variety of diverse operations in a worldwide Work. There are also plans in place to continue rapidly expanding the size of the staff (now approaching 100, not counting full-time ministers around the world) as needs continue to emerge. This has translated into an equally rapid expansion of our beautiful Headquarters office complex. (Bigger plans will be discussed later.)

You Will Want to Examine

Again, as referenced earlier, the reader is also urged to examine the wide variety of special tools and publications that have been prepared, and to recognize that The Restored Church of God has not only been commissioned, but *positioned*, by Christ to powerfully proclaim the kingdom of God to all nations, as well as to stand behind the responsibility to reach Laodicea (Rev. 3:14) and the nations of Israel (Ezek. 3:17; 33:7). The latter two duties are one of the reasons we have had to produce so much *additional* literature *beyond* what had been produced in the past. This has been Christ’s doing and not that of any man. No man and not even a much, much larger organization, involving the efforts of a great *many* men, could have published all that has been prepared here, and in such a short time, if it were not truly the Work of the LIVING GOD! This means that we have had to steadily draw our strength from God to keep up with and complete the overwhelming workload constantly before us.

I remind that this section has been a mere introduction to Chapters Fifteen and Seventeen. Now for an amazing prophecy...

THE “SHORT WORK” —AND A “REMNANT”

The Bible contains an awesome but little recognized prophecy having to do with the last phase of God’s Work, completed at the end of the age. Though mentioned, it has not yet been addressed. Nearly all have lost sight of it, and many never fully understood it. Yet it carries implications almost beyond imagination. For those who can comprehend what they will now *relearn*—or possibly hear for the first time—the next five chapters will be incredibly exciting. In fact, they will leave you stunned at what you can and should be a part of. You will also see that this prophecy represents perhaps the very greatest proof that God’s Work is not finished and continues—in a **BIG WAY!**—right to just prior to the appearance of the Two Witnesses.

At this point, you have been refamiliarized with the special Ezekiel Warning to the nations of Israel. What most have not realized—or remembered—is that there is a powerful *New Testament* prophecy that is a corroboration and expansion of Ezekiel’s “watchman” instruction, and this book would not be complete without it. This is a subject of which Mr. Armstrong spoke or wrote often to brethren and co-workers. You will see from various quotes that the Church once understood this prophecy—and most clearly!—but it has taken its place on the scrapheap of doctrines forgotten.

Recall that Mr. Armstrong wrote in his final letter “The greatest Work lies yet ahead.” Three of the next four chapters will reveal *why* he may have been more accurate in this statement than he could have

known. In fact, much of Chapter Thirteen will follow with a close examination of several vitally important, and absolutely absorbing, brethren/co-worker letters from Mr. Armstrong. They contain forgotten knowledge pertaining to Revelation 10, and the “little book” described there. But before the reader is ready for that fascinating study, we must first review a related equally fascinating prophecy that sets it up.

We begin with a summary of Mr. Armstrong’s ministry.

First, the Work of “Moses”

Jesus commissioned the apostles: “Go you therefore and teach ALL NATIONS baptizing them...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world [age]” (Matt. 28:19-20). In addition, we have seen what Mr. Armstrong repeated so many times—that Jesus told His disciples in the Olivet prophecy: “And this gospel of the KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto ALL NATIONS; and then shall the end come” (24:14). “All nations” appears in both passages.

First, recognize that Mr. Armstrong was used by God to bring many doctrines to the Philadelphian era of the Church in the 20th century. In some cases, he re-established understanding that was given to the first-century Church, but that had been lost over the centuries. In other cases, he was used to reveal knowledge that was previously “sealed”—never before understood. This primarily applies to the panorama of end-time prophecy recorded in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

In summary, Mr. Armstrong laid the DOCTRINAL FOUNDATION for the final eras of the New Testament Church. This fulfills Zechariah 4:9: “The hands of Zerubbabel have *laid the foundation* of this house; his hands shall also finish it and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me unto you.” Mr. Armstrong came to understand that this refers to him as a type of Zerubbabel, and this was made known to all of God’s people at the time. The record of history shows that he *did* establish this foundation for the spiritual Temple—the “house” of God—the Church. The Hebrew term translated “finish” in this verse actually means “to break off.” After his foundational commission was complete, Mr. Armstrong *did* break off—finish his course, in January of 1986—but not before making clear, in his last Brethren/Co-worker Letter, that “the greatest Work lies yet ahead.” He understood that the finishing of the rest of the Temple, above and squarely on the foundation, was beyond his lifetime.

But it has now been made plain that Mr. Armstrong’s role and identity are even more expansive. Malachi 4 also references Mr. Armstrong—

this time as a final type of *Moses*: “Remember you the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments” (vs. 4). (*Remember* in the Hebrew is defined as “to mark so as to be recognized.” This could not apply to the original Moses, who is among the most widely remembered and well-recognized figures in world history.)

Again, Mr. Armstrong brought the doctrinal foundation (“law”) that is still being built upon in God’s Church today!

Malachi 4 then foretells an end-time Elijah to come *after* Moses, but shortly before the Return of Christ: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse” (vs. 5-6). The New Testament adds that this Elijah would “restore all things” to the Church (Matt. 17:11).

These verses have been fulfilled! My exhaustively thorough three-part sermon series, “First a MOSES, Now ELIJAH—130 Proofs!” makes this fulfillment crystal clear.

Back to Mr. Armstrong. No one of any spiritual understanding doubts that he took the *gospel* to all nations of the world. Any who do not believe this much are reading the wrong book. But he also took all of the *other* true doctrines of the Bible to these same nations. Further—and by now this should be understood—he served as the Ezekiel “watchman” of the 20th century, fulfilling Ezekiel 3:17 and 33:1-9. Moreover, the Work that God led Mr. Armstrong to do was absolutely colossal in size and scope. But in the end he died. This created the two competing ideas—the Work is over, completed by Mr. Armstrong, or something else remains, whatever that is.

The remainder of this chapter and the two to follow will reveal to you what is already underway, but yet to be finished. May God help you comprehend the sheer magnitude of what you will now learn. And may He move you to see the responsibility this knowledge brings to YOU!

Here is what the reader must understand—and with no shadow of doubt remaining. Since the Moses Work ended over 25 years ago, and the gospel coupled with “all things” is to be preached until the age ends, it becomes crystal clear that there must be a second, follow-up—meaning a separate and different—and much shorter work that picks up and continues after the apostasy and two-phase separation of brethren—first, from the Worldwide Church of God and, second, from the splinters and slivers that arose from it.

Before we can examine that Work, if this two-step separation process from the splinters and slivers is not clear to you, pause and reflect

on it. Review what has been explained about this in “*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” and other books to the splinters. Reread that book if necessary until it becomes unmistakable to your thinking. You simply cannot properly understand the all-important, prophesied, final Work of God’s Church for the remainder of the age unless these last paragraphs have been fully comprehended. This process also reappears in the next chapter in an unexpected context.

Another Work—a “Short Work”

The book has proven conclusively that God’s commission to His Church continues until the end of the age—that God’s kingdom will be preached “until the end come.” It has also proven conclusively that the nations of Israel are to be warned by the “watchman” of Ezekiel 33—that these two components of the Great Commission in this age have not changed, nor will they until completed. It is against the second part of this backdrop that a special prophecy in Romans 9:27-29 comes into view. This will, in turn, lead to Revelation 10.

Paul recorded, “Isaiah also cried concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a REMNANT [take note] shall be SAVED: for He will finish the Work and cut it short in righteousness: because a SHORT WORK will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Isaiah said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah.”

There is not space in the book to re-explain all that the Tribulation and the Day of the Lord mean to the world. The Bible is plain that there will be no time like “Jacob’s trouble,” and there will certainly be nothing before or after the Day of the Lord that will remotely rival that prophesied punishment on all nations. The vast majority of mankind will not live over into the Millennium. Of course, a relative few will from every nation.

But our focus is on those of “Israel” and the “remnant...saved.”

Preparing the “Remnant...Saved”

We must state again that Mr. Armstrong has been gone for over 25 years. This has another meaning not yet mentioned. The population of Planet Earth is over one full third larger today than it was when Mr. Armstrong died. Just ponder this incredible fact. Then realize this means that the nations of today’s Israel are also much larger in population than they were in early 1986. For instance, in 2006 America announced it had reached the population milestone of 300 million, and this just 39 years

after it had reached 200 million (1967). We can interpolate a growth figure since Mr. Armstrong of over 60 million just in the United States.

Let’s summarize what these statistics mean. Nearly an entire generation of people—the Work will surely end at least 30 years beyond Mr. Armstrong’s death—will have died of natural causes since the last true warning went out to the peoples who heard his voice and read his books. Also, those who were alive, but under 20, will for the most part not have understood any message or warning they might have heard under his leadership. Vast numbers of others were not yet born. In effect, therefore, the significant majority of those in the nations of Israel today have *never been warned* of what is in store for the descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel!

These many scores of millions simply have no idea what is coming on our lands, and on our peoples!

Since no human parent would ever punish a child for something that the child had not been told (warned) was wrong, neither would God do this with His children. The fair, just, loving, merciful and patient God of the Bible is literally obligated to explain to all today WHY “the sword” is coming on 600 million people. Only a parental monster would neglect such a responsibility to so many “children” (of Israel) who hang in the balance. And remember, the generation alive today is the most rotten in the history of the world, and is one Jesus likens to both the universal corruption of Noah’s day (Matt. 24:37; Luke 17:26-27) and the awful perversion of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:28-30).

Take a moment to glimpse a tiny snapshot of this final generation reflected in Proverbs 30:11 through 14. The God described by I John 4:8 and 16—“God is love”—would never shirk His duty to trumpet a warning to such an abominable “filthy” generation.

The rest of this chapter will examine a great many passages from the Old Testament, some of them extensive, all of them graphic. These verses form a picture, at the same time both beautiful and ugly—wonderful and horrible. Together, they present a reality more astonishing than one could believe, almost beyond comprehension for those who try as hard as they can to grasp it. Yet, these sobering, stunning and horrific prophecies *must* be comprehended—and by YOU!

You are about to take a truly extraordinary journey into and through the immediate future. Fasten your seatbelt!

“For Our Admonition”

One of the greatest New Testament principles of the Bible is found in I Corinthians 10:11, and references the Old Testament: “Now all these

things happened unto them [Israel] for ENSAMPLES [types]: and they are *written for our admonition*, upon whom the *ends of the world* are come.”

This passage references God’s people alive at the “ends of the world,” and how they are to learn from Old Testament “ensamples,” meaning *types* applicable for us today. Many sermons and articles could open with I Corinthians 10:11 applied in different ways to our time.

I Corinthians 10 itself opens with a remarkable statement about a past event. Notice verse 1: “Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.” You will soon see ancient Israel’s exodus from Egypt as but a tiny *type* (ensample) of what will be *repeated*—and in the very NEAR FUTURE! And the final phase of God’s Work is directly connected to it.

Several more times in succeeding chapters we will discuss more about the biblical principle of *duality*. What you just saw becomes one of the greatest applications of this principle in the Bible.

Isaiah 10

The story begins with a broader look at the full passage in Isaiah, quoted by Paul. It is found in Isaiah 10. This chapter begins with a description of how God will punish Assyria (modern Germany) at the beginning of the Day of the Lord (vs. 3), after Assyria has carried out the punishment of His people, Israel. Let’s notice:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the REMNANT of Israel, and such as are *escaped* of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him [Assyria] that smote them [Israelites]; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, *in truth*. The REMNANT shall return, even the REMNANT of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though your people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a REMNANT of them shall return: the consumption decreed [on Israel] shall overflow [in] righteousness” (vs. 20-22).

This first passage sets the stage to understand all that will follow. A surviving “remnant” of Israel (referenced four times in just this passage) is foretold to “escape” and “return” from captivity at the end of the Great Tribulation, the time of Jacob’s trouble.

Isaiah also said this about the time when Israel will be freed from coming enslavement: “Shake yourself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose yourself from the *bands* of your neck, O CAPTIVE daughter of Zion” (52:2).

There will come a dramatic moment in Israel’s future captivity that she will be told by God to get up and move, that the enslavement is over and a very different future lies ahead. Let’s watch this develop in other passages.

Jeremiah Adds More

We saw that Israel escapes the “bands” of Assyria. During World War II, the tribe of Judah was enslaved in death camps and murdered on a grand scale by this same Assyria, utilizing places in Germany and Poland such as Auschwitz, Dachau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Bergen-Belsen and Buchenwald. Put another way, enslavement involved just one tribe (and then only part of it) scattered in two nations.

Jeremiah adds to what Isaiah recorded. Notice this about the escaping Remnant: “And I will gather the REMNANT of My flock out of *all countries* where I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase” (23:3). This pictures God’s chosen “flock” returning from “all countries” where He had “driven them.”

Later in Jeremiah more is added to this developing picture of Israel being brought by God out of captivity and back to her homelands. The next passage describes Israel’s attitude—that of a people who have been shattered by nuclear war, famine, disease and the final capstone of abject enslavement under the brutal hand of her enemies. She is seen at this point to view herself very differently than the attitudes evident in these same nations today: “In those days, and in that time, says the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they *and* the children of Judah *together*, going and *weeping*: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces toward it, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten” (50:4-5).

First, notice—actually *remember* from the Worldwide Church of God literature of the past—that more than Judah is involved in this captivity. As with the original escape from Egypt, all twelve tribes, here called the children of Israel and Judah, leave enslavement. Then notice the attitude of “weeping,” with a readiness to “join [to] the LORD their God” as they “ask” directions back to their homeland, Zion.

While an incredible canvas should already begin to be unfolding in your mind, there is a great deal more to understand—and we have not yet begun to connect any of this to the Work of God.

Let’s continue with one more fascinating passage in Jeremiah about this coming second and future great exodus.

Chapter 16, verses 10 to 12, describe a pre-Tribulation, self-righteous Israel unable and unwilling to see *why* God has “pronounced all this great evil against us.” She asks, “What is our iniquity?” and “What is our sin that we have committed against the LORD?” Jeremiah is

instructed in verses 11 and 12 to be sure he tells Israel WHY the captivity—that they would not listen to God’s warning to repent!

The result is “Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that you know not, neither you nor your fathers; and there shall you serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favor” (vs. 13). This is a description of the loss of all religious freedom. The context continues with God’s promise that He will regather Israel to her own land: “Therefore, behold, the days come, says the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD lives, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, The LORD lives, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north [Assyria], and from *all the lands* [we will see that these are nations all over the world] whither He had *driven them* [there this is again]: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers” (vs. 14-15).

Verse 16 offers an absolutely fascinating vision of how God will regather His people. Let’s read it before comment: “Behold, I will send for many *fishers*, says the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many *hunters*, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.”

At the end of the Tribulation, the Remnant of Israel is left literally scattered all through the nations of Earth. Collecting her involves the work of “fishers” and “hunters”—angelic recovery workers—locating surviving individuals, finally ready to seek God. It becomes evident these “workers” leave none behind.

More Detail From Ezekiel

When God desires a truth to be understood, and wants no room for misunderstanding to be possible by the honest Bible student, He repeats His message for emphasis in different ways in multiple passages, usually adding more details and facts to the tapestry He is weaving toward the full picture.

It should be obvious that the Ezekiel Warning itself would have to speak to the prophecy of Israel’s return from captivity, a captivity she brought on herself because she would not listen to the words of God through the “watchman” sent to warn of the consequences of disobedience to God. It does.

Here is a more detailed description of parts of the punishment leading up to the captivity, and the resultant escape of a remnant: “In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste [by nuclear attack], and the high places shall be desolate [false churches]; that your altars may be

laid waste and made desolate, and your idols [the false gods who could not save Israel] may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and you shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezek. 6:6-7).

This describes national calamity and widespread destruction, and death on a staggering scale. Of the initial 600 million people who go into the Great Tribulation, only 200 million will survive the initial effects. The first 200 million, one-third, will be victims of a surprise nuclear attack on the nations of the West. The second 200 million, another third, will die of resultant famine and disease epidemics. (Ezekiel 5:10-12 references and explains these “thirds.”) The first two-thirds are, in effect, the “lucky” ones—because the remaining, surviving third goes into ENSLAVEMENT! We will return to discuss a specific number *within* this final 200 million when it is time to see how many God says constitute the Remnant.

Ezekiel continues: “Yet will I leave a REMNANT, that you may have some that shall *escape* the sword among the nations, when you shall be scattered through the countries. And they that *escape* of you shall remember Me among the nations wherever they shall be carried *captives*, because I am broken [God’s attitude toward what He sees] with their whorish heart, which has departed from Me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall *loathe themselves* for the evils which they have committed in *all their abominations*” (6:8-9).

The reason Israel will come weeping from captivity is because the survivors have come to “loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed.” This is because they have come to grips with how God saw their conduct. But what made them able to know His perspective?

Consider for a moment that *someone* will have to have told these millions what these evils were—WHAT were the abominations—and WHY the captivity came. How else could they, *at this point*—at the moment of escape and liberation—know what brought their punishment? Recall that Isaiah said Israel would know how to serve God “in truth.” Ask: Who would have told them what “truth” was? How would they have come to understand this?

Ezekiel 20

The next passage is the longest in this chapter and it all comes from Ezekiel 20. There was no way to shorten the verses included, but they are broken into segments so we can better grasp what God wants His people

to comprehend. The setting is how Israel continually chose to pollute God's Sabbaths. This blatant disobedience is cited by God multiple times through the chapter. The reader would gain from a slow read of this long Bible description.

The passage opens with God's fury being simultaneously poured out on a sinful world at the outset of the Day of the Lord: "As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with FURY POURED OUT [on the heathen around them as the Day of the Lord begins], will I rule over you: and I will *bring you out* from the people, and will *gather you* out of the countries wherein you are *scattered*, with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with FURY POURED OUT." (vs. 33-34). Sobering words!

The next section looks ahead through the remainder of the time up to the Return of Christ, and after, when God will offer Israel a new covenant: "And I will bring you *into the wilderness* of the people, and there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, says the Lord GOD" (vs. 35-36).

Verses 37 to 40 are a kind of inset to God's thinking. They look past the Day of the Lord to Christ's Return, about a year after liberation from captivity, to when He will *convert* the Remnant of Israel:

"And I will cause you to pass under the rod [under the scepter of God's authority], and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and you shall know that I am the LORD. As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD; Go you [for the time being], serve you every one his idols [God's anger is especially against all forms of religious pollution], and hereafter also, if you will not hearken unto Me: but pollute you My holy name no more with your gifts, and with your idols. For in Mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, says the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve Me: *there will I accept them*, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things."

Verses 41 and 42 reset the timing of WHEN the earlier verses are to be fulfilled: "I will accept you with your sweet savour, WHEN I bring you out from the people, and gather you *out of the countries* wherein you have been *scattered*; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall *bring you into the land of Israel*, into the country for the which I lifted up Mine hand to give it to your fathers."

It is unmistakably plain from this passage that God will bring His people back *to their homeland of Israel* after they have been literally scattered across the world. This Remnant will be mindful of everything in their past that brought this most horrific punishment upon them, and are seen again to “loathe” themselves (next passage below).

Notice that God could have wiped them out entirely but chose not to, leaving the promised Remnant: “And there shall you *remember your ways*, and all your doings, wherein you have been defiled; and you shall *loathe yourselves* [there this is again] in your own sight for all your evils that you have committed. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for My name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings [or all would be destroyed], O you house of Israel, says the Lord GOD” (vs. 43-44).

Notice that Israel comes to “remember her ways” and “all her doings.” Ask again: How does she do this? *What* did she once hear that is now remembered—and *how* did she hear it? The only possibility is a warning coming back to mind that went unheeded.

Hosea Paints the Picture!

The fifth chapter of Hosea paints a graphic and painful picture of what lies ahead for those to be punished. It includes the reason for the punishment and exactly what God is looking for before He will intervene on Israel’s behalf. It also offers hope. Let’s read: “And the pride of Israel does testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them. They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find Him; *He has withdrawn Himself* from them. They have dealt treacherously against the LORD: for they have begotten strange children [today’s rotten—“filthy” (Prov. 30:11-12)—generation]: now shall *a month* devour them with their portions” (vs. 5-7).

Notice that after a certain point God will not be found of those who seek Him because “He has withdrawn Himself from them.” This presents an irony. Today, Israel *can* still seek God, because He *can* still be found. But she will not. The time is coming when she will seek Him, but He cannot be found—and this is because the punishment has begun and NOTHING can stop it until God’s purpose is completed!

The above passage ends with a curious reference to how “a month” shall “devour them.” Here is what this means, and it is nothing new: The Great Tribulation begins 1,260 days before Christ’s Return. Jerusalem is surrounded by armies 30 days earlier (Luke 21:20), at the point of “1,290

days” (Dan. 12:11). Matthew 24:15-19 reveals that this is the signal for the Church to flee “into the wilderness, into her place” (of safety – Revelation 12:14), because the Great Tribulation is only 30 days away—the *same month* that will “devour” Israel after the Work is over and the Church is protected. Realize that the Church will have *already gathered* in anticipation of flight, beginning at the “1,335 days” (Dan. 12:12).

Recall what Christ said in Matthew 24 *right after* His instruction to flee at the abomination’s arrival: “For THEN [30 days later] shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved [alive]: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened” (vs. 21-22). (These time periods reappear in Chapter Fourteen for more in-depth examination.)

If God did not intervene, Earth’s entire population would be wiped out. Of course, this would include Israel. The only reason there is a *Remnant* of her saved is God “cuts short” events, including her punishment.

Famine of Hearing God’s Word

Let’s momentarily move backward in time to the moments just before the beginning of the Tribulation. Recall that there is to be a famine of hearing God’s Word that comes suddenly as the final Work is “cut short” (Rom. 9:28). At this point, the John 9:4 “night” will have come when “no man can work,” including God’s Church warning those who had better heed NOW! But it must be seen how—WHY!—this prophesied famine could not possibly yet be here.

First, let’s review what God inspired Amos to record. Let’s remember the prophecy: “Behold, the days come, says the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of *hearing the words of the LORD*” (8:11).

Next, Amos describes what happens at the time of this famine. How do people react? “And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it” (vs. 12).

This is a shocking moment for frantic millions who can no longer find what God has been declaring through His Church. Another prophecy, implied here, but largely forgotten today, is that people will have been accustomed to “hearing the Word of the Lord.” Do not miss this.

This takes us back to Ezekiel 33 and an attitude that will become dominant through Israelite lands, because of what this Church will have been announcing. Notice how this chapter about the “watchman” con-

cludes: “Also, you son of man [a modern Ezekiel], the children of your people still are talking against [Heb.: “about”] you by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and *hear* what is the word that comes forth from the LORD” (vs. 30).

The unceasing and intensifying message from *this Work*—the *only place* that word *from the LORD* could come—will eventually be on millions of lips. These will regularly come to hear what God’s Work has to say on the most salient and important matters of the time. Great numbers—an audience of vast proportion—will talk about and debate the meaning of powerful prophecies. But most, even of those who understand, will be unwilling to *act* on what they learn: “And they come unto you as the people comes, and they sit before you *as My people* [in appearance only], and they *hear* your words, but they will *not DO* them: for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goes after their *covetousness*” (vs. 31).

The last sentence in the passage introduces the problem.

The “Music” Suddenly Stops

Tragically, the pull of materialism will overpower the masses’ desire to *ACT* on ominous, impending prophecies made plain by God’s Work. Covetousness will continue to rule the thinking of most. But people *will* remain interested because the message from God’s Work will be so compelling: “And, lo, you are unto them as *a very lovely song* of one that has *a pleasant voice*, and *can play well* on an instrument: for they *HEAR* your words, but they *DO* them not” (vs. 32).

But, abruptly, as though in the middle of the “song,” the “music” and “lyrics” stop. God suddenly concludes the warning. Space to take action will be gone. Those who would not heed will realize that they have made a horrible miscalculation about how much time remained. Desperate millions will be searching the airwaves, the Internet and every other outlet used for what can no longer be found—because the greatest famine of all time has struck! And it has become too late to escape!

This brings us back to Hosea 5 where the context continues with God speaking about Himself at the moment of famine: “I will go and *return to My place*, till they [Israel] *acknowledge their offense*, and seek My face: in their affliction [brutal enslavement] they will seek Me early” (vs. 15). When God “withdraws Himself,” He describes it as a “return to His place” in the third heaven.

He will remain ready to intervene—but this will not happen until terrible punishment is complete!

Moment of Intervention

Let's continue in Hosea and see what triggers God's miraculous intervention on Israel's behalf. Recognize that the message about Israel's condition overlaps into the next chapter. (Remember, men added chapter divisions.) Notice what happens as the Day of the Lord arrives, and Israel's attitude at the point where "they acknowledge their offense" before God: "Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: *in the third day* He will raise us up, and *we shall live in His sight*" (6:1-2).

This presents a fascinating point of prophetic understanding about the nature and timing of the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord. It reveals what God will do for Israel and how He will "raise...up" the surviving Remnant in the "third day," or third year (each day for a year), of the Tribulation. Israel recognizes what is happening and declares, "We shall live in His sight."

Many may have forgotten this passage—or never knew of it—and that Mr. Armstrong summarized the timing of these final, cataclysmic events. Here is a short statement he wrote in 1980 in his longest book about the fate of the nations of Israel as revealed in prophecy:

"The coming Great Tribulation probably will last about 2 1/2 years—the 'Day of the Lord' about one year—then comes the resurrection and the second coming of Christ!"

The United States and Britain in Prophecy, pp. 226-227

Get these crucial time periods clear in your mind. Remember that the Day of the Lord is also called the *Year* of the Lord in other places.

An inset: Note a passage previously referenced—that Ezekiel 20:35 stated that God pleads with the regathered tribes of Israel "in the *wilderness*"—and that God also reveals He will take spiritual Israel, the Church, "into the *wilderness*, into her place" (Rev. 12:14).

We might speculate: Is it possible that the Remnant of Israel is brought back to an area near, but outside, the Place of Safety? Are one or two wildernesses being described?

Back To Isaiah—God "Tithes" on His People

Recall that 200 million Israelites—the final third—go into captivity. Also recognize that these do not all survive the new World War III generation of what will be like death camps.

It is Isaiah who reveals *how many* in Israel will survive the coming catastrophe. Here is the verse that, in effect, reveals A NUMBER! This is an astonishing passage, so read carefully: “Then said I, Lord, how long? And He answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a *great forsaking* [the total breakdown of all law and order, and character, triggering punishment] in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a TENTH, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree [these can regrow quickly even if cut down at ground level], and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof” (6:11-13).

The prophet Amos is even more explicit regarding the number—the overall *percentage* of survivors—among Israel who return from captivity, and one critical passage becomes a kind of corroboration of what Isaiah is saying. Some background first.

Amos has much to say in the early chapters of his book about God’s view of Israel, and what lies in store for her. For instance, chapter 3, verse 1, begins with the instruction, “Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel...” Then verse 2 declares, “I will punish you for all your iniquities” before God then asks this of His relationship with Israel: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (vs. 3). Oft-quoted, few check the important context of what this rhetorical question in Amos is actually talking about. God is stating the obvious through means of a question—that He cannot any longer walk with His people. All semblance of birth-right blessings from Him cease.

Chapter 5 then opens with another lamentation against Israel and how she was “fallen” and “forsaken” with “none to raise her up” (vs. 2). Then verse 3 records, “For thus says the Lord GOD; The city that went out by *a thousand* shall leave *an hundred*, and that which went forth by *an hundred* shall leave *ten*, to the HOUSE OF ISRAEL.”

This presents a stunning, mind-boggling reality!

No more than 60 million Israelites—ONE TENTH!—will survive the soon-coming Great Tribulation to participate in the greatest exodus of all time. Yet, compared to perhaps three or four million leaving Egypt, this is a vastly bigger number for the angelic “fishers” and “hunters” to regather and bring back to Israel’s land of nativity.

Still, over a half-billion human beings just in Israel will not have survived to this point, having through procrastination and inaction terribly miscalculated the seriousness of what would come.

Assembled and Recovered a “Second Time”

Before discussing the surviving number further, let’s move to Isaiah 11:11, as we continue to make ever more clear the picture of what will occur. This passage offers more about the many places where God’s people have come to be scattered across the globe:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the *second time* to recover the REMNANT of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.” These locations include Africa and Europe, notice Assyria and Egypt again, plus perhaps other African nations, and suggest South America along with various “islands of the sea.”

Truly, this will have been a worldwide scattering and enslavement. Take time to mull—to ponder deeply—what lies ahead for whole populations who still—today!—have absolutely no idea—not a hint, inkling or clue—what is coming or why, and then ask whether God would, in effect, “ambush” His people with such awful punishment without having given powerful prior warning.

Verse 12 then describes how God will “ASSEMBLE the *outcasts* of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” (Also see Ezekiel 12:14-16, Jeremiah 30:11 and 49:32.) Verses 15 and 16 describe how God will dry up the multiple mouths of the Nile river delta (there are several) so that escaping Israelites can come back from Egypt and other places in Africa (“Cush”).

A Trumpet Blast!

It is also in Isaiah that we are given the signal of just how God will notify the entire world that Israel is being brought from captivity: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the GREAT TRUMPET shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the *outcasts* in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem” (27:13).

Words cannot describe the poignancy of this most special moment to God. It is interesting to notice how Numbers 10:2 explains that trumpets were always blown whenever God wanted to *assemble* the tribes of Israel. This pattern is seen to reappear one final time at the end of the age, except that the awesome volume of the blast will exceed human comprehension. More of God’s mind in a moment.

Realize first that something else accompanies the trumpet blast in this moment like no other.

Also a Mighty Earthquake

At the time of the heavenly signs, beginning the Day of the Lord, and as the trumpet blast occurs, the Bible records that Israel’s moment of liberation is also accompanied by a mighty earthquake.

The description of the sixth seal of Revelation 6—the heavenly signs—begins with this: “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a *great earthquake*; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and *every mountain and island were moved* out of their places” (vs. 12-14).

Compare this description to what Christ said about the heavenly signs and it becomes clear why the earthquake is so great: “*Immediately* after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the *stars shall fall* from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be *shaken*” (Matt. 24:29).

How great is an earthquake that moves *every* mountain and island—“out of their places”? The answer is one that involves even the heavens shaking, rocking the earth’s orbit as stars fall. The world has never seen such a powerful earthquake. But it is no accident that an earthquake accompanies Israel’s escape from enslavement. It is, in fact, another *type* of ancient Israel’s escape from Egypt.

Let’s read most of Psalm 114: “When Israel went out of Egypt...The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back. The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. What ailed you, O you sea, that you fled? You Jordan, that you were driven back? You mountains, that you skipped like rams; and you little hills, like lambs? Tremble, you earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob” (vs. 1, 3-7).

Just the earthquake described in Psalm 114 would probably shatter every seismograph on Earth. The one described by Christ and John is obviously MUCH GREATER!

Back to Isaiah

We return to Isaiah 27, verse 12: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream

of Egypt, and you shall be gathered *one by one*, O you children of Israel.”

What an absolutely astonishing picture presents itself as millions of broken, shattered, terrified human beings are brought together “one by one” out of enslavement. This regathering process begins with a trumpet blast unlike anything ever heard before on Planet Earth—an ear-splitting sound surely heard in every corner of the world. This will be accompanied simultaneously with a planet-rattling earthquake, also greater than anything ever experienced. When these occur, they will also be heard and felt by God’s people, then protected in the Place of Safety, and will send a special signal of this awesome moment for Israel. (And those protected will realize that only one year remains to finish their final preparation to be spirit teachers of these “escapees.”)

Try to imagine 60 MILLION HUMAN BEINGS being brought literally from all over the world—every corner of the earth!—weeping, loathing themselves, seeking God as never before, as they ask the way back to Zion. Beginning with the heavenly signs, plagues of every sort will be occurring all around these deeply humbled and sorrowful people during their incredible journey back to the homeland in which God always intended they reside.

One is left scarcely able to imagine the combination of pathos, repentance and, at the same time, electrifying excitement, all amidst continuing miraculous intervention, that this scene brings to mind. In fact, a very *different* kind of miracles than those allowing Israel’s escape will also be occurring all around the world. But none will want to experience them...

The Year of the Lord

Remember that the Day of the Lord has begun—the time of GOD’S WRATH on the rebellious sinning nations of Earth! (This one-year period begins with the heavenly signs.) While the faithful remnant of Philadelphia is in protection at the Place of Safety, this entire year is *witnessed* by these same millions who are promised by God that they will “live in His sight.”

To get a better picture of what is occurring during this period all around the escaping and protected Israelite Remnant, a number of final passages, all but one from Isaiah, must be examined. The “world setting” tells its own most amazing story.

The Day of the Lord is not merely a reckless God’s mindless BIG BLAST on the world. His carefully crafted purpose is at work. Besides the need for their own punishment due to sin, the Gentile nations receive

special attention from God. Understand this basic difference: The Great Tribulation is *Satan’s* wrath on the people of Israel, allowed by God because it serves His purpose in punishing His rebellious people, but the Day of the Lord is *God’s* wrath on the also sinning nations who enjoyed carrying out the punishment. This comes mostly in the form of powerful plagues.

Here is Isaiah’s brief but potent summary of the Day of the Lord. The passage introduces a big reason God is angry with the nations: “For it is the day of the LORD’S VENGEANCE, and the *year* of RECOMPENCES [repayment] for the controversy of Zion” (34:8).

Vengeance and Recompense!

Did you notice that “vengeance” is involved in God’s thinking, and that it has to do with “the controversy of Zion”? Truly today, the peoples of Israel, especially Judah, the Israelis, are given no end of trouble by the heathen nations around them. No matter how humanly reasonable and generous in times of need that all our Israelite nations have striven to be (despite national immorality and corruption, and all that God said Israel has become), the peoples around them are never truly grateful, and never satisfied, and have “plagued” them for millennia. The result has been never-ending “controversy” in Jerusalem and Israel.

A brief side note: Recall the leader offering a “solution” to the problems of the Middle East in his \$65 book. (Following today’s typical pattern, he is donating a portion of the proceeds to Mid-East “intercommunal peace efforts.”) But there is *no human solution* to the “controversy of Zion.” While none is surprised that politicians, diplomats, generals and conquerors have tried to solve the “Mid-East problem,” this man’s book is blindness at a new level. Only the returning Jesus Christ and the resurrected saints can solve this problem!

Next, Isaiah records God speaking this: “For the day of vengeance is in My heart, *and* the year of My redeemed is come” (63:4).

This passage describes two entirely different aspects to God’s mind, both occurring at the *same time*. Notice that He also calls this time of vengeance “the year of His *redeemed*.” This passage introduces fascinating understanding. God literally buys back (redeems) His people from bondage. In effect, the nations are “paid” in plagues, literally plagued by God as they plagued Israel. On the one hand, God feels tenderly toward His broken and redeemed people—but toward the heathen He feels very REAL VENGEANCE!

“Ransom” Payment Like No Other

This introduces a longer and very graphic passage from Isaiah 43. It summarizes all of what we have just described. Read it carefully for the expansive picture presented: “But now thus says the LORD that created you, O Jacob, and he that formed you, O Israel, Fear not: for I have *redeemed* you, I have called you by your name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you: when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon you” (vs. 1-2).

This describes an incredible scene—the horrors of nuclear war and fiery plagues occurring all around Israel during her return!

Now notice how God says that Israel must be ransomed—redeemed—bought back: “For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour: I gave Egypt for your *ransom*, Ethiopia and Seba for you. Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honourable, and I have loved you: therefore will I *give men for you*, and *people for your life*. Fear not: for I am with you...” (vs. 3-5).

This latter passage describes an incredible exchange of lives that is part of God’s plan to redeem His people on the way back from scattering and bondage. Quite literally, God says that certain peoples will have to die for Israel (by plagues)—and this is part of God’s “ransom” plan—so that she can safely return “home.” This is different from the usual form of ransom in which the *kidnappers* receive financial payment to secure release of the hostages. In this case, with the hostages freed, the hostage *takers* are “paid” with *their own blood*. At this point, Israel has been released from all further debt of slavery to her enemies. Her captors have received payment for the slaves they lost—their own blood and lives.

Now continue: “I will bring your seed from the *east*, and gather you from the *west*; I will say to the *north*, Give up; and to the *south*, Keep not back: bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by My name: for I have *created him* [Israel] *for My glory*, I have formed him; yes, I have made him” (vs. 5-7).

God fulfills at last what was always His purpose for Israel!

Finally, National Conversion

The 31st chapter of Jeremiah is one long prophecy that speaks of Israel’s return from captivity, her coming to deep repentance with many details

offered and her coming to conversion later in the chapter. The chapter offers insets about her past abominations, but focuses on conversion from verse 31.

Here is what the oft-quoted verses 33 and 34 state: “But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; *after those days* [after the Great Tribulation, the Day of the Lord, Israel’s return to Zion and the kingdom of God has been established], says the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Because of the final Work done by God’s Church in the few years that remain, there will be a *remnant tithe* of Israelitish peoples with whom God can work, to whom He can give His law and into whom He can put His Holy Spirit at the outset of the Millennium. And these nations will play a role in leading the entire world to the same. In fact, the Remnant does not return alone from captivity.

Large numbers will join them in the journey...

THE “GREAT MULTITUDE”

The subject of the Israelite Remnant introduces another very large number of people that suddenly appears on the world scene at the same time. This is the well-known, but not well understood, “Great Multitude,” often referred to as the “Innumerable Multitude.” This suddenly appearing group is described in Revelation 7:9-17. You will learn that these enormous masses of people are linked in a fascinating way.

Strangely, even though the prophecy about the Israelite Remnant returning from captivity is mentioned in many more passages than is the Great “Innumerable” Multitude, and is seen to be a centerpiece within God’s plan at the end of the age, most brethren in the Church have generally been more aware of this latter prophecy. This is because the Great Multitude is described just after the 144,000 are first introduced.

The Great Multitude is, in fact, a tremendously important prophecy. Sadly, and this acknowledgment is becoming a broken record within the book, this understanding has been largely neglected within the preaching of almost all of the splinters and slivers. They can no longer see much or any of its connection to God’s Work. In fact, you may soon find yourself admitting to having forgotten most or even all of what the Church once understood to be an absolutely vital—and inspiring—prophecy in regard to the final Work of God’s Church!

A variety of questions arise about the Great Multitude: Who are they? Where could so many people come from? How could such a large number arise so suddenly? Could they be the same as the Remnant? If

not, how are they different? And, since the Great Multitude is seen to “come out of tribulation” right as the Great Tribulation ends, is this group in any way *related* to the returning Remnant of Israel? Recall that the Remnant appears at the exact same juncture in God’s carefully prophesied timeline, which is just before the Day of the Lord begins. Is this an accident? And why would two such similar groups be different?

The answers to these questions must be understood before going on to the other prophecies previously mentioned about God’s Work. I repeat: You will find that the identity of this huge throng of people is vastly more important than most now realize. And again, you will also learn that it is directly connected to the very final phase of the Work of God. Mr. Armstrong is about to make that clear.

But first we must be briefly refamiliarized with the prophecy.

A Look at the Prophecy

The Great Multitude is actually referenced in several Bible passages. But this has been generally unrealized by almost all of God’s people. It becomes one of the surprising things you will learn in this chapter. You will see that most have simply not known how to find these verses. We will later examine two.

The prophecy is best introduced by its most familiar passage, Revelation 7:9-17. While we will later examine the specifics of this longer passage in more detail, first, simply take the time to read all that John recorded:

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

“And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among

them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Understand that there are many points to examine within this extensive prophecy. There is a lot more here than meets the eye. But, this discussion can be simplified if we first look at an overview.

Remembering What Mr. Armstrong Taught

The best way to summarize the prophecy, with its setting, was written by Mr. Armstrong. This fairly lengthy statement comes from his booklet *The Book of Revelation—Unveiled at last!*, and the first paragraphs appear under the subhead "Who Constitute the Innumerable Multitude?" The other two subheads are his.

As you read, take careful note of the *timing* of prophetic events described. Also, notice how Mr. Armstrong explains that God always *warns* those facing punishment, and how in this case the first and greatest warning is issued by His Church before the Tribulation:

"Now how about this innumerable multitude? They have come through THE Great Tribulation. God will not send His frightful PLAGUES to punish the world, until He has first sent a great supernatural warning. God has warned the world through all His prophets—through His Son Jesus Christ—He is warning the world right now through this very work. But God is a God of mercy and compassion. He will yet warn this world once again—by supernatural signs, in the sun, the moon, and the stars. God will leave men no excuse.

"And after the Great Tribulation, when men are seized with stark terror at these supernatural heavenly signs, multiplied thousands will at last recognize that it is really GOD warning them! Yes, multiplied thousands who now hear this warning from God will not heed it now. They are deceived. They still believe and follow their various human leaders, or groups. Their minds are not fully opened to recognize this as God's last warning to this world! They are not repenting or turning to God, now! Oh, how well I know that! But when they see these things actually occur which they heard from no others—when they have seen how the world was deceived and misled about the Great Tribulation, and they have gone through it—when they see these terrifying supernatural SIGNS in the heavens, then, at last, hundreds of thousands of them—perhaps even some of you—will at last recognize the TRUTH,



Monthly, Weekly and Daily Mailings: While The Restored Church of God reaches millions of Internet users throughout the world, we also provide hard-copy material from our vast library of literature.

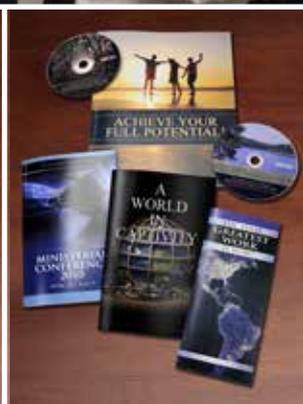
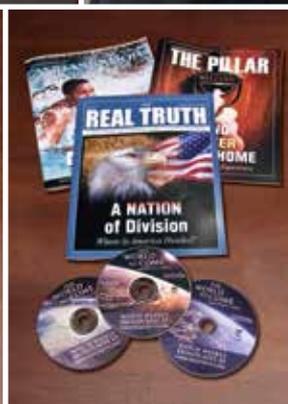
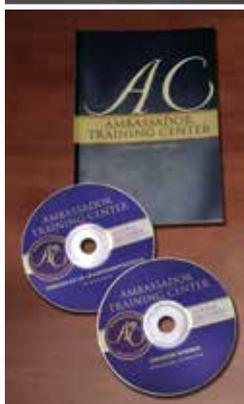




Various teams at Headquarters meet with Mr. Pack to discuss, plan and implement projects that affect the direction of the Work.



