

PASTOR'S REPORT

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IS CHRIST STARTING A SECOND CHURCH?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

HOW MANY CHURCHES does God have at one and the same time?

The dissidents following a MAN, Garner Ted Armstrong, are now speaking out of both sides of their mouths. They KNOW that God condemns following a MAN. So, in an effort to take members away from God's Church, actually THREE false claims are being spread.

1) They are spreading the LIE that Garner Ted Armstrong is only doing the same thing his father did--FALSELY claiming I left the "Sardis" Church to pull away their members and so start a church of my own. The long article recently appearing, on "How the Worldwide Church of God Came Into Being" ought to NAIL THAT LIE! a) I did not leave them, for I had never been a member of them; b) I continued working alternately with their two main divisions--Stanberry, Mo., and Salem, W. Va. c) I was still working with them in 1945, 12 years after the present "Philadelphia" era came into being, 1933. Note that in this he concedes the 7 churches of Revelation 2 and 3 were consecutive eras, as well as seven continuous conditions in the one Church.

2) Again they admit the successive eras depicted in Revelation 2 and 3, claiming that my son is now starting the "Laodicean" era of the Church. But God does not start His Church or any era of it by one disfellowshipped for causing division, sowing the seeds of discord among brethren, and then attacking God's Church and trying to draw away its members after him, on pretext of being a CHURCH--when those few are only following A MAN. It is NOT a Church! It has no Apostle, Evangelist-Pastor-Elder organization. It is NOT proclaiming Christ's Gospel into all the world for a witness unto all nations! It is a MAN, with one or two working with him, merely seeking to take away members of God's true Church.

3) Then they speak out of the other side of their mouths, I am grieved to say. This time, they say Revelation 2 and 3 do NOT portray seven SUCCESSIVE stages or eras of the one true Church. Apparently they try to explain, or twist its true meaning, by saying seven is God's number of completeness--therefore there are now MANY churches, as Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, etc. etc.--all of which COMBINED constitute the BODY OF CHRIST. Anyone who believes that had, perhaps, better get into one of them, or follow a man who has incorporated himself to be a church. But a legal corporation does not make it GOD'S CHURCH!

It might be interesting, at this point, to explain the TOTAL DIFFERENCE between what Garner Ted is now doing, and what his

father did in 1930.

He has incorporated under civil law, under a church name as a starter. This was done to try to draw away members from the true Church to follow him.

But what his father did was totally different. In Oregon a number of members of the "Church of God, Seventh-Day," headquartered at Stanberry, Missouri, pulled out and incorporated themselves separately as "The Oregon Conference of The Church of God". They became a SEPARATE CHURCH, operating with their own tithes, directing and paying salary to their own ministers. They were ORGANIZED. They did not understand God's form of organization--they had no Apostle, but they did employ evangelists--as Robert L. Taylor, Roy Daily and myself--and later, Sven Oberg and A. J. Ray. Their form of organization was a board of trustees, with a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer. The board was in authority--not the ministers.

Shortly after the Oregon Conference separately incorporated, a division occurred in the Stanberry church, and approximately half of their members followed Andrew N. Dugger into a new church based at Salem, West Virginia, and named, simply, "Church of God".

In August of 1933, I renounced the salary from the Oregon Conference, but did not leave their fellowship. In fact, later that August a new church was established at Jeans school house, 12 miles west of Eugene--all but one family my own new converts, and that family not attached to either Sardis group. But, more--most of the Oregon Conference members began coming to Eugene to fellowship with the new Radio Church of God (now the Worldwide Church of God), and I continued as a voluntary service, to preach Sabbath afternoons at the school house near Jefferson, where they met. I never sought to pull away any of their members. They were enamored with the new Salem-based church, and a little later--(not now sure of the date), probably 1934, while the Radio Church of God was on the air and the PLAIN TRUTH being published--they abandoned their Oregon Conference and went in with Salem. At, and just west of Eugene, the parent church of the Worldwide Church of God was very much alive and growing. I was leading elder, and I had appointed and ordained an assistant pastor, and a deacon. We counselled seriously on the matter--decided, in early or mid-1934 not to go in with the Salem people--and we had never gone in with Stanberry. However, a little later I agreed to co-operate and work with the Salem ministers--and under this arrangement I continued as pastor of the members who formerly were the Oregon Conference, but now were joined with Salem. BUT NEITHER I NOR ANY OF THE EUGENE MEMBERS ever joined the Salem Church--or Stanberry. I received no salary or compensation of any kind from them. On my part it was a VOLUNTARY GIVING of time and effort and co-operation, with no remuneration of any kind.

