

RADIO CHURCH OF GOD
Box 111
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

January, 1955

Dear Brethren:

GREETINGS, in Jesus' name: I have to sidetrack everything else for the moment, and write this brief letter submitting a serious and most URGENT problem to all the membership of God's Church.

Mrs. Armstrong and I stopped off at the tabernacle near Gladewater, Texas, for the Sabbath service on our recent return trip from Chicago and St. Louis. Arriving at the tabernacle, I found the two rooms at the rear of the main auditorium -- that is the registration office and Mr. Hoeh's room -- with a door-way cut between the two rooms, and both rooms jam-packed with men huddled in like sardines, trying to keep warm with the little heaters in those rooms. Then, across the auditorium floor, in the two rooms to the south of the platform in front, with a door-way cut between those two rooms also, were the women packed in and huddled together.

It was a cold day. There are a lot of cold days in that part of Texas at this time of year. It was impossible to hold a meeting with the men and women in separate rooms, separated by the entire auditorium floor. It was altogether too cold, with a damp cold draft sweeping through the main auditorium, to hold the service there. Finally we moved all the chairs outdoors, on the sunny side of the building, and held the service out there. I stood and preached in my overcoat. About 125 brethren were there for the service, and they sat and shivered, in a little semi-warm sunshine, but also in a cold breeze. I had a sore throat, and trying to preach under those conditions gave me a severe cold, made my throat much more sore, and brought on a temperature. We were forced to lay over one whole day in Midland, Texas, where I had to go to bed. After driving two more short days with the fever and sore throat, arriving in Phoenix, I was forced to finally telephone home and have our son Dick fly to Phoenix and drive us home from there. I am not over it yet, still hoarse and unable to be on the air -- forced to keep repeating year-old programs.

There are now 40 children in our school in the tabernacle at Gladewater. They are having to endure those impossible conditions in that cold, chilly and unfinished tabernacle five days a week. About a hundred or more brethren meet there for the service every Sabbath.

Brethren, we cannot allow that condition to continue. Raymond Cole, now pastor at Gladewater, and with considerable help from Raymond McNair, who was there for some three weeks, went everywhere around Gladewater trying to rent some other building or hall or church, which would be warm -- but it was impossible.

We have not been able to put any more money into the tabernacle to finish it up. It is completely open at the sides and the rear. But SOMETHING MUST BE DONE IMMEDIATELY! If you could only see the pitiful condition under which our brethren there, and these 40 school children, are trying to carry on the church and the school, I think you'd be really SHOCKED! I was.

It is absolutely necessary that we finish up the smaller rear church auditorium AT ONCE. The rear wall, to be of stone, and the side wall, must be finished up. This will then provide the smaller church auditorium for the Sabbath services, the general assembly room for the school, and the dining room, for it opens off the kitchen as most of you know who have been there. This will cost a lot less than to finish off the sides and the rear of the large auditorium, with its very high ceiling.

But we still owe the contractor for work done more than a year ago. We are paying it off week by week, and we must continue to put all that we can possibly spare from the regular funds toward paying off this debt. We cannot put ANY additional money into finishing off this rear church and school auditorium, from regular funds, which must go to spread the Gospel around the world.

There is ONLY ONE SOLUTION. I simply have to put this problem squarely up to all you brethren. I am sending this letter ONLY TO MEMBERS -- not to any of our Co-Workers, except those who are included in our member list as members of the Church. THIS IS A SOLEMN AND URGENT AND IMPERATIVE RESPONSIBILITY, which I am forced by these circumstances to place squarely on your shoulders. There is no other way but to call on you, even as Moses called on God's people in his day for the tabernacle of that time, to respond generously and IMMEDIATELY -- to really dig down deep, and send the largest SPECIAL offering for this purpose you possibly can -- AT ANY SACRIFICE. Send in your tithes and

regular offerings, as usual, for THE GOSPEL WORK. We cannot use that money for this tabernacle. But I must ask you for one, or SEVERAL additional SPECIAL offerings right now of the largest possible amounts. I am sure SOME of you can send in \$500 or \$1,000 or more. Some of you cannot possibly send in more than a couple of dollars or so -- but I have to ask you, as GOD'S OWN PEOPLE, to send ALL YOU CAN, be it \$2, or \$5,000. This is a test God has permitted to come upon us to PROVE us, whether we really are the true CHURCH OF GOD. If we are, brethren, we will respond. This is a very SPECIAL and urgent emergency. Never before have I sent such an appeal for a cause purely within our own church, just to our own members. I am forced to put all the authority God has vested in me, and in HIS CHURCH, into this appeal, and to make it MOST URGENT, that EVERY MEMBER shall respond, according as God has made possible. Send all you can now, and again a week, a month, and up to two months from now. REMEMBER, this must be SPECIAL, separate from and in ADDITION to your regular tithes and offerings, and please in your letter state plainly that this SPECIAL OFFERING is for the TABERNACLE FUND.

God bless you all -- I know we shall rally to this urgent need for our brethren and children at and near Gladewater.

In Jesus Christ's name,

Herbert W. Armstrong