Editorial Process. Before magazines and other publications are published they go through a rigorous editing process, followed by the addition of photographs, illustrations and graphics, bringing them to the high standard of quality required for *The Real Truth* magazine and all literature produced by Restored.



and at last turn to God in complete submission, fully repenting, and coming through Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world! We of this ministry well know that our real reward in the harvest of precious lives will mostly come after our labors are finished!" [Author's note: Before continuing, consider the powerful parallel of whether the last several sobering sentences also apply to you today, particularly if you are no longer even participating in the ongoing warning Mr. Armstrong describes. If you say there is no parallel to you, think carefully why not!]

What Do the Trumpets Symbolize?

"A trumpet is an instrument into which one blows. A trumpet sounds by blowing wind through it. These seven trumpets, which compose the seventh seal, follow immediately after the sixth seal. At the time of the sixth seal, described in the last of the 6th chapter of Revelation, it was announced that 'the GREAT DAY OF GOD'S WRATH was come.' These symbolic TRUMPETS portray, then, THE DAY OF THE LORD—the day of GOD'S WRATH! The day God intervenes in world affairs to PUNISH this world for its EVIL—the day God pleads with all flesh in the physical language it can UNDERSTAND!—and, as Zephaniah 1:16 says: 'A day of THE TRUMPET and alarm against the fenced [that is, fortified or defended] cities, and against the high towers [that is, military fortifications].'

"The TRUMPET was always blown as a warning of war, or approaching armies. It signifies war and destruction. When ISRAEL turned a deaf ear to all God's prophets—rejected God's loving pleading through preaching—God punished ancient Israel by sending the armies of Assyria to conquer them. When Judah disobeyed worse than Israel, God Almighty sent the armies of the CHALDEANS to conquer them. As God steps in to punish the whole world—yes, ALL NATIONS, for their evil, which is destroying them and bringing such suffering and unhappiness on all their peoples, the TRUMPETS, or alarms of WAR, are sounded. Trumpets are blown by wind. Now again notice: 'And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree' (Rev. 7:1).

God's Children Protected

"These winds were held back from blowing these seven trumpets until the sealing of the 144,000 and the great innumerable multitude that came

out of the GREAT TRIBULATION from all nationalities and peoples. They who repent and turn to GOD for protection are first brought under the divine protection, so that just as God protected the children of ISRAEL when He poured out the plagues on ancient Egypt, so shall He protect ALL His children who rely on Him from these plagues now about to come on the modern BABYLON! [Author's note: Take special note of Mr. Armstrong's next sentences. You will see that they have a direct connection to the *specific identity* of the Great Multitude.] And, incidentally, the plagues God sent on Egypt in the days of Moses were a direct type of these plagues that shall now be poured out on BABYLON. Those protected from those ancient plagues were taken under Moses to the promised land, the Holy Land. Those saved from these plagues will be taken by CHRIST into the KINGDOM OF GOD—to be set up on earth with headquarters in Jerusalem.”

pp. 35-38

There are many elements of crucial knowledge contained in this powerful and graphic statement. Do not miss them, including the very last sentence, which introduces the fact that the Great Multitude will eventually receive salvation in God's kingdom. The process of how and when this occurs will be explained later.

The 144,000

Mr. Armstrong touched upon the sealing of the 144,000, the subject of the first half of Revelation 7 and of the first five verses of Revelation 14. Take note that a special and very inspiring four-part sermon series about the identity of the 144,000 has been prepared. It is most conclusive, leaving no doubt whatsoever who these people are—and the answer is not what you expect. The identity of the 144,000 is something that has not been truly understood, and certainly never as this series *fully* explains the subject.

The series is filled with *facts, evidence* and *scriptural proof*. It is not one you should even think about letting yourself miss! Once begun, you will be unable to stop listening until finished. Also note that Part Four of the series takes a longer look at the identity of the Great Multitude.

Powerful Advance Warning

Finally, recall Mr. Armstrong's mentioning that the nations will be left without excuse because a POWERFUL WARNING will have occurred—that

this is what God always does before punishment. It must be mentioned—and plainly understood—that God will also leave those who have His Spirit with no excuse—those who should know better!—for not having wholeheartedly *participated* in the warning message thundered by His Church in the last years while there is still opportunity. We will look more closely at this later.

Examining the Description

Understand that this prophecy is infinitely more important than meets the eye. Also, many have misunderstood it, reducing it to a relatively small number of people linked to the 144,000 because they do not understand the Greek words translated “Great Multitude.”

The term *Great Multitude* derives from the Greek words *polus ochlos*, and translators have given the most accurate rendering for these words. But this same phrase is found in a number of other New Testament passages, in which the size of the group being referenced can be anywhere from a small gathering or mob to great numbers. Therefore, it is important to look at the key verses within the prophecy, beginning with God’s own description of the group’s size.

Let’s start with verse 9, which begins the prophecy and records what John next observed after seeing the 144,000 sealed: “AFTER THIS I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of *all nations*, and *kindreds*, and *people*, and *tongues*, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”

This describes what will be seen later to be a vast and diverse wave of human beings literally from every corner of the world. Careful reading reveals that *five* key words can be examined to help demonstrate this.

Let’s examine each of the italicized words in the verse. These definitions will prove important when we revisit some of them in the Chapter Thirteen discussion of Revelation 10:11.

The word “all” is translated from the Greek word *pas*, and this word means what it says: “every, all, thoroughly.” Obviously, people from *every* nation of the world are involved in this event. This means that the Great Multitude is anything but a small number, as some have suggested.

Next is the word “nations.” The Greek word here is *ethnos*, pronounced eth’-nos, and the modern word *ethnic* derives from it. It means “a race, that is, a tribe; specifically a *foreign* (non-Jewish) one (usually by implication *pagan*).” It is interesting that *ethnos* also means “Gentile,

heathen or nation.” This is obviously talking about the non-Israelite nations of the world—the other six and a half billion people of the earth’s population. So this is referencing a people quite different from those of the Israelite Remnant.

Then comes the word “kindreds,” and this comes from the Greek word *phule*, which carries this meaning: “offshoot, race, clan, tribe.” This is a key word in the prophecy. When understood, it is the term that God uses to be sure the reader does not miss the fact that every kind of ethnic group within the nations of the world is included—has representation within—the Great Multitude.

The word “people” in the Greek is *laos*, pronounced lah-os’, and is the root from which *Laodicean* derives. First, realize the meaning here must be at least somewhat different from nations and kindreds. In fact, it carries a more narrow definition and usually means “a people, but involves one’s own populace.” Chapter Thirteen will also reveal that this describes one element of people to whom the final watchman of Ezekiel was to be sent—to his own people, or what would be either Israel, generally, or the tribe of Judah, specifically. Why this word is included is fascinating and will be revisited later.

Next is the word “tongues.” This comes from the Greek word *glossa*, pronounced gloce’-sah. The English word *glossary* derives from it, and it simply means “the tongue; by implication a language.” This is almost certainly another way of saying that virtually every possible kind of racial, ethnic and cultural background that a human being could possess, defined to some degree by the world’s many different languages and dialects, will be included among those who repent at the end of the Tribulation.

Why Innumerable?

In light of what Mr. Armstrong explained, it should by now be clear that the number of people within the Great Multitude is almost certainly gigantic. Mr. Armstrong suggested perhaps hundreds of thousands at least. In all likelihood, and considering the power of the final Work of God, the number may well be much bigger than this. There is a reason I say this.

On a side note, no matter its size, no matter how big the multitude might be, there is no number that cannot be counted by the mathematical systems of men. Men are able to count the now estimated 30 billion trillion stars in the universe, as well as numbers much, much larger. Thus, the only reason that the Great Multitude would be *innu-*

merable is because it is a number not yet established—a number that will only be known once it can be determined how many people around the world have chosen to repent as a result of what they have witnessed and experienced.

Every person possesses free moral agency. Each human being must decide what he will do when cataclysmic prophesied events about which he has been forewarned actually come to pass.

“Came Out of Tribulation”

Verses 10 to 12 are not difficult to understand. But verses 13 and 14 offer the biggest clue to *when* the Great Multitude appear: “And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

Obviously, this conversation involves a *vision* wherein John, on Earth, is talking with 1 of the 24 elders, in heaven. However, the verse plainly reveals that these people have repented—and that they “came out of great tribulation,” exactly as do the Remnant—as well as that they come at the same time. (Yet, they are not described as having been “sealed,” as were the 144,000, meaning they do not yet have God’s Spirit. Also, there is not yet mention of *when* they will be saved.)

The next several verses offer the biggest clue to how the process of conversion fits the multitude. As you read the final three verses of the prophecy, five times referencing “shall,” it becomes evident the multitude complete their conversion at Christ’s Return. (“The 144,000” sermons carefully explain this.) Now notice: “Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sits on the throne *shall* dwell among them. They *shall* hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither *shall* the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne *shall* feed them, and *shall* lead them unto living fountains of waters [the Holy Spirit—John 7:37-39]: and God *shall* wipe away all tears from their eyes” (vs. 15-17).

It is evident from the future tense used throughout that the Great Multitude are only fully converted upon Christ’s Return, some time after which they “will be taken by Christ into the kingdom of God,” as Mr. Armstrong explained.

Now begins examination of a fascinating parallel.

When Israel Left Egypt

Recall that I said we would see the principle of duality in application several more times. This is the second time, and is again in the context of Israel coming out of Egypt.

Exodus 12 tells the story of Israel’s departure from Egyptian slavery and of the first Passover, to be instituted annually from that point. Verse 37 describes how the “children of Israel journeyed” from Egypt with “about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.” When wives, and the size of families at that time are included, the six hundred thousand number likely grows to several million.

The *size* of the escaping Israelite nation of that time becomes significant in a way that most have not recognized. This number was so large—this event so enormous, and with many powerful miracles surrounding God’s intervention on behalf of His people—that the local inhabitants of Egypt saw what God was doing and wanted to follow their escaping “employees” to wherever God was leading.

The First “Great Multitude”

Many more than those of Israel chose to depart when Pharaoh gave permission to leave. Here is what the Exodus account records about the number of Gentiles, or what the Old Testament often refers to as “strangers,” who departed with Israel: “And a *mixed multitude* went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle” (12:38).

This is a fascinating statement, and carries within it a dramatic *duality* foretold to play out again in regard to the future Israelite Remnant’s coming escape from the “Egypt” that, in this age, has become all the nations of the world. (Of course, we just learned that some of the Remnant are actually enslaved in literal Egypt once again.)

The Hebrew words translated “mixed multitude” offer a vital clue in regard to this very exciting prophecy of what lies ahead for people of all nations. The word *mixed* comes from the Hebrew *ereb*, which has this definition: “mongrel, race, mixture, mingled people.” The word *multitude* is *rab* in the Hebrew, and means, “abundant, great, many, plenteous, populous.” Think of the modern term *Arab*.

The picture here is that peoples of every kind—a diverse, mongrelized mixture or mingling of humanity, probably in at least some cases peoples who were also slaves in bondage beside their Israelite counterparts—came in large numbers. In other words, the size of the multitude

was *great, plenteous, populous* or *abundant* in number. In fact, Exodus 12:38 could just as correctly have stated that a "Great Multitude" came with Israel from Egypt!

Now remember again that I Corinthians 10:1 and 11 tell us that Israel's original exodus was an "ensample" or "type" for us today. Of course, this would have no meaning if we could not know that God has *specifically foretold* a second, future, and much, MUCH greater exodus than happened 3,500 years ago.

Now we ask: Did God foretell, possibly in some kind of coded form, the appearance of the Revelation 7 Great Multitude in an *Old Testament* passage, one that is linked to Israel's coming exodus from captivity? Can we find further corroboration of this co-mingled "escape" event beyond the parallel of the original Exodus account?

The answer to the first question is that *God did*, and to the second is *we can!*

Powerful Prophecy

We have seen that Isaiah recorded more than any other prophet about the circumstances surrounding the escaping Israelite Remnant. It is not surprising that his prophecy introduces the subject of "strangers" (Gentiles or foreigners) who come with Israel.

An extensive passage in chapter 56 reveals what God has known all along would occur. The chapter opens with God describing the arrival of salvation and the revealing of His righteousness to all mankind. We will momentarily learn the time setting of this prophecy. Verse 2 introduces the Sabbath's connection to righteousness. Immediately, and in this context, God invites all *Gentiles* to be included in what is now to be a plan for *all* nations.

First read carefully verses 3-7 leading up to how the "stranger" can also have access to the true God:

"Neither let the son of the *stranger*, that has joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD has utterly separated me from His people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus says the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep My sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants, *every one* [Gentiles, too] that keeps the sabbath from polluting it, and takes

hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”

The context of the stranger being able to know and serve the true God is at this point brought in. Notice the context of how and where this happens. Now read carefully the next verse: “The Lord GOD which gathers the OUTCASTS OF ISRAEL says, Yet will I gather *others* to Him, beside those that are gathered unto Him” (vs. 8). It is evident that the “others” gathered here (the King James translators added this word because the phrase following it commands it) appear at the same time when God gathers Israel. No other conclusion can be drawn.

The Big Picture

Let’s take a moment to draw some important final conclusions, some by way of questions.

By now it should be clear that the Israelite Remnant and the Great Multitude of Revelation are not synonymous—are not exactly the same group. But we are forced to ask: Would God introduce such an incredibly important event as is the appearance of the Great Multitude as late as the book of Revelation, and offer the reader no other clues about their identity—or how and why it was that hundreds of thousands or more likely many millions would suddenly repent and turn to God? And is it a coincidence that this repentance comes at exactly the same time the Remnant comes to repentance?

This alone should tell us that these events have to be in some way connected.

Some have thought the Great Multitude receive salvation in the first resurrection. Why would this occur when it is evident that even the Remnant is not scheduled for salvation at the end of what would just be one year of conversion for these scores of millions? The entire process of character-building would certainly not be possible in one year, and for such vast numbers besides. This is certainly not what God usually does. The Great White Throne Judgment for billions lasts 100 years—a long time! So it makes no sense that this would happen here for *great numbers* all at once.

In this same vein, some would naturally note that the Great Multitude are “clothed with white robes” (Rev. 7:9) and that they have “washed” them “in the blood of the Lamb” (vs. 14). This certainly describes part of the conversion process. But the prophecy offers no

evidence that, as happens with the 144,000, the *spiritual* “sealing” that comes with the receiving of God’s Spirit has taken place. (See John 6:27, Eph. 1:13, 4:30 and II Cor. 1:22.) If it had, why would God mention this all-important sealing in regard to the 144,000, but not in regard to the Great Multitude? (I cannot stress enough the importance of hearing this sermon series, but also in helping to understand key differences with the Great Multitude.)

Further, recall that Christ promises to lead the Great Multitude to the “living waters,” which we saw is the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39). This happens later, because it is something we also saw “shall” occur, along with the other things that Christ declares He “shall” do for this vast throng of strangers coming with Israel.

The Great Multitude (as well as, of course, the Remnant) is shown to have access to God’s throne—they are “before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple” (vs. 15). Every Christian should of course realize that he can come before God’s throne anytime he wishes. But this is not evidence of full conversion with the Great Multitude.

Notice this basic description of what is actually happening every time a Christian prays: “Let us therefore come boldly *unto the throne* of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16). This passage alone demonstrates that the Great Multitude “before God’s throne” is not a picture of people who have achieved salvation or who are, as some assert, a last-minute part of the 144,000, a group who obviously *do* receive salvation at the First Resurrection one year later upon Christ’s Return. It is merely a picture of peoples around the world who now realize that they can come in prayer to the throne room of God any time they wish. This marvelous gift of access has been given.

Mr. Armstrong never saw a need to explain the one-year gap between the appearance of the Great Multitude and the Return of Christ as a statement of *when* the multitude would be saved. The same is true of the Remnant. Although the reason is evident, this is now made plain. However, it is also plain that—and this is the important point—both the Remnant and the Great Multitude are *protected* from the plagues coming during the Day of the Lord.

But here is what is *vital*ly important to realize will occur at the outset of the Millennium. It becomes apparent that all nations of the world will have a kind of early representation, or “advance guard,” who will almost certainly be part of the human structure of government in each nation, who serve under the God Family—the ruling Kingdom of God. (Of course, prophecy shows most of Earth’s remaining population will be

temporary “holdouts” who will not quickly repent without more “stimulus” from God. See Zechariah 14:16-19.)

Foundation Laid!

Let’s pull back for a moment and look at this from a grander perspective. While all of what you have seen is certainly an exciting prophecy, the true picture is even much bigger than meets the eye.

A repentant Great Multitude from all nations (and, of course, with the Israelite Remnant) will bring a foundation—a starting point—from which the Law of God will spread throughout the world. (Also, recall Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-4 from Chapter One about how this will happen from Jerusalem.) So, from the outset of the Millennium people in every nation—the “holdouts”—will be able to observe that some around them reflect changed lives. They will see dramatically different attitudes and conduct—and that a new and different God is already being worshipped by small enclaves of people in every corner of the globe!

Are you seeing the importance of the remaining Work of God in a clearer light?

How This Will Happen

We can speak with certainty that millions around the world *will* be able to *know* what it means to repent and turn to the true God at the outset of His year of wrath. Here is why:

(1) The Two Witnesses will already have been at work for the two-and-a-half years of the Tribulation, explaining God’s Plan, as well as the timing of the Day of the Lord soon to occur, and they will have certainly called the nations to repent before time has expired and it is too late to avoid punishment. Of course, many will see the power and magnitude of the miracles that these two prophets will perform and will recognize that they are servants of God. Not everyone should be expected to blaspheme God and be unwilling to repent in the face of punishment, as some are foretold to do (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21).

(2) Realize that the millions constituting the Remnant will have had extended daily contact with the gentile “strangers” among whom they live. These Israelite slaves will surely have talked about what it was—the national sins and abominations—that brought the last two and a half years of punishment upon their lands and themselves. They will almost certainly also speak of the very Work of God that warned them of what lay ahead, and that they did not heed!

Similar to the “locals” of ancient Egypt, many will learn that they can escape the incredible one-year destruction about to come upon the rest of the nations of the world. Again, the Israelites will surely tell them of the prophecies described in Chapter Ten, and the kinds of things written in this book.

Also, from earlier in the chapter, recall that the word “peoples” within the Great Multitude description is one that can refer to the Israelite tribes. Here is the point. Certainly a multitude involving ALL nations would necessarily have to include the *Israelite* nations coming as part of, and maybe the largest percentage of, the overall migration! But generally think of these groups as *alongside* each other.

(3) Understand that the Work God is doing through The Restored Church of God is TODAY reaching expanding millions of people, with these in *every* nation and even most territories of the world. In addition—and how many will be willing to acknowledge the importance of this?—we are, in fact, and this has been true for a while, reaching almost every nation (and most territories) of the world EVERY DAY!

How Big?—How Soon?

Pause and savor—deeply think about—what the last paragraph contained. Then recognize again that for a time we nearly tripled in size for six straight years. The impact that this powerful Work is having *right now* is far beyond what our enemies and the splinter leaders want you to know. Thousands are reading our material every week in single nations that were barely touched in the 20th century.

What is *already happening* is unprecedented!

So then we could also naturally ask: How many will know of the message thundering from this Work within just one, two, three or four more years? And what if we continue to grow at the *same rate* for these short few remaining years? The vast millions that we will be reaching just in 2011 leaves one almost unable to comprehend where the Work will be during each of the years to follow. Now ask: How soon before we reach most nations every *several hours*, and then *every hour*—OF LESS?

It only began to occur to us in late 2005 that the explosion of interest in what this Church is doing is beyond anything that anyone in our office could have imagined possible today, even with another two or three years of steady growth. This certainly includes me. I simply could not have dreamed what God had in mind all along for His final Work at the end of the age.

But now this surge is reality.

Already, any number of heads of state or interested parties in the very highest government offices from around the world are coming to our websites on a regular basis. So are embassies, high-ranking judges, military and political figures from around the world. In addition, many of the greatest media outlets of the world are regularly perusing the material on our websites, with more and more journalists (some well-known) quoting our booklets and articles.

Here is a strange curiosity: Because of the mass of material we offer, we can also report that religious leaders, or their assistants, from many of the world's largest professing Christian denominations come to us for materials. These represent large and growing numbers—many hundreds, or even thousands—of ministers of every geography, stripe and background who also come to us for information. (And they are often quoting us favorably.) The marvels of modern technology permit us to carefully track the above kinds of visitors.

All of this has today pushed the Work of God's Church well beyond the impact of not only all of the splinter "churches of God"—and by far—but has also taken us into the top percentage of all categories of websites in the world that are listed in a popular ranking system. And remember, in a sense, we consider ourselves to just be getting started—just scratching the surface—of what we know can be done.

Therefore, how long before we have become the biggest thing in religion that the world has ever seen? We cannot know for certain, but we can speculate that it will not be very long before we are the largest "event" that "Christianity" *in all of its forms* has ever experienced!

May God help you see your role in this effort.

And You...?

In regard to both the Israelite Remnant and the Great Multitude, what an exciting time it will be for the survivors *then!*—and what an absolutely inspiring opportunity *now* for God's laborers commissioned to warn and prepare these millions.

But the years remaining to do this are few...

TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

All of the prophecies of the two previous chapters form a dramatic parallel to events involving God's people. This extraordinary parallel becomes a kind of inset chapter that is inseparable from all you have learned so far.

Assembling certain scriptures introduces a strange *false picture* before God's people that must be understood. This picture is presented by carefully sequencing a series of key verses.

Do not permit its message to escape you!

Misreading Events—and Time

One of the most critical warnings that Jesus directed to His disciples living at the end of the age was that many would have slipped into the belief that more time remained than God had planned. He summarized this attitude as “My Lord delays His coming” (Matt. 24:3, 48). Jesus knew that circumstances, in both the world and the post-apostasy “church,” would mesmerize many into assuming they could enjoy their lives a little longer before “things blow up.”

The problem?

When calamity strikes without warning, many will be shocked, thinking, “I thought we had more time.”

A review of Jeremiah and Ezekiel reveals that this thinking reflects how people would *perceive* the speed and seriousness of end-time events

between nations. They would not be able to recognize prophecy, and the *rate* of its advancing fulfillment, playing out before them. Follow closely, because some of the book’s most critical understanding comes now.

Recognize that both the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel long ago foretold a future *strange interval* in world events when, just before the end, political and religious leaders, among others, in the nations of Israel would offer public reassurance to the masses who would be concerned about what they were observing on the domestic and international scene. Jeremiah wrote this about the efforts of leaders in latter-day Israel: “They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace” (6:14). For emphasis, God inspired Jeremiah to repeat this passage verbatim in chapter 8, verse 11.

Here is how Ezekiel describes the fruitless efforts of leaders who apply patchwork solutions to huge, impossible problems looming over the world: “Because, even because they [the leaders] have seduced My people [both Israel *and* sleepy brethren], saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar” (13:10).

Understand the terms being used here—grasp God’s meaning. “Untempered mortar” allows bricks to come loose under pressure where “walls” were thought to be stronger than they were. These ineffective “solutions” (the untempered political mortar used by world leaders) will involve military, political and probably religious solutions—and will almost surely include the spreading of the counterfeit “Jesus” and his band-aid, social-improvement “gospel.”

Because the One who became Jesus Christ inspired both Old Testament and New, it is not surprising that the problem of misreading events at the end would be a theme referenced by numerous Bible writers. In fact, Jesus Himself spoke more than once of how His coming would arrive without notice, as would a “thief” entering your home late at night when you would be asleep (Matt. 24:43; Luke 12:39). Peter was also inspired to speak of Christ’s coming “as a thief in the night” (II Pet. 3:10).

Thieves do not telephone in advance of their coming. They “break and enter” homes or businesses without notice. Truly, the Tribulation and Day of the Lord will suddenly “break” into world peace and “enter” the course of every nation on Earth!

Descriptive Summary

God inspired the apostle Paul to record a more detailed picture of our time in his first letter to the Thessalonians: “But of the *times and the*

seasons, brethren, you have *no need that I write unto you*" (5:1). First, pause and reread the verse. Can you say that this is true of yourself? Are you aware of where events and trends are today in God's final prophesied *biblical timeline*? The evidence is that many brethren *have* needed someone to "write unto [them]" about these prophecies.

This is happening now!

The I Thessalonians 5 summary of timing in the last days continues with this sobering affirmation of the above passages: "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord [described in Luke 17:30 as when Christ is revealed] so comes as a *thief in the night*. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; *and they shall not escape*" (vs. 2-3).

The painful labor of childbirth—"travail upon a woman"—begins suddenly, without notice, at the moment the mother's "water breaks." This can also happen *prematurely*. Similarly, a pregnant world, filled with problems and ready for "delivery," will fall into a false security—a misperceived feeling of "peace and safety"—just before its "water breaks." This will at some point, for geopolitical reasons we cannot yet clearly see in exact detail, become the prevailing international mood. This attitude will overtake and capture the thinking of entire great Israelite nations, and probably soon.

The terrible, sickening result?—"and they shall not escape"!

Brethren Should Know Better

Let's finish examining I Thessalonians 5. Notice verse 4 that follows: "But *you*, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake *you* as a thief." So tragically today, most brethren *are* in darkness, having fallen into the deep blindness that Christ foretold would strike the final era of His Church (Rev. 3:17).

Paul reminded the brethren of who they were and the responsibility they had: "You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us *not sleep*, as do others; but let us *watch and be sober*" (vs. 5-6). Darkness covers the truth of events for billions. But God's people are to be different from their neighbors. They must literally "see the light" of world events.

Yet, so many today cannot see the clock on the wall! Asleep, they are *not* watching and *not* sobered by ominous developing events. The result? This time *will* overtake thousands as a thief!

So many in the splinters are living as though the age will go on forever—but it will not! And remember, Paul wrote—in essence warned!—

that the short Work would also be cut short. When understood, even this makes its own instructive statement. Consider. Why would God describe His Work this way if observers would think it was ending at just the right time? Reality screams that the majority will be fooled, most of these having been unwilling to comprehend—and others who knew but were unwilling to *acknowledge*—where God’s hand was at work.

So recognize—embed in your mind!—that there is a very powerful *caution* intrinsic within Romans 9:28! An already short Work will be further *cut* short!

“Saddle Up!”

Soon, the final Beast of Revelation, ridden by the Great Whore of chapter 17, will explode onto the world scene. No one will be expecting this truly “thief in the night” event. Their sudden joint appearance will signal without warning that another “night” related event has come—the end of God’s Work. The Beast’s arrival and surrounding events were foretold this way: “As a SNARE shall it come on ALL them that dwell on the face of the WHOLE EARTH” (Luke 21:35). The message is that this time will pierce world “tranquility” without advance notice—like a snare—except for those diligently “watching” (vs. 36).

In the near future, the great “mama” whore will instruct her harlot “girls” to stop squabbling and disagreeing, to submit and to “return home NOW!” False, but very real, miracles will reinforce her command, and most or all of these wayward protesting “daughters” *will obey*! Only a few years remain before the false prophet gives his “woman church” the chilling instruction to “saddle up” the Beast for its final ride into awesome, frightening prophecies that will leave all nations of Earth in shocked amazement (Rev. 13:3-4, 8, 13-14; 17:2, 8)—and the nations of Israel in captivity, their lands destroyed.

Remember duality. It will be this religious/political/economic/military system that takes a defeated Israel into the “bitterness,” “rigor” and “affliction” of hard labor under the Beast’s brutal slavemasters, exactly as came upon ancient Israel under Pharaoh (Ex. 1:13-14; 2:23; 3:7). The similarities are striking to the point of stunning!

Most of God’s People Also Taken

Here is what so few seem any longer to remember: The Beast’s ride will also take the Great Whore directly into the lives of those of God’s people who thought there was more time—who did not take seriously either

zealously living God's Way or *fully* participating in His Work. When this happens, all of the people who had fallen into compromise and the kinds of Protestant "harlot" thinking described in this book (and in others to the splinters) will be desperately sorry—and even more desperately wishing they could have another chance to make the right decision.

But it will be *too late!*—much, much **TOO LATE!**

It has been my over 40-year experience in Christ's ministry that most of God's people simply will not listen to what God says. They cannot seem to make themselves take seriously His commands, instructions and warnings. Will you listen to Him through His servant, Mr. Armstrong? This quote returns from the INTRODUCTION:

"The world has sunk into a complacent, indifferent slumber...The world is too busy enjoying this new-found prosperity, basking in the comfortable sunshine of luxury, to be much concerned about the on-coming NUCLEAR World War III that *WILL*, unless prevented by Almighty God, simply erase human life from this planet!

"Soft words and pretty speeches do not arouse people out of this pleasant dream. It takes a *jolt!*"

"Personal," PT, Sept. 1965

This was written nearly 50 years ago—in the mid-1960s. In regard to "prosperity and luxury," when conditions are compared to the enjoyment of life's good things that have arrived for a much greater percentage of people today (as well as having achieved a much greater degree), the 1960s seem almost prehistoric. Thus, most will still not be aroused or moved by strong words.

You could be an exception.

Bold Statement

Whether you can yet understand or accept this, The Restored Church of God has been commissioned by Christ to restart, reconstruct and **FINISH** the "short work" of Romans 9:27-28 in **ALL** of its elements. **WE** are the ones who will—and do—throw aside "soft words and pretty speeches." It is **WE** who must always be willing to speak like a **TRUMPET**—and bring a **JOLT** to all who might hear! If possible, I would also use an earthquake to awaken more readers.

Still, some will only hear "a lovely song." But not all!

For God's Work to be completed, realize that there must be a surviving group of zealous Philadelphia faithful (Rev. 3:11). Because there is

work to be done—much work!—there must be a single, focused, unified organization composed of brethren who are willing—no matter how unpopular and no matter the personal cost—to anoint their eyes and help warn their fellow Laodicean brethren to do the same and join them.

Notice that the context of Romans 9:27-28 ties God’s final Work directly to the Remnant of Israel. This construction and context is *God’s doing*, not a product of mental gymnastics with the passages, by me or anyone else. The sandwiched wording is no accident. Make yourself acknowledge that Paul fits the “short work” reference squarely into Isaiah’s chapter 10 “remnant” prophecy. There is simply no other way to read the passage!

Spiritual Israel Also Warned

The Church’s responsibility to warn the scattered brethren of *spiritual* Israel is inseparable from that of the special warning to the nations of *physical* Israel. So it must at least be mentioned in this volume what is at stake for those with God’s Spirit who will not heed His warning. This means rejecting all that has been written here, and includes being unwilling to do *THEIR PART* in *fully* supporting His Work while there is still time to participate even though they returned to His Church.

After all, both Israels (only some of *spiritual* Israel) enter enslavement together. They have the same time limit on their decision!

Recall that the nations of Israel, once in captivity, will no longer be permitted to worship as they choose. False gods will be *forced* upon them. This will include the Mark of the Beast. The final, or third, two hundred million will have no choice in accepting this Mark.

Understand. The same Work of God must proclaim to the scattered of *spiritual* Israel how individuals can *avoid* the horrendous trial in store for their carnal-minded Israelite counterparts. The same false gods await both. Of course, the stakes are much, *much* higher for God’s Spirit-led people today. Once they enter the Tribulation, they *cannot* survive physically—they have *no hope*—none!—of living through this time to escape with the Israelite Remnant.

Mr. Armstrong Warned

Mr. Armstrong described the Roman system during the dark ages, explaining why the Beast’s mark is Sunday-keeping. Here is what he wrote near the end of his booklet about the Beast, under the subhead “Why Saints Were Martyred”:

“It was for obeying God’s FOURTH Commandment—keeping the Sabbath—that millions were put to death. The local Council of Laodicea, about A.D. 363, passed this decree: ‘Christians must not Judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, resting rather on Sunday. But, if any be found to be Judaizing, let them be declared anathema from Christ.’

“The church caused them to be killed. When the church branded one ‘anathema’ (a heretic), the state police of the Empire began torturing him. Unless he recanted, he was tortured until he died!

“Laws became so strict no man could hold a job, or engage in business, unless he worked on Saturday and rested on Sunday. And the world will be so geared that it will be almost impossible for one to ‘buy or sell’ except he receive this MARK OF THE BEAST!”

Who or What is the Prophetic Beast?, p. 40

Tragically, having already lost God’s Spirit, one-half of Laodicea—the *foolish* virgins of Matthew 25:1-12—will NOT survive the Tribulation *spiritually*, having sold out before this time of terrible, intense persecution. They will accept the Beast’s mark to save their physical lives. But their decision pays only short-term dividends because these will die in the Day of the Lord—and of course lose salvation. The other half of God’s unprotected people *will* enter eternal life—the *wise* virgins—but must be martyred in order to receive salvation. At the last minute this half will awaken in captivity, admitting and repenting of their wretched state.

The result? Imprisonment, torture and death.

Mr. Armstrong introduced his very descriptive “Beast” booklet with a potent statement. Notice how he references preachers in the world’s churches who will not discuss prophecies, particularly those they know to be almost upon us. Ask yourself if this also describes the organization you attend:

“For it is those of this very present generation who shall be worshipping this beast or his image, or shall have received his mark, that will suffer the unspeakable torture of the seven last plagues!

“Ignorance will not excuse! ‘My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,’ says the Eternal, in Hosea 4:6. And the illustration of Ezekiel’s watchman shows that those who are unaware, because they are not warned, will suffer just the same (Ezek. 33:6; 3:18). God expects the spiritual leader of His people to be His ‘watchman’ (Ezek. 33:7) and to warn the people. [Author’s note: It is this final single sentence that carries supreme importance to whoever *is* the leader of God’s people

today. It explains why the books to the splinters and a great many others to Israel.]

“The time is at hand! The plagues of God’s wrath will soon be poured out, unmixed and undiluted—full strength—upon a heedless, God-defying world, *and* a careless, lukewarm, indifferent Christianity!”

“Every sign tells us these things will happen, plunging the world into the most frantic, frenzied state of anguish ever known...Those who suffer the wrath of Almighty God are described as those who worship the beast, or his image, or have his mark.”

“These prophecies are real. They are imminent. Because these and other prophecies have never been understood until now, even churches, the theologians, evangelists have been ignoring prophecies in general and these imminent prophecies in particular. Too many are trying to speculate in their imaginations. But God says, ‘My thoughts are not your thoughts’ (Isa. 55:8).

“We can’t work this out in our minds. We are face to face with a stern reality, not an imaginary fairy tale! There is only one way to learn the truth. That is to study carefully, cautiously, prayerfully, with an open mind yielded to and guided by the Holy Spirit, all the testimony of all the scriptures that bear on this question.”

Ibid., pp. 2-3

These are very strong words! And you have seen that this book diligently applies the formula in the final paragraph. Also, do not miss the reference to Laodicea, depicted as “careless, lukewarm, indifferent Christianity!” (Remember, traditional, orthodox Christianity is not lukewarm, but rather is *ice-cold*.) Is their fate what you want? I can only hope that Mr. Armstrong’s most graphic and powerful description stuns thousands reading it after so many years without review.

Since God’s final Work is foretold to be short, and even to be cut shorter—yet we have seen it will reach many, many millions—can you connect these facts to why this book has emphasized over and over not just the sheer *size* that this Work must attain, but why this must happen QUICKLY?

This introduces a crucial but overlooked element of that Plan.

“Evil Men and Seducers” Fulfill God’s Purpose

Another central part of God’s final test for His people in the “perilous last days” must be addressed (II Tim. 3:1). Let’s permit God’s Word to

present and explain it, because it has *not* been properly understood. This is another part of the chapter that will be unpleasant.

First, carefully read: “But evil men and seducers shall wax *worse and worse*, deceiving, and being deceived” (vs. 13). This is a sobering passage. It should be obvious that it does not invoke a “pretty” discussion. God inspired Paul to warn YOU that instead of things getting *better* after the apostasy, with faithful leaders resuming authority, leadership over most of God’s people instead grows *continually worse*. Do not add to or subtract from the verse. Accept what is written. It is not “evil men will grow worse and worse *until the apostasy, after which everything gets better.*”

This scripture says exactly what it means!

Some will wonder—and this is natural—why God would permit ever-worsening leaders to continue over most of His end-time flock. The questions take this form: Why were *all* false leaders—all “evil men and seducers”—not left behind in the apostasy? What possible *purpose* can be served by their remaining presence? Why did God not return faithful leaders to *all* His people?

It is crucial you understand this ongoing test. If not, you will have no rest—and will continue to lose your way as events play out.

Separation Continues

Recall again that this and other books to the splinters have explained God’s “two-step” process during the apostasy. First, all with God’s Spirit were forced to flee the Worldwide Church of God to survive. Second, all who desire both the unabridged truth and to do God’s *true* Work—and to keep His Spirit!—must take the more difficult second step of leaving behind all forms of compromise found in the splinters as they return to the one true Church and Body of Christ under God’s government. While this description of the process is brief, it suffices for the point here.

Let’s comprehend what is at work. It was relatively easy to leave the WCG for a new organization with hundreds or thousands at one’s side. (While not the case with everyone, this scenario was true of most.) When seen in its full light, this was very little test at all compared to the next one—THE SECOND STEP!—being unwilling to compromise *anything* once taught and proven, and to locate the organization that does not. Special, awesome understanding was given to Philadelphia (Rev. 3:11). God had to be sure that His people loved EVERYTHING they had once understood to be the “hid treasure” of which Jesus spoke. This meant that a very rigorous test had to be devised by God to prove them.

Only this would separate the truly *serious* from the mere *interested*!

Return to II Timothy 3. The very next verse in the context tells you *how* to RESIST the evil leaders of today: “But CONTINUE YOU *in the things* which you have *learned* and have been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them” (vs. 14).

This is a plain statement about DOCTRINES and TRADITIONS taught in the past. It also tells you—think carefully about the context here!—*in what way* God sees these men as evil. Verse 14 is also the *solution* to the “evil men” problem, leaders who do *not* teach “the things which you have learned and have been assured of.”

I did not write this passage, and neither did you or any man. God did. These verses are juxtaposed in context as they are because that is exactly what God intended. Get this straight before continuing!

Why does God give such a strong admonition if He is not *serious* about what God’s people face? Now think again. The leaders whom Paul describes are “evil men,” plain and simple! Establish in your mind that it is GOD, not Paul or I, who calls those who are now prowling—stalking!—*through* the splinters today “EVIL MEN.”

This is *God’s* term presented TO YOU. Will you receive it?

The word that God chose to describe these false leaders—“evil”—is *poneros*. Its unusually descriptive meaning should hit with the force and shock of a lightning bolt. It is: “Hurtful, calamitous, culpable, derelict, degenerate, vicious, malicious, wicked, grievous, of the devil.”

Could God have chosen a stronger, more potent word? If so, what would it be? (And yet you will learn that there is another crucial and equally bad aspect of God’s description of them to be examined later.)

These wolves are not *circling outside* the big organizations—the WORST ones are *leading* them! The same is true of the slivers. Led by a different spirit, these men have brought a different Jesus who comes as part of, and with, a different gospel and with many other different doctrines—and a very DIFFERENT WORK, falsely labeled the “Work of God”!

Again, *why* are these men permitted to remain in their positions? God foresaw there had to be impediments that His people must be willing to overcome in their pursuit of *His* doctrines and *His* Work! Such men provide plenty of impediment—plenty of test. But let’s see more.

Hindering the Work

We can add another frame of reference about these men before continuing. Near the end of his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul wrote about “wicked men.” Notice: “Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the

word [or work] of the Lord may have free course [Grk: run or speed on]...and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and *wicked* men: for all men have not faith” (3:1-2).

This is an extraordinary passage. It contains more than meets the eye. The word translated “wicked” here is also *poneros*. But this time, those it is used to describe were able to impede the Work being carried out by Paul. How serious was this? These servants of Satan were so harassing God’s servant, and therefore His Work, that Paul had to ask the brethren to pray for his deliverance.

Think! Men so evil that God must supernaturally intervene and *deliver* His Church, His Work and His chosen leader at that time. Because there is nothing new under the sun, it is the same today. I ask God’s people to do the same for me as *I*, and God’s Church and Work today, are slandered by men more evil and cunning than most could imagine.

But more remains to be understood.

Also Coming “One by One”

Realize that wrong BELIEFS have not been the only problem in the lives of many today. Wrong CONDUCT—compromising how Christians are to *live*—is at least an equal problem. Today, thousands of lives have come to be in almost complete spiritual disarray—doctrines *and* conduct are both being compromised. As Mr. Armstrong stated, many *have* become “careless, lukewarm, indifferent.” And few are hearing sermons about this, certainly not *strong* ones.

(“*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” explains this spiritual breakdown in most brethren’s lives in much greater detail. Also, *SHOULD ACCUSERS BE ANSWERED?* and *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* cover other parts of the process.)

Christ is today knocking on individual doors and gathering all those of His flock willing to receive and listen to Him. Similar to Israel later, the Church is *now—before* the time of Jacob’s trouble—also being gathered “one by one.” Christ, the Great Shepherd, is the ultimate “hunter” and “fisher”—recall Jer. 16:16—seeking out His people no matter the group or organization in which they reside.

But time is waning.

The living Christ’s goal: One after another among God’s Spirit-led Israel being willing to break off all compromise NOW—in doctrine and conduct—and to come out of *captivity* within the splinters. Today, many of God’s people *are* being held in very real SPIRITUAL CAPTIVITY. This is because false leaders have been able to effectively confuse and spiritu-

ally bind thousands through means of relentless—virtually nonstop!—deceit and outright lies against God’s Truth, Church, Government, Work and Plan today. This centers around endless falsehoods about me. But those who visit our Headquarters are eyewitnesses to the truth.

A Different Captivity

Paul wrote about how some who, when shown the truth of their actions, will not repent. This takes them into “the snare of the devil,” meaning they have been “taken *captive* by him [to do] his will” (II Tim. 2:26). (This is the passage just *before* the opening chapter 3 warning that “in *the last days* perilous times shall come.” Recall that verse 1 sets the stage and introduces the worsening “evil men and seducers” of verse 13.)

Understand. At some point in their course, various senior ministers simply gave over to the unbridled pursuit of power over God’s people, a power not assigned to them by God. In their lust for the preeminence of high office and influence over as many brethren as they could garner for themselves, they ignored all the “caution signals” and ran every “stop sign” and “red light” in the road before them.

Captured, they now do Satan’s will—while continuing to *appear* as “angels of light” (II Cor. 11:13-15)!

Remember—and never permit yourself to forget!—that the devil is also doing a “work.” Paul recorded that his spirit “*works* in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2). See this! In one sense, Satan is no different from God. His “work” also involves a *master plan*: Thwart *God’s* Master Plan by having every true Christian fail the test!

The PLAIN PICTURE here is that certain leaders today have literally been taken captive by Satan the devil. (Of course, so have many of their followers.) These are not my words, but rather what your Bible tells you—if you are listening. In turn, this means that God’s people are then, in effect, captives of those who are themselves *Satan’s captives*—the splinter leaders and other ministers!