Later --it was either 1945 or 1947--probably the latter--the former Oregon Conference members had a division. I had ordained two elders and two deacons in their local church near Jefferson, which I pastored. Half of them including one elder, a Mr. Davidson, and Mr. Henion, refused to meet with them further, though I urged them to remain with the Salem people.

Meanwhile, about half of all the brethren in the Willamette Valley had remained with Stanberry. They asked me urgently to unite them

with the half of the Salem people who had refused to remain with the Dugger group. For a while I refused. But it left only a small membership still with the Dugger division, and finally agreed to organize them and serve as their pastor--although the Stanberry brethren kept their membership and sent tithes to Stanberry, while the Henion family and others, including the Coles, counted their membership with the parent church of the Worldwide Church of God--and Mr. C. Wayne Cole is still with us in the very important capacity of Director of Pastoral Administration, Worldwide.

I continued to pastor the Stanberry--based group in the Willamette Valley until--probably in 1942 when I spent some months in Hollywood starting the DAILY radio broadcasting, and speaking Sunday afternoons to a packed house at the Biltmore theater. I had GIVEN them my time and service freely, at my own and Eugene church expense. I sought none of their members and none came with us--though as brethren we still had love one for the other.

And I did not start out by incorporating myself pretending to be a church. We, in the growing Church of God--then Eugene-based--finally had grown to a size where incorporation became a necessity. IN NO WAY is Garner Ted doing as his father did, and any claim that he is, is a point-blank lie resorted to, to DECEIVE God's people, and present the REPREHENSIBLE things Garner Ted is now doing in a good light. It is Satan who tries to make us believe that wrong is right.

But now what about the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3?

I have always said, and still affirm, that these seven messages to the seven churches are picturing in advance the seven CONDITIONS to be found in the ONE CONTINUING TRUE CHURCH--but with the Ephesian condition dominant during the first era or years of time, the Smyrna condition becoming dominant in the next period of time, and so on with the Laodicean condition outstanding in the same true Church at about the time of the Great Tribulation, and climaxing with Christ's second coming.

To expound that fully requires more space than I have here. It will be covered later.

But the crux of the whole matter is simply THIS: Where, in all this effort at persuading God's people to follow Garner Ted Armstrong, a man DISFELLOWSHIPED, who did, and is continuing now from without, to sow the seeds of discord among brethren--in all their arguments, W H E R E I S G O D? WHERE IS JESUS CHRIST, living HEAD of the Church?

One thing I can say definitely and with authority, GOD and our Head, JESUS CHRIST have NOT left God's one and only TRUE CHURCH.

These dissidents are LOOKING AT MEN! They are leaving GOD out of their thinking. For FOURTY-FOUR YEARS the living JESUS CHRIST HAS BEEN HEADING, LEADING, GUIDING, AND BLESSING GOD'S ONE AND ONLY TRUE CHURCH!

He has not forsaken it. HE is not in ANY effort to pull members out from GOD'S Church, where CHRIST is working. HE is NOT following

Garner Ted Armstrong, who resorted to a conspiracy to water down God's TRUTH--to SECULARIZE God's Church and college--to literally PUT GOD AND CHRIST OUT OF THE COLLEGE AND CHURCH! HE is not! Will YOU?

Some were leaving Jesus when here in the human flesh (John 6:66-68). "Many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with Him". Would YOU have been one of them?

ANSWERING SMEAR STORIES

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Since 1972 God's Church and Work have come in for some unfavorable publicity in the public press.

Jesus said, "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you". I counted this cost almost 52 years ago, when I gave my life, for whatever it was worth (which was less than nothing in my estimation as I gave it) to the wonderful Christ who had bought me (and you) with His life's blood. I was willing to suffer whatever He allowed.

And I have tried not to answer back. You have not heard or read a word from me in self-defense since this ugly publicity began appearing in 1972. Prior to that there had been persecutions, oppositions, and some limited public comment of an unfavorable nature.

But recently more defamatory stories have appeared in the public press, some of a nature I simply cannot let go unanswered.