Grasp what I am saying—understand precisely how this applies, because these are not difficult dots to connect. God’s people in the splinters are in SLAVERY TO LIES! This involves deception about God’s doctrines—of course, some doctrines involve *behavior*—as well as about Christ’s Church, Work and Government. Do not diminish the incredible importance of what is happening, and that this form of enslavement also includes its own false god—“another Jesus.” You have seen that this different Jesus also has a different “father” (John 8:44), with other doctrines and priorities!

But the captivity of God's people is different—it is not *forced*, as with Israel—it has been enslavement BY CHOICE!

Carefully Prepared in Advance

Let's return to what is seen to be the SECOND WAVE of “worse and worse” false leaders—again, God's words, not mine. I repeat: These provide much of the FINAL GREAT TEST upon God's now scattered people. Let's learn still more.

Some of the men leading the splinters have been carefully prepared for their role in God's test over a long period. As with Pharaoh, to aid His purpose, God Himself may have played a role in hardening some of the hearts of *Satan's agents* at work today. Judas, the Beast and the False Prophet, among others, are examples of where God has chosen a person for evil within His great overall purpose. However, in the end, whether some leaders today were sown into the field by Satan early on (Matt. 13:25) or prepared by God for their current role is irrelevant. Whether these men were once faithful, or ministerial tares from the beginning, the net effect is the same. They are “grievous wolves” having arisen “speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:29-30).

But how did these men get to the positions of authority that they hold? It is no accident. Under close examination, these leaders are seen to carry an unusual ability, one that the average leader or minister simply does not have.

How They Get Away With It

Paul's foretelling of “evil men” at work among God's people in the last days carries a second crucial element of warning not yet addressed. Do not miss what is really *additional instruction* to those who are paying close attention! Modern false leaders are also described as “seducers.” This means their techniques are clever, cunning, hypnotic—*seductive*! God's Church is described as a woman (Rev. 12), and these men fulfill the slippery “way of a man with a maid” (Prov. 30:19) with their persuasive power. The arguments and human reasoning they present when changing doctrine or dismissing plain teachings of Mr. Armstrong are usually—at least *on the surface*—plausible and reasonable. Their “theology” and occasional references to their view of the “history” of any specific doctrine under review, particularly when describing what Mr. Armstrong thought or believed, often “seem right” (Prov. 14:12; 16:25) to the casual reader who is unwilling to “prosecute” their thinking.

The meaning of the Greek word translated as “seducers” primarily references *imposters*, and the New King James Version uses this. But this word also carries the much stronger, explicit and more sinister connotation of a “wizard” able to “cast a spell” on listeners. Obviously, God has chosen another very powerful word! He expects His servants to take note that He has.

Everyone is familiar with the growing number of popular televangelists and religious personalities of today. The ones with the highest profile within “Christianity” are invariably those who are the smoothest in style, tone, emphasis, body language and word choice. These men come off as sincere and believable. The result is that vast thousands often sit in stadiums mesmerized by these religious “actors.” In fact, some of these men could win an Academy Award if they *were* actors. Yet, and this is no overstatement, many of them could not begin to compete with, or “carry the water” of, the even better actors at work with audiences in the splinters.

I ask: With all the warnings in God’s Word about false leaders, why do so many among God’s people seem perfectly content to accept without question what they are hearing? Yes, why?

Do not miscalculate regarding what is occurring around you! These men are extremely good at what they do, having had years, even *decades*, to hone their lethal craft. Many of them *are* virtually “wizards with words” who seemingly *can* “cast a spell” on their unthinking members. In fact, the incredible deceit of some of these men almost defies description. I have heard their sermons and read their articles, and found myself thinking that Diotrephes himself could learn from some of them (III John 9-10).

Upping the Ante

Another problem enters here. Certain ones of these leaders so hate parts of God’s truth and Work, and the light that I am shining on their false teachings and leadership, they are now willing to openly predict that God will put me to death, but only after great “sorrow, bitterness and suffering,” as at least three separate leaders have declared. This is because of the principles and facts covered in books such as these. They fear the wrong kind of exposure.

Satan’s purpose is to frighten people away from God’s Work!

These declarations represent a shocking development, something not seen before in the splinters and slivers. But they are a trend I foresaw in early 2000 that had to come. With the above kind of awful prediction, confusion and deception has descended to a new and different level. When some can compare my actions in *upholding* the truth to those of

Mr. Armstrong's apostate successor—and this *is* occurring—a new threshold has been reached! To declare me to be like this man, asserting “both appointed themselves apostles,” is to miss a towering difference: I seek to *return* God's people TO the truth, the other man and his cohorts sought to *take* them FROM the truth!

Most remarkable is that the great majority of the thousands hearing such men seem to believe them. So many have become completely incapable of discerning even the most basic “good and evil” (Heb. 5:13-14).

Pass the Test!

You must see that some of today's leaders are able to spin events and present confusing disinformation and outright lies faster than snowflakes fly in a blizzard and bullets leave a machine gun. You must be able to *discern these men*. This can only be done by measuring their teachings—and sometimes their *conduct!*—meaning their fruits—against the doctrines you were taught, not by the eloquence of their venomous attacks on God's Church, me or the Work done here. Only those who deeply love *all* of God's Way will be able to cut through the wonderfully cunning and murderous deceit from these ENEMIES OF GOD, and survive.

Desperate people say and do desperate things. When leaders feel that their empire, their following, their legacy and their source of financial support is being threatened—that it could begin to implode and crumble without action—they lash out. This can come with a fury that would make the devil blush!

But the wise will carefully weigh their words—and take action themselves (Dan. 12:10; Matt. 24:15). They will discern and REJECT murderous liars. In the end, you will either give heed to the voice of truth or to the voice of deceit. Do not permit yourself to see your decision as more or less than this. You have been shown the difference and by now should see it clearly.

Brethren, you must *pass* the test—GOD'S TEST!—of these SATANIC LEADERS in the overlooked *second step* you now face. II Timothy 3:14 told you how to do this!

The Courageous Few

Grasp that it will only be by the departure from spiritual captivity of enough courageous brethren *now* that will ensure the existence of a surviving Israelite Remnant who will be liberated from their prophesied

horrible captivity *later*. These are willing to *now* cut through the avalanche of seductive deceit burying so many today so that they can come and put their shoulder to the wheel in God's Work.

This means many more must yet come *spiritually* weeping and loathing themselves, and supplicating and seeking God, while He is still accepting them. This will involve deep repentance, as these anoint their eyes through use of more of God's Spirit, thus obeying John 14:26.

It has been said that the "road to hell is paved with good intentions." *Indecision* must not be permitted to trump good intentions, and pave the road to the Tribulation. Those who will come must neither dawdle nor procrastinate in an age foretold to suddenly snare an unsuspecting world.

Do not dilly-dally!

Re-accepting the Same Commission

Nothing you have read throughout the book has been new truth. Instead it is just more *forgotten* truth for thousands who should have resisted amnesia by remaining filled with God's Spirit. But for many others, like their Israelite counterparts born or becoming adults *after* Mr. Armstrong's time, they have *never* heard explained—made PLAIN!—exactly what is at stake for either today's descendants of Israel or the lukewarm dominant element now among God's people. Thousands entered the Church and heard a generation of pastors who never preached, or *carefully* preached, these things. Therefore, I have tried to speak as bluntly as possible. I have tried to use a "jolt" to awaken all who will heed.

We must pause for a related question: Who else is even talking about all that you have seen presented? Who else preaches these subjects, giving many—or *any!*—whole sermons on them? You have seen enormous, towering prophecies open up—with two more to come—and seen that they are found all through the Old Testament prophets. (There are many more passages than those I have quoted.) You have also seen that the fulfillment of these prophecies is IMMINENT, and that they will affect *all nations*—the ENTIRE WORLD! Why then does no one speak with authority about them—and, most important, their direct connection to the final Work of God at the end of the age?

The time is soon coming when all of God's people, the Church of the New Testament and Israel of the Old, will have to remember where they heard these truths explained—where God's Church and government—and the *true* Jesus Christ!—was at work all along. They will have

to acknowledge who it was who explained to them what was at stake in the years just ahead.

Will you have to *remember* THEN—or will you *heed* NOW?

Regaining a Sense of Urgency

People of the modern age take pride in not showing emotion as past generations once did. There has become a conscious effort in society by people to suppress natural human feelings. The emphasis is now more on being “laid back,” “cool,” “hanging out” or “chilling out.” Gone is an emphasis on being deeply passionate about a matter. And almost gone are statements such as “he has fire in the belly” or “he is on fire” or, as was often reported in the past, “he is on fire *for the Work!*”

Now ask: How did you feel after reading about the prophecies of the two previous chapters? Did you experience an overwhelming feeling of excitement? Did the picture described give you goose bumps?—chills? Did it leave you deeply sobered? But are you also *inspired* by God’s Master Plan? Most important, does this knowledge make you want to *participate*?—to DO something?

I am trying as hard as humanly possible with God’s help to rekindle the fire of urgency once felt by God’s people. I am trying to STIR YOU UP!—LIFT YOU!—to see a grander horizon, one connected to why you were called into the Church, and to WHY YOU WERE BORN!

Let’s allow Mr. Armstrong to describe this urgency by revisiting an earlier quote from him about the famine of the Word:

“...brethren and co-workers, the prophesied Great Tribulation (nuclear World War III) will start soon after the European unification. That means OUR WORK OF SPREADING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE FINISHED! We have not now much more time. Soon shall come a FAMINE of hearing the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11).

“God says, work while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work—in the Work of God!

“Nothing else is important in our lives, now, but this all-important Work of God.”

Co-Worker Letter, Nov. 22, 1982

Hear the message. Feel the passion. Catch God’s vision. Return to your first love. Regain the sense of urgency lost by society and the majority of brethren who have been so badly affected by society’s envi-

ronmental “sea change” in approach to inspiration, zeal and feelings of excitement. Ask God to help you rekindle what has been lost. Meditate on the knowledge you have received. Use the forgotten tool of fasting, and do so more than once, if necessary. And be willing to restudy this book with all referenced sermons.

You can once again thrill to exciting news of God’s Work!

Open Door, Then Slammed Shut

We know some will seek to hinder God’s Work—this has already happened. But nothing will be able to stop the final message going out until the open door God has given His Work is shut, and the *famine of the Word* slams into the nations of Israel. This will come because the task—the God-ordained duty—has been completed. God’s Work *will* be FINISHED! The time will have come when no one else will listen and further warning becomes a waste of time. When this happens, God can no longer be found, having “withdrawn Himself from” Israel and “returned to His place.”

Next? Absolutely devastating national punishment must begin for HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS!

Similar to Israel, God calls Laodiceans the “REMNANT of her [the true Woman Church’s] seed” (Rev. 12:17). This term describes the brethren remaining *after* the juncture at which Philadelphia was taken to safety (vs. 16). You do *not* want to be in THIS remnant, because it has no survivors! And it will have been indecision and procrastination that sweeps so many of God’s people into the “fire” of Revelation 3:18! When this point comes, most brethren will have *permitted*—in fact, *caused!*—*themselves* to be out of time, sealing their fate. So tragic—and so unnecessary!

Next? The very worst kind of trial and chastisement must begin for THOUSANDS!

One More Great Prophecy!

All of this should have real meaning to you, and at this point you should at least be intrigued, if not already fascinated, excited and inspired by rediscovered knowledge. However, there is another forgotten, but supremely important, prophecy that only now comes into view. It powerfully amplifies all that you have seen.

We are finally ready to ask: What is the *connection* between the “short work” and the “little book” of Revelation 10? This question leads to the next chapter—and another subject that no one understands or talks about as did Mr. Armstrong...

THE “LITTLE BOOK”— AND “PROPHECY AGAIN”

You have learned that God’s final Work in this age involves a most SPECIAL COMMISSION. While outlined in one chapter of the book of Ezekiel, it is supported by many other passages in that book and elsewhere. But it is further supported by an unusual and seemingly mysterious prophecy that has also fallen into disuse and from memory.

Let’s learn more about what God expects from those carrying out the last Work remaining for His Church!

Extraordinary Letter—and the “Little Book”!

We are now prepared to examine Revelation 10 and the vital subject of the “little book” referenced there. The reader will want to read the entire chapter with an open Bible.

What will follow is centered around a very extensive series of statements from Mr. Armstrong, written to brethren and co-workers on November 19, 1976. This was perhaps one of the longest letters he ever wrote. Mr. Armstrong’s purpose was to carefully explain a *new truth* that had been revealed to him. It was no small matter!

This chapter is the next-to-last time in the book that you will hear from Mr. Armstrong. More than any other subject, the warning to Israel, coupled with taking the gospel to the world, defined Mr. Armstrong’s life. What you have read in the previous chapter, and what you will yet read in this chapter, literally impelled—in fact **DROVE!**—his existence

for 52 years. This will be evident. As you read, savor the clarity, power, passion and driving commitment with which Mr. Armstrong saw and carried out his commission.

Recognize that much more on this subject could have been included from other statements by Mr. Armstrong. While important, it is not practical to include even the entire letter we will review, so excerpts, sometimes extensive, will be presented. These are followed by my comments.

The Learning Process

The letter begins with Mr. Armstrong carefully teaching the brethren and co-workers about how the Church learned the truth, beginning with the correct gospel. This background sets up what he references in the letter's opening line, which begins, "It seems very possible God has once again revealed something NEW to us, and important."

You are about to learn just how important was this new understanding (all emphasis is his throughout):

"Actually the TRUTH—which has become the accepted and official teaching of this Church—started under most unusual conditions. This is GOD'S Church, and it, in this present era, rose up in this world whose God is (though the world is deceived into ignorance of it) Satan the Devil. It is like a sprout of GOOD wheat sprouting up among thorns, thistles, and briars.

"We are not 'just another Protestant church.' It is true that Baptists, fundamental Methodists, and other Protestant denominations, do teach some things as we do—but they have the branches and twigs of the tree—NOT ONE OF THEM has the real TRUNK of the tree—with its MAIN BRANCHES.

"In other words, not one of them knows what spiritual salvation really is, what the KINGDOM OF GOD (Christ's whole Gospel) really is, WHY God put humanity here on earth: WHAT is our real ultimate human POTENTIAL, or HOW we shall reach it. They know not God's PURPOSE, nor His MASTER PLAN for working it out. They do not know why we are here, where we are going, or THE WAY. Those are the BIG, MAIN branches of the tree of knowledge. They are the MISSING DIMENSION in knowledge."

The reader should at least note—recall this from early in the book—that the final paragraph here opened with Mr. Armstrong plainly stating the "KINGDOM OF GOD" (in all caps) was "Christ's *whole* Gospel."

Again, this is big proof that Mr. Armstrong never saw Jesus Himself as part of the gospel. Now continue:

“Jesus came over 1,900 years ago with a vital MESSAGE from God—but after 3 1/2 years of preaching it to hundreds of thousands, only 120 still BELIEVED WHAT HE SAID (Acts 1:15). I do BELIEVE what He says!”

This last quote is a stunning reality for those who will receive it. In fact, it is a perfect reflection of our time. Look back. Mr. Armstrong preached the kingdom of God and all of God’s other truths for *52 years*, not three and a half. We could ask, paralleling Jesus’ ministry—but 15 times longer—how many in the end truly believed the things Mr. Armstrong taught? In fact, how many will *return* to believe what he reveals in the remainder of this letter?

Mr. Armstrong’s Calling Recounted

The letter continues with a long review of Mr. Armstrong’s calling and conversion. In the middle of the story, he further establishes how the Church received *every* doctrine it came to accept and preach. (Tragically, almost the entire Church has forgotten that truth enters the Church *only* through apostles. This towering understanding is explained in *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* and other books to the splinters.)

This next segment ends reiterating the true gospel, and Mr. Armstrong’s commission to preach it:

“But God brought me through a process that ERASED former misknowledge—and, as it were, gave me a clear start from ‘scratch.’

“I wonder if you realize that every TRUTH of GOD, accepted as true DOCTRINE and BELIEF in the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD came from Christ through me, or was finally approved and made official through me.

“Forty-three years ago, God committed to me His GREAT COMMISSION—to carry Christ’s Gospel MESSAGE of the imminent coming KINGDOM OF GOD into all the world.

“Again I say that is a STAGGERING RESPONSIBILITY!”

Mr. Armstrong next jumps back into the storyline of his first contact with the “humble Church of God brethren” of Oregon. The following brief segment shows how even *God’s people* can get terribly mixed up

and confused about what is the true gospel. The reader would do well to recognize and accept the sobering danger of an *entire Church era*—Sardis!—falling into the deception of a FALSE GOSPEL—one other than the kingdom of God! Remember also in this regard that Christ described the Sardis era as “dead”:

“Those brethren I came among were humble, sincere, strict Sabbath keepers, but as a whole, spiritually DEAD—especially their ministers. Still there were some among them who had that first love of the TRUTH. But they did NOT proclaim Christ’s Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, nor even understand what it was. They were bent on preaching a ‘third angel’s message.’”

One Man at a Time

The next quote picks up with Mr. Armstrong reiterating how God always works through ONE MAN AT A TIME, with many others around him in positions of support. He also references how Christ chooses and trains those specially used of Him:

“The living Christ trained and chose me to carry out that staggering and tremendous GREAT COMMISSION.

“Brethren, NO MAN, of himself, could have decided to do this, and, on his own human ability and power alone, have RAISED up this WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD, have developed the facilities and machinery for BROADCASTING THAT ANNOUNCEMENT—by radio, printing press, television, personal preaching to THE WORLD. This WORK OF GOD has grown into a great, powerful WORLDWIDE and WORLD-KNOWN work.

“There is but one answer. No one can believe that I alone had the ability and the power to accomplish something that never before in the history of man has been done! GOD DID IT, though He used me as a human servant. NO MAN BY HUMAN ABILITY COULD HAVE ACHIEVED IT.

“Yet God always has worked through ONE MAN, surrounded by helpers.”

Learning Israel’s Identity, and Other Truths

The subject now changes briefly for the first time to the book of Revelation. Here is a short segment that includes a reference to Mr.

Armstrong coming to the pivotal understanding of the identity of the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” After all, coming to *this knowledge* is essential to being able to warn these “lost sheep.” It is interesting to read when Mr. Armstrong also came to understand the identity—the location—of where God’s true Church was through the ages, and how it appeared in seven successive eras. Most would be surprised that he learned this in the very first year of his calling, but this knowledge paved the way in his understanding to his role in Philadelphia:

“Early in my studies—1926-27—God opened my eyes to the fact that, while Revelation 2 and 3 covered the conditions in the WHOLE CHURCH from its beginning to Christ’s coming, these two chapters also represented successive ERAS, with a certain characteristic dominating each. WE are the Philadelphia era at the specific TIME when God is having to OPEN DOORS to nations where those doors have been CLOSED to Christ’s message.

“Another vital NEW TRUTH God revealed to me was our identification as the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matt. 10:6)—as distinguished from the Jews (see booklet, United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy). Another was the fact that ANGELS first inhabited this earth, prior to Adam. That the GOVERNMENT OF GOD was established on earth over them, and that they sinned (II Peter 2:4), rejected GOD’S GOVERNMENT, rebelled, and went their own way of DESTRUCTION AND DARKNESS, instead of God’s way of CONSTRUCTION and LIGHT.”

Returning to Ezekiel’s Book

The next segment, quite extensive, introduces and details Mr. Armstrong coming to learn about the extraordinary prophecies in the book of Ezekiel, and a sobering responsibility that he discovered. While this portion somewhat overlaps with what we have already studied, it is vital to get this straight in your mind in preparation for what Revelation 10 will reveal. Mr. Armstrong recognized this and included it.

Read very carefully:

“In those early days I was especially interested in the book of Ezekiel. A special reason was that I saw Ezekiel was first given God’s message in PROPHECY, while he was a Jewish slave, by the River Chebar in the land of Babylon. Now this was close to 120 years after the House of ISRAEL had been taken captive to ASSYRIA.

“My astonishment was aroused when I saw that his message was to be taken to the HOUSE OF ISRAEL. Now Ezekiel was a slave among the HOUSE OF JUDAH—not Israel. By this time many of the ‘lost sheep of the House of Israel’ had migrated north and west from Assyria. They were, by Ezekiel’s time, in Britain and Western Europe.

“The book of Ezekiel starts off in the first chapter with a rather weird description of his vision of the GLORY OF GOD.

“The first message, or instruction from God, comes, beginning the second chapter. “And He said unto me, son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation...[and they shall know] that there hath been a prophet among them” (Ezek. 2:3, 5—c/f Rev. 3:9).

“Now notice chapter three. In verses 8-10 of the second chapter, he had been given the message in a book—a roll, written on both sides—about which I will refer later. In chapter 3:1 God says, ‘...Eat THIS ROLL, and GO speak unto the House of Israel.’ Again in verse 4, ‘Son of man, GO, get thee unto the House of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.’

“NOWHERE in the Bible are JEWS called ‘the House of Israel.’ This term applies ONLY to the TEN-tribed Kingdom of Israel taken into Assyrian captivity more than a hundred years before Ezekiel and the Jews of the House of JUDAH were taken to Babylon.

“Nowhere in the book does Ezekiel record his journey from where he was in Babylon to those of the House of Israel who were then in Britain and Western Europe. Nowhere does he record his giving of the message to them. He merely RECEIVED the message. He merely RECORDED IT IN WRITING.

“There is no reason to think his message was ever delivered to the House of Israel in Ezekiel’s time. The message in fact is for today—and contained a WARNING of things to happen to Britain, America and the Western European nations NOW in OUR DAY.

“I saw clearly, back in those early days—and especially during World Wars I and II, that Ezekiel’s prophecy was a message to be taken by some MODERN TWENTIETH CENTURY servant of God—a ‘modern Ezekiel’ to America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

“I dwelt in hundreds of broadcasts on this book of Ezekiel and its WARNING of things IMMINENTLY NOW to HAPPEN TO Britain, the United States and Western Europe.

“Of course I always did, from the very beginning of this WORK OF GOD, proclaim the good news of the COMING KINGDOM OF GOD.”

Why the Apostles Emphasized Christ

Before Mr. Armstrong continues, he offers a final inset about the gospel of the kingdom into his subject line. Recall that in this letter, quoted in Chapter Four, the first paragraph of this segment explains the reason behind the apostles giving extra attention to the role of Christ. It is important repetition to recall from Chapter Five that Mr. Armstrong discussed how no one of that time would have been willing to believe the gospel message from Jesus if the listener did not understand WHO and WHAT He was. The apostles were forced to establish that Jesus Christ was in fact the prophesied Messiah, and this opened the door for their listeners to consider what He taught. I repeat: This is central understanding—do not let it elude you, as it has so many others.

Read carefully again from his November 19, 1976 letter:

“The original apostles proclaimed the KINGDOM OF GOD, but they also put very special emphasis on something that specially applied only to their time, right then. They were personal EYE WITNESSES to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In THEIR day, the chief opposition and persecution came from those Jewish leaders who rejected Christ as the promised Messiah.

“DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND. The Jews as a whole did not reject Christ. Indeed, virtually all His followers—the 120 that were WITH HIM and the apostles (Acts 1:15) from which the church started—all were Jews (or proselytes). The church BEGAN as almost 100% JEWISH. The Apostle Paul always went first to the Jews, and most of his churches started out as Jewish. The persecution was not so much from the rank and file of Jewish people, as from their Jewish RULERS, who held political jobs under the Roman government—the Pharisees—and also the scribes and Sadducees.”

Get this summary perfectly straight in your mind. The original apostles stressed the “death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ” as something merely to receive—Mr. Armstrong’s words—“very special emphasis...*only* to their time, right then.” Mr. Armstrong explains that this is because the twelve were “eyewitnesses” to these things, something that God’s servants of later ages could not claim. In addition, once Christ’s role as the Messiah was clearly established by so many who saw and worked with Him, there would be no need for this same emphasis in later periods. The Bible became the record of this.

To summarize again: How incredible that the splinter and sliver leaders today have almost with one voice been unwittingly swayed *by the apostates* to not only unnecessarily spend time and focus on Jesus' sacrifice and forgiveness, but to also cram this into the gospel where it does not belong, making it *their* gospel—and placing themselves and their unwitting followers into the crosshairs of the Galatians 1:6-9 CURSE!

Back to Ezekiel

The next-to-last segment that follows must be read as one long, single statement. Mr. Armstrong first references again the open doors before the Work of Philadelphia. Then he takes his readers back to Ezekiel, before walking them through a summary of the book of Revelation through chapter 9. It is important backdrop to chapter 10, so it cannot be broken or important setup is lost.

Now continue:

“But Christ said to His Philadelphia era Church, that because we have but little strength, He would OPEN THOSE DOORS TO US (Rev. 3:8).

“Now I want to take you back to Ezekiel and show you something I think VERY EXCITING and MOST IMPORTANT!

“God said to Ezekiel, ‘But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee...open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe’ (Ezek. 2:8-10).

“Continue: ‘Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and GO speak unto the house of Israel’ (Ezek. 3:1).

“Now let us turn to the book of Revelation.

“Chapter one gives the opening salutation and the introduction, giving the real SUBJECT of which the book is concerned. It is in verse 10: ‘I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.’

“In the opening salutation we find that it is NOT the revelation of John at all, but the revelation of Jesus Christ. He is the Revelator—who does the REVEALING of what otherwise is non-understandable. The Apostle John was merely the WRITER, who recorded (1) the WORD OF GOD, (2) the testimony—direct words of—Jesus Christ, and (3) all

the things that he SAW in VISION. In this vision, he was taken from the Isle of Patmos, where he actually was as he wrote, into THE DAY OF THE LORD—a special period of TIME here called the ‘LORD’S DAY.’

“The DAY OF THE LORD is the time when GOD supernaturally shall INTERVENE in this world’s affairs, the beginning of His TAKING OVER all its governments, societies, production, commerce. We have had 6,000 years of the DAY OF MAN. Now we shall soon have 1,000 years of the DAY OF GOD.

“Chapters 2 and 3 are messages direct from Jesus, in heaven, sent to the angels (which, some believe means to the chief human leaders of the SEVEN CHURCHES). Chapter 4 describes a vision of God’s Throne in heaven. Chapter 5 shows God on His Throne, with a BOOK in His right hand—again, a SCROLL, written on both sides, and rolled up and SEALED with SEVEN SEALS. No one in heaven or earth was able to open the seals, and REVEAL what was therein written. Then appeared one as a slain, resurrected Lamb, standing in front of the throne, and HE alone was worthy to open the seals and REVEAL the meaning of the book. He stepped forward and took the book from the right hand of God.

“The sixth chapter shows the opening of the first SIX of the seals. The seven seals cover the ENTIRE BOOK. The sixth seal, in time sequence, brings us down to the DAY OF THE LORD, with terrifying SIGNS in the sun, moon and stars.

“The seventh chapter begins with four angels poised to let go the blowing of the first four TRUMPETS of the seven TRUMPET PLAGUES, which are, and constitute (that is, all seven trumpet plagues) the seventh SEAL.

“Then another angel appears crying out to the four angels to HOLD UP the blowing of these trumpet plagues UNTIL the servants of God are sealed.

“So here is one example of where God deliberately held up world conditions, and His own intervention UNTIL something important to HIM was accomplished. In this case it was the sealing of the 144,000. And also the other great numberless MULTITUDE of all nations. They have all come through (this numberless multitude) the GREAT TRIBULATION, which was symbolized by the fifth seal.

“The seventh seal is not opened until the beginning of the 8th chapter. The first trumpet plague blew upon the EARTH, the second on the seas, the third plague was upon the rivers and lakes, and the fourth upon the sun, moon and stars.

“This left three more plagues, called WOES. The seventh trumpet—the last—will be the seven LAST PLAGUES, at the very TIME of Christ’s coming to earth to RULE all nations.

“The 9th chapter carries the events into the first and second WOES (or the fifth and sixth trumpet plagues).”

The “Little Book”

The focus of the letter now changes dramatically to the all-important subject of Mr. Armstrong’s letter—Revelation 10 and the obvious parallel between the “little book” it describes and the book of Ezekiel. Read most carefully what Mr. Armstrong explains about this connection, and the *timing* of its fulfillment within the *overall timeline* of the events of the book of Revelation. Note Mr. Armstrong’s acknowledgment about having to recognize that time was going to go on past 1972, significantly longer than he had previously thought. The quote is extensive, and this is again because it is best not to break Mr. Armstrong’s thought:

“But we now come to an INSET chapter, as I have called certain ones, such as the 13th and 17th chapters—in a sense, ‘flashback’ chapters, to bring up-to-date earlier events. The seventh trumpet or THIRD WOE is not opened until chapter 11, verse 15.

“Now notice this tenth chapter—an inset chapter, not necessarily at all occurring at the TIME sequence of the end of the ninth chapter. The actual recording of EVENTS, TIME-WISE, is not continued until chapter 11, verse 15.

“This chapter 10 has been virtually OVERLOOKED. I did not comment on it in the earlier days, or expound it when I wrote the OUTLINE of the book of Revelation, or the full booklet on the revelation. There was NO WAY it could have been understood then—until after subsequent events—just as we could not have understood how Satan sways the entire WORLD, as explained in Eph. 2:1-2, until we had radio and television.” [Author’s note: The point Mr. Armstrong makes about the fulfillment of certain events paving the way to and permitting understanding of “subsequent events” is of absolutely crucial importance in regard to what follows. In fact, when understood, this principle is seen to be the very reason the identity of the 144,000 and other unfolding prophesied events could not be understood until our time. (Chapter Fourteen has another.) This principle will momentarily come into play as the focus of this chapter.]

“A MIGHTY ANGEL comes down from heaven, his face as the SUN, his feet as pillars of fire. His voice was as the roar of a lion. He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth.

“He had a LITTLE BOOK open.

“This mighty angel in the second half of this inset prophecy, beginning verse 6, swears by the Eternal GOD there shall be ‘time no longer’ (A.V.—marginal translation—‘no more delay’). But the angel continues, ‘But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, (7th trumpet—which shall be the 7 last plagues—and which also is the PRECISE TIME of Christ’s coming as KING over the earth)—*when He shall* begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished...’ (verses 6-7).

“I italicized ‘when He shall’ referring to the sounding of the last and FINAL trumpet, to show that the time setting of this brief two-part inset prophecy is NOT AT OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER the 6th trumpet (of chapter 9)—but SOME TIME PRIOR TO IT! Therefore, in time setting, this is a flashback. Now continue:

“The Apostle John in his vision is told to take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel, and eat it up.

“HOW LIKE EZEKIEL’S PROPHECY!

“It was sweet as honey in his mouth but BITTER in his stomach.

“The message of the little book seems to be what the angel next said, ‘Thou must prophesy [proclaim-preach-foretell] again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues and KINGS!’ [Author’s note: Take careful note of Mr. Armstrong’s bracketed section, and the central phrase “prophesy again” of which he is speaking. This adds important meaning to these two words.]

“Now WHEN?

“The message of the little book written on both sides of a roll, to be eaten and swallowed, takes us directly back to Ezekiel’s prophecy. Ezekiel himself, as I have shown, NEVER WENT TO ISRAEL, NEVER DELIVERED THAT MESSAGE. It was not a prophecy for the Israel of his day—but for OUR DAY, NOW. Ezekiel’s prophecy was NOT a message to MANY NATIONS, speaking different languages, and to their KINGS. It was to the REBELLIOUS PEOPLE of the House of Israel and it was emphasized to Ezekiel they were NOT of strange speech—NOT foreign Gentile nations.

“This WORK OF GOD did carry that message to those same people in OUR DAY, prior to January, 1972.

“I felt I had reason to believe it was POSSIBLE that OUR WORK would be FINISHED by January, 1972. I wrote and printed that many

times. But I also said I WAS NOT SETTING DATES—it was not CERTAIN! It was a possibility.

“But being HUMAN, many of those supporting me in this Work did take it as a definite date. Up until then they sacrificed to send in tithes and offerings for God’s WORK. When the Work did NOT end in January, 1972, some FOOLISHLY said, ‘Now I’m through going without things I’d like to have—my Lord delayeth His coming!’ Read what God says of those who say and do that!

“Now WHEN is the TIME of this prophecy in Revelation?

“Read right on. Chapter 11 is merely a chapter division written by MEN. But John’s book of Revelation continues right on. The apostle, in his vision, is told now by this same angel to rise and MEASURE THE TEMPLE. But LEAVE OUT the court which is for the Gentiles, for they shall tread down the Holy City for 3 1/2 years. So the TIME of our prophecy is at least 3 1/2 YEARS before Christ’s coming—before THE GREAT TRIBULATION, before the beginning of the DAY OF THE LORD and before the seventh angel blows the last trumpet! Then it continues on into the message of the TWO WITNESSES—also referred to and perhaps identified in Haggai and Zechariah. And THEY SHALL PREACH A LAST WARNING TO THE WHOLE WORLD FOR 3 1/2 YEARS!

“And it is not until after ALL THIS, that the time element picks back up with the sounding of the 7th trumpet in chapter 11:15.

“Therefore, MY CONCLUSION?

“Could it be possible, after proclaiming the Gospel of THE KINGDOM OF GOD, as well as Ezekiel’s warning to the people of Israel, that, beginning January, 1972, when my PRESENT CAMPAIGN of walking through the doors God said He would open (Rev. 3:8) to KINGS, and many NATIONS of DIFFERENT LANGUAGES commenced, that it is the FULFILLMENT OF THIS PROPHECY OF REVELATION 10?

“To me it comes as a STARTLING, AMAZING EYE-OPENING NEW LIGHT DIRECT FROM GOD!

“THAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PHASE OF GOD’S WORK TODAY!

“And THE JOB IS GETTING DONE!”

Immediate Conclusions

We must now draw careful conclusions from what Mr. Armstrong explained in this final segment. Comprehending the *overall message* is nothing less than ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL TO YOUR FUTURE! These conclu-

sions have everything to do with where and what is the Work of God for the remainder of the age.

First, recognize that Revelation 10:11 uses the unusual term “prophesy again.” It is clear from what you have read that Mr. Armstrong believed he fulfilled this passage when he went as before—a second time, the period after 1972—to “peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings” with the Ezekiel Warning. He grew even stronger in this conviction during the year following this letter, because this was the year of his heart attack (1977). He knew God had brought him back to put the Church back on track and he believed at that time to finish God’s Work for this age.

Return and reread the paragraph beginning, “Read right on. Chapter 11 is...” Mr. Armstrong refers to the work of the Two Witnesses beginning on the heels of the fulfillment of *prophesying again*. This is crucial because he makes clear that preaching the message of the “little book” was to continue right to the time these two servants of Revelation 11 would take the baton for their commission (right after the Temple is measured).

There was to be *no delay* after prophesying again was complete!

Mr. Armstrong died in January 1986, over 25 years ago. There is no possible way that the long gap in time following his death could permit him to have been both the one who took the Ezekiel Warning to the nations of Israel, *and* the one who did the same thing *again*, later.

Why?

His ministry did not pass the baton directly to the Two Witnesses!

On the one hand, Mr. Armstrong could not possibly have known of all that would happen after his death. On the other, he clearly *did* understand that “the greatest Work lies yet ahead.” At least in part, and maybe in whole, this is because he recognized—and had no doubt *always* recognized—that the fulfillment of Revelation 10:11 *immediately* preceded the Work of the Two Witnesses (who were nowhere in sight in the mid-80s).

Pause and ponder what you have read. Do not let it escape you before proceeding!

No Interval—No Gap in Time!

To remove all doubt about how Mr. Armstrong saw this prophetic timing—that there was to be *no interval* between “prophesy again” and the Two Witnesses appearance—let’s fast-forward to January 20, 1981 and what he wrote in this later Brethren/Co-Worker letter. Mr. Armstrong

wrote a number of times about this subject (I have reviewed letters for nearly every year thereafter into the 1980s), because it was on his mind from 1976 forward. However, the following quote speaks specifically of the timing, the precise *when*, of “prophesy again,” and whether Mr. Armstrong believed many years could separate this fulfillment from the Two Witnesses’ appearance.

Particularly focus on the second paragraph (*italics mine*):

“But there is an important prophecy in the tenth chapter of Revelation. The apostle John is recording what he saw revealed in a vision. An angel came with his hand lifted to heaven saying, There should be time no longer—or, better translated, There shall be no more delay. Then a voice from heaven told John to take and open a very small book in the hand of the angel, and eat it. In his mouth it was sweet as honey, but in his stomach very bitter. Then the voice said to John, God’s apostle, Thou must prophesy (preach or announce) again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, AND KINGS.

“Now what is the TIME setting of this prophecy It is sometime PRIOR to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, at which time Christ shall come. That is clear in verse 7. Also it is *followed immediately* by the three and a half year mission of the two witnesses. Their three and a half years BEGIN with the Great Tribulation. So the TIME of this prophecy is just shortly before the Work of the Philadelphia Church is finished. After that shall come the Great Tribulation, and the Day of the Lord, when there shall be supernatural disturbances striking the world with astonishing AWE in the sky.”

Remember, Mr. Armstrong explained previously that certain events must be fulfilled before “subsequent events” can be understood. He did not—and could not possibly—have realized that a complete falling away from everything he taught would occur by the hand of successors who would betray him on a breathtaking level. Nor could he have imagined the splintering of people into so many organizations teaching so many differing doctrines, and combinations of doctrines—never mind could he have envisioned that three-quarters or more of the WCG membership would fall away altogether!

For those who say I am changing what Mr. Armstrong taught regarding “prophesy again,” the only response is that it is not possible to agree with him on two opposing points. Much as we might like to—this is not possible. Either he was correct in saying that he fulfilled warning the nations of Israel for both the first time and then “again” later, but was

wrong about how quickly the Two Witnesses would appear—or he was wrong about himself fulfilling “prophecy again,” and right about the fact that the Two Witnesses would follow *immediately* on the heels of the Revelation 10:11 fulfillment when it *did* occur!

Both cannot be correct!

Can You See?

Can you see this? Can you also connect the problem to why “subsequent events” could only be understood, or *fully* understood, *after* the death of Mr. Armstrong?—and *after* the apostasy that followed? Can you see why the fulfillment of “prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings” *may* have been in Mr. Armstrong’s thinking when he said, six days before his death, that “the greatest Work lies ahead”? Can you see that he would have realized—and this would have been obvious—that the Two Witnesses were not remotely on the scene, and neither was the Tribulation? Can you see that if his thinking was so continually focused on the fulfillment of “prophecy again,” he would have had to be *looking forward* in his thinking as he informed the Church of what must still “lie ahead”? And can you also see that Revelation chapters 10 and 11 *are* obviously ONE CONTINUOUS THOUGHT, only broken by men dividing the Bible into chapters? (We will come to “measure the Temple.”)

Finally, can you see God would have had to begin at some point to train and raise up *another servant*—in preparation for *another Work*—a final short Work—to not only fulfill Revelation 10:11, but also to *re-introduce this prophecy* and *explain it a second time* to God’s people in light of “subsequent events” following Mr. Armstrong’s death? Can you see that the survivors of the apostasy would have to decide whether they would participate in support AGAIN in reaching and warning Israel—or not?

The answer to all these questions should be obvious to every objective reader.

Let me state emphatically for all who will hear. I tell you with Christ’s authority that The Restored Church of God is preaching *again*—the SECOND TIME!—the warning to the nations of Israel (Isa. 58:1) and the announcement of the kingdom of God to all nations of the world (Matt. 24:14). I state with the same authority that we *and we alone* represent the “short Work” foretold by Paul in Romans 9! Further, this Work will continue and grow right up to the appearance of the Two Witnesses, when two prophets will arise from *this Church* to carry out their commission!

The latter chapters will describe more about why the Work you have come in contact with will become so large that it will literally bend the imagination of God's people and countless millions more. This chapter and the previous ones have introduced prophecies that, when they come to the full, will truly shock the world's consciousness. Most have simply not understood the awesome magnitude of what God has always had in mind as the final Work for His Church before the arrival of the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord!

Some will comprehend, others will not!

(You may wish to listen to my detailed sermon titled "Prophecy Again—Then Famine of the Word." This sermon is number 21 in the *Prophetic Sequence Series* found on rcg.org. It is one of the most fascinating sermon subjects you could study. When complete, this series will probably be 60 or more sermons.)

More About Duality

The commission to "prophecy again" involves the biblical principle of *duality*, already mentioned and explained. It was Mr. Armstrong who taught the Church this important principle in watching prophetic fulfillment. Yet, never have fulfilled prophecies demonstrated that the *same person* or *same event* in a prophecy fulfills both *types*—both parts of the duality.

Consider. There was the first Adam, but the second Adam was Christ (I Cor. 15:45). The first type of Elijah was John the Baptist, but the second was one who would come much later. The Old Covenant involved *physical* Israel—"the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38)—but the New Testament Church involves *spiritual* Israel. Abraham offered Isaac as a type of the Father later offering Christ, ancient Israel was liberated from Egypt, modern Israel from all nations, etc.

Ask yourself: When has one human being or one event foretold in Scripture *ever* been BOTH TYPES of its fulfillment? This has *never* happened—and this is why God had to raise up a final shorter Work to follow Mr. Armstrong's ground-breaking "Moses" Work. Further, God realized it would take time after the apostasy to gather all those who would anoint their eyes, refuse all compromise and rekindle a Philadelphian spirit—it would take time to gather the people whose hearts would *return* to the full truth and to the same kind of Commission Mr. Armstrong taught them for 52 years!

There should be no difficulty accepting that Mr. Armstrong would only *naturally* conclude that his recovery from heart failure was a kind

of “coming back” to the same Work to be done “again.” He simply could not have understood in 1977, still nine years before his death, all that would come after, and that “Jacob’s trouble” was still far in the future. Yet, by late 1985, his thinking having shifted, this latter realization was probably weighing on him.

A Final, Closer Look at Revelation 10:11

Remember that the fulfillment of Revelation 10:11 involves reaching *peoples, nations, tongues* and *kings*. Each of the Greek words from which those in italics are translated carry a message, one that is absolutely fascinating when these words are taken collectively—and one that backs up Mr. Armstrong’s understanding that the “little book” of Revelation 10 is the book of Ezekiel.

Let’s examine each word, noting some Chapter Eleven review.

The word for “prophesy” is *propheteuo*, pronounced prof-ate-yoo’-o, and it can mean “to foretell events, divine, speak under inspiration, exercise the prophetic office, prophesy.” Certainly, this part of the assignment is not difficult to grasp.

The word “again” has a straightforward, literal meaning. It is *palin*, pronounced pal’-in, and it means “anew, back, once more, furthermore, again.” There is no question that this understanding means the whole process must be started “anew” and that the ENTIRE COMMISSION must occur “again”—that a final servant and Work must go “back, once more.”

The next several words appear to present a description similar to that of the Great Multitude. But it will become evident that there are important differences. In fact, the first and greatest difference lies in the fact that the responsibility to prophesy again to “peoples,” “nations” and “tongues” is not qualified by use of the word *all* in front of these words, as we saw to be the case with the Great Multitude. In other words, it is clear that God had a narrower or more confined number of nations in mind when He inspired Revelation 10:11. This will soon be even more evident when we examine the words.

The word “people” in the Greek is, once again, *laos*. First, realize the meaning here must be different from nations and tongues. In fact, as we saw in Chapter Eleven, it means “a people, but involves one’s own populace.” This describes one element of people to whom the final watchman of Ezekiel was to be sent—to his own people, or what would be the tribe of Judah in the case of Ezekiel. But Ezekiel was never to be the actual watchman, and all of the tribes were to be warned by the men who would be. This sets up the next paragraph.

It becomes obvious then that the word “nations” must involve a different people. The Greek word here is also *ethnos* and, again, it means “a race, that is, a tribe; specifically a *foreign* (non-Jewish) one (usually by implication *pagan*).” The context means that the primary reference here is to the other—the non-Jewish—tribes (nations) of Israel. Recall what Mr. Armstrong stated about reaching the *other tribes*—the House of Israel. It is interesting how we saw earlier that the word also means “Gentile, heathen or nation.” In fact, Israel has truly become like the Gentile, heathen nations around her. (It certainly is possible, and maybe probable, however, that this reference somewhat speaks to the additional responsibility for God’s final servant and Work—the Philadelphia leader/Church before whom would still be an OPEN DOOR—to take the gospel to *all* nations—all “ethnos”—of the world, in the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14.)

The “tongues” of this passage also comes from the Greek word *glossa*. Again, it means “the tongue; by implication a language.” Of course, reaching all of the nations of Israel, as well as the entire world, would certainly involve being able to reach them in a language they can understand. No mystery here.

Finally, the word for “kings” is *basileus*, pronounced bas-il-yooce’, and the words *base*, *basic* and *basis* derive from it. It means “the notion of a foundation of power, a sovereign, a king.” In principle, kings means heads of state of any title or designation—kings, queens, presidents, prime ministers and chancellors, among others.

When taken together, these six words describe the things that Mr. Armstrong did—the categories of people he reached—with the Worldwide Church of God in support. He warned the nations of Israel and Judah, took the gospel to both Israelite and Gentile nations of the world, did so in a variety of man’s great languages, and he met with over one-third of the world’s heads of state of his time, again, Israelite and Gentile.

It is this pattern that becomes the one to be fulfilled again. It is no surprise then that the remainder of Philadelphia is demonstrating unprecedented momentum, unseen in the splinters, individually or collectively. Doors are being opened *again* in sudden and unexpected ways. In fact, rapidly unfolding events confirm in undeniable ways that doors to national leaders are also indeed opening a second time, as any number of heads of state (this was mentioned earlier) are now *known to be* reading *The Real Truth* magazine. We see their names on our mailing list. We can ask: How soon before there could be personal contact with certain leaders, this time more likely the final leaders of the nations constituting Israel?

The final chapters will discuss in greater detail fast-increasing momentum. Of course, some of this has already been mentioned. You

will want to read slowly, giving thought to what YOU will do in light of what The Restored Church of God is doing.

No Surprise

Satan is the master counterfeiter. He counterfeits every major and minor doctrine of the Bible. It should come as no surprise then that the devil would know he must create a counterfeit—a substitute thinking and approach—for what Mr. Armstrong taught about the little book being the book of Ezekiel.

Some years ago, Gerald Flurry wrote a small book called *Malachi's Message*. He stated in it that the little book was centered around Malachi, not Ezekiel, and that *his book* was in fact the “little book.” Incredibly, while claiming to most perfectly uphold Mr. Armstrong’s teachings, this man, in fact, threw out the correct biblical understanding of which book of the Bible is the little book, and replaced it with a silly, shallow counterfeit understanding from the wrong book of the Bible. More incredibly, thousands followed him, and still do. They seem completely oblivious to the fact that their leader has *rejected* what Mr. Armstrong taught about the special Ezekiel Warning and prophesying again.

The false leader of PCG has capitalized on Revelation 10, offering the ridiculous assertion that the verse 7 mention of the word “mystery” references Mr. Armstrong’s book *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* and involves bringing the “same prophecy again,” meaning taking this particular book to the “widest possible audience” again, within the framework of being God’s selection to “raise the ruins” of all that the apostates destroyed.

This man has probably done more than any other to blur and confuse the understanding you have received from this chapter. But perhaps more astonishingly, a much greater number of God’s people seem to have *no recollection whatsoever* of when or what Mr. Armstrong taught about the little book, or even that he taught *anything* about the meaning of either Revelation 10, generally, or verse 11 within it, specifically. This is but one more example of mass amnesia afflicting thousands!

These same thousands should be almost preoccupied with the fulfillment of a single Bible chapter (and verse) to which almost none seem to give a thought!

What “Comes With the Territory”

There is a good reason most people are not willing to participate in or even be associated with warnings. Warnings—delivering BAD NEWS!—bring

persecution, including condemnation and much worse, by all those who, we have seen, view exhortations, admonitions, rebukes, and warnings as “unloving.” In fact, in this age of never-ending “tolerance,” no matter how wrong or evil something may be, this describes the vast majority today. God’s Church *has* been terribly persecuted by former brethren and leaders, and increasingly by the world, and this is almost entirely because we are willing to do the “heavy lifting” that they will not. We ARE willing to deliver tough but necessary messages when others are not! Like Paul, we know persecution comes with the territory (II Tim. 3:12).

And we now know that it will grow *worse* before ESCAPE!

Some assert that any message preached to the world should “always be positive.” This is naïve to world conditions and ignores reality. More specifically, most leaders describe our Work as “negative.” This is because they are too cowardly to accept being unpopular—and too faithless to believe and obey God.

Of course, the gospel—meaning “GOOD NEWS”—*is* a wonderfully positive message. It *is* truly the good news of tomorrow beyond the bad news of today—and we thunder it in every nation!

But recognize that there is NOTHING positive about a warning—particularly the one involved here. No amount of spin can make it so. But, as with Paul, difficult “necessity is laid upon me” (I Cor. 9:16)—and all others in The Restored Church of God.

I, and they, will stand the test!

Future protection from what lies ahead cannot be separated from whether *you* will help shoulder the burden of responsibility with us—whether *you* will help do some of the heavy lifting *yourself*—and while there is still time! Those who *are* willing to “bear the heat of the day” doing their part in this formidable task, rather than staying in the “cool shade” of the splinters away from persecution, will experience the later “shade” of protection. Tragically, most will be forced to endure the hottest “fire” of all history (Rev. 3:18).

But this will have been by choice!

The Grand Pattern—Again!

Again, Satan counterfeits everything, with emphasis on those things that are most important. PCG, which claims to be “raising the ruins” of Mr. Armstrong’s ministry, is a much greater imposter/counterfeit than most realize. Wrong on many doctrines of major importance, unlike other splinters, they *claim* to be copying *all* that Mr. Armstrong accomplished in doing the Work.

In fact, The Restored Church of God *is* following what I have called “The Grand Pattern” of all the *other* things Mr. Armstrong’s 52-year ministry accomplished. We are not just *prophesying* again, but are following, in a host of ancillary areas, many *other* elements again of this extraordinary, God-inspired pattern—*other* aspects of the Church that made possible such an immense Work.

For instance, we have already achieved: an extensive field ministry, a college to train field ministers and additional Headquarters leaders, a wonderful summer camp (Summer Educational Program, or S.E.P.), a staggering amount of high quality literature, three four-color magazines, a program paralleling *The World Tomorrow* broadcast, publishing in multiple languages, publishing certain books in major bookstores, feast sites in every corner of the world, annual “Behind the Work” Feast films to keep all of God’s people inspired and on the same page, the same internal infrastructure of departments and divisions, the same pattern of progressive innovation regarding vehicles explored to do the Work, and so much more. All these things occurred in the past, so it is not surprising that they have reappeared in one form or another.

It is wrong to attribute this pattern to Mr. Armstrong, the man. These things were achieved because they were *God’s* pattern, merely revealed through His human leader. But the pattern was so powerful that it held tens of thousands in place who later evidenced they did not even have the Holy Spirit. It was so effective that it also kept in place what were almost all of the others who did have the Holy Spirit, but who later proved they were insufficiently convicted to avoid being seduced into rejection of both doctrinal truths and the pattern as a whole.

Think about this, then think about the following paragraph!

It would only be natural that Satan made certain his counterfeit was in place well before all of the above parallels could be achieved. This allowed greater numbers to be deceived into following an utterly false impostor. The devil could hardly permit otherwise.

So when you think of The Restored Church of God, you should think of much more than continuing the Work as the Church did it, but rather you should also be mindful of everything else that was accomplished within the twentieth-century forerunner of Revelation 10:11!

Continuing Unchanged

Before concluding, we must pause and ask again who else is talking about the things of this chapter? The answer is NO ONE! Yet, and I am

repeating from the end of an earlier chapter, you have now seen that this powerful connecting prophecy to the “short work” is inseparable from the Ezekiel Warning. You have also seen that the fulfillment of this profoundly important prophecy—the scattering of Israel, yielding a remnant—is IMMEDIATE, and why it will ultimately affect all nations—the entire world!

So then, one final time: Why does no one talk about these things—and their direct connection to the Work of God at the end of the age? And should you not at least ask why you are learning about them here, from The Restored Church of God?

By now you must surely realize that the Work of God is *not* finished—far from it!—and neither has it changed!—in fact, you have learned the reasons that it literally *cannot change* until everything done before is repeated—done ONCE MORE—AGAIN!

Grasp this! You have come in contact with the only Church and Work truly led by and used of God. I state again on Christ’s authority that The Restored Church of God will be the instrument through which Almighty God *repeats* the Work of the Worldwide Church of God under Mr. Herbert Armstrong—and will thus be the ONLY ORGANIZATION to finish the *true* Work of God, prior to the Two Witnesses.

Will you be part of it? Your answer connects to a bigger issue...

“MEASURE THE TEMPLE”

Many have assumed the commission to prophesy again *immediately* precedes the work of the Two Witnesses, described just shortly after the first portion of Revelation 11. This is, in fact, *almost* true—but not quite. These same people have thought that the Church’s flight to safety also happens *immediately* at this point. This is *almost* true—but again, not quite. An incredible ongoing process culminating in a single final event *parallels* the whole period of prophesying again. It involves *another* specific and entirely different responsibility.

There is a profoundly important prophecy that culminates just after the short work ends, and just before the commission of the final two prophets in this age begins. This prophecy is so important that it requires that this be the book’s longest chapter. In fact, it is longer than any other two chapters in the book. You should find the puzzle that it unlocks so compelling that it is difficult to put it down.

Revelation 11 opens with a curious statement recorded by the apostle John instructing him to “Rise, and measure the temple of God.” Certain descriptive clues of this mysterious “measuring” are also given. The Tribulation is not introduced until the middle of verse 2 and the Two Witnesses are not directly mentioned until verse 3.

Most have never noticed or focused on this strange command. A few have, and still fewer have considered its meaning and implications. Similar to “prophesy again,” none have *comprehended*—and most have not understood at all—the seriousness of what it means!

You must understand!

You have seen that Mr. Armstrong laid the foundation to properly understand Revelation 10:11. Yet we saw circumstances in the Church and in the last days had to change—had to advance beyond his lifetime—before that prophecy could possibly be understood. The same is true of “Rise, and measure the temple.” However, Mr. Armstrong never to my knowledge even attempted to explain what this prophecy meant. You will learn why he would not need to know its meaning—but you do!

This chapter will closely examine this additional very dramatic prophecy. May God help you grasp—truly comprehend!—all that you are about to learn!

The Prophecy

Before continuing, it is helpful to read as one the overall context and flow of the three prophecies—(1) prophesy again, (2) measure the Temple of God and (3) the Two Witnesses—as they appear. Remember again as you read that the book of Revelation was recorded as a scroll. It originally lacked the chapters and verses that men came to think it should contain. While helpful in almost every instance through the Bible, these manmade “breaks” in the text can cause the mind to “break” with them in thinking. In this case, the closely connected time sequence that the text reflects gets lost if these three things are not read together.

Let’s then read Revelation 10:11 through 11:3 as a single block of Scripture, as it would have appeared to all Bible students for many centuries after it was recorded, when no chapter and verse were present. The bolded section is the part that most overlook:

“And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, You must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. **And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.** And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.”

It is crucial to get the flow and its setting clearly in mind. This will better enable you to distinguish all the points to be understood within the text.

What is the “Temple of God”?

If you have been reading my books to the splinters and listening to key sermons referenced in the suggested order, it should now be clear to you that the Church Jesus Christ promised to build is the same as the biblical “Body of Christ.” This book has also referenced this several times. You have been brought to remember that this Church and Body is undivided, that it functions under the government of God, and that it exists to do the Work of God. If you have not proven—more correctly, *reproven*, for those with a Church of God background—what is Christ’s Body, all that follows will make little sense. (Again, you must read *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?*)

There is something else in this equation—another most crucial term—that must also be understood or vital knowledge is screened away, left impossible to understand. Only by understanding this additional vital element of knowledge can the meaning of “Rise, and measure the temple of God” be unlocked.

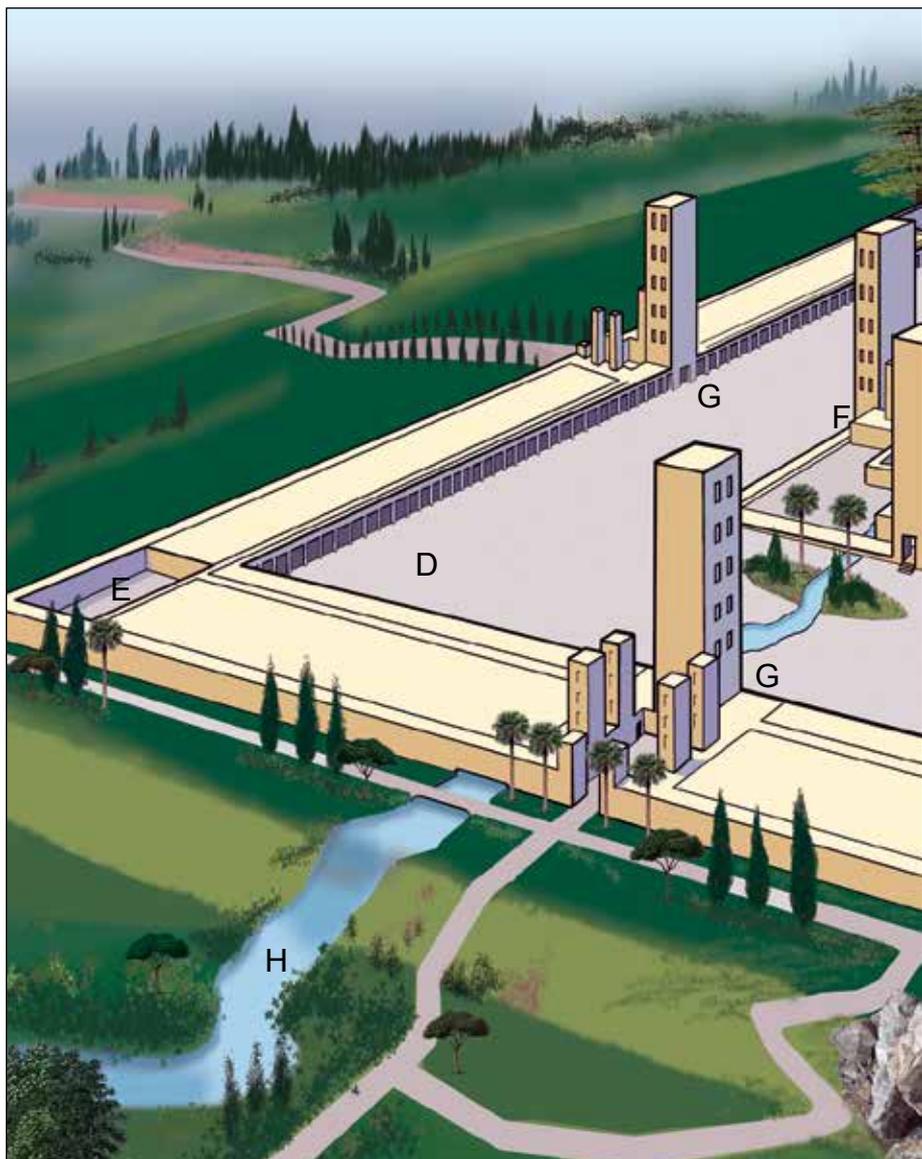
If one does not understand what *is* the “temple of God” as the term is found in the New Testament, there is no possible way to know what is to be measured in the above prophecy. For instance, if you were told to go measure “the skyscraper,” but not told *where* it is—which skyscraper, and in *which city*—and also *what* a skyscraper *is*—the assignment is impossible to fulfill. You would have no hope of carrying out the instruction.

Let’s understand the New Testament Temple of God.

Three Temples

The path to understanding Revelation 11:1-2 begins in the Old Testament with the temple that King David purposed to build. This first building replacing the tabernacle in the wilderness (that was in use for almost five centuries) is often called “Solomon’s Temple.” Begun in about 964 or 963 B.C., this perhaps most magnificent and beautiful of all structures ever built by the hands of men took seven years to complete. Overlaid and furnished in gold throughout, it remained in use for over 370 years, or until about 585 B.C., when it was destroyed by the invading army under Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. Of course, the Jews were taken into captivity in this same military siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

There is not space here to describe the awesome size and incredible splendor of this first “house of the LORD,” as Solomon’s Temple was also



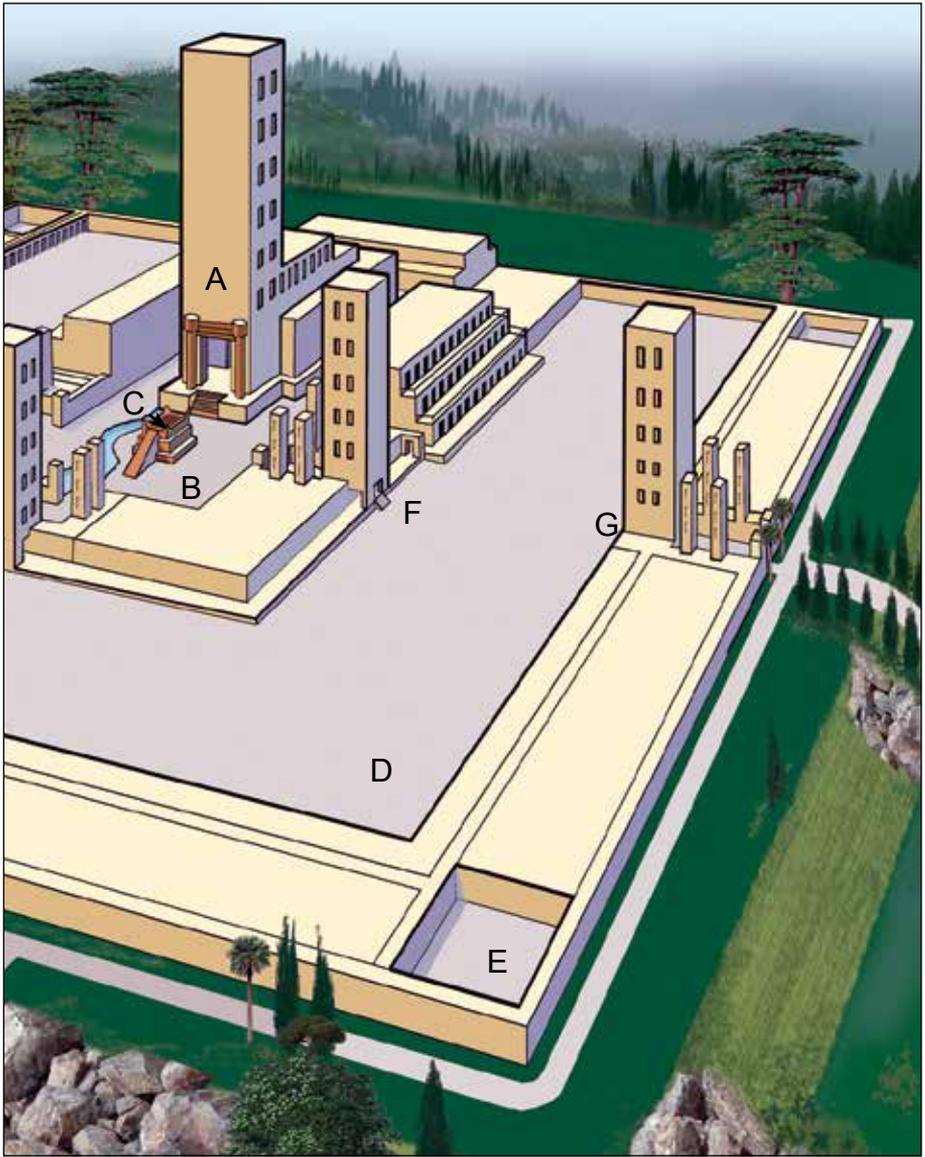
Ezekiel's Temple:

A-Main Temple

B-Inner Court

C-Altar

D-Outer Court



E-Cooking areas

F-Inner Gates

G-Outer Gates

H-Healing waters that flow from under the temple

called (I Kgs. 6:37-38). Suffice to say, this stunning structure became the model guiding Mr. Armstrong in his desire to build the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, which from the beginning was always affectionately—and respectfully—also referred to by the Church as the “House for God.”

In 539 B.C., the Medo-Persian empire defeated the Babylonians. God almost immediately after the victory commissioned King Cyrus of Persia to rebuild both Jerusalem and God’s temple (Isa. 44:28). Ezra 6:3-4 records Cyrus’ decree to carry out the instruction.

Begun in 537 B.C., this second temple, usually referred to as “Zerubbabel’s Temple,” took 21 years to complete—until 516 B.C. It remained in use for almost 500 years (497) until 19 B.C.

Zerubbabel’s Temple was also an extraordinary structure, but it was generally considered to be much inferior to Solomon’s in both workmanship and quality of materials used. In fact, these shortcomings became the pretext under which it was dismantled by Herod the Great, giving way to what is usually referred to as “Herod’s Temple” or the “Renovation of the Temple.”

Herod the Great (there are four Herods mentioned in the New Testament, this was the first), the builder of this “renovated” temple, reigned from 37 to 4 B.C. Having severely offended the Jews under his governorship, Herod desired to reclaim their affection through what he thought would be the ultimate gift—yet *another* temple that he wanted to build for them (but also as a monument to himself). He determined that it should exceed what he deemed to be the both inferior and incorrectly designed second temple built by Zerubbabel. After some convincing, the local Jewish leaders and citizenry signed on. Construction began in 19 B.C. and continued for 46 years (John 2:19-20) until late 27 A.D., the year beginning Christ’s ministry.

Built on top of a gargantuan foundation called “The Temple Mount,” roughly the size of 30 football fields, no one has ever determined how the huge stones in such a massive foundation were laid. Some single stones were as heavy as 600 tons, or 1.2 million pounds. When the Roman General Titus destroyed the temple in 70 A.D. (Matt. 24:2), he used battering rams to knock down each part of the building, including every stone “one upon another” just as Christ had foretold. But his legions could not dislodge the foundation stones, and neither could multiple earthquakes over the centuries to follow.

Thousands of finely shaped stones were brought in from Lebanon for construction in the “renovated” temple. A total of 1,000 priests, specially trained for the project, completed it well ahead of the projected

schedule for final construction—thus allowing it to be in place before the arrival of Christ’s ministry. For comparison, this enormous renovation was actually 2½ times the size of the Temple of Giza in Egypt.

Daniel 9:25 describes a decree in 457 B.C., the seventh year of Artaxerxes, king of Persia (Ezra 7)—as part of the “70 weeks prophecy”—which revealed that the temple would be finished by 27 A.D., again, the year Christ’s ministry would begin.

Many brethren reading this date back to the time of the important Ambassador College “Big Dig” in Jerusalem in which a “50/50 joint participation,” as Mr. Armstrong put it, with Hebrew University took place. They will remember a project that began in late 1968 and continued into the mid-70s, during which the south wall of the Temple Mount was excavated. Specially chosen Ambassador College students were sent to work there each summer, and some others remained through the year, as this project was reported through regular updates to the Church and college by Mr. Armstrong and others. Of course, the Church understood this was in the very place from which the returning Jesus Christ will soon rule the entire world with the saints!

It is worth noting that the Bible actually describes in significant detail a future *fourth* physical temple in Ezekiel, chapters 40-48. To be built on Mount Zion in Jerusalem at the outset of the Millennium, this colossal building complex will even far exceed the size and splendor of Solomon’s Temple. It will have a veritable skyline of towers connected to it that will be the equivalent of 20-story buildings and will include immaculate dining facilities for the priests that just in themselves will be spectacular. (An artist’s depiction of this temple from *The Good News* magazine of May 1988 has been added, with an accompanying legend—next two pages—to aid in picturing various critical parts of the temple mentioned in the “measuring” prophecy. While interesting of itself, the elements of this rendering will take on more value later in the chapter.)

What Mr. Armstrong Taught About Yet *Another* Temple

But there is still another temple—a *fifth* temple, and also called the “House of the Lord”—which is described in the New Testament. This one is more important than all of the previous temples discussed put together. Before examining what the Bible says about it more closely, let’s look at what Mr. Armstrong understood and taught regarding the Church of God and its relationship to the New Testament Temple of God. Here is what he wrote to the Church in 1979. It lays the foundation for

the rest of this chapter. (All emphasis, including underlining, is Mr. Armstrong's.):

“I know I have been chosen to carry the true Gospel around the world as a witness before Christ returns. **BUT HE ALSO HAS COMMISSIONED ME WITH SOMETHING MORE—and VITALLY—IMPORTANT.**

“Let me explain. When I was in England a few years ago, some of us were wondering how the temple was to be built in Jerusalem to which Christ shall come at His imminent **SECOND COMING** in supreme **POWER** and **GLORY**. Would the Israelis dare to demolish the Islamic ‘Dome of the Rock’ that now stands on the site of the temple to which Christ came over 1900 years ago? Would they build a new temple on that spot?

“But since then God has revealed additional prophecies. Let’s begin in the Book of Haggai. In Ezra 1:1-2, you’ll read of how God influenced King Cyrus to issue a proclamation sending a colony of Jews back to Jerusalem to build the second temple—70 years after the destruction of Solomon’s temple.

“The Governor and head of this colony was Zerubbabel, who was sent as the builder of this second temple to which Christ came at His first coming, more than 1900 years ago.

“You read of this in Haggai 2. In reference to the temple, God said through Haggai, ‘For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come [till the treasures of all nations are brought hither (Moffatt translation)]; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts’ (Haggai 2:6-9).

“Notice! This is a **PROPHECY**—for the future. The **TIME**? The present and immediate future.

“The theme at the beginning of chapter 1 has been the building of the second temple. Then, in the verses above quoted, it becomes a **PROPHECY**—no longer a history of Zerubbabel building the temple over 500 years before Jesus came, yet the same temple to which He came at His first coming. But suddenly the **HISTORY** changes to **PROPHECY** of our time now, and it speaks of the temple—this ‘latter-house’—having glory far greater than that of Solomon’s temple. Now what temple is it talking about? The one Zerubbabel built was no where near as glorious as Solomon’s temple!

“But THIS IS NOW PROPHECY—no longer HISTORY! It is speaking of OUR TIME, late in the 20th century! This ‘latter house’ is the temple to which the GLORIFIED CHRIST shall come at His second coming—soon now, in our lifetime. It is speaking about the temple to which the GLORIFIED Christ shall come in our day!

“But this time Christ is not coming as a human, to die and give His life for us! This time He is coming IN SUPREME POWER AND GLORY to RULE ALL NATIONS! He is coming as the all-SPIRITUAL GOD! And He is not coming to a physical people who, 1900 years ago, rejected Him—or to a temple of stone, gold, silver, and wood. You find the temple to which He will come this time described in the NEW Testament:

“Now therefore ye are...fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household [family] of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto AN HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD’ (Eph. 2:19-21).

“Brethren in Christ, WE ARE THAT TEMPLE!”

Co-Worker Letter, July 24, 1979

This is a very plain statement—and final scripture—and it is absolutely filled with meaning. It introduces one of the most astonishing truths in the entire Bible. You will discover that it becomes the path to understanding Revelation 11:1-2. In fact, without it we have no *basis* for knowing what John was told to measure, and also, you will see, for learning *how* the measuring would be accomplished.

Now it should be obvious why the instruction to John involved a temple of greater glory than any of the first three described. The period referred to in context by Haggai is obviously the Day of the Lord—when all nations will be shaken!—and the time of the returning Jesus Christ, Who will be coming to the Church, now “grow[ing] unto an holy temple in the Lord.”

So, the New Testament Church of God—the same as the biblical Body of Christ—is here described as the “temple of the Lord,” and it still means the place where God dwells. But are there other New Testament passages that amplify what Mr. Armstrong recognized?

There are several, and they are crucial to understand.

The New Testament Temple

The term “temple” is used in a host of contexts throughout the New Testament. This word appears literally scores of times through the gos-

pels and epistles of Paul, as well as in various places in the book of Revelation, usually there referring to the Temple of God around God's throne in the third heaven.

The English word “temple” generally derives from three separate Greek words that can correctly be translated as “temple.” These are *oikos* (oy' kos): “a dwelling, by implication a family home, household or temple”—*hieron* (hee-er-on'): “a sacred place, that is, the entire precincts of the temple (at Jerusalem or elsewhere)”—and *naos* (nah-os'): “a feign shrined temple—the central sanctuary itself.”

Let's examine a few additional verses that remove all doubt about what—who—is the Temple of God today.

John 2:19-21 is the place to start. It offers important proof that the Body of Christ is the same as the Temple of God. As you read, realize that Christ's words are the Bible interpreting the Bible, and they provide the best introduction to the subject of the New Testament Temple. Note especially the final part: “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building [Herod's renovation], and will you rear it up in three days? But He spoke of the *temple of His body*.”

If you understand that Christ's “body” is also His “temple”—and that the “temple” is “His body”—obviously the same as the term “Body of Christ”—you cannot get confused. All you must do is take Christ's words at face value. The Bible has here interpreted itself.

What Paul Recorded

Paul recorded the most about the New Testament Temple. He wrote this to the Corinthians: “For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's BUILDING” (I Cor. 3:9). Note this. Unlike today's English, the King James translators carefully used “ye” whenever the intent was plural and “you” when it was singular. The *ye* here means all of the Corinthians, or thus the whole Church, collectively. It will become clearer as we proceed that individual members are not the Temple of God, but rather the entire Church as a whole comprises the Temple.

We will later come to understand *how* the Bible describes—the term that it uses for—individuals *within* that Temple.

A few verses later Paul added this: “Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in ye? If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy,

which Temple ye are” (vs. 16-17). Each time “temple” appears, it is *naos* in the Greek, meaning the central or inner sanctuary.

Placed together, these verses reveal that God sees His people as both His Building and His Temple. God is *building* a Temple—a House. I Corinthians 6:19 adds a little more. It also makes clear how serious it is if we treat lightly the incredible privilege it is to have God dwelling in us—if God’s people do not conduct themselves in a manner that reflects this.

But the second epistle to the Corinthians adds significantly more. Let’s notice: “And what agreement has the Temple of God with idols? for ye [notice the plural pronoun is used throughout here] are the Temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (6:16).

The last part of this passage is a quote from Leviticus 26:12. Its use here demonstrates God has *always* planned that His Church, those in whom He would in the future *personally dwell*, would be the greatest—truly the most glorious—temple of all. Remember, Leviticus was recorded long before either Solomon’s or Zerubbabel’s temple was built.

Also, there is a powerful message for everyone in the splinters in the preceding verses leading up to the verse 16 quoted above. For those who desire to be in God’s Temple, there exists no room—NONE!—for doctrinal compromise with any of the false teachings of counterfeit Christianity—summarized as “unrighteousness” and “darkness”—now invading and infecting *all* the splinters. We are to “touch not the unclean thing” (vs. 17)—*any* unclean thing.

Pause to read verses 14 and 15. Then take the time to read each phrase in Ephesians 5:6-11, followed by verses 23 and 30. The first group of verses condemn all compromise with every form of unrighteousness. (This issue will rear its head later when we examine the three things John was told to measure.) The latter two verses tie Christ as Head of “the Church” to those in it being what He considers the individual “members of His Body, of His flesh, and of His bones.”

Let this understanding of exactly what it means to be in the Body of Christ sober you!

Church, Body and Temple—Three Critical Verses

One final proof (there are several others) that the *Church of God*, the biblical *Body of Christ*, the *House of God* and the *Temple of God* are the exact same thing is understood by carefully comparing three addi-

tional passages in Paul’s epistles. Follow very closely the incredible connection between these important passages.

Do not miss what they reveal!

Let’s begin by looking at I Timothy 3:15. This crucial but largely ignored bedrock passage provides the New Testament definition of the true Church of God. While most have forgotten it, this verse has always been there. The Church is there called “the *house* of God, which is the *Church* of the living God, the pillar and ground of THE TRUTH.” (Take more than a passing interest in the fact that this verse directly ties the Church to where “the truth” is—not “some of the truth” or “much of the truth” or even “most of the truth”—and certainly not “truth *mixed with error*”—but rather simply “THE TRUTH”!)

Then, get clear in your mind that the Church is called “the HOUSE of God.” (It is also more than interesting that this is virtually the same term used from the beginning regarding Solomon’s Temple—which was generally referred to as the “House of the Lord,” or “God’s House,” as in I Kings 6:37-38.)

Next, recall that Mr. Armstrong in his statement referenced Ephesians 2:19-21. Also recall that Paul called the Temple of the Lord a “BUILDING *fitly framed together*” in that passage. Later, in chapter 4 of Ephesians, he said the identical thing about the Body of Christ. Notice: “From whom the whole BODY *fitly joined together* and compacted [I Corinthians 12:24 adds “tempered together”] by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part...” (vs. 16).

The phrases translated “*fitly framed together*” and “*fitly joined together*” derive from the very same Greek word *sunarmologeō*. It means “to render close-jointed together, i.e. organized compactly, be fitly framed (joined) together (in the sense of laying).” Paul obviously had the same thing in mind whether he was discussing the Church, the Temple (or House of God) or the Body of Christ.

Sunarmologeō offers truly fascinating meaning. The beginning and last portions of the definition—“render close-jointed” and “together (in the sense of laying)” —carry the obvious meaning of laying individual bricks or stones that are mortared or put “close-jointed” beside each other (“together”) as one would lay them in rows within a building.

Since we saw that the Temple is also called God’s “building,” there is no possible way to read these passages and conclude that the true Church of God could be anything other than *one undivided organization*—A SINGLE BUILDING! Do not let anyone ever again tell you that

God’s Temple is anything less than this! His Building cannot be “spiritualized away”—as do Protestants with every doctrine in God’s Word—into a “temple” that is ill-defined, disconnected, amorphous—and meaningless.

Now let’s look more closely at the “bricks” or “stones” used in building—exactly what or who it is that lies together “close-jointed.” At this point the knowledge presented in this chapter becomes personal.

An Astonishing Passage in I Peter!

The apostle Peter put an exclamation point—a capstone if you will—on all that Paul wrote about the New Testament Temple.

This first of his general epistles declares this to what would include all true Christians through the ages: “If so be ye [plural again] have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To Whom coming, as unto a LIVING STONE [referring to Christ], disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as *lively* [living] *stones*, are built up a SPIRITUAL HOUSE, *an holy priesthood*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices [on God’s altar], acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a CHIEF CORNER STONE, elect, precious: and he that believes on Him shall not be confounded” (2:3-6).

It is obvious the *living stones* (Christ being the Chief Corner Stone) are the individual Christians in the Temple lying “close-jointed” or “fitly framed” together. And note that it was only the priests who could enter and serve in Solomon’s Temple (II Chron. 23:6). Also, it is important to recognize that verse 5 should carry the stronger rendering of the POSITIVE COMMAND “*be ye* [BE YE!] also living stones,” as is found in the margin of many Bibles.

This is absolutely incredible understanding, for those able to receive it—for what should be a second time! Get it firmly in mind before continuing. Everyone with God’s Spirit alive today should give much more than mere pause in determining whether they are fulfilling this meaning and purpose—what is a COMMAND!

Peter wrote more, and our understanding cannot be complete without it: “Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the Stone which the builders disallowed [or “rejected”], the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a *royal priesthood*, a holy nation, a peculiar people;

that ye should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (vs. 7-9).

The world has never been willing to accept the *true* Jesus Christ! Neither will they accept the Church He built—and is still building. They “stumble” at His doctrines, and reject—“disallow”—Him as the Head of the Church—*any* Church. In His place they have brought a cold, *dead Jesus* (called “another Jesus”), who brings *dead understanding* (empty false doctrines), and who builds *dead churches* out of DEAD STONES!

The Tragedy Today

But here is an infinitely greater tragedy, one that is the story of our time and of the final Church era: Most in the splinters have come to feel much the same as their worldly counterparts, but with no recognition that this has happened.

They will no longer hold precious the true Christ of the Bible. Neither will they hold to His truth. They will not yield to His government. Neither will they come to His Church, nor support His undivided Work. And they will no longer permit Him to head their lives—and to continue building them into His House. Blind to their actions, they have placed themselves outside the Temple He is constructing. They have unwittingly chosen not to be placed next to the “living stones” with which He is building. These are the *foolish virgins* of Matthew 25.

Get this. You are being judged on these things—NOW! The same apostle Peter also said two chapters later that “Judgment is *now* on the HOUSE OF GOD” (4:17).

Brethren of the splinters, the Church has long understood that the “House of God” is His Church. By now you know this is the same as saying “His Temple”—of which you were called to be a “living stone,” one “closely joined” with all the others in God’s unified “Building.” (But this will soon be seen to be a house of more than one dimension—more than one parameter.)

Why cannot people today any longer seem to remember that God’s Church—the Body of Christ—His House or Temple—is obviously one, undivided organization ruled by Jesus Christ as Head under the government of God—and doing His Work? (Four detailed sermons about the Temple of God are available on our website. They carefully discuss all you have learned—and will yet learn—in this chapter. Parts 1 and 2 are titled “The Greatest Building!”, with Parts 3 and 4 titled “Measure the Temple.” Do not miss them!)

What could be more important for you to understand than these points? What could be more important to you than allowing yourself to be placed by Christ back into the Temple—into the “House of God”—recognizing that even it is still being judged?

What could be more important to you than recapturing the basic, but all-important, knowledge that God’s people sang at Sabbath services *for decades*? How could so many forget that “Except *the LORD* build the HOUSE, they labor in vain that build it” (Psa. 127:1)? There is but one House God could have had in mind here, the one He planned long before the Psalms were recorded. How could splinter leaders think they can build their own “houses” and that Christ would follow their lead instead of the other way around?

And how could so many blindly help them build?

The majority today have made themselves “branches cut off” from Christ—not *yet* dead in most cases, but rather having made themselves *dying* stones, stones with the “oil” of God’s Spirit flowing out of their “lamps” without replenishment from Christ. (Many have already died.) They are “branches” cut away from the “Vine”—stones removed from the BUILDER! We will momentarily revisit this in the context it deserves.

So tragically, most simply no longer seem able to realize—or even remember—that Philadelphians are promised to one day be “pillar[s] *in* the [coming] Temple of...God” (Rev. 3:12).

How did all this incredible knowledge get lost to thousands?

Back to Zerubbabel

God’s people are without excuse. They were once aware of an extraordinary biblical parallel that guided their understanding of what God was doing within His Temple—of what the Worldwide Church of God was under Mr. Armstrong’s leadership.

The following quotes from another quite extensive *Co-Worker Letter* of March 19, 1981 explains what I reference—what people once knew but have now forgotten. In it Mr. Armstrong took further what he said about Zerubbabel’s Temple, and the latter-day “glorious Temple.” He was telling the Worldwide Church of God (and co-workers) about extraordinary knowledge revealed in Malachi, Haggai and Zechariah, having to do with Zerubbabel, the local governor who we saw presided over the rebuilding of the second temple. I have left in some repetition from the earlier quote to bring helpful context.

Read carefully and allow Mr. Armstrong’s words to teach you again. I have broken his instruction into three excerpts (All emphasis is his):

“Now consider the prophecy of Malachi 3:1-5. In verse 1, God will send a human messenger to prepare the way before Christ, coming as the Messenger of the New COVENANT. Now what coming of Christ is this prophecy talking about? Read verses 2 to 5. Jesus did none of those things at His first coming—but WILL DO THEM AT HIS SOON SECOND COMING! So the prophecy is, actually, foretelling primarily a messenger to prepare the way for His SOON SECOND COMING!

“Yet Mark 1 and other New Testament scriptures identify John the Baptist as fulfilling that prophecy.

“But REMEMBER GOD’S PURPOSE WORKS IN A PROCESS of DUALITY! John the Baptist was a TYPE or forerunner, of one to prepare the way for His Second Coming. Jesus is to come to His TEMPLE (Mal. 3:1). He came to a material temple of stone, wood, gold and materials A.D. 27-31. To what Temple will He come IN OUR TIME, SOON NOW?

“Hold this prophecy of Malachi 3 in mind, and turn to Haggai 2, beginning verse 3. Zerubbabel was governor of a colony of Jews sent from Babylon back to Jerusalem 70 years after destruction of Solomon’s temple, to build a new temple. This also was the days of prophets Ezra and Nehemiah. Zerubbabel was builder of this second temple. It was the temple to which Jesus came at His first appearing as a human.

“Verse 3, the former temple of Solomon was then as nothing compared to its original physical glory. God commands Zerubbabel to be strong and work to build the temple (verse 4). Verse 6 goes into a far-future prophecy of a time just before Christ’s Second Coming, when God will shake the earth and shake all nations, and the ‘GLORY OF THIS LATTER HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN OF THE FORMER’ (verse 9). The temple Zerubbabel built of stone, wood and physical materials was nowhere near as glorious as the former temple of Solomon! This is a PROPHECY speaking about the temple to which Christ shall come the second time, in supreme POWER and GLORY—a temple far more glorious than Solomon’s!

“To WHAT temple will Christ come very soon now? Are the Jews going to demolish the Moslem temple, Dome of the Rock, which stands on that site now, and build a new super-glorious new temple? NO! Turn to Ephesians 2:19-22. The Church at Ephesus was composed of former gentiles. They are no longer foreign gentiles, but fellow-citizens with the saints—a spiritual NATION. They are also a FAMILY—of the ‘household’ of GOD—the GOD FAMILY. As a BUILDING they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being chief cornerstone. As a BUILDING, they are fitly framed together (in UNIFIED ORGANIZATION) growing

into a HOLY TEMPLE!” (Author’s note: Give special attention to “in UNIFIED ORGANIZATION.”)

This first segment sets the table for the new understanding to follow. Be sure to stay with the different parts of what Mr. Armstrong connects:

“Zerubbabel built the second temple to which Jesus came the first time. John the Baptist prepared the way before the FIRST coming. But WHO was to build the SPIRITUAL temple to which Christ shall soon come the second time? Who was to prepare the way before His Second Coming?

“Remember God does things in DUAL stages. As Zerubbabel built the first temple of MATERIAL stone, wood and other materials, he was a forerunner or type of one through whom Christ would raise up or build the SPIRITUAL TEMPLE—His Church of our time, prior to the Day of the Lord and Christ’s Second Coming. As John the Baptist prepared the way, in the PHYSICAL wilderness of the Jordan River for the first coming of the HUMAN Jesus (both man and God), then coming to His MATERIAL temple, and to His PHYSICAL people Judah, ANNOUNCING the Kingdom of God to be set up more than 1,900 years later, SO God would use a human messenger in the SPIRITUAL wilderness of 20th-century religious confusion, to be a voice CRYING OUT the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, about the SPIRITUAL CHRIST, coming in SUPREME POWER AND GLORY to His SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, to actually ESTABLISH that spiritual KINGDOM OF GOD.

“Brethren, HAS THAT BEEN DONE BY THIS CHURCH?

“Did God raise up a one-man LEADERSHIP to be used by Him in building this spiritual TEMPLE and in proclaiming after 1,900 years the true GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD in ALL THE WORLD—to even go to kings and heads of nations (Rev. 10:11)—in bringing the Church back to the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED (Jude 3)?

“HAS THIS HAPPENED, IN YOUR DAYS, AND HAS GOD BROUGHT YOU INTO THIS PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT AS A PART OF IT?

“HAS ANYONE ELSE DONE IT?”

A Type

The whole Church once thrilled to such powerful announcements, particularly those of the last four smaller paragraphs. By now, if you have

read the books to the splinters in the suggested order, you have seen that Mr. Armstrong fulfilled the role of the final Moses to precede Elijah, who would appear shortly before Christ's Second Coming. But have you remembered—did you not once understand?—that he also fulfilled another parallel role concerning a special prophecy, typed by Zerubbabel?

Let's learn what he taught:

“I have shown you that the book of Haggai is a PROPHECY. Zerubbabel's temple, to which Jesus came at His first coming, was a TYPE of the SPIRITUAL TEMPLE (God's CHURCH) to which, in its resurrected GLORIFIED state, it will be the GLORIOUS TEMPLE to which Christ will come SOON NOW IN OUR TIME.

“Zerubbabel, therefore, was the typical forerunner of one Christ would use to build that GLORIFIED SPIRITUAL TEMPLE—God's Church of this END TIME.

“In Zechariah 4:6 and 9, God says of this former type: ‘This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power (humanly), but by MY SPIRIT, saith the Lord of hosts.’ In Revelation 3:8, Christ says of the leader of today's Church, ‘I know thy works; behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength (only a little strength humanly), and has kept my word, and hast not denied my name.’ This Work in our day has not been done by human strength or power, but by FAITH and the POWER OF GOD'S SPIRIT.

“Further, ‘The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house (the first temple); his hands shall also FINISH IT!’ So far as I know, GOD HAS NOT RAISED UP ANYONE ELSE TO FINISH THIS WORK HE HAS USED ME IN DOING!

“God could take my life in the next breath—or He has power to keep me on the job as His instrument for as long as He deems necessary.

“I have NEVER SAID I expect to live until Christ comes.

“But, just in case of my disability for any reason, to prevent Satan from causing division, I feel God has inspired me to delegate power to the Advisory Council, during any such complete disability, to take full charge of the Work and all its assets and activities.”

Powerful Meaning!

This final excerpt practically explodes with meaning, and several points must be emphasized.

First, the ancient Judean governor Zerubbabel was a direct type of what Herbert W. Armstrong would be used to do with a much greater Temple to come later. Second, Mr. Armstrong would lay the foundation of the New Testament spiritual Temple at the end of the age. Third, it was foretold that Mr. Armstrong would “break off” (the correct translation of the Hebrew word *batsa*, rendered “finish” in Zech. 4:9) from what he started, meaning the Church of God would be built on the right *foundation* and it would later be completed as a marvelous *finished* SPIRITUAL PRODUCT unlike anything the world had ever seen!

The fuller context of what Zechariah wrote makes this even clearer: “Then he [an angel] answered and spoke unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain [not even mountains would get in the way of what God purposed]: and he shall bring forth the headstone [the true Christ?] thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have *laid the foundation* of this house; his hands shall also *finish it* [the House]; and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me unto you. For who has despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the *plummet* [plumb line or plumb bob] in the hand of Zerubbabel...” (4:6-10).

A plumb line is a carpenter’s instrument that is used in conjunction with a level for the purpose of getting the perfect right angles, necessary for building walls, roofs and floors of buildings. All construction must be straight to be correct, and observant owners will not tolerate anything less. Any contractor who forgets this basic rule will soon be in another line of business.

Christ has been no different in building His Church. He would not use—nor would he tolerate—a “contractor” who could not “get things straight.” The all-powerful Christ is a perfect MASTER BUILDER, and One Who would—and did—carefully select the right human contractor, one He personally trained and prepared. Christ also recognizes He is the most important stone within His own building—that He Himself is “built in.”

Now understand. Mr. Armstrong did not just build and finish God’s Temple during the Philadelphian era, but, through God’s Spirit and power (vs. 6), he got things STRAIGHT! His work at the human level left in place a New Testament “building” that was correctly “trimmed” as any carpenter would do this. Under Christ’s guidance, Mr. Armstrong got STRAIGHT a host of true doctrines, Church government, the Great Commission, the

Ezekiel Warning, the importance of the Second Commission, feeding the flock—and everything else necessary for the successful working of an enormous worldwide organization. An immense world headquarters complex, three colleges, numerous regional offices, summer camps, AICF, and other things were all part of this. As my book on God’s government described, the Church of God in the twentieth century was a beautiful, efficient, productive—SYMMETRICAL—structure, I repeat, simply unlike anything the world had ever seen!

But scores of thousands forgot what they witnessed!

A final ancillary point of clarification belongs here. The last portion of Mr. Armstrong’s third excerpt could seem at first glance to indicate he thought he would finish the full Work of God for this age. A closer reading makes clear that, since Mr. Armstrong was well aware he could die before the Tribulation, he had to be referring to finishing *his own assignment*—the work given to him personally, as described in Malachi, Haggai and especially Zechariah. Of course, his prophesied responsibility—his “assignment” prophetically, if you will—also included the *first* fulfillment (of “prophesy again”) of Revelation 10:11. This had to be completed—be a finished responsibility or “work”—before the latter fulfillment of that prophecy could come to pass, as it is now.

Related to this, the prophecy in Zechariah could not have meant that no more “living stones” (I Pet. 2:4) could be added to the Temple after his lifetime. Several parables, particularly Matthew 22:4-14, Luke 14:12-24, but also Matthew 20:1-16, demonstrate that certain others would be called right up until the last minute at least in part to fill the *empty seats* at the Wedding Supper that, in some cases, others selected earlier had vacated. Mr. Armstrong could not possibly have equated his responsibility with who could be called to finish the final number that God desired at the Wedding Supper.

Do not let anyone with his own agenda about whether the Great Commission was completed in 1986 confuse you regarding what Mr. Armstrong simply could not have meant in this statement, if he were to remain consistent with *everything else* he said on this subject!

A Type—and an Analogy

Just the knowledge that has been presented to you in this chapter so far is of paramount—ABSOLUTELY SUPREME—importance to your future! Now consider the following parallels.

Solomon’s Temple has always been understood to be a *type* of Christ building His Temple—the New Testament Church. Zerubbabel’s

Temple you have now seen is a type of Mr. Armstrong finishing and plumbing the New Testament Temple foundation during the Philadelphian era.

There is another kind of parallel or helpful analogy that will aid you in understanding the remainder of the chapter.

Recall the renovation of the dismantled second temple that was in place when Christ came for the first time as Savior, and to build His Church. The Restored Church of God is truly the renovated Church—the *renovated Temple!*—of the Philadelphian era. While others have *claimed* to be the true Church, or part of it as the now “greater Church of God,” Restored really is *exactly the same* as the Church that Christ led Mr. Armstrong to re-establish—to “build,” “finish” and “plumb.”

Of course, it is for you the reader to prove if this is true!

Back to Chapter Title

At this point, this chapter of the book becomes most fascinating, but only for those who have understood what has been covered to this point. All that comes next will be among the most sobering things you will ever read, with conclusions coming both during what follows and at the end. Therefore, open your mind. Give yourself a chance to comprehend almost unbelievably potent realities—and stunning, even stupefying, prophecies—soon to crash into place, some upon the world and others upon God’s lukewarm people.

This chapter is titled “Measure the Temple.” However, it easily, and technically more correctly, could be titled “Measure the Temple, the altar, and them that worship therein.” John’s instruction to “Rise, and measure” involved much more than what is the *starting point* of God’s Temple, and there are enormous reasons for this that will become evident. Other elements of the Revelation 11:1-2 description have to also be understood for the whole passage to come together—to bring out the powerful meaning God intended.

You are now prepared to understand the instruction given to John. Before continuing, open your Bible to the passage and keep it there because we will be referring to several key words within it. You will need to continually check the context to appreciate all that you are about to learn.

Everyone is familiar with puzzles. You have probably made several, starting from childhood when only six or eight pieces formed the complete picture. In a sense, Revelation 11:1-2 forms a basic puzzle with “pieces” of similar number. Recognize that each word or phrase to be

explained is *one piece* of a puzzle whose picture only becomes clear when the last piece is in place. Miss a few or even a single piece and you will miss most or all of this puzzle!

No “Interpretation” Necessary

As you read, you will see that no human interpretation of “measure the Temple” is necessary. The Bible and the simple meanings of key words in the Greek will be seen to do all of the work for us. All you must do is accept Scripture and basic word definitions, and remember Mr. Armstrong’s statement a few pages back regarding Revelation in general and chapter 10 in particular. He said that “There was NO WAY it [the prophecy] could have been understood then—until after *subsequent events...*” had occurred.

Do not permit the assignment to be more complicated than this! “Subsequent events” *have* occurred, and they have permitted God’s plain meaning to open to us as a result.

John—A Type of Another Later

Like the instruction appearing as though it is to John to prophesy again, the assignment to “measure the Temple” also cannot actually refer to John. This would be no more possible for a man living 2,000 years ago than would be Ezekiel’s assignment to carry out *today* the “watchman” responsibility (of 3:17 and 33:1-9) when he lived 26 centuries ago. It is clear from the previous chapter that these assignments were designated to men living in the last days.

It should be obvious that the instruction also could not possibly apply to Mr. Armstrong. If you understood just the last chapter, as well as the fact that the Revelation 11:1-2 *setting* immediately leads up to and precedes the arrival of the Great Tribulation, this much is clear. This is a reality some cannot accept, but the setting “is what it is.”

Notice again that the prophecy is sandwiched into the text immediately *before* the mention of the Two Witnesses, meaning the Two Witnesses could not be candidates to fulfill the instruction. (After all, there are two of them.) Understand that they have not yet been introduced in the text, and their “job description” lacks any such mention in an assignment that is said to only last the 1,260 days of the Great Tribulation.

The instruction is to *one* person—the same man whom John types within the instruction to “prophesy *again*.” Notice that Revelation 10:11

begins, “And he [the angel] said unto *me* [John]...”, similar to how 11:1 begins, “And there was given *me* [John again, meaning the one he types]...” to fulfill this extraordinary duty.

Any attempt to say that either John, Mr. Armstrong (that he either did this in the past, or that he will be *resurrected* to do it, as some believe) or the Two Witnesses—or any other individual—fulfill this passage is to force the meaning. So is the obvious assertion that the Temple of God is *already* being measured *now* by the idolatrous, blaspheming splinter “prophet” who claims to carry “Aaron’s budded rod” given him for this task. However ridiculous this is to the thinking Christian, thousands have fallen for this idea.

Remember that Satan counterfeits everything, so do not fall for any of these theories!

Now realize that there is *no other Temple* that the passage could be referencing than God’s spiritual Temple today—Christ’s New Testament Church or Body. Obviously, no human being is capable of measuring the Temple of God in the third heaven at God’s Throne (Rev. 14:15, 17, etc.), nor would there be a reason for one to measure any possible future physical temple in Jerusalem. If so, how would any man accomplish such a task, particularly when there is no clear indication that such a temple will be built? And again, why would God assign such a thing? Also obvious is that it cannot be talking about measuring the *not-yet-here* temple described in Ezekiel 40-48. And finally, the temple of God described in Revelation 21 and 22 cannot be a possibility for measurement because its arrival is even farther into the future—and it would involve a man “measuring” God and Christ.

Finally, there is the matter of the *time setting* of the prophecy. Considering its location in the text—sandwiched between two giant prophecies—on what basis could God expect us to conclude this is other than something culminating immediately *after* God’s Work (prophesying again) is finished and immediately *before* the arrival of the Two Witnesses?

Unless one ignores the prophecy’s location, there is no other “time” possibility.

Be sure to get all these preliminary issues completely straight in your thinking before continuing. Do not allow yourself to think “Mr. Pack is leading the reader.” Be sure you see the natural, scriptural “funnel” into which *God* leads those who desire to know the PLAIN MEANING we will learn. (Beginning now, the key phrases in the prophecy form subheads in all capital letters to differentiate them from other subheads within the flow of explanations given.)

“A REED LIKE UNTO A ROD”

We can now begin with the first phrase in the prophecy—that John was given by the angel “a reed like unto a rod.” First, simply notice that it was neither a reed nor a rod per se, but rather the phrase must be taken for what it says. But what does it mean?

The Greek word for “reed” is *kalamos*, meaning “A reed (the plant, or its stem), by implication: a pen.” From all indications, such a reed was a long stem-like object, perhaps most like a pole, to be used for measuring. It is interesting that the *Hebrew* word for reed is *kaneh*, which carries an almost identical meaning: “A reed by resemblance of a rod, especially for measuring; shaft, tube, stem, or a stalk.” (For instance, Ezekiel 40:5 speaks of “in the man’s hand a measuring reed of six cubits long, by the cubit and an handbreadth: so he measured the breadth of the building, one reed; and the height, one reed.” This leads into the nine chapters introducing the physical millennial temple to come of Ezekiel 40-48.)

Mark 15 records two places where the meaning of a reed is obviously not a mere flimsy stem or stalk of a plant. In verse 19 it says that “they smote Him [Christ] on the head with a reed [again, *kalamos*]...”, and in verse 36 is added, “one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink...”

So far there is no difficulty in understanding, but what about “like unto a rod”? The Greek word for rod carries fascinating meaning. It is “A stick, wand, cane; baton of royalty; scepter, staff.”

This adds much more to the meaning of the phrase. It becomes clear that the instrument given to John is one that both has substance and carries ruling authority, as would a scepter. But there would have to be a FIXED STANDARD in place so that *proper* measurement could occur when there was need. It is interesting that the English word *canon* derives from the Hebrew *kaneh*, which we just saw defined. It is also interesting that the apostle John was the last person whom God used to finalize the canonization of the New Testament, and thus the whole Bible.

It should not be difficult to see that the scriptures themselves function as “a reed like unto a rod,” and, when in the hands of God’s appointed leader, typed by John, they become the ultimate measure of the Temple, altar and worshippers. Take a moment to read Hebrews 4:12, II Timothy 3:16-17, Revelation 20:12, I Peter 4:17 and John 10:35 to see that God’s people are not only under judgment now, but the measure by which they are judged is Scripture!

It will help to think of how Mr. Armstrong led the Philadelphian era of the Church over a 52-year period. The only standard by which he “measured” everything was the PLAIN WORD of God.

“RISE”

The definition of the Greek word for “Rise” is *egeiro*, and it means “To awaken, rouse from sleep, from setting, or from inactivity.” Notice it can have two alternate meanings, with the first one the obvious applicable meaning here—“from setting.”

Since the one described in this prophecy would obviously not be asleep and in need of being awakened, the latter meaning applies—to rouse from one’s “setting” to another. (Again, just as obvious would be that this leader would hardly have been “inactive” prior to this change in setting.) It will be seen as the picture here develops that this man will, in fact, change very suddenly from previous setting to the work of Revelation 10:11 and to that of the stunning responsibility you are about to understand.

Keep this simple. To look for more than this is to overanalyze the word. Remember, no human interpretation is necessary.

“MEASURE”

The next key word to be defined comes from the Greek *metreo*, meaning “To measure; ascertain in size by a fixed standard.”

It is not hard to see from where the English word *meter* derives. The universal standard for distance and measuring almost the world over springs from this Greek word—kilometer (1,000 meters), centimeter (1/100th of a meter), millimeter (1/1,000th of a meter), etc.

It becomes absolutely clear that John’s instruction includes a highly-defined *standard*, one that cannot be misunderstood by those who know anything at all about measuring. Understand this. There is absolutely nothing on Earth—or in life—that can be measured without use of a FIXED STANDARD!

Other standards, whatever they might be speculated to be in this case, would not and could not apply. For instance, in the United States, unlike the rest of the world, distance and measurement is counted in inches, feet, yards and miles. Travelers and businessmen operating here must constantly adjust for this difference. For purposes of illustration, it could be said that America falls short of the world’s “meter” standard.

Do not be confused by this *second* reference to a fixed standard. You may be thinking that the Bible has already been established as God’s ultimate standard for measurement. That is certainly true. However, history shows that the Bible can mean “a million things” to “a million different people.” This is why Christendom is split thousands of ways, and the splinters are divided into hundreds.

The one given this assignment cannot be in confusion about exactly *how* he uses his biblical reed/rod of ruling authority in carrying out the measuring assigned him. He must know *exactly* how to fulfill his duty! And this must be a man first ruled by God before he can rule others.

Keep reading!

“THE TEMPLE OF GOD”

The prophecy takes a crucial turn at this juncture—the point at which WHAT is to be measured is presented. The “Temple of God” is the first of three items listed.

The chapter has already thoroughly defined God’s Temple of the New Testament. You should not be any longer in doubt at this point that John has been told to measure the Church of God, the Body of Christ—the *spiritual* Temple of God (or the House of God) as it consists at a point in the near future. No other meaning can be substituted. If there were another definition to be applied here, what would it be? And how could God expect His people to *know* that the meaning of this all-important term is suddenly something else at the end of the Bible—in the middle of the book of Revelation—than what was understood before? More particularly, if so, how would the modern leader typed by John know this?

This would be an unreasonable leap—and God could not permit this to occur!

This said, the Greek word for temple here is *naos*. Recall that it means “A feign shrined temple—the central sanctuary itself,” different from *heiron*, which we saw means “A sacred place, that is, the entire precincts of the temple (at Jerusalem or elsewhere).”

A seed must be planted at this point. Since “the court” is not to be measured, but is certainly within “the entire precincts of the temple,” it becomes of obvious importance why *naos* is used instead of *heiron*. Also recall from Paul’s writings that every time the New Testament *spiritual* Temple—the Church—was referred to, he used *naos*. (John’s record is here seen to be *consistent* with what Paul recorded.) In other words, God’s Church does not include what were called the outer and inner courts of the

temple, but rather just the inner *sanctuary*, where the Holy Place, the Holy of Holies and the Ark of God were located, among other things, and where only the priests were permitted to enter for official purpose.

This is a crucial distinction that will soon prove to be incredibly important. I repeat, keep reading!

“THE ALTAR”

The second item John was to measure is “the altar.” This term is not here by accident. The purpose for its inclusion—and its definition, its meaning—must be clearly understood. Like the “temple” (and the other elements, or key words, of the prophecy), the meaning cannot be left to human interpretation or opinion. You will see that the stakes involved here are much, MUCH too important for this to be allowed to happen!

There is a great deal to learn.

The Greek word translated as “altar” is *thusiasterion*, meaning “A place of sacrifice; an altar.” This definition is as basic as it gets. While this section stays just as basic, it is necessarily much longer.

It is interesting to note that the English word *enthusiastic* derives from this Greek word. In other words, in Greek culture, which would be reflected in the language, if one is enthusiastic, it is as though he is worshipping, something one would do at an altar.

The altar in the Old Testament temple was at the entrance to the main building—recall the illustration—where we saw only the priests could perform or even enter. Do not let it be lost on you that the New Testament Church was called both “a holy priesthood” and “a royal priesthood” in I Peter 2:5 and 9, respectively. We saw this.

Think of this in two ways to make it most clear: Only those who are *in* the Temple are, or can be, God’s spiritual priesthood, and, conversely, only those *in* God’s priesthood are permitted into His Temple or to sacrifice on His altar. Recall that our future is to be “kings and priests” (Rev. 5:10). (Also, recall that I Peter 2:5 states that this royal priesthood “offer[s] up *spiritual sacrifices*, ACCEPTABLE to God by Jesus Christ.” What is “acceptable” will carry greater significance in a moment when discussing *what* is brought to the altar.)

Only One Location

Now consider two crucial points: First, the only acceptable sacrifices were those offered on the altar of the Temple of God *at Jerusalem*. No

other locations—meaning any *other* altars in any *other* places—were acceptable to God. They had to be at the *one* designated location, God’s House in Jerusalem!

Various kings of Israel, such as Jeroboam (II Chron. 11:14-15), as well as kings of Judah, such as Ahaz (II Chron. 28:4, 25) and Manasseh (II Chron. 33:1-3), disobeyed this instruction. These rebellious, evil kings built high places, groves, molten images and “alternative” altars around the country. Invariably, as always happens, the people followed along. But it is recorded that righteous kings, such as Hezekiah (II Chron. 31:1; 32:12) and Josiah (II Chron. 34:3), always destroyed the other locations of supposedly acceptable worship.

Take time to read of these evil and righteous kings, and what distinguished them from each other in Scripture. Evil kings brought and taught “abominations” in Israel and Judah. Righteous kings threw down and destroyed all forms of false worship. Recall that the Bible records of these accounts, “All these things happened unto them for ensamples [types]: and they are written for *our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (I Cor. 10:11). Will we be admonished by them?

Grasp this fact of history. God set apart just ONE LOCATION—*one* temple and *one* altar—to offer sacrifices before Him. No humanly-devised alternatives were *ever* acceptable—I repeat, EVER! This is directly analogous to the one true Church and spiritual Temple of God today. In this light, it is interesting that the high places and altars in Israel sometimes came to number in the *hundreds*—exactly as do the splinter “alternative altars” today!

“In Spirit and in Truth”

A *second* element of the Temple altar carries truly colossal importance—and explains the earlier *second* reference to a FIXED STANDARD of measurement.

Polluted offerings were also unacceptable to God. Any animal that was imperfect, unclean or undesignated as acceptable, or those that were ceremonially improperly prepared or offered, were not received by God, even if sacrificed on the right altar.

How serious was this to God? Priests that offered any of these perversions could be *put to death* (Ex. 30:9; Lev. 10:1; 16:1-2; Num. 3:4)!

At Sabbath services, God’s ministers and people no longer offer physical things to God. Christ explained this new emphasis for those who seek to worship God today: “But the hour comes, and now is,

when the true worshipers shall worship the Father IN SPIRIT and IN TRUTH: for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him MUST worship Him IN SPIRIT and IN TRUTH” (John 4:23-24).

Only the Truth!

The only offerings acceptable on God’s New Testament altar, within His spiritual Temple, is THE TRUTH! Anything other than *the truth* that the Church once understood and proved to be God’s doctrines is profane—spiritual *pollution*! No matter what men think, *other doctrines* are not good enough before God! We *must* appear in His presence always worshiping “in truth.”

The splinter leaders are violating both points described so far. Not only have they lost track of what IS the Temple, having created NON-DESIGNATED ALTARS in alternative locations, but they have brought POLLUTED SACRIFICES before God. As so many false priests, they have brought—and taught God’s people—doctrines that are *not* the truth. In the name of “growth,” these men do not fear to prepare unclean—unacceptable!—sacrifices. And these false leaders happily puke these on *false altars* outside God’s Temple before attendees willing to have it so!

Is this you?

Mr. Armstrong made clear not only what *is* the New Testament spiritual Temple of God, but also the ONLY DOCTRINES that are acceptable on God’s altar. Not only was the foundation of the Temple laid and finished, but the doctrines offered within it were also “plumbed, trimmed and true”—they were STRAIGHT!—and the living Christ, the Chief Cornerstone, was pleased with the latter Zerubbabel’s work!

Are you?

“Spiritual Sacrifices”!

John 4:23-24 has a parallel “Temple/altar/priesthood/sacrifice” element hidden within it. To see it, let’s merge the command in that passage with what Peter wrote about God’s people—the living stones—in his first epistle. Recall: “You...are built up a *spiritual house*, an holy priesthood, to offer up *spiritual sacrifices*, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (2:5). All “spiritual sacrifices” in God’s “spiritual House” must be “acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” After all, Jesus Christ is called our “great High Priest” in Hebrews 4:14-16. This makes Him the Priest in charge of the

entire priesthood—that is those who will come under His charge, His authority—and as such it is He Who presents all offerings to God.

You may have never thought of yourself as a priest under the watchful eye of the Greatest Priest offering sacrifices on the altar in God's Temple, BUT YOU SHOULD! How often have you reminded yourself that you are a "holy, royal priest"?—ever? Then, how often do you concern yourself with these questions: What kind of sacrifices did Peter have in mind? What kind of sacrifices do I bring? What, in my case, am I asking Christ to present on my behalf as acceptable to God?

The subject of *New Testament* sacrifices is a big one and probably something that few think about. In fact, most probably have no idea how often the New Testament speaks of them, thinking that sacrifices and offering animals are primarily "an Old Testament subject having to do with the Levites and ancient Israel"—similar to the passive way that most brethren surely think about "temples," "altars," "priests" and "courts," assuming many do this at all.

Actually, it was established long ago, even in the *Old Testament*, that sacrifices were a much bigger subject than just the priests in the physical temple. Were you aware that David spoke at least twice back in the Psalms about offering "the sacrifices of righteousness" to God (4:5; 51:19)? How concerned are you about this?

Then, in the New Testament, Paul added more: "By Him [again, by Jesus Christ] therefore let us offer the *sacrifice of praise* to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips *giving thanks* to His name. But to *do good* and to *communicate* forget not: for with *such sacrifices God is well pleased*" (Heb. 13:15-16). This is a potent scripture, one absolutely filled with meaning. When was the last time you thought about it?

And what about this reference in Philippians? Notice: "the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a *sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God*" (4:18). Here, just the simple collective generosity of a congregation to God's servant (Paul) was described as an "acceptable" sacrifice that was also "well-pleasing to God."

Finally, again from Paul, is this most powerful of all New Testament scriptures on the subject of sacrifice, almost completely forgotten by most today: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your *reasonable service*" (Rom. 12:1).

There was a time when God's people knew that everything about their lives belonged to God, they knew they were LIVING SACRIFICES, and that this was a "reasonable service" expected of them by God. We were priests consecrated for God's service. Not only were we to be living sac-

rifices, we were to recognize that we had been redeemed, brought back as “alive from the dead” (Rom. 6:13) by Christ’s sacrifice, and given an incredible opportunity to assist in the most important Work on Earth!

Being a living stone means being a living sacrifice!

But how many people today do you think are concerned about these things when they cannot even remember what *is* God’s Temple, never mind who is and who is not in it? Are you concerned?

Ecclesiastes, now back in the Old Testament, offers perhaps the most accurate picture—with a warning—of what is happening today with many of God’s people: “Keep your foot when you go to the HOUSE OF GOD, and be more ready to hear, than to give the *sacrifice of fools*: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not *rash with your mouth*, and let not your heart be hasty to utter anything before God...” (5:1-2). In the age when “the people rule, judge and decide,” we have just described thousands who are only too willing to offer endless confused, misguided opinions about what they once so clearly understood.

The subject of spiritual sacrifices presented by God’s priesthood on His altar at His New Testament Temple is very serious to God. I hope the little you have read here demonstrates just how serious your “spiritual sacrifices” should be to you!

Let’s get this! Together, John 4:23-24 and I Peter 2:5 form one of the most powerful scriptural combinations in the entire Bible—for those of God’s people who will still receive their message. We saw the Church of God—the Temple of God—is “the pillar and ground of THE TRUTH.” When you come before God, (1) you must be at the right location—the true Temple and altar, (2) you had better worship in truth, undiluted, nothing else added, or your offering is *not* acceptable, (3) your sacrifices had also better include such things as *righteousness, thanksgiving, praise, doing good, faithful communication* and *generosity*, among others—and (4) God must see you willing to daily OFFER YOURSELF as a “living sacrifice” in service before His altar, at His House, in His Work.

Think hard on these things! And then think hard on them again!

“THEM THAT WORSHIP THEREIN”

The phrase in the subhead is better translated as simply “the worshippers therein.” The King James translators added “them” as an implied pronoun.

The Greek word for “worship” is *proskuneo*, which means “To prostrate oneself in homage, do reverence to, adore.”

This word presents a graphic and sobering picture. Mull it carefully with yourself in mind, because it contains much more than meets the eye. In God's eyes, to worship—anything!—is to prostrate oneself before it in a reverential and adoring manner. Regarding the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why* and *how* you see yourself in worship, you should envision yourself doing it in this way, and it will give you pause!

The world generally looks at worship as a one-hour event each Sunday morning. Some churches add a Wednesday evening Bible study, or “testimonial night,” and perhaps a few more “activities” through the year. God's people are entirely different. First, they worship on a “24/7” basis, or 168 hours a week instead of just one, two or a few. They are to recognize that in coming before God's altar, they come all day, every day, and that they had better be zealous—enthusiastic, if you will. And this means every one who is *in* God's Temple, if he is to *remain* there.

Christ described those of Laodicea as lacking “zeal” (Rev. 3:19), for which He counsels them to “repent.” This zeal is essentially demonstrated in three areas, and is directed toward: (1) the truth, (2) all forms of personal conduct and (3) involvement in the only Work of God on Earth. Worshiping God “in spirit” means regular prayer, study, fasting, meditation and constant exercising of God's Spirit. This element of spiritual worship and activity, coupled with truth, is very important to the God who means what He says!

Those who properly worship God in spirit know that “the inward man is renewed day by day” (II Cor. 4:16)—and, I repeat, this is all day, every day!

Worshiping God “in spirit” carries another profoundly important implication—and it is tied directly to the reason Laodiceans must *anoint their eyes* in order to regain vision. Those who read my book on this subject recognize the problem in Laodicea is that the “branches” there are no longer connected to the “Vine,” Christ, meaning they are cut off from receiving more of His Spirit. This book has at least briefly referenced how spiritual “oil” is running from the “lamps” of thousands who can no longer replenish it as they once could because they are outside Christ's Body!

Christ declared, “*Abide in Me*, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it *abide in the Vine*; no more can you, except you *abide in Me*...for without Me you can do NOTHING” (John 15:4-5).

Many scriptures could be added at this point to underscore the overarching supreme importance of being connected to Jesus Christ every minute of every day.

Think! Not only are those in the splinters not worshipping God “in truth”—or even close to it—they are not, and *cannot*, worship Him “in spirit” without being *reconnected* to the “Vine.” This is the only path to again becoming VIBRANT stones, close-jointed with the Chief Corner Stone and the other living stones *in* the Temple.

In light of everything that you have learned so far in this chapter, understand the following: All people with God’s Spirit today will ultimately have met either one of two very different spiritual standards prior to the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord. *Everyone* will have adopted a position. That position will determine how they are measured by the time this horrific calamity slams into the nations of Israel:

(1) They will worship in spirit and in truth without compromise, and assist in finishing God’s Work, both possible only from inside His Temple—ALL with God’s Spirit (Philadelphian or Laodicean)—or...

(2) They will worship in another way, using other doctrines, doing a different work, in an alternative location—having lost God’s Spirit!

You have two options. Pick one...

“THE COURT”

All of the prophecy so far has involved just verse one of Revelation 11. With verse two, the instruction takes another crucial turn. John is not only told what to measure, but what NOT to include—what NOT to measure! This is the most sobering part of the prophecy—and the most critical to your future.

We must understand why “the court” is excluded from the Temple.

Most of God’s people are probably only a little familiar with either Solomon’s or Zerubbabel’s Temple (the same is true of Herod’s renovation). They would likely not know much about differences, for instance, between the main temple building, the inner and outer courts. These differences are all-important and, when understood, present the blueprint for how God’s people are being divided up to the time of final measuring.

When the Bible references “God’s House” in the Old Testament, this *always* includes more than the main temple building. It *always* included the two courts surrounding this building, as well as the six gates (three led to the outer court and three to the inner) and all the other structures associated with the temple. Note that virtually all New Testament references to Herod’s Temple refer to activities occurring in the courts, and not the main building.

When Luke 18:10 and Acts 3:1 reference people going to the temple to pray, it has to mean the outer court because, again, only the

priests could enter even the inner court, as well as of course the temple itself. When the apostles taught in the temple on a daily basis (Acts 5:42), it also has to mean the outer court for the same reason. Also, Acts 5:12 records the apostles performing “signs and wonders...among the people...in Solomon’s Porch.” This included the noted miracle of the lame man who was healed at “the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful” (3:2).

I repeat, all these kinds of activities and encounters had to be occurring in the outer court, never the main temple, either the holy place or the holy of holies. *The New Bible Dictionary* states that there were actually four courts in Herod’s Temple—one for “the Gentiles, and others for the women, the men of Israel and the Priests, in ascending order of exclusiveness.” The temple complex is seen to be much bigger than meets the eye.

In the Old Testament, Solomon’s Temple would have been the same. An example of this is Jeremiah 28:5, which speaks of “all the people” standing *with* the priests “*in* the House of the LORD.” This also would have to have been in the outer court because, I repeat, only the priests could enter even the inner court. Today’s parallel is that the royal priesthood of God’s Temple may still freely meet with those in the splinters at places *outside* that Temple—outside the true Church and Body of Christ. Some will eventually leave the court to return to God’s Temple (God’s Church). Others never will—the foolish virgins.

Filling In a Picture

Other interesting facts are important to be aware of, and prepare us for fascinating understanding. There were 30 different meeting rooms, some extensive, that existed around the periphery of the outer court. These (and other structures) served for various assemblies and dinners, as well as provided locations where people could meet or pray in privacy.

When most think of Jesus overturning the tables “in the temple,” they think of the main building. But this could not have been the case. Yet, even Jesus, a Jew and not a Levite, spoke in John 2 of what was occurring merely in the outer court in this way: “And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not *My Father’s house* an house of merchandise” (vs. 16).

We will discuss in more detail a little later how the Gentiles are prophesied to overrun “the court” (Rev. 11:2). Historically, the various courts were frequented by a diverse group that included Gentiles and unbelievers who were all permitted into this area. Realize, and this is

certainly obvious, that the standards of conduct and the nationalities permitted among those who could enter the outer court were much lower than for the inner court or the main building. The unfaithful and the impure were acceptable visitors. This would have directly contributed to why an atmosphere could develop in which moneychangers would feel comfortable taking up residence.

In fact, there is at least a partial modern parallel existing at the Temple Mount above the Western (“Wailing”) Wall today where tourists, Muslims and other non-Jews visit in great numbers what would have been part of the outer court of Herod’s Temple. I have been there twice, toured the two Muslim Mosques on the site, and seen thousands milling and looking around the area in tour groups.

Now consider. Utterly contrary to what Mr. Armstrong *ever* permitted, it should be seen as no coincidence that, exactly as happened in the liberal years of the mid-1970s, virtually all of the splinters and slivers quickly returned to an “open door” policy in regard to who may attend services.

Finally, you may wish to read the Psalm 48 description of the beauty and majesty of the entire temple complex to read how impressive were the “towers thereof,” as well as “her bulwarks” and “her palaces” (vs. 12-13), to appreciate both the immense size and sheer magnificence of all that was considered to be God’s House—the Temple of God.

Birth of the New Testament Church!

Before continuing, another more than interesting fact of history should be considered. Were you aware that the *New Testament Church* began in the outer court of the temple? Most have never considered this, or why. (In fact, this is also seen to be why the apostles would have spent so much time there later.)

Acts 2:1 records that the Church gathered on Pentecost “with *one accord* IN ONE PLACE.” Verse 2 describes God giving His Spirit accompanied by powerful miracles and many speaking in tongues (vs. 2-4). The next several verses show that great numbers were present from “every nation,” and that they heard what was happening. A near uproar ensued because of it. After 3,000 were baptized, verse 46 adds, “And they, *continuing* daily with *one accord* IN THE TEMPLE, and breaking bread...”

While it is more obvious why Pentecost was the *time* Christ chose to build His Church and give His Spirit, it is also no accident that God would have chosen the *physical* Temple as the *location* to bring into

existence the New Testament *spiritual* Temple of God! Where else would have been big enough? Where else would people have thought to gather on a Holy Day, Pentecost? With so many thousands present (again, 3,000 were just the number ready to be *baptized* in the first day, and these would have almost certainly had mates and children in attendance), a powerful testimonial would have been intended by God to show that an extraordinary SHIFT had taken place in what God considered to be His Temple!

Understand as you read this that the 12 apostles would certainly have remembered John 2:21—Christ declaring that the Temple was His Body—and would have understood all that the apostle Paul later recorded about the Church and Christ’s Body being the Temple of God, as well as His “House” and “Building.” All of these terms would surely have been explained to and understood by those being baptized. Thus, when Christ fulfilled His Matthew 16:18 promise, those who constituted the New Testament now *spiritual* Temple would have KNOWN that they did!

How incredibly sad that most with God’s Spirit today no longer understand who is and who is NOT in the Temple of God!

“LEAVE OUT” the Court

This section is inseparable from those on the court. In Revelation 11:2, the one of whom John is a type is told “But the court which is without the Temple *leave out*, and measure it not.”

Before more closely examining the words “leave out”—and they carry a *very* sobering meaning far beyond what you could imagine—it should now be clear *why* John had to be instructed to exclude the court from his measuring. Unless so instructed, his *automatic assumption* would have been that the courts should be *included*. But we see that only the MAIN TEMPLE BUILDING—where the *priests* could enter!—was outlined for “measuring.”

You *must* get this point clear in your thinking before you can understand the stunning truth you are about to learn!

The Greek word translated “leave out” has a definition very different from what the King James translators selected. It is *ekballo* and does not carry the *passive* meaning of “leave out,” but rather an *active* one, which is “to eject, cast out, drive out, expel, send away.”

See this difference!

The English phrase “leave out” is similar to *discount*, *overlook*, *ignore*, *work around*, *do not consider*, etc. These are all passive terms,

and clearly different from the meaning of *ekballo*. The question becomes WHY is John told to eject, cast out, drive out, expel or send away “the court”? Of course, a man cannot expel or drive away *a place*, so the obvious meaning is intended to reference those who are IN that place—in this case, IN the court.

While this much is not difficult to understand, obvious questions come to mind: Who is in the court? Why—or how—could it be that whoever these people are, they must be *sent* or *driven away*?—and from *what* are they driven away? Further, who would have the authority—or power—to carry this out? Related to this is where and when would this casting or driving out occur?

These questions must all be answered. Every one of them involves you and all others of God’s people! But something else in the prophecy must be understood before addressing them.

“GIVEN UNTO THE GENTILES”

The most ominous part of the prophecy—and you will soon learn why—comes next, and is contained in the *reason* John is told not to measure the court. Notice this from the middle of verse 2: “for it [the court, meaning those in it] is given unto the Gentiles [Grk: *ethnos*—the nations]: and the holy city [Jerusalem] shall they tread under foot forty and two months.”

Grasp this part of the prophecy. Whoever it is that is in the court gets “tread upon”—we might say today “tromped” or “trampled” would be better word choices. But, knowing just the basics of what happens in the Great Tribulation, “stomped” might be the very best or most accurate translation. Another way of saying this is that, by being cast out and driven away, those in the court are left unprotected from what those “measured”—those in the Temple’s main building—the priesthood!—escape!

It should be clear by now that this is a very serious issue coming to a head at a very serious time for God’s people—in fact, at one of the most serious periods in history. You cannot afford to get the meaning wrong.

Let’s understand more. The “42 months” referenced in verse 2 is of identical length as the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord, and it is obviously the same as—and exactly equal in length to!—the “thousand two hundred and threescore days” of verse 3 that the “two witnesses... prophesy” in *Jerusalem* (vs. 8).

This question arises: How does this “tread[ing] under foot” fit with prophecy as a whole as the end draws closer? What could it have to do

with the Temple and those in the court? In other words, how might the “Gentiles”—the nations—intersect with those in what we might think of as a kind of *adjacent* relationship with the New Testament Church? Remember, the events described involve Jerusalem at least in part. So where then are God’s people in relation to this? Who is “driven out” of the court?

These are additional questions, begging answers.

Revisiting Key Prophetic Periods and Conditions at the End!

All of the questions at the end of the last two sections are answered by recognizing the overall conditions extant in both the world and among God’s people just as the true Work of God comes to an end. These answers are intertwined with the playing out of incredible events foretold to come upon the world just before the Great Tribulation. Generally speaking, God’s people *know* of at least some of the pieces within the “puzzle” analogy described earlier, but have not been able to *assemble* them correctly.

Let’s now review from the past some long-understood basic elements—key pieces!—of prophecy so that the picture comes clear. Let’s begin some critically important *assembling*.

The Great Tribulation, which we saw lasts 1,260 days, is one of *three* key periods at least at one time familiar to virtually all of God’s people. The others are “1,290 days” and “1,335 days.”

The Church has always understood that the latter number, 1,335 days before the Return of Christ, signals the end of the Work and when God’s faithful people—the Church also always understood this to mean those of Philadelphian thinking, conduct and Work—are to be “taken” (Luke 17:34-36; Matt. 24:40-41) to the Place of Safety. This has not changed. Then, 45 days later, at 1,290 days until Christ’s Second Coming, the Church actually *flees* from its assembled location. (We will momentarily see *where* the faithful—those in the Temple of God—are taken.)

Daniel, Matthew, Mark and Luke

The prophet Daniel closed his book with this statement encompassing both time periods: “And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the ABOMINATION THAT MAKES DESOLATE set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that *waits*, and comes to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” (12:11-12).

Note that the element of *waiting* is tied to individuals who “come to” the 1,335 days—and, we will see, to the end of the Work. This will soon become clearer. But there will come a dramatic moment in which God makes known to His Church—those in His Temple—that they have waited long enough—that time is up. The faithful are now to be “taken.”

The New Testament adds more about the abomination of desolation, with Christ in Luke warning God’s people living in the last days, “In your *patience* possess you your souls [eternal lives]. And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the DESOLATION thereof is near [now just 30 days to go]. Then let them which are *in Judea* [take note] flee to the mountains [is this Petra, 100 miles to the south?]; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto” (21:19-21). Verse 22 then declares that “these be the days of vengeance,” with verse 24 stating that “Jerusalem shall be *trodden down of the Gentiles*, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

Notice that Christ uses almost the *exact same wording* as does Revelation 11:2. This should not be surprising since He was the Revelator of what John merely recorded!

It also becomes obvious that the “holy place” of Matthew 24:15 is in the same place as the “holy city” of Revelation 11:2, and that the “armies” of Luke 21:20 are the same as the “Gentiles” of Revelation 11:2. Of course, Jerusalem is in the center of “Judea.”

Patience—and God’s Work

Matthew adds more to what Luke recorded. There, Christ specifically ties waiting (Daniel) and patience (Luke) to, among other things, finishing the Work: “And this gospel of the KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the *end come*. When you therefore shall see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso reads, let him understand:) Then let them which be *in Judea* [note again] flee into the mountains” (Matt. 24:14-16).

Get straight in your mind that those in the Temple of God PARTICIPATE IN the commanded responsibilities described all through this book! How many times already have you seen Mr. Armstrong tell you that the Great Commission continues until the Great Tribulation—until “the end come”?

Mark’s parallel chapter 13 account is almost identical to Matthew’s in each of the key elements. Verse 10 states of God’s continuing Work,

“And the gospel must first be published [same Greek word as “preached,” used in Matthew] among all nations,” with verse 14 repeating, “But when you shall see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that reads understand,) then let them that be *in Judea* flee to the mountains.” (Ask: Why is Judea mentioned in each gospel account—three times!—if God’s people have been taken to another place? Also, elements of difficulty with the flight about which to pray appear in each account.)

Verse 19 in Mark’s account, however, is stronger than its more oft-quoted parallel in Matthew 24:21, and presents this chilling statement of what will then be about to fall on the world’s greatest nations: “For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.”

Two prophets also describe this time as worse than anything civilization has ever experienced. Daniel said, “There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time” (12:1). And Jeremiah recorded, “Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it” (30:7). Frankly, most of God’s people have been lulled by passing years into forgetting the awesome seriousness of what lies ahead!

No wonder then that both Matthew (24:13) and Mark (13:13) state identically, “But he that shall *endure* unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Now note also then that when Luke described “patience” as the key to “possessing your lives,” he had to have also been referring to *eternal* life—being “saved.” With this in mind, it becomes even more apparent why the same Jesus Christ described Philadelphians as having “kept the word of *My patience*” (Rev. 3:10). This is unmistakably similar to what He had instructed His disciples to do in Matthew, Mark and Luke, and to what Daniel stated earlier about *waiting*. Christ must be reinforcing in this passage His own words of Matthew, Mark, Luke and Daniel. (Of course, Christ also inspired what Daniel, like John, was merely used to record.) And then it is not strange that Christ also added in Revelation this description of God’s saints through the ages: “Here is the *patience* of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the *faith* of Jesus” (14:12). Both tremendous patience and unwavering faith will surely be needed at this time.

A brief reference to another monumental aspect of the picture that almost no one seems to consider is related here. It is found in the six verses *preceding* “in your patience possess you your lives” of Luke 21:19. Verses 13 to 18 there describe two kinds of people who will be

required to give “a testimony” on Christ’s behalf, almost certainly in the period just before the 1,335 days begins and continuing to the 1,290 days. After the point of Christ “giving you a mouth and wisdom” (vs. 15) that cannot be resisted, careful reading reveals that some are obviously protected (“taken” to safety)—“there shall not a hair of your head perish” (vs. 18)—but also, “and some of you shall they cause to be put to death” (vs. 16). Intrinsic then to the verse is that people of TWO CONDITIONS enter this final period!

Finally, it is also no wonder then that *physical protection*, starting in Judea, is directly tied to patience by Christ who promises Philadelphians that He “will keep you from the hour of temptation [trial], which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. 3:10). Near the chapter’s end, you will learn why a lot more brethren should have remembered this passage, and that it follows the description of a people who continued walking through a miraculous “open door” (vs. 8)—and stayed focused on *exactly* how to qualify for protection.

Several points of supreme importance emerge, and God’s people—YOU!—are told by Christ to “UNDERSTAND” them: (1) Warning and preaching the true gospel—the Work—concludes just before the end. (2) The abomination of desolation is 45 days thereafter heralded by armies gathering around Jerusalem. (3) When this happens, God’s people flee! (4) They do this *from Judea*! (5) Waiting patiently for this moment—enduring to the end—is essential, and is tied to saving one’s eternal life, and to being protected during the Tribulation and Day of the Lord!

“The Court” Defined

We discussed, and you should by now realize, how no one (including the apostle John) could know the meaning of the *Temple of God* unless God revealed that meaning. You have seen that He did this. Similarly, since John was told not to measure the court, God would have to make known what IS the court. It would be unfair of Him to do less. The one whom John types would have to know what it is—and so would YOU to avoid being in it!

The very fact of a *mention* of an area not to be measured by John means there is an important *distinction* to be necessarily made. So then, what *is* the distinction? I ask again, what is the point of making a distinction—a separation—a difference—between the Temple and the court without revealing what it is—and how it applies? The answers to these questions are obvious: God would also have to REVEAL what the court is!

In fact, *your future* turns on understanding it, so let's speak plainly.

First, let's ask: Who might be *candidates* to be "in the court"? Let's put this another way, bringing a helpful angle: What group or groups will be most likely to think themselves to be *in* the Temple of God—part of the Body of Christ—when they are merely *close* to it?

Understand. It is apparent—in fact, obvious—that those in the court must have come to believe that they are *in* God's Temple. They have to be told they are not—that *close*, or *nearby*, is not good enough!

The answer to the last question above is fairly simple, and comes via another question: Remember one more time that the Bible teaches and Mr. Armstrong taught that, just as the Temple or House of God is one Building, there is only one unified, organized Church and Body of Christ. Now, what have most of God's people today come to believe about the definition of the one true Church and the Body of Christ? What definition for these have they *unconsciously substituted* for what over 150,000 people formerly believed before the apostates got finished with their minds?

The only possible answer to who is in the court—and it should not be difficult to see—is that it is the tens of thousands attending the splinters, but also some who come back into God's only Church, but who lose His Spirit. They form what have become *hundreds* of "rooms" in the outer court, around and OUTSIDE the MAIN TEMPLE BUILDING!

Who else could it be? Who else could even be *candidates* of the remotest possibility, besides the splinters, meaning those who lost God's Spirit in these groups? If you say there must be other candidates, WHO are they?—WHERE are they?—HOW do other possibilities you may have in mind FIT with all of the understanding you have seen here? If you say "no" to the explanation given, WHAT ELSE WORKS? The only possible fit are the "foolish virgins" of Matthew 25 who lost God's Spirit because they would not reconnect to the Vine—Jesus Christ. Realize that the "wise virgins" will have returned to God's Church in order to still have God's Spirit (although they will not have recaptured the Philadelphian condition).

As you consider alternatives, come to grips with the fact that the MAIN TEMPLE was a *small structure* and was only accessed by a relative few (the priests) compared to the much larger numbers who frequented the courts.

The modern parallel is almost painfully obvious!

Ponder Carefully

Be very careful in your conclusions. Mull, ponder, distill, and crystallize your thinking. Now let me ask these questions in another way: If you

believe the explanation you have seen for all the elements of measuring the Temple is wrong, *why* do you believe this? *Where* is it wrong? For instance, if you believe some or all of the terms discussed must have different meanings—which ones, and what would be the correct meaning in your opinion? And will you base your life on whatever theory you devise as better? If so, is anyone else presenting you with what you deem a better “theory”?

Break down the important questions in your mind: For instance, do you believe that the Temple of God is other than what Mr. Armstrong taught? If so, why? How and where did he misunderstand Paul’s writings? And if he was wrong about something that you have seen to be so central to all that the Bible teaches about what the Church IS, was he even sent from God?

Another example might be: If you feel the explanation of the court must be wrong, *how* is it wrong? What scriptures or examples used did not apply? What other idea better fits?

Then the altar. A thorough explanation was given straight from the Old Testament pattern of Solomon’s Temple and altar. Which elements of what was presented do you disagree with? If God intended His people to reject the Bible pattern, and all the parallels within it, as a basis for this term, what else could He have had in mind?—and again, how could He expect His people to *know* of this change?—to be able to *discern* that He had made an end-of-the-age switch in meaning?

Examine—prosecute—your own thinking! Make yourself focus on, digest and COME TO GRIPS with the issues in this chapter. Do not permit yourself to take a slipshod approach to matters of such colossal importance to you.

As you ponder, also recognize that God would necessarily have had to send a man to explain the things of this chapter. Who else is doing this? Again, can you name *any others* who have taken even half as serious an approach—never mind WHAT they say—to all you have learned?

Do not get WRONG the answers to each of these questions!

Frantic Millions—and “the Court”

Let’s pull back and look ahead to events at the very end. We often think that only those who “hate the Church” will have an interest in it as the Work shuts down. But more than our enemies, worldly governments and the great false religions will be focusing on us.

There will be many others with a very different sentiment than those of God’s people.

Now return to the 1,335 days—the moment when the Great Commission ceases. The book has carefully described this coming “famine of hearing the Word of God”—the conclusion of “prophesying again.” We saw that vast millions will be in shock—stunned that God’s Work has suddenly ended in a “famine” unlike any other, and that this occurred while they thought more time remained. We saw that great numbers are described as “run(ning) to and fro” to discover what happened to the “word of the LORD,” as they try to figure out what happened to the “lovely song.”

Now also consider that millions of “Bible students” at least know of the scriptural references to prophetic events centering around Jerusalem, and to the three references to “them which be in Judea.”

Bear in mind that, while most professing Christians do not read their Bibles very much or at all, a great many do, and many of these are enamored with a host of popular ideas about how prophecy will play out. Just look at the religion section of a major bookstore. So God’s Church will be far from their only source of information. Seduced by misunderstanding, this will almost certainly lead to a rush of potentially great numbers of “believers” to “where the action is.” If you have not thought about this confusing element of deceived “Christians” who will also expect to be spared by God from what lies ahead, you might ponder how such future realities will play out. You should also think about this in light of what you have read in this volume about the vast millions who will generally know of what THIS CHURCH and THIS WORK teach about what the then-immediate future holds for the nations of Israel. You should at least think about how Satan not only *counterfeits everything*, but he brings *confusion everywhere!*

Jerusalem and Judea will be a bigger focal point than most of God’s people begin to realize. The eyes of the whole world will be fixed on this region. In fact, with the Vatican even now openly setting its sights on controlling the “holy sites” in Jerusalem, and with prophecy showing that Jerusalem will become an open city guaranteeing the “three great religions” there under the Vatican’s control, it becomes clear that a great many people will make a journey to Jerusalem to realize their life’s goal of “walking where Jesus did.” Millions do this now, and it will only increase as great numbers of prophecy watchers want to be at the place of His Return.

Professing Christians will be less familiar with the verses, conditions and events, as well as the precise timeframes and sequences, of the earlier subhead about this and all the material in this book when the

famine strikes. These millions will of course be shut out of that which they do not fully comprehend—either salvation or protection. But those with a Worldwide or splinter background are different.

These basically know at least most of the picture (blurred though it became) of what lay ahead, but will not *act* on this knowledge. This said...

They will see *this* Work of God come to an end...

They will see those who say they are God’s Temple suddenly “taken” to safety...

They will remember that Judea is the place to be...

They will hear of those who arrived there...

Like the foolish virgins, they will desperately seek to be included...

Some will likely direct their organizations to flee to Judea...

Let’s now momentarily turn our attention to another question!

Who Measures?

Remember, the apostle John could only be a TYPE of *another man* who would live at the actual time of the measuring. This obvious question arises: *Who* is the human leader described? Someone, somewhere has to fulfill the instruction in this verse. Self-appointment will not work. Somewhere, a servant of God must hold God’s scepter of authority to carry it out. This much is apparent.

Again, who is this person?

The KEY to the identity of this man—obviously one who must be a leader *somewhere* among God’s people—has actually already been presented three different times by Mr. Armstrong at earlier intervals in the book. I have also covered this subject extensively in other books to the splinters with similar quotes from him. But let’s gather for review just the statements that you have previously read in this volume, because they nail down the answer.

The first quote was in Chapter One. Here is the basic pattern within God’s government that Mr. Armstrong consistently taught throughout his 52-year ministry (all emphasis still his):

“And a century of time cycles after the first birth of the Church was a TIME that God *DID USE* as a time to start a REBIRTH of His Church, when once again just before the close of the 6,000-year duration of the ‘day of man,’ and the ushering in of the day of the LORD, His Gospel of the Kingdom would be proclaimed worldwide (Matt. 24:14).

“We need to understand a PRINCIPLE by which God always has worked through humans. He has always worked through ONE MAN at a

time. He worked through Abraham. He worked through Moses, through Joshua, through one “judge” at a time, through Samuel, through David, through Solomon. He worked through Peter and when Peter had left the Middle East, through Paul. These men had, in greater or lesser number, staff assistants under them, but God’s WORK was through the ONE MAN AT A TIME!”

“*Just What Is ‘The Work’?*”, GN, April 1981

The next two quotes reappear from the last chapter and earlier in this one. In the first, Mr. Armstrong was recounting the way in which God had used him from the beginning of the Work. In the second, he was explaining, via a question, his role as the modern Zerubbabel. Let’s notice:

“There is but one answer. No one can believe that I alone had the ability and the power to accomplish something that never before in the history of man has been done! GOD DID IT, though He used me as a human servant. NO MAN BY HUMAN ABILITY COULD HAVE ACHIEVED IT.

“Yet God always has worked through ONE MAN, surrounded by helpers.”

Co-Worker Letter, Nov. 19, 1976

“Did God raise up a one-man LEADERSHIP to be used by Him in building this spiritual TEMPLE and in proclaiming after 1,900 years the true GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD in ALL THE WORLD—to even go to kings and heads of nations (Rev. 10:11)—in bringing the Church back to the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED (Jude 3)?”

Co-Worker Letter, Mar. 19, 1981

Of course, God *did* use ONE MAN to lay the foundation and to plumb the spiritual Temple of God through the twentieth century. If you still accept what you once believed in regard to what Mr. Armstrong taught about the government of God, and if you understand that government is always led through one man, your search is easy.

Again then, who is it that does the final measuring of the Temple?

Find the Temple of God today and you will know the answer! While those *outside* the Temple would not recognize who this will be, those *inside* would know.

God would not bring in someone other than His designated leader. If He did, why would He do this?—who else would it be?—and how could His Church know that He did? God would not wait until the end of the age

and suddenly change His pattern of working through ONE MAN. This would work against Himself *and* against what His people would—or should be—expecting and looking for. Besides, the man has to be the one *within God’s government* who carries the SCEPTER OF AUTHORITY. Mr. Armstrong showed the pattern of that authority, and it would not change today!

However, in the truest and ultimate sense, it is God who measures His Temple. Do not lose sight of this. But, and this is the point, God always works through His chosen human servant! In any age, this man is just an earthen human vessel—a clay pot (II Cor. 4:7)—through whom God works. God’s leaders are never the equivalent of modern Caesars who present “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” in matters small or large. This final leader is used to merely formally identify and recognize what God has been measuring all along (recall I Peter 4:17) by the biblical standard that He has made available all along.

So then, the answer to who measures the Temple is GOD! Grasp this sobering reality!

When Is the Temple Measured—Officially?

We must pause for the purpose of a “look back.” My books *THE TRUE CHURCH*, “*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” and *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* quoted Mr. Armstrong and the Bible extensively, and explained in detail the truth of what is the Church of God and the Body of Christ. This volume has made equally clear the connection of these terms to the Temple or House of God. All who have read this material should have been left without doubt. In fact, the truth contained in them was virtually impossible to be misunderstood by those who were even a little honest with the scriptures cited and principles given.

Beginning May 1999, I was led to write and preach (and post) a tremendous amount of material focusing on what is the true Church and Body of Christ. The books referenced in the above paragraph are not all that I have written. There is also a fascinating full-length, 223-page book *Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!*, as well as two booklets that are available—*Where Is God’s Church?* and *Here Is The Restored Church of God*.

I have also given and posted a *four-part* sermon series about the true Church that a great many thousands have heard, as well as another *two-part* series titled “The Body of Christ: Why Most Are No Longer In It—But Assume They Are!”

I have also done a four-part *World to Come* video series on the true Church. And I have delivered probably a full dozen or more sermons on

how the undivided government of God leads the undivided Church of God. In all points they agree with Mr. Armstrong.

All of these materials have served to make most clear what is and is *not* the true Church of God—what Jesus did and did *not* build after His promise in Matthew 16:18. Thousands all through the splinters are reading, viewing and hearing what is available. Surely no one else has EVER focused as much on all the Bible verses, principles and quotes from Mr. Armstrong as I have been required to do.

Measuring the Temple is seen to be closely connected to first properly *defining* the command. But it also includes the process of years that will ultimately demonstrate who *returns* to that Temple. This means all the way to a point of culmination, now just ahead. Seen in its full context, it becomes clear that “measuring the Temple” involves a process with *God’s people* running PARALLEL with the period of “prophesy again” being simultaneously carried out to “peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings” of *the world*. How obvious that the same Church would be carrying out both commissions.

Just as obvious then is that today’s Church of God leader is the one of whom the apostle John was a type at the end of the age. Mr. Armstrong was not ashamed or embarrassed to declare that he was an apostle—and the modern Zerubbabel—and the Ezekiel watchman. You have seen his bold words. Neither can I be ashamed or embarrassed to acknowledge whom God has used to fulfill what John recorded. I am not!

“The Remnant of Her Seed”—Again

Another incredible scenario emerges as Philadelphians are “taken” to the Place of Safety, and those of Laodicean condition are left behind. God’s people would do well to meditate on what comes next.

Recall that in Revelation 12:16-17 Laodiceans are described as the “remnant of her [the woman’s] seed [children].” Turn there and notice how, just after Philadelphia escapes, the dragon’s pursuing “flood” (army) is swallowed in an earthquake—yet another type of ancient Israel leaving Egypt: “And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood [army] which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed [Laodicea], which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

The angry, rebuffed “dragon” (Satan) is immediately described as turning his attention—and his “guns”—toward the horrified “remnant”

brethren (who will be scattered around the world) still in shock over the unexpected turn of events they just experienced. Those so recently driven out—ejected—you have seen will be “trodden underfoot” by other divisions within Satan’s Gentile armies readily available around Jerusalem. This may not happen immediately. Desperate people will try to hide—will try to save themselves through any means.

But soon—imprisonment, torture and death arrive!

Of course, again, those of Laodicea will not have been taken to Judea. This will be in part because they will have been deceived by events—thinking “the time is not right” and that their fellow brethren could have continued “eating and drinking,” and “buying, selling, planting and building” (Matt. 24:38; Luke 17:27-28) for a while longer. Others will simply have come to a painful awareness that they “blew it.” Yet these will probably also try to hide from the Beast who will force his “mark” without exception.

However, all of these will be hunted down and “brought to justice”! The only “good news” in this horror is that God’s remnant people *will* admit their condition, deeply repent and still *will* receive salvation through martyrdom! This will occur during the same period that the other half who lost God’s Spirit because they would not repent, and are too weak to resist, will succumb to the mark of the Beast.

“Leave out the court” is a phrase of truly immense importance to thousands today. The picture it elicits is not pleasant to contemplate, but what you have seen described *will happen!* How many will be willing to act in advance on what they have learned? While most will not, or will not be worried much about it if they do, some will read and *act*.

You could be one of the few of the seventh era who will refuse to let events overtake them!

Revelation Means Reveal

Turn to the very beginning of the book of Revelation. It opens with Christ’s stated purpose for which John recorded the book: “The revelation of Jesus Christ...to *show* [make known, reveal] unto His servants things which must *shortly come to pass*...blessed is he that reads, and they that HEAR the words of this prophecy, and KEEP [Grk: obey] those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (1:1-3). The book closes with this repeat for emphasis: “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that KEEPS [obeys] the sayings of the prophecy of this book” (22:7), and “Seal *not* the sayings of the prophecy of this book: *for the time is at hand*” (22:10).

The Greek word translated “revelation” is *apocalypse*. This word means to reveal—not conceal, hide, veil or close up. The dictionary definition of *revelation* is: “The act of revealing or disclosing; something revealed, especially a dramatic disclosure of something not previously known or realized.”

Let’s be clear. God intends that His servants understand the book of Revelation. The chapter 11 “Measuring the Temple of God” would certainly be no exception—and in fact it is not. Its meaning *has* been revealed. After all, Christ’s instruction would be impossible to carry out if God did not disclose what specific terms and symbols mean. (And His leader would have to know first so that he could explain them.)

God knew that the burden was on Him to be sure His servants had no excuse—that they could not claim “ignorance of the law.” If one *chooses* not to “read” or “hear” what can be known, that is one thing. But how can one “obey” what was never *shown* (revealed) to him?—and how can one “keep” what he never had?

Will you *hear* what has been shown? Will you *keep* it?

No Exceptions!

One of the greatest quirks of human nature is that human beings—nearly all of them—believe they are “exceptions to the rule.” Most people live their entire lives under this illusion.

Here are a few examples: Employees tend to assume that they can leave bad work habits unaddressed and this will not catch up to them over time. Others believe they can drive while intoxicated and get away with it. Of course, most believe they can eat junkfood every day but not get sick. Millions of married couples believe they can violate the principles governing a happy union, but that their marriage will still survive. Worse, the majority of human beings believe they can, at least in little ways, lie, cheat and steal without consequences. Much worse, criminals believe they can commit crimes and misdemeanors and never be brought to justice.

Recall from “*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” how I explained that most people assume “accidents only happen to others.” While people generally recognize that there is *cause* and *effect* in life, the human nature within them lulls them into believing that it only applies to the “unfortunate others”—that they can “get away with” what would catch up to anyone else. In fact, almost no one lives his life truly believing “you reap what you sow.”

The same is true of God’s judgment. Most people would readily acknowledge what has been referenced several times, that “judgment is

[now] on the House of God,” but very few seem to live as though this verse applies to themselves. People can read in the scriptures the many places that warn “there is no respect of persons with God,” (Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9, etc.), meaning that no one receives favoritism in judgment. They can also be generally aware of verses like these two—“But he that does wrong shall receive for the wrong which he has done; and there is no respect of persons” (Col. 3:25), and “if you call on the Father, who without respect of persons judges according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear” (I Pet. 1:17)—but they are not deeply sobered by any need for close personal application of them. They do not move through each day of their lives with this understanding constantly before them.

They do *not* “sojourn here with fear” as they should!

If you think you do, and you are in a splinter—*any* splinter—I urge you to think again. While you could be one of the rare exceptions to this, you probably are not, and should concern yourself with what you will do from this moment forward.

Each of us should hold no illusions about our conduct in the eyes of God. All parts of it will eventually come to light for exactly what it has been. Ultimately, it *will be* measured of God. Jesus declared, “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known” (Matt. 10:26). Paul added this: “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God” (I Cor. 4:5).

Now this sobering warning from the very apostle Paul himself, who recognized even *he* had to “keep under [Grk: beat] my body...lest...I myself should be a castaway” (I Cor. 9:27).

Then there is what Ezekiel wrote in the context of the Tribulation and the events surrounding it: “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, says the Lord GOD” (14:14). Just six verses later (verse 20), this is repeated by God for emphasis, using nearly the same language, but noting that even family members—“neither son nor daughter”—would receive special treatment.

Ezekiel’s words should carry much greater meaning to you because they must be considered part of his overall warning message!

The blunt message of Scripture is that no matter how great a servant of God may be, no matter how high his office, no matter his prior record of service, in the end, “every tub has to sit on its own bottom”—“for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap” (Gal. 6:7).

Ponder very, very carefully the verses of the last few paragraphs—and really those of the whole chapter. Practice telling yourself that they apply not just to others—but to YOU! Force yourself to make them personal. Practice remembering them until they are *habit*, and this will literally transform your thinking—and both your view of and your place within the prophecy explained in this chapter!

During the time of measuring: Your personal wealth does not count. Who you know does not count. Your level of education does not count. Your last name—who you are related to—does not count. Number of years “in the Church” does not count. Previous early reputation for character and service does not count. Being beautiful, handsome, young, old, white, black or yellow does not count. It will come down to who is *in the Temple*.

THAT—and THAT ALONE—will count!

Just as there is today no mystery to who is and who is not in the Temple of God, in the near future there will also be no mystery. On Christ’s authority, I tell you that there will be *no exceptions* to God’s application when the complete measuring is finished!

Your Concern

Finally, realize that God would have to *send* a man at the right moment, after Mr. Armstrong’s time, but before the age ended, to explain this crucially important prophecy—and others!

He did this!

Just as someone had to explain the identity of the 144,000, the meaning and time of the “short work,” the actual fulfillment of “prophecy again,” how the Great Multitude and Israelite Remnant mesh, how to anoint the eyes to escape Laodicea, exactly what happens at the moment God’s people are “taken” to the Place of Safety, among *a few* related points of knowledge, make yourself recognize and ACCEPT that someone had to be *sent* (the literal meaning of the highest New Testament office) to correctly teach “measure the temple of God”!

This happened! A messenger *was* sent to explain critical matters!

You are counseled to not let smugness defeat you—to be willing to deeply examine your condition. And you are further counseled to focus on GOD’S MASTER PLAN—*strategic* and *operational*—for finishing His Work, and whether you will support it...

THE RCG STRATEGIC PLAN

The Restored Church of God has operated under a long-term *Strategic Plan*. This plan has to do with our early priorities for preparing to continue the WORK, feed the FLOCK, restore the full TRUTH and rewrite the Church's past LITERATURE. Some initially misunderstood our intentions. Others knew them, but found advantage for their own organization in misrepresenting them. This chapter looks more closely at where we have been, and where we are, with Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen looking more closely at where we are going!

May 1999

The Restored Church of God came into existence in May 1999. Since its inception, many have asked that we explain the Church's "strategic plan" for continuing God's Work and feeding the flock—the First and Second Commissions. Most inquiries of this nature come from people who attend one of the splinters. Of course, we refer them to our extensive material designed for those with a Church of God background. Everything about who and what we are has been explained in exhaustive detail in our *Splinter Explanation Packet*. And many have found it is also helpful in understanding our early history.

We did not formally present a synopsis or overview of our Strategic Plan until June 2002. At that point, because our enemies were taking delight in declaring that we were not going to continue the Great

Commission, and had no plans for such, we revealed the plan. Obviously, it has evolved over the course of time, continually expanding as we have identified new publishing projects that God wanted to be carried out and as new opportunities—gigantic open doors!—have presented themselves. This “evolution” has been dramatic.

Some Background

Before giving specifics of the plan, some background is necessary to understand a critical decision we faced very early in our development. It has everything to do with what we are today, and in a sense *defines* The Restored Church of God.

Some history: I was disfellowshipped from the Global Church of God on May 3, 1999 for defending truths that its leadership would no longer teach. This followed a major split that had occurred in this organization about six months earlier. Though that division eventually culminated in a struggle for power in late 1998, my concern centered on the many *false doctrines* that had crept into that Church. I said this very loudly at the time, but few listened.

During this difficult period, and for some time before, I became increasingly aware that *all* of the splinters were compromising many doctrines given by God to His Church. Some were admitting they had made changes. Others (like the Global Church of God, which became the Living Church of God) were deceitfully claiming they had not. All were growing worse! I knew something had to be done.

By now you have probably read enough that it should be obvious Christ established The Restored Church of God for those willing and strong enough to stand up for the UNCOMPROMISED *restored* truth. Christ knew that all who loved the pure, unabridged—and unvarnished—doctrines of the Bible, as the Church once understood them, and who wanted to continue supporting God’s Work as the Church once did it, had to have a place to do this! Now they would. Gradually, over time, more and more brethren learned about us and left the splinters to join us.

Of course, from 1999, I was able to speak much more loudly about doctrinal compromise throughout the splinters. This book, along with my 2-volume Biography, demonstrates at what level!

A Crucial Decision

Shortly before establishing Restored, I envisioned reprinting Mr. Armstrong’s literature and using it to rekindle the same Work. This seemed

the most natural and desirable way for an organization believing *all* that he taught to continue Jesus' commission as God used Mr. Armstrong to do it. It would have been the most correct way to go forward—and much easier, faster and less expensive than any other approach. It also would have allowed me time to simultaneously write the over 2,000 pages of books like this one, so necessary just to explain the apostasy and related questions for those with a Church of God background.

After almost 29 years in the ministry at the time, I simply could not leave God's sheep "hanging" in regard to the greatest questions facing the Church in this age. Mr. Armstrong had personally trained me and I felt a duty to explain to God's people what happened and to warn of the consequences of what would yet happen if they did not heed Christ's warning. While opinions were everywhere, I also saw that no one else felt the need to do this in any systematic way.

But Federal Copyright Law eventually prohibited us from republishing Mr. Armstrong's material. (Having already reprinted eleven of his smaller booklets, we were forced to stop.) As mentioned, a Federal Appellate Court upheld the WCG's copyright, and the Supreme Court refused to hear PCG's appeal. Because PCG was not willing to rewrite the literature, it had pressed on blindly, wasting years and millions of dollars in legal expenses, in hopes of overturning the decision. The WCG later sold a number of copyrights to PCG for more millions.

We were not so foolish—or so "patient." Understanding it is the truth Mr. Armstrong taught that is important, rather than his precise wording, we accepted God's will and proceeded with the only alternative: Take on the staggering task of rewriting *all* the Church's past literature!

That has been done, and was completed in 2005.

On a related note, let me underscore again for emphasis that some other individuals and small groups, pretending to be independent Christians "defending the truth" and "carrying on the heritage of Mr. Armstrong's literature" even *after* the official legal ruling, today openly defy the law and publish Mr. Armstrong's writings, anyway. They feel no restraint, nor will they accept any from anyone or any organization. Naturally, others are happy to link to these sites—thereby endorsing them—and disobey Romans 13:1-7, among other scriptures. This includes the Eighth Commandment prohibiting stealing. We pray for all these people, because they are in more trouble than they know—with God, and possibly man!

Therefore, early on, I had to make a simple decision between two clear choices: (1) Immediately re-start the First Commission, without

either literature or a trained and faithful staff and ministry, or (2) *first* reconstruct the enormous amount of written material explaining all of God’s doctrines (which no other leader or *entire organization* was willing to do), and *then* expand into what would be a *much larger* and *more effective* Work. While some organizations wrote a couple booklets and immediately started a “work” on radio or television, I knew that approach would be unwise for a host of reasons.

In addition, I recognized that when Mr. Armstrong left Sardis in 1933, only 19 people came with him and six of them were his family. This meant he had no *immediate* pastoral responsibility to a shattered flock of hundreds following his lead—and to the thousands more left scattered and confused, with many of these wondering where to go.

I did!

Why Rewrite First?

It became obvious that the second approach was far better for several reasons. Here is a summary of each:

(1) It re-established, in writing, clear evidence of what the entire Church once believed and practiced. It also re-established where the *voice* of Christ was found, for those still able to recognize what this was and who were looking for it. All mystery about what we teach would also be stripped away.

Consider again. Over time, it has become obvious to more and more of God’s people that Christ is gathering His faithful flock to The Restored Church of God to finish the Work before flight to safety. This gathering has also sped up with time, and become another reason we had to make absolutely plain where Christ’s voice is at work. Taken together, you have learned John 10:4 and 18:37 explain who *hears* that voice—TRUTH!—and who does not. These passages remove any doubt about *exactly what it is* Christ’s sheep listen and look for. Most do not even know of these verses, let alone read them carefully! Do this if you have not yet.

As vital as it is to finish the commission Mr. Armstrong started, *no one* who loves the doctrines of God believes the Work is *more* important than teaching all of the truth (including publicly establishing that one does). Nor would it be even *as* important. In addition, therefore, it must also be clearly established for all to see that we *never* compromise. This would be no easy task—we knew our work was cut out for us.

Consider this to make a point. Many religions, including Protestants, Catholics and the WCG, are doing some kind of “work”—and are preaching a “gospel.” Of course, no one would consider joining them to

“support the work,” because what they *teach* is wrong. Why then would one consider joining a “work” that teaches *some* things wrong, reflecting the wrong “tree” in the Garden (mixing good and evil knowledge)? How many times did Mr. Armstrong warn of this? If you have “eyes to see and ears to hear,” you will understand this point!

(2) We did not start with thousands (or even *many* hundreds) of people, as well as hundreds (or even dozens) of ministers. We also lacked the resources and funding necessary to *immediately* do anything that could have any impact.

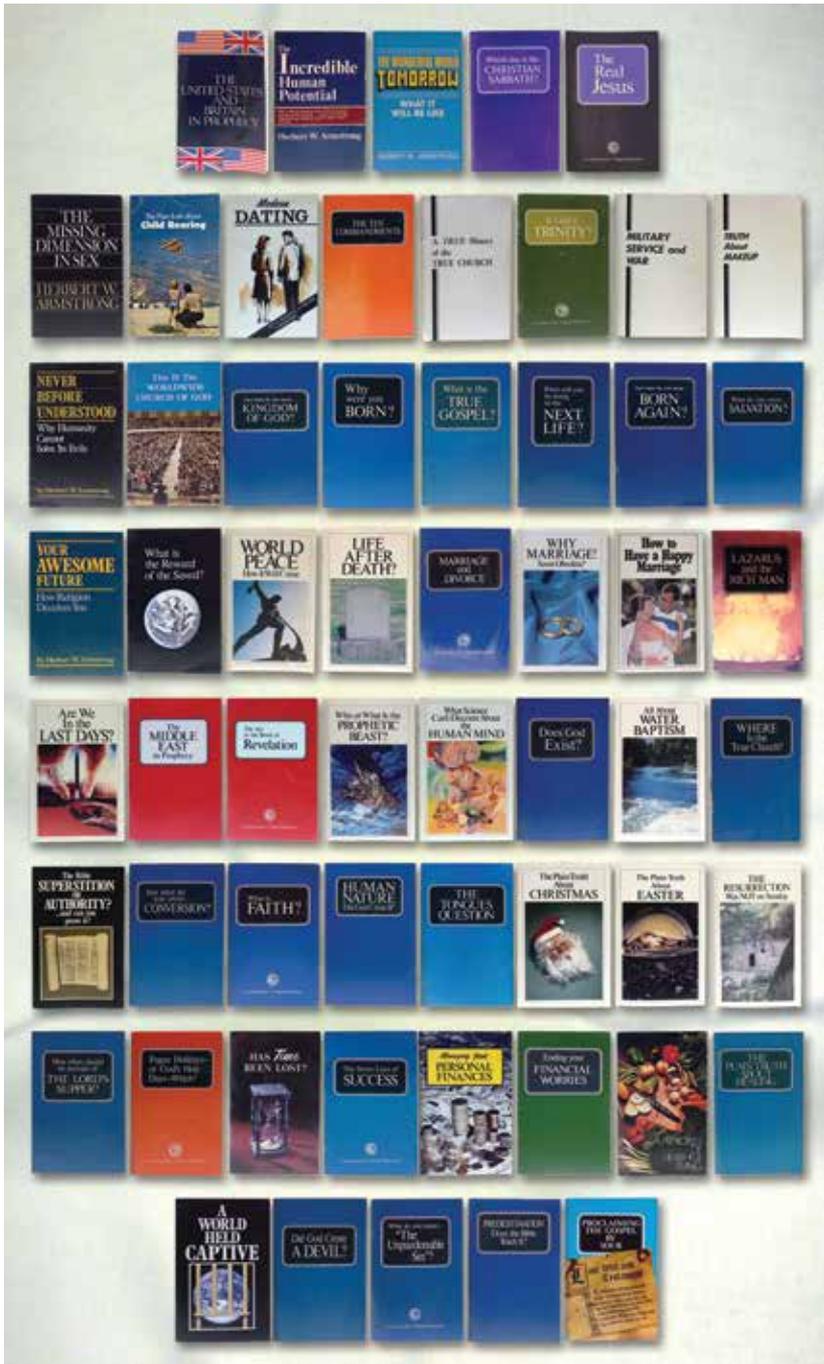
(3) During the extraordinarily challenging and difficult period of literature reconstruction—writing (and my late wife typing) in only *five years* what Mr. Armstrong and others wrote in *52 years*—I realized we would have time to slowly grow larger while becoming more prepared to eventually expand the Work at great speed.

(4) A tiny early staff—now approaching 100, but at first only five, plus a couple part-time volunteers—of zealous, but initially relatively inexperienced, people would be insufficient to keep up with the truly enormous workload, even working 50-60 hours week after week as we had to. (I was *forced* to work 80 or more hours each week for years, with my wife doing the same.) The staff also needed time to mature and gain experience in what it *means* to reconstruct God’s Work. In addition, we had some initial start-up difficulties because certain of our earliest employees, unable to see what they had become part of, suddenly left us and did absolutely everything in their power to destroy God’s Church and me through outrageous false accusations and lies. (In fact, if our early years had become a book or movie it would have been named “Against All Odds.” And, part of God’s overall test and Plan—you probably are witnessing this—our enemies’ efforts continue.) But when this happened, we simply followed Mr. Armstrong’s example of accepting setbacks as the cocking of a gun before it fires a bullet. But it did have some initial effect.

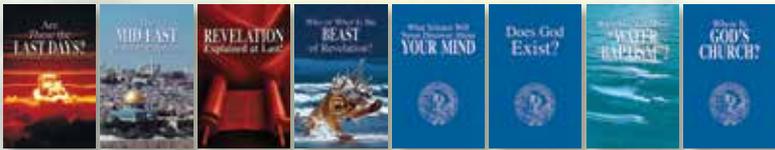
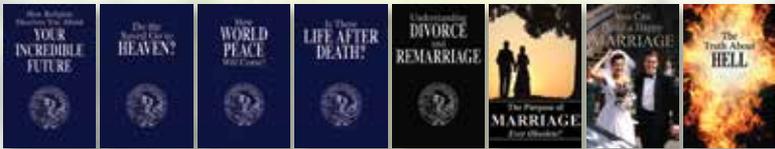
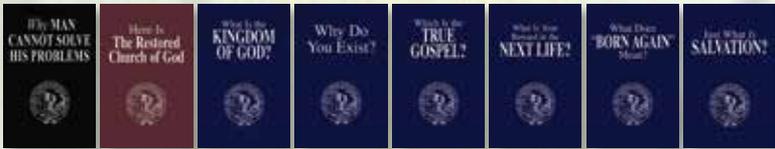
We also have annually carried out our plans to hire more people in new and crucial areas of the Work. Many others will almost certainly be hired every year going forward. (More pastors would be in addition, and this will be discussed later.)

(5) For years, I was the only *full-time* minister in Restored. Today we have full-time ministers around the world, plus many local church elders. While we were steadily blessed with a growing number of faithful pastors, elders and deacons, I still had to continue working alone in certain regards.

Certainly, we will continue to do much more as additional staff, pastors and elders come with us—but large numbers of these have not. Of course, while we know that prophecy is not encouraging in this regard,



Books and booklets formerly produced by the Worldwide Church of God.



Books and booklets written by The Restored Church of God.



Then: *The Bible Story*, *Youth Bible Lessons*, *Bible Correspondence Course* lessons, articles and three magazines formerly produced by the Worldwide Church of God.



...And Now: *The Story of the Bible*, *Children's Bible Lessons*, *Bible Introduction Course* lessons, articles and three magazines produced by The Restored Church of God.



Unique to Restored: Above is the additional literature unique to The Restored Church of God, which was essentially not needed in the period under Mr. Armstrong's leadership.

we also know that other (at least a few) ministers will come. This said, I recognize Mr. Armstrong also worked *entirely* alone for much longer than I. Therefore this is not *complaining* (I deeply love my work), but rather *explaining*, because it was a huge factor throughout our start-up and reconstruction phase.

This is one reason we established an extensive, and carefully prepared professional *Leadership Development Program* (LDP) early on, with a later Pastor Training Program. This expanded into the Ambassador Center (AC). We could not waste time worrying about who had *not* come with us, but instead focused on developing those faithful men and women who had. AC has been of enormous help in this training process.

(6) I knew that when the time came to begin a larger Work (in 2003), we would have virtually *every* piece of literature *already in place*, exactly as Mr. Armstrong did in his latter years. This vast supply of material (many hundreds of separate items, some in six languages) would enable us to more efficiently help many more people, and be able to offer almost *all* of God's truth *immediately*. We would also have the staff *already in place* to handle the anticipated increase in mail. (Of course, this supposed "slower pace" still put us far beyond parallel points of Mr. Armstrong's time and pattern of growth. It also ensured we could *quickly* explode to a size much larger and far beyond those with confused priorities. This happened—and is still happening as you will see.)

(7) Finally, there has been another large benefit to the path that we chose. Some, *professing* their love for the truth, refuse to join us because they incorrectly perceive that we are "not doing a *big enough* Work" or are "not on television like Mr. Armstrong."

Understand. These people have not come with us for one reason—they do not sufficiently "love the truth" (II Thes. 2:10), and by this I mean ALL OF IT. And they seem unable to recognize how enormous has become the Work and "reach" of The Restored Church of God. Sadly, they are also unwilling to explore the *facts* of our size because they would discover how immense we have grown. A big excuse for indecision would evaporate. Further, *closed minds* have kept many from recognizing the explosive dynamic effort of which they could be a part—if they would just anoint their eyes and open their minds. But, in fact, their attitude *toward certain doctrines* means they do *not belong* with us—or at least not yet.

Mr. Armstrong always understood this. I John 2:19-21 has a slightly different but similar application to such people and thinking. These brethren have literally *culled themselves* from participating with us by the compromised beliefs they have chosen. While we wish them well, God's overarching purpose has been served. Paul's statement that "all

things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28) has worked on our behalf.

The weight and number of these points made easy my decision. I knew God was guiding us!

Examining the Fruits

In under nine years, The Restored Church of God was able to complete more than 100 books, booklets and brochures, plus many articles. Now consider the four largest splinters. In a combined total of over 50 years of existence, they have *collectively* produced perhaps about 75 to 80 books and booklets after the pattern from the past. This will probably slowly increase. Also, these publications are incomplete in content and weak in language, as well as of lesser physical quality.

Take the time to peruse their websites and examine their titles—and then look at ours (a few pages back). Notice the many familiar topics from the past that they ignore, apparently thinking them unimportant or unessential to rewrite. Then actually read through a few they have—if you can endure the disappointment!

(Incidentally, we did not count PCG, which has produced over 30 booklets containing what could only be called nonsense—silly prophetic junk—incorrectly connecting hundreds of plain Old Testament passages in the prophets either to Gerald Flurry, Laodicea, Philadelphia or Mr. Armstrong, when these are so obviously addressing physical Israel and Judah. These publications butcher the kinds of passages referenced throughout Chapters Ten, Eleven, Thirteen and Fourteen. We also did not count the literature of Mr. Armstrong that PCG prints.)

Combined, UCG, LCG, PCG and COGwa and COGaic have about 32,000 people, over 800 ministers, staffs totaling almost 200, and take in \$60 million annually. Unlike The Restored Church of God, such groups are “rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing”—except a lot more literature and zeal to prepare it. But first they would have to recapture *and* teach all the doctrinal truth they profess to love. I speak rhetorically, because this is not foretold to happen in these “sisters of the seventh era.” In a fraction of their collective age, and with a tiny fraction of their resources and staff, demonstrating God’s miraculous help, we have already out-produced them all—combined—SIGNIFICANTLY!

In the face of these demonstrable facts, *you* decide, on just this basis, who is lukewarm—as well as “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17)—and I speak here just in the organizational and production sense, and regarding zeal.

I periodically talk to ministers in other organizations and am invariably appalled at the amount of basic understanding they have lost—and seemingly without a clue that this has occurred. Of course, we hope many more brethren in these groups will yet “anoint their eyes” so they may see what they once had and join The Restored Church of God in doing the Work of delivering a massive arsenal of literature and broadcasts—THE TRUTH!—to all nations while there is yet time!

The fate awaiting the brethren of the seventh era does not have to include them—or you. Every person has a CHOICE about his future!

As of December 2011

Bear in mind that for years, because of steady progress and evolving plans, the numbers that follow changed almost daily. For this reason, the statistics, dates and certain time-sensitive references in this section are periodically revised. The date on this subhead will always tell you when the last revision occurred.

Here is a summary of what we produced in 12 years and 8 months:

(1) Again, Restored now has 108 *books*, *booklets* and *brochures* in place. Such a rate of production has *never* happened in the history of God’s Church! The enormous help and guidance of God—coupled with technology, efficiency, unity of purpose, zeal and hard work—made this possible. As Mr. Armstrong taught, we are to “*pray* as though it all depends on God and *work* as though it all depends on us.”

Incidentally, I have rewritten all 47 of Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets. Besides *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*, which only Mr. Armstrong was APPOINTED to write, there are no exceptions to this. Mr. Armstrong explained in that book that he was almost certainly the messenger to Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7), and this was the centerpiece of his work to that era. (Recall that he described it as possibly the most important book after the Bible.) However, we discovered, largely after the fact, that we had incorporated nearly every aspect of *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* into other literature.

(2) We currently have almost 60 *articles*—some longer or even much longer than certain of our booklets—teaching additional important doctrines, and covering the same topics as the WCG when it was on track. Perhaps a few more will be written over time.

(3) Restored has produced about 230 *form letters*, reflecting all those available in the past, plus others. About 30 serve members of the Church, internally. The others are on our website as “Q & A’s.”

(4) We regularly publish a large, full-color magazine for our members, *The Pillar*, which is similar to the old *Good News* magazine, with

some “Church news” aspects of *The Worldwide News* included. This publication is loaded with meaty articles that assist the Church (the ministry) in its responsibility to feed God’s flock. The content demonstrates that no one else publishes anything like it.

Flagship Magazine!

(5) We made the decision in late 2001 to work toward a four-color, *Plain Truth*-style magazine. We stayed on track and all of the necessary editorial staff and writers fell into place to launch this flagship magazine by January 2003. Called *The Real Truth*, this monthly publication reflects the quality of *The Plain Truth*. It educates mankind about *why* society is fast mirroring Sodom and Gomorrah—*why* violent crime is exploding—*why* the breakdown of character and moral decay around the world—*why* America is plagued with evils of every kind—*why* the United States and Britain are declining in power and prestige, while the European Union continues to rise—*why* world peace has been so elusive—and *why* man cannot solve his political, moral, social, economic, criminal, educational, personal and *spiritual* problems.

Like its predecessor, *The Real Truth* offers humanity its only hope! (Ask: Why do two of the four large wealthy splinters produce their “flagship” magazines only bi-monthly? What are their priorities?)

With the arrival of this magazine, and our websites, we are spreading the good news of the kingdom of God to the world, and God’s warning to modern Israel—backed by the *fullness* of His truth—as a witness. *The Real Truth* is currently read throughout the Israelite nations of the United States, Canada, Britain, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand—and *every* other country and territory on Earth. (*rcg.org*, *realtruth.org* and *worldtocome.org* have reached all 193 countries on Earth, as well as most or all territories.) As mentioned, it is now also read by any number of heads of state, among other leaders.

It made much more sense to publish this magazine *after* we finished all of the other necessary materials to be able to properly *follow through* and teach all those who became interested through its message.

(6) In conjunction with *The Real Truth* magazine, 16 brochures in our *Prophetic Trends and Conditions* series have been published.

(7) God’s Church has produced an entire *Bible Introduction Course*, with 30 lessons (bound in two volumes). Primarily designed for adults, this course was also written in a way that would work well for teenagers.

(8) We have rewritten all of the original *Bible Story* books, titled *The Story of the Bible*, and included one extra volume.

(9) We launched a four-color youth magazine—*Ambassador Youth*—in August 2003. It is similar to the original *Youth 81...82...83*, etc. This quality, no-nonsense magazine is published quarterly.

(10) We have rewritten all of the original “Y.E.S.” lessons—Kindergarten through 6th grade—a monumental undertaking. This vital project for the young children of the Church—called the *Children’s Bible Lessons*—began to be a reality in October 2003. In just over three years, all *twelve lessons* were completed in *seven levels*—84 lessons total! We have also regularly produced for years both Spring and Fall editions of a *Children’s Holy Day Activity Book*. No one else attempts to produce anything similar. Automatically sent to members, all of these are available from our website to everyone outside God’s Church, and many thousands download or receive these many lessons and books.

(11) We have a comprehensive Member Services Section (in several languages) on *rcg.org* so our brethren can freely access hundreds of our sermons (we currently list over 600), among numerous other things found there. This includes regularly posted videos ranging from lectures given at Ambassador Center to special music productions. We intend to *never* neglect our duty in these extra ways.

(12) We have many internal tools in place that serve both the brethren around the world and the machinery of the Church. Because we do not have hundreds of ministers, we had to prepare additional, very detailed manuals—*Festival Planning Manual*, *Editorial Instruction Manual*, *Host Information Manual*, *The Real Truth Newsstand Distribution Manual* and our *Leadership Development Program*, among others. More tools can be added as needs mature.

(13) We have produced a beautiful, high-quality Bible hymnal similar to the purple WCG version, also automatically sent to new members. We offer a musical CD for accompaniment, as well as another wonderful DVD collection of music for the Church.

(14) We produce an annual high-quality sacred calendar for our brethren.

(15) Unlike any splinter, we produce a well-illustrated yearly Manpower brochure to inform Church members of the ever-expanding ministry and Work around the world.

Our Literature Policy

An essential element of our Strategic Plan involves how and to whom we distribute literature. Because of the vastness of what we have available,

and because it is of such high quality, we face something the Church of God has never faced.

Some explanation. The ten books and related sermons explaining the apostasy to those with a Church of God background are very expensive to produce and mail. Jesus taught, “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8)—and we happily do this. Preparing and providing these special materials is part of the responsibility of God’s Church, and of true shepherds. It was a duty no one else and no other organization would perform—or could even understand *how* to perform.

For some time we were only able to offer the *rewritten* material teaching and explaining God’s doctrines to those learning them for the *first* time. Here is why: Though the majority today have *forgotten* or *rejected* certain biblical truths, former WCG brethren at least once knew these doctrines. Therefore, receiving hardcopies of this literature generally should not be necessary for them to make their decision whether to come with us. Besides, our website makes virtually *everything* we have instantly available to *everyone*! All material can be accessed instantly and without limit.

Some initially accused us of unwillingness to send hardcopies to those in the splinters. They seemed unable to grasp that our SEP alone (again, very expensive), explaining the apostasy *in great detail*, contains over 2,000 pages of information—far more literature in itself than what any of their organizations offer in *total* produced for its members *and* the world! (And remember, we also offer thousands of pages of *other* material.)

Part of our Strategic Plan has been—and always will be—to avoid *wasting* resources. We cannot afford to spend money we do not have. Remember, Christ instructed the apostles to make “*disciples* of all nations,” not “*subscribers*—or *viewers*—or *listeners*—of all nations.” This must be done wisely, within a budget (I Cor. 4:2). Steady growth changed our circumstances and we became able to more freely offer hardcopies to those of Church of God background.

Any who will not act on the knowledge and proof of over 2,000 (SEP) pages—again, freely offered—will probably never act, period! Our obligation to such people has been met. But, we do send literature explaining God’s truth brought to the Church through Mr. Armstrong to those in the splinters wishing hardcopies.

Some may find interesting the story behind our literature...

A PERSONAL STORY

Rewriting Mr. Armstrong's Literature

This is an inset chapter, and it is *personal*—yet it directly involves *you!*

It involves my PERSONAL STORY of rewriting Mr. Armstrong's literature—and why I considered this enormous task to be an amazing blessing, opportunity and duty, rather than a burden or just an obligation.

I have often thought that I have lived a most privileged life. Of course, just living in a modern Western nation and enjoying the birthright blessings is enough to make this true. Certainly, having been called into the truth over 45 years ago, and having been able to attend Ambassador College (and when it was on track) makes this infinitely more true. The wide range of experiences that I have enjoyed has enriched my life beyond all bounds.

I have been blessed to travel the world, have a wonderful family—three children—and now many grandchildren. Meeting many remarkable people has also been a big part of this experience. My list of extraordinary blessings is endless. Probably most readers could create their own list of privileges and blessings, with the rich experiences that shaped and defined their lives.

A Common Experience

This chapter will describe a *different* and unusual privilege from any I have known, or ever could have dreamed. Let me explain.

First, look at a part of the past that is probably familiar to most readers. The Worldwide Church of God once produced a 58-lesson Bible Correspondence Course. This course was eventually replaced by a 32-lesson version, (which was in turn later replaced with one of 12 lessons.)

The 58-lesson course was different. It required students to look up and *write answers* to basic questions. This was because every fourth lesson was followed by a simple test to be returned for grading before the student could continue with four more lessons sent. Mr. Armstrong knew the value of physically writing out God's doctrinal truths in a logical, sequential way. The Correspondence Course required this!

Most could never forget this exercise, and many probably still have their original handwritten answers to those early lessons. I certainly will never forget the experience of all that writing! (I was age 17 when I began and high school had been presenting enough opportunities to write.) Simply reading my description of this is probably enough to bring back a flood of memories, and this is what I am trying to do now—bring back memories!

This requires further explanation.

A Difficult Period

There have been three other times that I have been involved in an extensive exercise similar to writing out the old *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*.

Now for a brief description of the *second* time I did something similar. The reasons were not so pleasant. In late 1985, just before Mr. Armstrong died, I was demoted by Joseph Tkach, Sr., after he had already systematically stripped away most of my pastorate. This man had deeply resented my relationship with Mr. Armstrong and openly told me so. With Mr. Armstrong dying, he pounced.

I was sent to New York City and placed under two successive men who were told to give me little to do—"teach me a lesson" and "break me." This intensely difficult trial lasted for 4 1/3 years. I went from pastoring almost 1,100 people (some time before my transfer) in a beautiful part of western New York state to a level of responsibility equivalent in some ways to little more than a deacon. (This is not intended to denigrate the important service of faithful deacons, but merely to explain my severe reduction in responsibility after having had such special and extensive previous training for pastoral service.) All of this occurred while having to serve in some of the most dangerous neighborhoods on Earth!

I suddenly found that I had much time on my hands—and not by choice. Like a prisoner in a cell, I had to fill that time, and I decided there was one activity that was the most profitable way to do this! I determined to start organizing and printing, by hand, ALL of the key scriptures on every major subject in God’s Word pertaining to Christian growth and overcoming. I knew this would be a daunting task, but decided that the benefits would be well worth the time spent—time I had in abundance. I saw value in a refresher about basics.

Extensive Research

After selecting a topic (such as peace, happiness, wisdom, patience, faith, love, etc.), I would then look up *every single scripture* throughout the *entire* Bible that was in any way related to the subject. This often involved many hundreds of passages. Next, I would selectively print out, laboriously by hand, a large number—50 to 100, and sometimes up to 200—of the clearest scriptures on each subject until I had exhausted it. For instance, there are 121 passages recorded under “Faith and Confidence” and 90 under the heading “Persecution, Trials and Tribulation.”

The project slowly took on a life of its own. I got to where I looked forward to each new topic. Ultimately, I wrote out thousands of passages. This task took years and I was transferred back to pastoring just before completing it.

I now look back treasuring the many hours and years spent doing this. I still have the original notebook, and periodically review its contents, as did my late wife. Among other benefits, this project helps me remember an extremely humbling period in my ministry—and life!—when circumstances *forced* me to bury myself in the project, in part to defeat discouragement and boredom.

I have often reflected on this long and most difficult trial—and on the *many* benefits gained from this exercise that are still serving me today. For instance, it permanently changed my view of how God assembled His Word for our benefit. Space does not permit me to tell of all the other wonderful lessons that flowed from this scriptural research. (You could probably cite similar lessons from writing out the old Correspondence Course.) Looking back, I have never doubted that God inspired this project. An assignment that was born of an injustice and seemed at first to be a curse turned into a great *blessing* partly because of God’s role, later seen so clearly!

The thought did not then occur to me how this exercise would serve me for many years to come. This is because I still periodically

read these scriptures aloud, sometimes in prayer, from the old, battered notebook. Pages are tattered and tabs are falling apart from age and use, and I have repaired them often, much like rebinding an old favorite Bible.

For personal reasons, I will never stop reviewing these verses—or recalling the period they represent!

My First Book

The *third* time I undertook a similar project differed only slightly from the first two—the seven-year period spanning the collating of at least 13 versions of my first book *There Came a Falling Away*—422 pages. While I did not actually physically write out this book, its preparation required exhaustive research into previously taught doctrine unlike anything ever attempted. (Of course, I received help from one who now claims all credit.) The research and lessons from *this* project are also of immeasurable value to me today—and I hope to you!

Combing through countless books, booklets, articles, magazines and letters to cull thousands of statements was an extraordinary journey, including the process of contrasting them to the false doctrines that the apostates presented. Other books to the splinters also required gathering many, many more for a similar purpose. Try to imagine the time necessary to prepare these books. It was an incredible experience and process.

Old Testament Kings

Before describing the *fourth* time I undertook a similar project, first read Deuteronomy 17:14-20:

“When you are come unto the land which the LORD your God gives you, and shall possess it, and shall dwell therein, and shall say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; you shall in any wise set him king over you, whom the LORD your God shall choose...but he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt...neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

“And it shall be, when he sits upon the throne of his kingdom, that *he shall write him a copy of this law in a book* out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and *he shall read therein all the days of his life*: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:

that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.”

This is a fascinating Old Testament passage. (You can see why I might especially relate to it.) Consider what it must have been like for the kings of Israel and Judah to perform this task. All of the tribes of Israel would have known of this commanded obligation—and that *all* kings were to do it. One can imagine that there must have been regularly scheduled times set aside when the five Books of the Law (Genesis through Deuteronomy) were to be copied by each king in his own handwriting. Millions would have been aware of the king’s obligation, with personal aides’ schedules probably set accordingly.

Just making a single copy of the Pentateuch would have been a tremendous task, considering ballpoint pens had not been invented! The quality of paper was also inferior to what is available today. We can only guess how long it must have taken for each king to perform this command. Then try to imagine how his “secretary” must have arranged his appointments around this obligation. Like waiting for any appointment today, his subjects, no doubt, had to occasionally wait for the king to finish his daily writing before he could see them.

Then, after copying the law, instead of filing it, the king was to regularly *read from it!* My late 1980s exercise helps me better understand how this *handwritten* copy would have served the king throughout his life.

In addition to teaching the king to fear God deeply (vs. 19), this process was intended to humble him (vs. 20)! There is no command that anyone but *the king* was to do this. Surely all Gentile kings around Israel must have known of this task, and that none of *their* “gods” required the same. Also, Israelite kings would have been aware that neighboring kings were familiar with this strange and tedious exercise.

While this task must have felt burdensome, God knew it served several purposes for those faithfully adhering to His instruction. (No doubt some or even most kings would have rebelled and ignored it.)

Copyright Decision

Let’s now visit this exercise from a different, but related, perspective. Most in the splinters would be aware that on September 18, 2000 the Ninth Circuit Court of California decided that it is a copyright infringement, and therefore contrary to federal law for anyone other than the

copyright holders to reproduce the old literature containing God’s truths in Mr. Armstrong’s *exact wording*. The book has referenced this twice. Though I had come to expect this decision (for various reasons at the time), it was still extremely difficult news to hear—and even more difficult to *personally* accept.

I had deeply wanted the ruling to go the other way and told myself many times afterward, when the decision was “split” two judges to one in favor of the Worldwide Church of God, how this landmark decision turned on the opinion of *one man*—a single human being! Naturally, I experienced a broad range of emotions—some not good.

I told myself that if ONE JUDGE—JUST ONE MAN!—had decided differently, I would not have needed to rewrite ALL of the books and booklets Mr. Armstrong published (plus many by other authors). These could have been subtracted from the many more he was NOT required to write, but that I was!

The shock and weight of this staggering task took weeks to settle into my mind. I hasten to add that I am years past this feeling, partly because I am now finished. But at the time, I was left stunned and overwhelmed at what lay ahead. So would anyone else!

My mind kept turning over and over what this meant: Scores of different kinds of publications, containing thousands of pages, and requiring tens of thousands of hours to complete the task.

This would take years, and I was not certain we had those years! And I wondered who would help me.

Why?

We should discuss *why* God permitted or, in fact—and I have no doubt—directly *caused* this to happen. Certainly, if “the king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD,” and “He turns it whithersoever He will” (Prov. 21:1), then God could have easily guided the outcome that so many had hoped and prayed for. He could have turned one judge’s thinking. But that was *not* His purpose. I became convinced there were *many* reasons God guided the outcome to be what it was.

FIRST, it would have been much too *easy* for us—and me!—to simply copy what Mr. Armstrong wrote. As some may be aware, this process was well underway. We had already reprinted 11 of his smaller booklets and could have easily continued.

SECOND, thousands in the splinters would be able to see our willingness to do what their much larger, wealthier organizations would not do—and were not *motivated* to do!

THIRD, many older brethren who might never reread the originals could be inspired to *re-examine* these truths in the newer books, booklets and articles. They could find investigating them interesting. It would no longer be as easy to dismiss them, saying, “I know what is in this booklet. I have *already read it.*” Memories could be refreshed.

FOURTH, of necessity the truth would now be phrased differently than before. We had no choice in this. While the style of my writing is not comparable to Mr. Armstrong, it does give “another look” to the *same* truths—which could serve to sharpen these doctrines in the minds of people who may be rereading them.

FIFTH, rewriting all of the literature would serve as a beacon to everyone who would care to know the only place where the *full truth* is still being taught! The effort put forth would for the discerning become a “city set on a hill” that could not be dismissed. This project would set us apart like nothing else, and God knew it!

SIXTH, that we must rewrite all of God’s doctrines, simply because we did not hold the copyrights, would make their precious value more real since many of Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets are still unavailable. What had been taken for granted would revive in importance.

Other reasons could be listed. For the moment, I will focus on the SEVENTH reason, which probably only applies to me.

Just the physical mechanics of rewriting multiple thousands of pages (above the 2,000-plus-page SEP) of books, booklets and articles was its own challenge. Each project presented its own obstacle. Merely selecting the most precise words, to best represent the Bible’s teaching, like hitting the proverbial “nail on the head”—while at the same time being *prohibited* from using Mr. Armstrong’s wonderfully concise wording—was an indescribably difficult task!

Try to imagine.

Of Priceless Value!

The process I had to walk through to achieve this is worth more to me than all the gold in Fort Knox and Solomon’s temple combined! Appreciate the sincerity of this statement. I daily drew inspiration and strength of doctrinal knowledge as God helped me address each new project. Again, it is difficult to select the right words even now to portray *why* I count this as *the* greatest single privilege of my life, and the furthest thing from a burden that one could imagine!

Just as the kings of Israel and Judah were humbled by copying the law, the task of having to rewrite every one of the truths of God was

truly—TRULY!—humbling. It is not easy to explain exactly why, but it was. I knew God was using me. And studying and restudying the doctrines Mr. Armstrong taught, and then writing, followed by editing each book or booklet *many* times, meaning I was reading and rereading what was written, strengthened immeasurably my knowledge of the doctrines of God. Naturally this left me in a better position to effectively teach and defend those doctrines.

I have never experienced anything like this process, and never will again. It is a feeling of awesome blessing and privilege—and of being humbled—to have been used to do this!

Inspiring, Miraculous Process

The manner in which the process itself worked was also miraculous in the truest sense. The actual *method* God used in helping me became its own amazing inspiration—and it is my hope that it will be to you. That is why I am including a brief description here, and it carries lessons—messages—for those who accuse the Work of God.

Start by taking a moment to ask yourself how so many thousands of pages of books, booklets and articles could be rewritten in about four and a half years. Again, this includes editing them *several* times, and usually *many* times, with expanded editions the result, done in the same way Mr. Armstrong added to and improved certain of his books and booklets, but over a 52-year period.

Add to this that, during the same period, most of the books to the splinters were also written (and these also expanded *many* times), as were a number of other books and booklets that Mr. Armstrong was able to assign to other writers in a way that I could not.

Then there were certain *additional* books and booklets, as well as some articles, covering various other important aspects of the truth, that had never been written before, with circumstances in this age having brought a need for them. I had to write any number of these—AND had to carefully edit everything written by *any other writer*. So, just this latter process involved writing over *three million* words, and editing *millions* more.

While some readers may doubt the following statement, nevertheless, here it is: *Every one* of the books, booklets and articles I had to rewrite was done almost entirely *without any notes*. I had no time to prepare them. With only a Bible in hand, and occasional scraps of paper, I literally called out the words, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, section by section, and often chapter by chapter of a book,

as my wife patiently typed every word. Long trains of thought would enter my mind as I spoke, with many of them coming in ways, and at speeds, that are beyond what any human being could possibly devise without God's *special intervention*—impossible without direct DIVINE INSPIRATION!

And I mean IMPOSSIBLE!!!

Over 25,000 Hours

This incredible process spanned a period of approximately 25,000 hours, between my late wife and me. Because she was a very fast typist (and I am sure that God provided her wonderful support in part for this service), I was able to move sometimes at great speed through a task that shortness of time would not permit to again occur over a period of 52 years, as could happen with Mr. Armstrong. God knew the age was short—and that a “short work” was His purpose—as well as that He had to intervene in a most powerful way to help me complete the task. This included giving both my wife and me an unbelievable *strength of endurance* to carry on day after day—and for years!

And yet our enemies scoff.

If the reader will think about this, really deeply *ponder* it, it will become obvious there could have been no other way for it to have been accomplished. And it stands as its own towering MIRACLE, declaring that God leads this Work!

And yet our enemies scoff.

Early on, my wife and I developed a sophisticated system whereby she could know, through a series of physical signals and spoken one-word terms, when I had a complex thought train in mind that she must type *without interruption*. Many were the times I knew God's Spirit was placing one thought after another in my mind, often arranged like many boxcars following in a train. The thoughts would come and come and come, for hours and hours and hours, over days, weeks, months—and eventually years—until all the publications were completed. Of course, as with every writer, it was necessary to clarify, strengthen, tighten and generally improve the text afterwards through edits before each was finished and ready for printing.

Nothing could explain what occurred as happening solely on the human level—on *human* power or “steam.” No physical pile of clay could do what I had to do—and that certainly includes me! (And my wife.) The recognition that one is being used directly by God to do something that he or she simply could not do on human strength—and

for a task so SUPREMELY IMPORTANT!—is what made this experience so humbling, and at the same time so inspiring. When truly understood, all room for *any* kind of bragging is removed.

A note to accusers and persecutors that they might consider their attacks in a new perspective: While you may be trying to *discredit* me, you in fact greatly *overcredit* me. When you suggest that either I or my wife could have done this on our own, even a fraction of it, you have unwittingly assumed a human being is capable of what *no man* could do. Not for a moment would all of this have been possible without CONTINUOUS MIRACULOUS HELP from Almighty God. None could ever be so arrogant as to believe this could be done through “brainpower.”

Attackers—reread Matthew 12:31-32 and Acts 5:34-39—and be careful what you speak against!

To all others, if you are anointing your eyes, you have much to consider in which organization you attend. Ponder this account as you look for the hand of God at work today.

Be sure to look for the right things!

Let's Talk About You

This chapter was originally written to the members of The Restored Church of God. But it has application to everyone with the Spirit of God.

It takes less than an hour to read one of our booklets, depending on its size. Books would be more. If I or our staff can spend many hours researching, writing, editing, proofreading, formatting, printing and mailing them, those who profess to love God's teachings can certainly find the time to read them—as every member did (or should have) when first learning God's Way. The value for those who do this has been enormous. (New members may request any or all of our materials—15 at a time—and these are all listed in a beautiful literature catalog sent automatically with our *Splinter Packet*.)

Look at the apostasy from a final perspective. If brethren had taken time to periodically review Mr. Armstrong's literature, more would have held to the truth when the apostates threw it out—and done so again as their current leaders selectively threw away many of the *same doctrines*. Tragically, now regretting their action, many people can remember *throwing away* all of Mr. Armstrong's literature at the request of the apostates.

Have you considered how important carefully rereading God's *many* truths is to “holding fast” (Rev. 3:11)?—or that God deems it vital for you to *regularly* do this?

Should there remain any question in your mind about this?

Also, taking time to reread relevant verses will help you to much better “endure sound doctrine”—while many around you turn to an endless variety of “fables” (II Tim. 4:1-4).

I have explained to members that it will be easy to fall into the pattern of *not reading* each book, booklet, article or other publication (magazines, bible lessons, etc.) that arrives, and that they should fight this temptation with all their might! For example, several years ago, a man left The Restored Church of God because he wanted to observe New Moons. At the same time, he suddenly decided “Mr. Armstrong was wrong on at least twelve separate doctrines.” We found out he had never *proven* that truth only enters the Church through apostles *before* joining us. (He had led us to believe he had.) Upon learning he should do this, after some thought, he decided (quickly) that he had no interest in proving this. Since he “knew” Mr. Armstrong was “wrong” on so many points—his own *human reasoning* and *feelings* were the sole source of this conviction—he concluded that he could not possibly have been an apostle. This allowed, and actually paved the way for, him to fall into wrong ideas *after* coming with us.

Had this man taken the time to thoroughly PROVE *why* he should be here, and *why* he should continually REPROVE God’s truth, he would have had a greater chance of surviving the test that swept him away into error!

Books, booklets, articles, Bible lessons and magazines have poured from our Headquarters. *Determine to read them!* They have been produced by an extremely zealous staff working many thousands of hours to feed you “to the full.” A loving God is offering you a SECOND OPPORTUNITY to cherish what you may have taken for granted.

Grave Disservice

You saw proven that Mr. Armstrong talked constantly about how our hearts must be in the truth and in the Work of God. Surely he said and wrote this *hundreds of times*. It was his continual theme in virtually every one of his co-worker letters—and it was the theme that gave his life meaning. Ours, too.

Let’s rephrase Deuteronomy 17 from the perspective of the Work. You do yourself a terrible disservice if you neglect taking time to “[re] copy the words of the law”—the literature bringing back to your remembrance and to your thinking all that you were taught about the importance of God’s Work—and thereby allow *your* heart to be “lifted up among your brethren” in Laodicean smugness.

If this happens, God can not work with you because He resists the proud and can only give grace to the humble (Jms. 4:6). As with the

kings of Israel and Judah, you will soon cease to fear God, and will drift away from serving Him “all the days of your life”—AND this means you will lose interest in the Great Commission of helping take the announcement of the kingdom of God and the rest of God’s truth to the world, as well as helping to issue the final, greatest warning of all history to the nations of Israel and the brethren of the last era!

Believe these things—and ACT on them!

More than just with reproducing the Church’s literature, we strive to do everything with a *master plan* in mind...

THE GREAT COMMISSION OPERATIONAL PLAN

Chapter Fifteen explained our *Strategic Plan*—why we did what we did, and in the order we did them, in the early years of Restored. That plan is different from our two *Operational Plans*—one for the First, or Great, Commission, the other for the Second Commission of feeding God’s flock.

This chapter and the next look in greater detail at where these commissions have taken the Church today, and where we anticipate they will take us in the future. We have well-developed plans going forward within each of the *two major commissions* given by God to the Church at the end of the age.

“Behind the Work” Video

Many will recall the Worldwide Church of God’s “Behind the Work” films produced in the last years under Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong. Our expansive, yearly “Behind the Work” films present God’s Work with the same style and impact, and offer a detailed and fascinating inside view of how God’s Church takes the gospel to all nations and territories, reaching increasing millions each year, while spiritually feeding an ever-growing worldwide flock.

Brethren in every WCG splinter owe it to themselves to see these videos. (Thousands of our readers learning the Bible’s truths for the first time have found the films eye-opening.) They are powerful, undeniable,

set-the-record-straight statements of where God now works. Those expecting the usual, incomplete amateur production presented by UCG and LCG will be left amazed. While many have dismissed us as an inconsequential “Internet ministry” and supposed “one man show,” these films thunder the truth and set the record straight!

Those with an open mind, or those unhappy with the lack of zeal in the organization they attend, but who are yet to be convinced of a “better option,” will not want to miss this inspiring behind-the-scenes film! The picture painted presents a giant contrast to all that is happening elsewhere!

God’s people have been victims of a monstrous spiritual crime. If you are among those who want returned *everything* stolen from them, and who long for the subsequent peace, harmony and real excitement enjoyed during the golden years of Philadelphia, including the wonderful unity of purpose experienced... If you wish to be part of the final true Work of God... If you only have one hour to devote to everything written or spoken by The Restored Church of God... WATCH JUST THE LATEST OF THESE VIDEOS!

On Fire for the Work!

This Christ-led Church is absolutely on fire for the Work of God, and the amount of our current material, ongoing and future projects prove it! And, as explained, we have material available in English, French, Spanish, German, Afrikaans and Dutch.

Every day, we receive a great many inquiries from people hearing God’s truth for the first time, and these are from around the world. And we hear from former *The World Tomorrow* listeners, *Plain Truth* subscribers, co-workers and ex-WCG members, hearing Christ’s voice through our literature, broadcasts and sermons. We continue to grow at a steady and rapidly accelerating rate.

But remember to keep in mind that this is the Laodicean age. It is no longer Philadelphia’s time. Because of this, and because time is growing short, I have previously explained that it is not possible to do the same kind of large Work—meaning number of conversions—that occurred under Mr. Armstrong.

Exploding Income

All that follows in this chapter is a direct byproduct of one fundamental reality that The Restored Church of God enjoys year after year after year:

Our annual income continues to rise at an unprecedented level probably throughout the history of God's Church—in this century, the last century or any other century.

Our regular income grew **over 90% IN 2011** above 2010 (and did this during a terrible recession)! This continues a pattern of increase:

- 2002—over 45%
- 2003—a bit under 3%
- 2004—over 42%
- 2005—almost right at 23%
- 2006—over 41%
- 2007—over 77%
- 2008—31%
- 2009—over 19%
- 2010—over 37%

In nearly every case, these numbers were well above projections. Of course, and this is the oft-forgotten factor of sustained growth over multiple years, each year's percentage is derived from a much larger base figure—meaning the long-term *raw number* growth becomes much greater, now the case with us.

While the splinters and slivers ALL struggle to outpace inflation—others seem unembarrassed to trumpet only single digit growth in income against an inflation number that reduces it further. Other groups see no growth or are even declining.

It has been gratifying to see increasing numbers of people cut through the misinformation to see plainly where God is working!

Most among those who are even a little bit awake comprehend there cannot possibly be more than a handful of years remaining to complete what God intends for His Work to accomplish!

We now look more closely at our Great Commission Operational Plan—at some of what must yet be accomplished. We are already employing *several* methods of doing the Work, including our three mammoth websites, Internet advertising, worldwide television, and an expanding *Real Truth Newsstand Distribution Program*. While we will later talk further about plans for television, there are other vehicles for doing the Work that are in place or under consideration.

Giant Websites

One measure of the growth of God's Work is the number of downloads from our websites. In 2011, we had almost *13.5 million* downloads. For comparison, in 2006, we just exceeded *8.5 million* items taken against a

little over 3.7 million in 2005. By every standard, this is SPECTACULAR GROWTH!

The reason we now reach so many millions of readers, viewers and listeners with even more millions of pieces of literature and broadcasts is that we have a large and rapidly growing budget for Internet advertising. This budget is revisited every month.

Success Guaranteed!

Here is where our *Operational Plan* for the Great Commission grows exciting—and I mean REALLY EXCITING! It should now be clear that our plan—God’s Plan!—must produce the biggest short-term impact in religion the world has ever seen. In fact, prophecies you have studied in this book reveal in advance this will happen—so we need only to figure out what God is leading us to do and then watch it come to pass.

Think of this in the following way: Imagine we are General Motors Corporation early in its existence. Now imagine that we were told early on that we will become the largest automobile manufacturer *ever*, and this will also happen over a *short period*—and that it was *certain*—it was GUARANTEED! Then imagine we were even told that if plant laborers or leaders were negligent or became disloyal and left to join the competition, faithful replacements would be provided—in other words, we would still achieve our goals, no matter what. All that remained would be to pursue the right strategies and tactics to bring this certainty to pass. But even imagine that these would be shown to us by God.

We have described the Work of The Restored Church of God!

Recall again that Mr. Armstrong said God’s people should always “pray as though it all depends on God, but work as though it all depends on us”—and also that “the Work of God moves forward on its knees.” Therefore, instead of falling back to cruise control, because we understand prophecy, we are using God’s end-of-the-age Master Plan as motivation to try even harder at innovation and use of creative ingenuity.

Website Strategy

Developing colossal websites requires a carefully designed STRATEGY—and employing a variety of *tactics*—as well as recognizing that regular postings on our sites must continually occur. Regarding *The*

Real Truth site, for instance—try to think of this as you read—in addition to (1) producing ten magazines annually instead of six, we are also (2) posting regular *special news alerts*, and (3) broadcasting *The World to Come*, which are posted daily in audio and weekly in video on a third site—*worldtocome.org*.

What you have read in just the last paragraph has meant that a significant number of effective new writers have had to be trained to meet expanding editorial needs. This has been another of our internal training programs that was able to yield skilled writers to keep up with the demand of our editorial needs. We know God will continue sending additional effective writers, or those able to be trained to help the Work.

Finally, and this is now obvious to the reader, the sheer awesome size of our websites brought us to a point where we had to bring in a large, outside company to *remodel* them. These sites needed to stand “at the top of the world,” so to speak. This meant extraordinary attention needed to be brought to their appearance, functionality, usability, internal mechanics and capability to maximize overall impact. *The Real Truth* was completed first.

New Television Studio!
—Videocasting *The World to Come!*

Mr. Armstrong began announcing the gospel in the 1930s on *The World Tomorrow* radio program. By late 1967 most of his public preaching had moved to television. This program slowly built a giant audience of regular listeners, millions of whom went on to read *The Plain Truth* and other literature. Of course, many thousands became members after first hearing Mr. Armstrong’s voice. This established the successful pattern used today.

Before our plans to move to videocasting, we produced 112 *World to Come* audio broadcasts. Of course, these are *all* available 24 hours a day on *The World to Come* website—and will remain so indefinitely—which means there exists a system of archiving programs that Mr. Armstrong could not have dreamed of 25 years ago.

Recognizing that we live in a largely image-driven “video world,” we understood the need to begin videocasting *The World to Come* program. The first step was to find space in our building to construct what must be a “world-class”—state-of-the-art television studio. Necessary sufficient space *was* secured and construction was completed.

These are regularly produced, and the length, set appearance and style closely resemble Mr. Armstrong’s telecasts. One of the virtual *doc-*

trines of the past was that we serve a God of quality. Therefore, these videocasts reflect excellence, and are absolutely professional in every way—using high definition cameras, beautiful studio, sufficient and super-quality graphics, news footage, powerful statistics, effective music, all of this brought together by cutting-edge software.

All of this came together and was possible through use of a *team* of outside professionals. We were also blessed to already have highly trained professionals—very hard to find—in place on our staff. It took very little time to perfect the level of quality we achieve.

New World to Come Website

In July 2010 the Church launched a third website dedicated solely to *The World to Come* broadcast. This includes both daily audio (15 minutes) and daily video productions (30 minutes), Monday through Friday. These videos have brought hundreds of thousands of views per month.

This number is projected to reach potentially many millions, with 2012 projecting a number almost beyond imagination, when one considers five videos posted per week instead of one, as well as daily audio, which began shortly after the launch of the website!

More About Television

The subject of a studio automatically reintroduces that of bringing the broadcast and the Work to television.

First, I was interviewed in 2009 and seen on television—*The History Channel*—with this program shown over and over, all over the world. Of course, many millions of people saw this program aired in 70 countries. I can also conceive of television occurring in *five possible ways*, the last one involving regular programming. God almost certainly has something *much larger* in mind in this regard, and this could include:

(1) Spot commercials (30 or 60 seconds in length) on many stations, hopefully in at least all large- and medium-sized markets, probably mostly in the nations of Israel.

(2) One or more national television specials to a huge audience, reached all at once. This would almost certainly follow a large advertising campaign in advance.

(3) Interviews on selected popular talk shows (this has already happened on radio several times).

(4) Major media coverage, at some point, as a result of the size and power of the Work—the case with *The History Channel* interview.

(5) For years this list ended with four points. But now that ministers are positioned around the world, our literature has all been written, and our income continues to explode, a fifth has become necessary. In the fall of 2012, *The World to Come* broadcast launched on at least one national cable station, with a reach of over 125 million people in about 50 million households. We pursued this opportunity because income made it possible, but also because such a large station enhances *other* ways we are doing the Work. A unique “synergy” comes from one or more such stations at this point in our growth.

Television today is still evolving. Everyone in any way connected to mass media understands this. The future will demonstrate how and to what degree this medium should be used within the final Work of God. However, with our new studio, we are in a position to quickly move forward.

In fact, the media expansion that has occurred is dramatic. To learn more, read the detailed and inspiring announcements regularly posted on *rcg.org*.

Still Looking Ahead

We are also currently exploring the possibility of spot ads on radio that could appear sometime in the future. These could eventually be on local stations in a variety of Western countries, and be anywhere from 30 to 60 seconds in length.

We recognize that the special warning to Israel will almost certainly take us into most or all of the major western newspapers before the age is complete. Mr. Armstrong employed powerful full-page ads in the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*, among other big American papers. Any realistic approach to reaching countless millions would almost have to include papers like these and others before it could be said that the Great Commission and special warning were truly finished. In time, we think these ads could also encompass the major news magazines of our time.

The Real Truth Distribution Program

I have already referenced our *Real Truth Newsstand Distribution Program*. When Mr. Armstrong was alive, this was a vital means of reaching many more millions in every country in which the Church had members “on the ground.” We are striving to be as aggressive as possible in expanding this program, and we do employ it everywhere

Why the Internet?

Technology has always been a mainstay of God's Work. During the twentieth century, preaching the gospel was primarily accomplished by radio and television. With these media, popularity was measured by the size of local markets, ranging from several thousand to many millions. The Internet has forced a shift in thinking. Local markets measured in the millions (or much less) have been replaced with a *global* market totaling nearly two billion—and expanding!

Even in the early stages of God's twentieth-century Work, Mr. Armstrong and his assistants were quick to employ the latest technologies. God's Church has always been willing to explore and employ the most effective means available—from the early printing press to modern high-speed color printers. This also included additional means of doing the Work, such as public campaigns, which were later replaced by Public Bible Lectures, with the very successful *Plain Truth Newsstand Distribution Program* coming still later.

Over time, radio was largely supplanted by television. Once Mr. Armstrong fully understood the power of this visual medium, he moved quickly to take advantage of this new technology. This shift was adopted early—even before television was the primary entertainment source. The pattern of adopting “cutting-edge” technologies had been established. By the time TV blanketed the nation, God's servants were *already* skilled in how to effectively use it for the furthering of the gospel. This put them “ahead of the game” in a powerful way!

Over the course of Mr. Armstrong's ministry, radio and television carried his voice into homes around the world. God inspired His servant to embrace new technologies that were the most effective means of doing the Work *at that time*—obviously because this was the way to reach the most people.

Today, the Internet has become the most successful medium the world has ever seen. It has grown faster than any before it. In nearly three decades, its “population” is approaching the two billion mark, with *many* additional millions using it each year. It is now officially the world's largest communication medium, except for television during *primetime*.

This technology has *already* taken the gospel into *all* 193 countries of the world—and all reachable territories—and in an unprecedented *comprehensive* way. Unlike radio or television, the costs to reach *every* country are minimal—not millions of dollars. Never has God’s Church been supplied with a method to preach “all things” to “all nations” so INSTANTLY and INEXPENSIVELY!

The Internet Today

Some statistics about the Internet will help the reader understand how many people it reaches and how widespread is its use.

Since 2000, the size of the Internet has more than *quadrupled*—and the trend shows no signs of slowing. As of March 2009, the Internet hosts nearly 1.8 billion users, the majority of which originate from Western nations. However, its popularity is growing rapidly in parts of the world in which God’s Work had been prevented from reaching in the last century (such as China). It is also reaching other prophetically important parts of the world. In the European Union, for example, nearly 50 percent of citizens have Internet access.

However, the Internet’s *size* is not the whole story. It is also quickly becoming *the primary source* for knowledge and information.

In 2008, the three major television networks lay claim to about 23 million viewers *combined* for their nightly news programs. In comparison, in late 2007, 71 percent of Americans received their news online!

Another poll revealed that over 45 percent of 18- to 54-year-olds turn to the Internet for news and entertainment, rather than television. This same poll asked, “If you could select only two media sources, which would you choose?” In every age group, the Internet was their number one choice. Not only do most people prefer the Internet, it dominates their media time. On average, Americans spend 77 percent *more time* online than watching television.

Further investigation reveals this interesting fact: Approximately 70 percent of those polled watch television while multitasking—doing other things. Of this number, 66 percent are also online. In other words, the majority of those watching television are likely not paying close attention!

Another study indicated that 83 percent prefer the Internet over newspapers for their daily news. Never mind that information online is much more current than *any* newspaper or most television. The result:

Newspaper subscriptions drop each year, but visitors to newspaper *websites* jumped 21 percent in 2005—and more in 2006.

This has forced major newspapers to shift much of their focus online. Increasingly, other large corporations have come to understand that the Internet is the future of ALL media!

Large organizations such as Disney have begun using their television programs and advertising to support their online efforts. Others, such as Proctor & Gamble and Unilever, employ the Internet to expand their products. They have created specialty websites demonstrating new and interesting ways their products can be used. Like the avalanche of evidence already cited, this is another sign that the world recognizes its focus is no longer on television.

Of course, this does not mean the complete end of video or traditional television programs. Even major broadcast networks understand there is still a demand for these programs.

Radio is also not immune to the Internet shift. A company that measures radio audiences released a report showing listeners could fall between 85 and 94 percent by 2010. This is a catastrophic drop.

Cost savings and the general effectiveness of the Internet should be obvious. And these statistics are not lost on God's Church, which would be expected to adjust accordingly. The Internet's potential is nearly endless. Effectively using this tool is one reason God's Work has experienced unprecedented growth year after year—and for minimal cost!

Similar to popular Nielsen Ratings, the Internet has many rating sites to compare the effectiveness, or scope, of one website to another. The most popular of these rates our sites, *rcg.org*, *realtruth.org* and *worldtocome.org*, highly among all Church of God websites.

A Final Look at Television

Imagine if Mr. Armstrong were alive and understood the Internet's reach. Imagine he could be told there was a method to do the Work that could reach every country in the world—on a daily basis!—and that this medium allowed vast numbers of magazines, books, booklets, articles, lessons, broadcasts and even video to reach those countries. Now imagine his reaction when told this technology was virtually free!

Should any doubt what he would do?

Aside from the costs of television and radio, and the public shift, there are other important reasons these media are not as valuable as the Internet.

Television—like movies—has become a source of *entertainment*. The major networks feed society's desire for entertainment, not news!

Even if major broadcast networks were available *and* affordable, the Internet still greatly overshadows them in exposure. For instance, 30 million viewers are considered great ratings.

Consider that the Super Bowl has an average viewing audience of just over 90 million worldwide. Access to that audience comes at a HUGE price. A 30-second commercial was \$3 million in 2010! Albeit the most-watched program each year, the Super Bowl reaches only a fraction of those connected to the Internet.

The splinters continue to focus on a medium that reaches, in comparison, an *infinitesimal* market at an ENORMOUS cost. This becomes further evidence Christ does not lead these organizations! However, if big cable channels become affordable and available, THE EQUATION CHANGES!

The Internet exposure to a vast and growing number of users is not only larger than television and radio, but much more effective. It is the media bias associated with television news that has driven many to the Internet for information. When people want *breaking news*, they turn to the Internet. When they want world events explained, they turn to the Internet. When wanting to understand virtually *any topic*, they do the same. By properly utilizing this medium, The Restored Church of God provides over a million *answers* each month.

The most receptive, responsive person is one who is searching for *spiritual* information. He is *already* looking for answers. Our websites literally "have it all." This is in part because the Internet also permits us to "archive" everything we have ever done in one location—for free!—something never possible in Mr. Armstrong's time!

Christ has shaped and directed technology to expand His Work. The Internet is not only the most effective medium the world has ever seen, again, its massive impact costs virtually NOTHING!

Why do so few grasp this?

Never has God's Church been blessed with such a comprehensive tool to "preach the gospel unto all nations." Imagine the potential with even small additional numbers willing to support it.

The way that people find God's truth has changed. God's Church must change with it. We have. Truly, God has planned and developed the Internet as the principal tool to finish the remainder of His powerful "short work" (Rom. 9:27-28)!

we have brethren able to participate. The budget for it doubled just in 2010.

It is probably not an overstatement to say this program will one day by itself likely reach millions. Those who remember this ongoing local project from the past, and the number who were reached and even converted as a result, can look forward to being part of the same exciting program once again if they return to God's Church.

Many Books Available in Bookstores

Recall Mr. Armstrong's quotes about most of his books being made available to a larger audience of readers who would only read a book if they could purchase it in a store. He explained, and the Church understood beginning in 1978, that doing this was not a violation of Matthew 10:8.

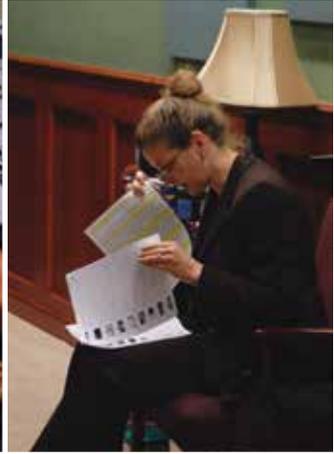
God's Church today reached a similar point in its development. With more truth in writing than any time in Church history, we decided in late-2007 that we were ready to follow Mr. Armstrong's pattern—and were able to do so in an expanded way. Dramatic plans developed!

First we were led to select a publishing company. Then we signed a contract for and submitted the first book—*The Awesome Potential of Man*. The next step, after thoroughly learning the process, was to submit more books, starting in 2009. These are currently available online. The reader is left to contemplate the awesome impact of adding just this single additional element to God's Work!

Hiring Staff and Field Ministers

The biggest problem with expanding our advertising and the newsstand program beyond where they had come to be was having not yet enough manpower to pursue all that could be done in just these areas. Eventually we hired additional people who could focus entirely on the distribution program and Internet ads.

We have sufficient staff in place to spend much time EFFECTIVELY advertising God's truth to the world. A unique and experienced advertising TEAM has been assembled by God. This "Growth team" constantly considers new ideas, new concepts, data and statistical analysis, technological advancements becoming available, improving the *Newsstand Distribution Program*, the changing nature of the multiple audiences we seek to reach, matters of efficiency, strategic hiring of niche skillsets,



The World to Come Program: Following the pattern of Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Pack regularly records broadcasts. Each one is posted and archived on the Internet, allowing the gospel of the kingdom of God to be preached around the globe 24 hours a day.

sophisticated hardcopy literature distribution campaigns, differences in approach from nation to nation, and any other additional vehicles and mediums that can be employed for expanding the Work—all as God sends us the funds to go forward with them.

Apart from web remodeling, our expanding staff has also been permitting us to move forward with additional elements of website attractiveness and usability. A plan is in place that is bringing to reality what we have in the past only been able to dream of. We have amazing ideas and concepts—and I do mean AMAZING!—yet to be developed and employed.

Now here is another dramatic announcement.

Headquarters Campus

Another subject could probably go into any of the chapters discussing future plans.

It goes without saying that the need to hire so many additional staff automatically creates another great—in fact urgent—need for God’s Church. Certain departments serve as part of what are considered to be “support functions” behind the Church’s two central commissions. The need for another kind of “support function” has come—that of a *new administrative Headquarters* (a whole campus) able to house the growth we are experiencing!

Our beautiful four-level Hall of Administration—about twice the size of our old space—is fully operational. The next two buildings, the Mail Processing Center and Media Center, will be completed by the fall of 2013.

Immaculate grounds, including many exquisitely manicured gardens, pools, paths, bridges, fountains, other water features, and sculptures, all set amidst stairwells and terraced landscaping, will reflect the extraordinary tradition of the Worldwide Church of God’s three Ambassador College campuses—which the Church long understood were in fact to reflect the quality and character of God!

The campus will be state-of-the-art in architecture, functionality and technology utilized. It will have a beautiful auditorium, classrooms and space for all of our existing departments and more, with room to grow. (Of course, just having five buildings in themselves creates many new departments, the ones needed to maintain them.) We were around 100 employees at the time we took possession in May 2013. Then there is the question of how many more people will be hired in the coming months.

A couple of examples serve here as classic illustrations of a larger point: This announcement brought forward outside critics. Apparently wanting to believe the Tribulation is only one or two years away (it is obviously no more than a *very few* years away), some see this as a “my Lord delays His coming” attitude. Incredibly, others who know better compare what we are announcing to “Mr. Armstrong said not to build *Church* buildings.” Mr. Armstrong was so obviously speaking of the unwise, wasteful capital investment in *local* buildings for *local* congregations. Remember again, Christ said that His servants would be found “so doing” when He returns.

If God has us enter the new campus, and then concludes the Work six months later, no one will complain!

Now here is an example of how things are done elsewhere: UCG planned to move its “home office”—*again!* It intended to build a new complex in another area of the country (this time Dallas)—*again!* By an extremely narrow vote of 202 to 195 within its ministry (a swing of just four men)—incredibly, the collective ministry in this organization vote on such things so they can direct their headquarters—this desperately confused, deeply divided organization must not only believe God IS the author of *confusion*, but also of near 50/50 *division* as to where even “His” headquarters—“home office”—should be.

Think! If God says that He chooses to “place His name” even on Feast sites, would His Headquarters receive from Him less attention? Then, how could over 49 percent of the ministers in this organization be so out of tune with the supposed “will of God” on a matter as important as where God establishes His earthly Headquarters? (At a certain point, a pitched battle developed over how and whether to proceed because the original property that had been selected fell through, and disagreement ensued over exactly what the ministry had voted to do. This division—and supposedly “God’s will”—swung back the other way with another vote narrowly keeping the “home office” where it was in Cincinnati.)

Eventually this split UCG—*again!*—with a new organization called Church of God, a Worldwide Association (COGwa) leaving with a third of the ministers and a fourth of the members. Incredibly, COGwa is an almost exact replica—a clone—of UCG. What was gained?

By contrast, because the government of God is present here, because we know that the living Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, has guided the decision to build a magnificent new campus, we did not vote on it. When God leads an organization this never happens.

Blind critics and misguided thinkers have no effect on what Christ is doing in *His* Church. Men and organizations like UCG and COGwa—LCG actually did move its headquarters to two cities (San Diego, California, and Charlotte, North Carolina)—seem unable to comprehend either *stability* or the most basic things necessary to properly carry out the Great Commission or the Second Commission of feeding the flock...

THE SECOND COMMISSION OPERATIONAL PLAN

Jesus taught His disciples—recall His question and follow-up statement three times to Peter—“If you love Me, feed My sheep” (John 21:15-17). Later, the then apostle Peter, having gotten the point, instructed in his first epistle, “Feed the flock of God” (5:1-2).

We recognize the importance that the Head of His Church placed on the Second Commission—*feeding* His flock.

Of course, and this is obvious, all of the previous chapter’s plans and programs would be in addition to field ministers we will continue to hire. Anyone experienced with God’s Church and Work knows its development would be limited—that it could not truly grow even close to its full potential—and potential *size*—unless there are sufficient “labourers in the harvest” (Matt. 9:36-38) who can baptize and care for those around the world learning God’s truth and coming to repentance.

This means field pastors.

The Restored Church of God has grown by 257% since 2005—or in six years. By every account this is stunning growth. Pause and savor it—and what it means.

All of these percentages reflect *many hundreds* of new brethren to be cared for. And what if events in the splinters catapult larger numbers our direction due to significant events and/or even worse doctrinal changes there that no one can anticipate? Things you are reading about here could trigger more brethren to soon recognize the “fingerprints” of God all over THIS WORK, and none other. In fact, this is happening!

THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD

WORLD HEADQUARTERS - CORPORATE CAMPUS



Witnessing the Present and Future of The Restored Church of God: The Hall of Administration was completed in May 2013, as pictured in the top photograph. Additional images show preliminary architectural renderings of our expanding Headquarters campus along with photographs of the Mail Processing Building and Media Center, both completed in 2014.



This presents an extraordinary ongoing challenge: The Church is charged with taking care of—feeding and protecting—Christ’s growing number of sheep in future years. We are continuing to rapidly hire additional *trained* pastors across the world.

Another Way Time Is Running Out!

It is apparent to even the most undiscerning person with God’s Spirit that the great majority of ministers in the WCG completely fell away during the apostasy. But this is only the obvious part of an ugly story.

When looking across the landscape of the splinters, to where the “surviving” ministers and elders went, the picture is hardly more attractive. Already-trained pastors that God may still intend to send us from those organizations will almost certainly have to come soon.

In a tragedy of epic proportion, so many of these men have simply thrown out, altered or forgotten too much truth, too much about the Church’s commissions, too much about the government of God, too much about even what is and is *not* the Church, too much of all that happened under Mr. Armstrong’s leadership—and so much more—to recover. Most have become too weak, confused, blind and compromised to find their way out of “the swamp.” No matter how much we might wish the situation to be otherwise, we must accept God’s Master Plan for His Church and Temple at the end *as that Plan is*. Thus, we are going forward with or without more ministers and elders having anointed their eyes.

Therefore, already having existing members or prospective members in over 50 countries, we have *further* developed a SECOND COMMISSION OPERATIONAL PLAN. It includes more Feast sites, more field pastors, larger general conferences, more congregations requiring halls because they have become too large to meet in homes, and more.

Pastoral Training Program

We have established an extensive training process for ministers. There are no more Ambassador Colleges as such, so a different and sophisticated plan had to be enacted. (More on our Training Center later.)

We pray constantly in the spirit of Matthew 9:36-38 that God will “send forth more laborers into the harvest”! Of course, He has never failed to do this, either today or in any previous age. We are confident the all-powerful Christ will meet the needs of His Church.

Two maps are included to show our full-time ministers by the end of 2012. They reflect the *minimum* by that point to properly supervise God’s

people in the United States and internationally. We hope to hire *at least* four to eight or more pastors or associate pastors annually. Of course, more faithful local church elders continue to be ordained or to join us.

Why Did You Wait So Long...?

An inset here is helpful: Some few could wonder why we “waited so long” to greatly expand our full-time ministry. Obviously, such questions would most naturally come from those in the big splinters who attracted the most ministers when they left the Worldwide Church of God. These would be unfamiliar with or have forgotten that it was over 20 years into the Philadelphian era of the Church before Mr. Armstrong was able to hire even a single pastor *anywhere* in the world.

As with the First Commission, certain things had to happen sequentially for us to go forward in a bigger way with more pastors:

(1) We had to grow large enough to *need* more full-time pastors. Our early annual rate of growth was generally in the 8-15% range, with these increases also coming off smaller base numbers in those years. Now growth is 20-30% *every year!*

(2) As with construction of a building or any major expenditure, we had to be able to *afford* ministers, including their expenses, within a grander budget of competing needs.

(3) We were able for a long time—and still can in some areas a while longer—to effectively manage God’s flock through local church elders, deacons, experienced local pillars, the Host Information Manual, the marvels and availability of powerful technology, a strong Headquarters Church Administration team, as well as weekly sermons and Announcement Bulletins, and *The Pillar* magazine. There was also the remarkable efficiency attributable to the *government of God* at work.

(4) Another “invisible” element about Restored has also been present—and in a big way. Because of the unparalleled wonderful unity and peace that prevails among our membership as a whole, the need for pastors in any significant number early on remained suppressed. Just the *complete* lack of doctrinal confusion and division has paid—and will continue to pay—its own incalculable dividends for the rest of the age.

(5) We wanted to be sure that those ministers (and wives) whom we hired were properly trained—that they would not make the same kinds of mistakes the vast majority of almost 2,000 ordained men and wives before them had made! This meant patiently and *properly* preparing them for service.

Besides having almost 30 full-time ministers already, our strategy involves, in what is just our *13th year* of existence, the hiring of a great many more pastors over time. We know this plan is ambitious, but it will happen because all the ingredients are in place!

One of the five buildings on our Headquarters campus will be devoted to Ambassador Center. A powerful, broadly based—and very experienced!—faculty is in place. It is every bit on par with the Ambassador faculties of the past!

Ambassador Youth Camp

Another exciting advancement in the Church—that came with an intermediate step in 2007—has been the development of a special summer camp in a beautiful facility in Pennsylvania.

Some history: For a few years, we sponsored group trips of several days for teens in the Church. Over time, our number of teens increased. This brought a need to transition to a full summer camp.

Mr. Armstrong long taught and often reminded the Church that we serve a God of quality—of excellence. He made sure God’s people consistently saw this quality, always within reason, in everything that was done. Summer camp was no exception. We wanted to be sure that a full summer camp was done right, and designed—and fully prepared—to teach God’s youth that they were put on Earth to learn a way of life practiced by no one else. (We had been producing Bible lessons and other important tools all along for younger children, as well as certain other tools for the teens, but this camp filled a special need for young people in the teen years.)

We could only wish every teenager in every splinter could see and experience all that God’s Church does for its teenagers—and what children of all ages routinely enjoy here. The Church, with generosity from the members, is pleased to underwrite such a wonderful camp. A special, in-depth 20-minute “camp video” was prepared and posted for the Church.

It is never too late for more teenagers, whose parents have anointed their eyes, to attend!

Rising Income

As mentioned, our income (in all categories) continued rising so fast that all of the above ideas—and many more—came into view for God’s Work. Further, because this is the Work of God and not of any man, we

have complete confidence that before the age is over God will supply miraculous “superfunding” to make *much* more possible. We are not naïve. We know it takes the “mammon of this world” to follow through on the programs described. All of this means God’s people have been LEARNING TO SACRIFICE after the pattern under Mr. Armstrong.

There is not enough space in this book to report all that we have “in the hopper”—all that is at work in our thinking—in terms of how we can expand the Work of the living God. I was taught growing up that people are only limited by their imagination, and the close observer will recognize we are far and away the most *imaginative* organization one could find. We are *never* afraid to innovate. It is visible to all but the most blind that TREMENDOUS POWER from God has shot His Work infinitely beyond the big splinters—and all of their “works” *collectively*.

This introduces related understanding.

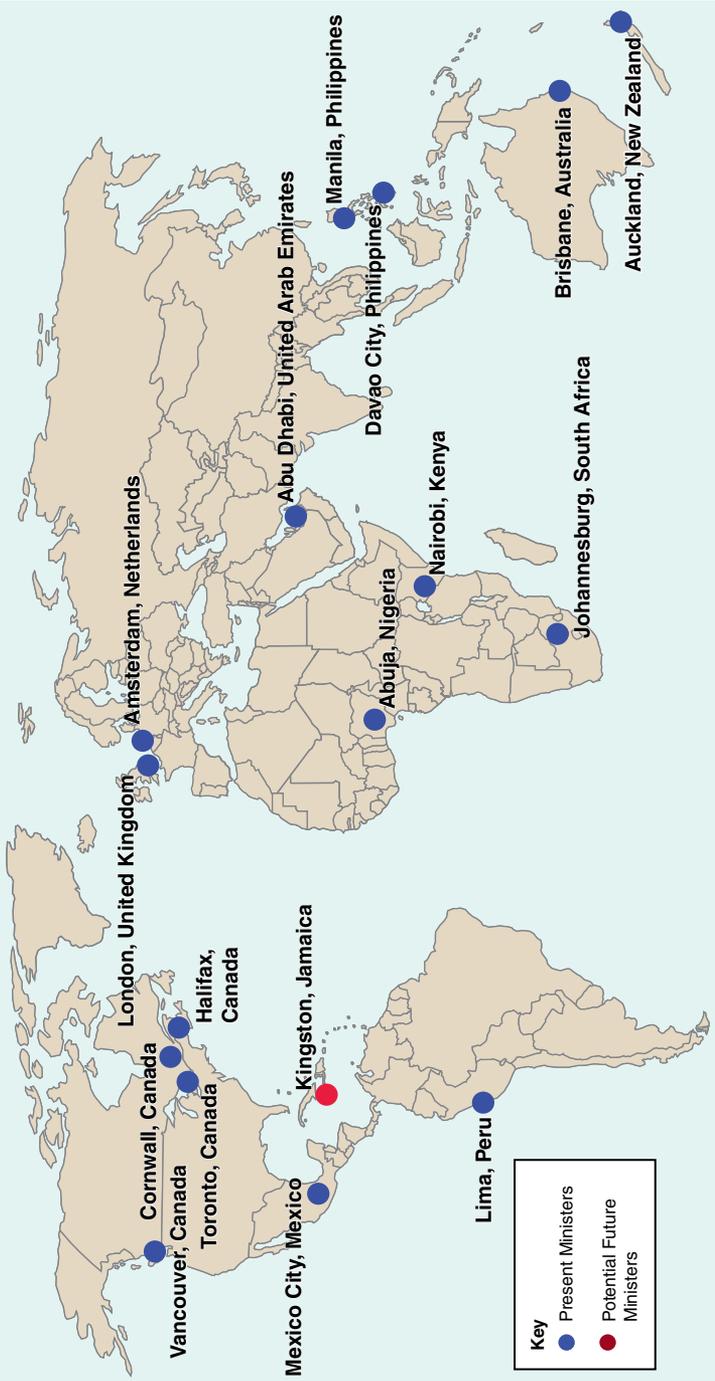
What Mr. Armstrong Told Me About Laodicea’s Work

I have explained elsewhere how I discussed many aspects of prophecy with Mr. Armstrong. On at least two occasions, I pointedly asked him to explain how he foresaw the future rise of Laodicea. These conversations were between 1978 and 1980, and in the wake of his having dis-fellowshipped his son from the Church in mid-1978. He was putting the Church back on track during this period and Laodicea was on his mind. He was also writing a great deal about Laodicean trends that had entered the Church in the 1970s.

First, recognize that Mr. Armstrong at least initially did believe the Laodicean era would formally appear at or just before the Tribulation. Some misunderstand *why* he thought this. The answer is simple: Believing at that time he would be permitted to live until Christ’s Return, he knew this final era, meaning the *doctrinal* part of the disastrous *condition* of God’s people it represented—could not occur on his “watch”—that this would have been *impossible*. This is because he would have thundered against and *blocked* its development as he had in the late-1970s when the early liberals had taken root in the Church. Everyone who dates to Mr. Armstrong’s time knows he would never have permitted compromise with truth to occur while he was alive. Therefore, he believed it would *have to formerly appear as a group after* Philadelphia was taken to safety.

This background sets up our conversations. At least twice Mr. Armstrong answered in the same way—four distinct points:

International Field Ministers



(1) The Laodicean era will arise “suddenly.” (This certainly did suddenly happen after his death.)

(2) “It will come out of this Church” (the WCG), his words.

(3) It will involve the dominant number of God’s people.

(4) It will do a small Work, because the “open door” for a big Work, the one that Christ would lead, would only be before God’s Church. (Each of these points were almost his exact statements.)

How correct his words! Except for the timing, because of his death in 1986, every point was dead on. The collective dead work of the splinters—all human works *entirely* of men—by now you understand will not begin to approach the Work that remains for THIS CHURCH! Again, this is because *only* the Church led by Jesus Christ has before it the “open door” of Revelation 3:7-8!

Yet Another “Church” and “Work”

A short inset is important before the chapter concludes, because it illustrates how confused even top ministers in the splinters can become. In late 2006, a newer “evangelist” arose from a splinter (he had been ordained to this office in 1999 by Roderick C. Meredith) and declared that *the Laodicean age had not yet arrived* “because Mr. Armstrong said it would not appear until the Church had been taken to safety”—and that Mr. Armstrong had made a point of stating this era would appear “after us,” meaning after the WCG *and his leadership*.

This man literally could not *see* the Laodicean condition all around him—and that it has been here for decades! Such astonishing thinking takes the blindness foretold to afflict Laodicea to a new level! That this is stated by one who suddenly purported to be the leader of the only true Church—a tiny, unproductive sliver—makes this thinking more astonishing. He must believe the “open door” lies before what has to be *his* “Philadelphian” group, since there are not yet any Laodiceans. It has been sadly humorous to watch this fledgling organization attempt to “do the Work” starting so late and from scratch. They failed miserably.

Think carefully. Mr. Armstrong was *correct* when declaring what he did about Laodicea coming “after us.” This is *exactly* what happened!—and with its appearance *did* come a variety of “works” of men. The splinters (and two or three slivers) *are* doing their own “work.” They—the *people* and *leaders*, NOT CHRIST—head them!

Here is the point: Obviously, most who at all love the truth would remember Mr. Armstrong repeating, “The Church must preach the gospel and do God’s Work.” It should come as no surprise that most

attend splinters doing “works” of various sizes and shapes. Frankly, it is this “we-are-doing-something” pattern of the big organizations that has served to lull thousands into believing they are continuing, and participating in, the Great Commission as Mr. Armstrong taught. They have not recognized themselves having fallen into various “efforts” of Laodicea—compromised, unempowered “works” that *did* come out of the WCG and “after” Mr. Armstrong’s leadership!

Only by Faith

Mr. Armstrong understood that *everything* the Worldwide Church of God accomplished was done by faith, and that *everything* achieved under his leadership was entirely “a *work* of faith.” His eyes were fixed constantly on the all-powerful living Christ, and His ability to perform miracles, open doors, coordinate events, arrange key contacts, work out matters of delicate timing, grant special favor, supply critical needs—and always right on time—and to provide the immense funding necessary for the size of Work that God intended.

We are no different. The plans you have seen described are very ambitious. We know this. Our enemies and critics scoff and sneer at what is presented here. We also know this. The idea that God will use *this Church* to fulfill the colossal prophesied commissions it faces is beyond what most could ever believe. And we also know this.

But we do not care!

You are left with Christ’s giant, looming open question to all of God’s people alive in the final age of the Church before His Return. Here is what He asked the disciples—but was really posing as a question for us today: “When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). He will!—and it will be found in those who take God’s Word—great prophecies—at face value!

This is what we have done—and will continue to do. We have unwavering faith in Jesus Christ’s ability to do His part in His Church’s fulfillment of *every* element within the two commissions.

I repeat a final time for powerful emphasis in this context, the Work that will be completed by *this Church* will ultimately dwarf anything the splinters could imagine—or that the world has ever seen! This is already happening—and you can be part of it...

Now what will *you* do?



Sermons and Sermonettes: Directed from Headquarters, each Sabbath and Holy Day, brethren around the world are provided with spiritual food from God's ministry.



Ministerial Conferences and Ambassador Youth Camp: At the annual Ministerial Conference, attendees hear informative, detailed lectures about working with brethren. Staff lectures are also heard, giving the Church's ministry a view behind the Work. Teens and young adults in The Restored Church of God enjoy many different exciting activities. The first official camp for teens, *Ambassador Youth Camp*, was in 2007, and was the first step toward a full camp in 2008, continuing each year thereafter.



Tools: Pictured here are some of the additional tools we produce. They aid in keeping all of God's people informed, in developing leaders and in ensuring that "all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

FINAL POINTS— FINAL QUESTIONS

Important points and a series of crucial personal questions remain. These are necessary to examine, and form the book's conclusion. In fact, it is not complete without them. Think most carefully about all that you read in this final short chapter. The material immediately following sets up other points and serious questions that you cannot now avoid.

“Goods” vs. “Services”

The worldwide pursuit of materialism and pleasure in every form, particularly in the Israelitish Western nations, has had a much greater impact on the thinking among God's people than most brethren would suspect. Let's understand how.

Almost everyone recognizes the economy of every nation is defined by a combination of *goods* produced and *services* offered.

Now turn your attention to the prevailing mood in America. As its citizens have demanded more *services* in their constant pursuit of ease, pleasure and entertainment, America's economy has largely retreated from and lost its world dominance in the manufacture of *durable goods*. People want services: restaurants, amusement parks, movie theaters, health spas, golf courses, casinos, concert halls, professional sports stadiums and arenas, computer and cell phone access, new forms of entertainment, tourist attractions, beautiful supermalls, and many other kinds

of pursuits and escapes. But this has come to mean that *other nations* now produce many of the items that Americans prefer to enjoy and consume, rather than to design and make.

Using this economic analogy, The Restored Church of God has produced—has “manufactured”—what could be called the “hard goods” of the Church of God, meaning vastly more literature to do the Work and feed the flock than anyone else. Yet, we have retained the essential “services,” including several that no one else has! (In fact, under careful examination, we are actually seen to have a *number of services* either in place or on the way that some of the big organizations lack. You have read about some of them.)

On the other hand, copying America’s economy, the big splinters reflect the opposite. They have generally emphasized “services”—more local halls, more pastors, more Feast sites, more youth camps, more projects and programs, and all kinds of socials and activities to satisfy what their “citizens”—their tithe-paying “consumers”—demand. While these things are of course not wrong in proper balance, these organizations no longer want to manufacture very many “goods”—and it is too late to start now. They well knew this would have meant too much work and not enough play.

When understood, this mindset is one of the reasons some of these groups fall into simple *contributing* to relief organizations—check writing!—rather than *warning* the nations being punished. Thus, well over a decade later, and after having each received hundreds of millions of dollars, these organizations do not have much literature—not very many *goods*—to show for their efforts! While they will never admit it, they spent too much time and money *playing*—and in some cases arguing behind closed doors about little more than nonsense. (Think UCG, LCG, COGwa and COGaic.) We have had to show a steady, patient endurance, so lacking in Laodicea. To repeat for emphasis, they were simply not willing to do the “heavy lifting” and to “bear the heat of the day,” so vital to having the tools that Mr. Armstrong knew to be necessary. Also like America, which is no longer willing to drive the world’s economic engine and has fallen behind other nations as a result, these organizations no longer *care* to drive the “economic engine” of the Great Commission.

The result? They have fallen far behind those God is using!

Grasp this. Without the *goods*, God simply could not use them, even if He were leading them—and the fruits, including things you have seen throughout this book, THUNDER that He is NOT!

Stop—think—analyze—understand. Make yourself come to grips with these things. Come to God’s conclusion!

Powerful Parallel

Then understand the astonishing historic parallel at work here. Exactly what occurred to brethren in the ancient city of Laodicea has occurred to most of God's people today. They have been *deeply* affected by the *service environment* in the world around them—as in BEING SERVED by their organizations instead of GIVING God's truth to the world! While brethren should have seen this change coming, they did not because *spiritual blindness* (Rev. 3:17) had *already* become widespread by the late 1980s. Most now want to enjoy the “creature comforts” offered by the big splinters, instead of zealously supporting the *true* Work of “taking to market” around the world the vast array of uncompromising books, booklets, articles, and other publications produced and offered only by Philadelphia's remnant. (This includes over 125 powerful *videocasts* and 300 *broadcasts* found on one of our websites.) Those of brotherly love would want to thoroughly—and LOUDLY!—warn their fellowman of impending calamity!

Consider carefully rereading this analogy and parallel until you cannot miss its message.

Hundreds of additional brethren throughout the splinters have been joining us. So are others, called from the world—now perhaps about 50 percent of our overall growth—and both facets of this growth have also been accelerating. More deacons, elders and other leaders are also joining us.

God's presence, coupled with the “durable goods” produced (literature), is why our statistical growth in both size and the reach and impact of the Work is exploding past the collective efforts of the “service-oriented” splinters. However, as we have often stated—and God has proven more than once—you have not seen anything yet!

Another Man “Sent”?

All of what you have read throughout the book introduces an enormous question that cannot be left unaddressed or unanswered in your mind. Near the end of Chapter One, it was explained in detail (and this was demonstrated) that God has used many men in ages past to either record in His Word prophecies about the kingdom of God or to announce it. Recall that I planted a seed in this regard.

In the New Testament, a particular man may be selected by Christ—directly *sent*—and used by Him to announce to all the nations of the

world the coming of the kingdom of God. This man's duty in the time of the end would also necessarily include being *sent* with a blunt and urgent warning, directly from God, to the greatest nations in the world, as well as to *spiritual* Israel—those of His Church who had become blind and grown lukewarm with God's precious truth. Before these two groups could be sent into terrible punishment, we saw that a loving God would WARN them.

Therefore, someone would—someone must!—*be sent* to issue the warning!

When it is evident that these SPECIAL COMMISSIONS—being sent to the whole world with the gospel, and to Israel, as well as to the Church, with warnings—have been designated by the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, the man chosen has been given the office of apostle. His fruits become the confirmation. Understand, and this is the point, that when this designation has been assigned, it is, of and by itself, enough to prove that the Great Commission is not finished, and will experience a thunderous “final chapter.” Such was the case with Mr. Armstrong in the twentieth century. It is for the reader to prove if this office has been given again (Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:28)! Remember, Mr. Armstrong revealed that God always works starting through ONE MAN—no matter the age or period in history.

“Fingerprints”

Famous architects are invariably known for their “style”—their “lines” of design—or their school of thinking—in other words, the particular characteristics they employ that distinguish them from others of their craft. This is also true of authors, poets, artists, musicians and others. Everyone understands this.

In other books to the splinters I have explained in detail how “God's fingerprints” are always plainly visible for those who know what to look for. This is true of His Church, His government, which would be upholding all of His doctrines—and it is true of His Work. But these things are also true in regard to churches of men. God's people once plainly recognized *Satan's* fingerprints when they saw them. So many today have lost the ability to distinguish the things of God from the things of men or the devil. But some *will* still discern and recognize.

A series of questions will help you determine whether you can still see God's fingerprints on His Work. Examine the questions, perhaps carefully rereading them—and force yourself to produce an answer, spoken out loud:

- Do you still believe that Christ’s gospel is solely about the KINGDOM OF GOD?

- Do you still believe that this message must be powerfully announced in every nation of the world?—and that Mr. Armstrong understood this was never his “private commission”?

- Do you still believe an equally powerful *warning* must be preached *again* to the nations descended from Israel?—and that a large “Remnant” from these countries, with the “Great Multitude” alongside, will be the product of God’s final Work?

- Do you still recognize that God is punishing a world that is beyond repair—beyond anything the governments of men can fix—because it is in rebellion against His Law?

- Do you still realize that your job—the primary reason for which Mr. Armstrong said that laymembers were called in this age—is to support God’s chosen leader and His Headquarters in fulfilling the Great Commission?

- Are you able to remember and will you hold to all of the doctrines and policies that once pertained to the Work?

- Can you see God’s miraculous help—His supernatural “hand-prints”—plainly evident all over The Restored Church of God, including all that you have learned in this book?

- Have you investigated whether Christ has sent another apostle to finish *His* Work? If so, how careful, how thorough, were you in your investigation?

- Are you willing to return to being on fire to pray daily for God’s Work in the spirit of verses such as Matthew 9:36-38—“Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers...”—and II Thessalonians 3:1-2—“Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course [run or speed on]...”?

- Will you return to a spirit of sacrifice?

- Can you see that tens of thousands of fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who are languishing in confusion, misery, division and blindness, but who *do* have the Holy Spirit, must be reached and warned of the consequences of their condition before the age is finished and it is too late to repent?

- Do you still believe there is coming an unprecedented “famine of the hearing of God’s Word” because this Work will be complete and “the night [will have come] when no man can work”?

- Are you sobered when you realize this will happen suddenly to a stunned and completely unprepared world—and that this reaction includes the majority of God’s people?

• Do you still believe the Work must reflect the level of *quality* that Mr. Armstrong taught, and that befits the great God we always believed stood behind *His Work*?

• Do you still believe that the Temple of God is one unified organization headed by Jesus Christ under the pattern of God’s government as taught by Mr. Armstrong?

• With your protection—and your salvation—at stake, can you say that you honestly disagree with the explanation given for measuring this Temple?—and are you absolutely sure?

• Do you see yourself as having suffered from mass amnesia?

• Have you admitted which areas of the Great Commission you have forgotten?

• Are you willing to recapture and return to every one of them?

• Will you be found by Christ among those who have “faith on the earth?”—and regarding God’s certain promise to carry out all of the greatest prophecies in the final chapter in His Work?

• And most important, do you recognize that time is running out for *you* to make your own *personal decision* in joining and supporting this “short Work,” foretold to also be “cut short”?

Many more questions could be included, but these are enough. I repeat, think carefully about them. Review them several times if necessary. Then consider other questions in the book.

Make yourself answer each one with brutal honesty!

Returning to the Hallmark Quote

At the end of Chapter One you saw the following definitive statement from Mr. Armstrong. The last chapter also closes with it. Now that you have read the rest of the book, it should carry vastly more meaning than before. Recall that it appeared under the subhead “Your Part in GOD’S WORK”:

“In my over fifty years’ intensive, rich, active experience, since God changed MY direction into HIS WAY, I have observed that the *very first* need of every Christian, who is to GROW and develop this spiritual character, is to have his heart completely in THE WORK OF GOD, which the *living* Christ has called His servants to do, as His instruments! Our ‘WORKS’ are our part in GOD’S WORK—getting His true Gospel to the whole world *as a witness*—preparing the way for Christ’s coming. We are merely His INSTRUMENTS. It is GOD’S WORK! Those who condemn ‘WORKS’ are condemning the Great GOD who is the actual DOER

through us as His instruments and Co-Workers! It is not, after all, *our* works!

“Those who are self-centered, caring nothing for the WORK OF GOD, having not enough *outgoing concern* to want to help GET CHRIST’S MESSAGE out to this blinded, deceived, dying world, fall away. Those who center their whole ‘Christian’ life and activity on developing *their own selves* spiritually, whose hearts are not in or concerned about this great OUTGOING worldwide WORK OF GOD, actually directed by the *living* CHRIST, develop only INWARDLY, until they shrivel up spiritually and fall by the wayside! Those whose hearts, their active, constant, earnest, fervent PRAYERS, and their tithes and offerings are in GOD’S WORK continue to EXPAND spiritually—they become HAPPIER—they become greatly BLESSED—their lives become richer and fuller—and their faces beam in smiles. They RADIATE! They PROSPER!

“The New Testament is literally *filled* with instruction on *Christian living*—leading a new, different, sparkling, joyous life—or, perhaps more correctly, allowing Jesus Christ to live such a life—GOD’S WAY in them!

“How WONDERFUL is *God’s Way!*”

“SALVATION comes—if we are willing—as God’s FREE GIFT—by GRACE!

“But we *must be changed*. There is DOING, not hearing only (Rom. 2:13). There is development of a new righteous CHARACTER. Yet, even that is CHRIST *IN YOU* actually DOING it! Actually, even the ‘works’ are primarily done by HIM! But how WONDERFUL that there *are* righteous “WORKS” in the true Christian life—opportunity for *more* than salvation, priceless though that be—opportunity for higher position, rank, opportunity to SERVE, higher GLORY!”

What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?

Full Circle—Question Revisited

It has been said that “facts are stubborn things.” Early in the book’s INTRODUCTION it was asked: How many will be honest with all the *facts* of history and previous teaching of the Church presented throughout? You have read them and they are plain, clear—and SO MANY! When seen in their fullness, you should have found them *impossible* to misunderstand.

I ask again: How many will read this book and *remember*—in other words, will *recover from* mass amnesia and “Alzheimer’s in reverse”—and re-accept all that they have forgotten, and RETURN to what they knew?

I state one final time to every person who was in the Worldwide Church of God: You are *strongly* exhorted to read—and apply!—our absolutely crucial books “*ANOINT YOUR EYES,*” *THE TRUE CHURCH* and *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*—and WAKE UP to the doctrinal compromise, confusion, flattery, weakness and deceit of your leaders. Shift your focus and thinking from *enjoying services* to *MARKETING GOODS*! Come to where Christ is leading and God is working! Come to the only instrument that He is using, or could use! Come to the only “house” that the living Christ has built (Psa. 127:1)—and to the only “engine” that He is *fueling* and putting to service!

After you have anointed your eyes, come to the immensely powerful WORK being done **HERE!**

Other Splinter Explanation Packet Literature

THE TRUE CHURCH – One Organization, or Many?

Jesus Christ built His Church nearly 2,000 years ago—and promised it would never be destroyed (Matt. 16:18)! Is this Church and Christ's Body still a *single* unified organization? Or, after the death of Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986, and the prophesied "falling away" (II Thes. 2:3), did it split into *multiple* organizations, groups and scattered individuals? Christ is not divided, but can circumstances divide His Church and Body? Do—or can—the actions of men make this possible? The Catholics, the Protestants, the WCG apostates and the splinter leaders all have clear teachings on this subject. What did Mr. Armstrong teach—and does it align with the Bible? This book presents facts, history and the proof of Scripture. It brings PLAIN ANSWERS!

"ANOINT YOUR EYES" – Christ's Warning to His People

Christ warns Laodiceans to "anoint your eyes"—WHY? What did He mean? WHO did He mean—and how can you know? This all-important instruction, to *all* Christians living in the last days, *must* be understood. This extensive book—the most crucial written to the WCG splinters—thoroughly covers things never before explained, and in extraordinary detail. For those hoping to escape the Great Tribulation, it reveals *exactly* what Christ meant and how to apply this most critical warning!

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD – Understanding Offices and Duties

The Church of God—the biblical Body of Christ—is not divided, and is the only place where the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is present, the only organization Christ leads. He has placed *offices* and assigned special *duties* within His Church. All of the splinters have rejected God's government! This has led to mass confusion about these God-ordained offices and duties. What *exactly* is a deacon?—a local elder?—a preaching elder?—a pastor?—an evangelist?—a prophet?—an apostle? What about "teachers"? Who are the "messengers" to the seven Churches in Revelation 2 and 3? What do they do? Where will the Two Witnesses come from? How does the "watchman" of Ezekiel 33:7 function in *this age*? How do all these work and serve, and in UNITY? Who holds AUTHORITY to ordain today? Are splinter ordinations valid? Which office(s) can "bind and loose"? Can anyone add truth or traditions to the Church? Who is authorized to make Church-wide administrative judgments? Who supervises all congregations? This vital book answers all of these questions—and many more!

WHY THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD? – Should You Join?

There are over 300 offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God. Most believe there are much too many groups—and already "something for everyone." Was another really necessary, particularly when many are trying to "get the groups together"? The answer is a resounding "Yes!" This short book introduces The Restored Church of God by answering the most basic, commonly asked questions about us. We have carefully produced this material for all who want to understand the Worldwide Church of God apostasy—and what to DO about it!

SHOULD ACCUSERS BE ANSWERED?

Christ described our time as the age of hatred, betrayal, offense and lawlessness (Matt. 24:10-12). Many today use and promote innuendo, rumors, outright lies and other forms of deception to confuse and divide God's people, and defeat their confidence in Christ's ability to govern His Church. When presented with such information, what do—what will—you do? Christ said, "If they have persecuted ME, they *will* persecute YOU!" This means attacks, sometimes vicious, are a fact of life for God's people. The true Church and especially its leaders stand squarely in Satan's crosshairs. It will receive the brunt of persecution *prior* to the Tribulation, when Satan will turn on the "remnant" of

Laodicea (Rev. 12:17). Certain questions arise: Should accusers be answered? What spirit motivates them? Did Jesus answer His accusers? Mr. Armstrong was attacked throughout his ministry. Did he answer accusers? Should I? What did Mr. Armstrong teach about this? What does God's Word say? This book reveals the answers—and is the policy statement of The Restored Church of God about persecution and accusation, and our response to them.

SURVIVING “PERILOUS TIMES”

Civilization has entered the “last days” – II Timothy 3:1. The context through chapter 4, verse 4, reveals that “perilous times” have come upon both the world *and* the Church. There are now many kinds of deception and “sleight of men” (Eph. 4:14) being foisted on unsuspecting and gullible brethren. This volume addresses some of the worst of those deceptions, and assists in helping you survive them all!

THERE CAME A FALLING AWAY

Herbert W. Armstrong led the Worldwide Church of God for 52 years, teaching hundreds of true doctrines. He proved them from the Bible and told us to do the same. His successors changed them *all*. Do you think *some* changes were right? Do you realize ALL were wrong? Have you recognized them? Here they are!

(09/13/12)
WG - 011316

The Restored Church of God

1000 Ambassador Drive
Wadsworth, OH 44281
USA

P.O. Box 4064
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7S3
CANADA

Phone: (330) 334-2266
Fax: (330) 334-6513
E-mail: info@rcg.org
Web: rcg.org