One, which went out over the wires to many newspapers and news magazines, called Mr. Stanley Rader the "heir apparent", and another speaks of speculation that he will be the next Pastor General of the Church. This latter, in a national magazine, quotes my son Garner Ted, as saying that Mr. Rader "has already succeeded my father as head of the Church".

I want to say, 1) that Mr. Rader is a most valuable assistant to me in many ways--even beyond the capacity of words to describe--as personal assistant and advisor, as administrator in areas delegated to him, as financial advisor to the Church and Work, and as legal counsel teamed with Mr. Ralph Helge. There have been dozens of lawsuits filed against the college, the Church and often including myself, in trumped-up cases seeking to get money. Mr. Rader and Mr. Helge have won every suit--like a shield against unjust attacks upon God's Work--and few if any of our brethren have known of this INVALUABLE service to God's Work.

2) Mr. Rader has worked tirelessly, much more than eight hours a day, in the service of the Work. He has suffered slander, defamation from within the Church (mostly emanating from Garner Ted) yet has remained loyal. He has broken off all past social relationships in Beverly Hills and similar areas, to devote himself wholly and exclusively to God's Work, as my assistant. He never takes credit for accomplishment, but always gives full credit to me as Christ's Apostle.

3) Mr. Rader is not even ordained, nor do I now, or have I in the past contemplated ordaining him--yet my son has represented to the public press that he has already become head of the Work. All that is ridiculous, aimed at harming God's Work.

Yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Rader, at the moment in New York, saying his health is not up to par, and all this stress and strain is wearing on him, and he feels that probably he should resign. He wants to talk it over with me on his return this weekend. If his health permits, I shall plead with him to stay with me, for I NEED HIM AS MY ASSISTANT! He is of inestimable value to the Work. His fruits have been good--actually superb.

But the HEAD of this Church is the living JESUS CHRIST! Sometimes I have to wonder if some of our brethren forget that. JESUS CHRIST IS A L I V E ! This is NOT the work of MEN--not a worldly carnal operation or institution! I have had great difficulty in persuading some, even in high places in the Work (no longer with us) to realize that truth!

And, on the human level, Christ is using me, His Apostle, as human leader of the Work. And, these past six months, Christ has through me moved swiftly, dynamically, resolutely, with AUTHORITY, to turn God's Church, the Work and the college around--putting every phase of it BACK ON GOD'S TRACK.

I think that the leadership of Christ's Apostle has amply demonstrated for all to see, who is the human leader in God's Work under Christ. Mr. Rader makes no pretensions of anything like that, and what my son has been saying in the public press, I regretfully say to you, is his personal spite, antagonism, and effort at self-justification.

This year's Feast of Tabernacles was revealing PROOF TO ALL that God's Church has turned the corner--Christ's blessing is once again upon us--the Work is now surging forward with renewed vitality and power!

Let us PRAISE THE GREAT MAJESTIC GOD! He is a miracle and wonder-worker. Jesus Christ is IN this Church, directing and empowering--AND BLESSING it! Keep praying!

AN ASSIGNMENT FOR ALL MINISTERS

by Herbert W. Armstrong

When the "Systematic Theology Project" was passed out to all ministers at last January's conference, I am sure those unauthorized to have handed it out--or even to have prepared it--intended it to be an ASSIGNMENT for every minister to read and study thoroughly, for it was represented to you (falsely) as the official doctrines and beliefs of the Worldwide Church of God.

Robert Kuhn, Ph.D., and perhaps one or two others, scholars, of this world's higher education, wanted God's doctrines put in the form and order of modern scholarship.

I have said before--and quoted U.S. Senator Hayakawa, former university professor and president--that this modern academic scholarship does INTIMIDATE students on the college level, and those starting in graduate work at a university.

But did it ever occur to us that the greatest author, educator and revealer of knowledge of all--the real author of the world's greatest seller--and least understook Book, the Holy Bible, did not organize and systematize His revelation and dissemination of TRUTH in this "scholarly" manner!

Up to a certain point--the history of ancient Israel, the historical account is largely in orderly sequence--but God's most important revelation of HIS TRUTH--HIS DOCTRINES AND BELIEFS--which He wanted to be those of His Church, are here a little, and there a little. They are not in orderly sequence, not in what "scholars" in the world's universities would consider a "Systematic Theology Project".

Well WHAT then? Are we to conclude that God is ignorant, unlearned, unscholarly--and inferior to self-exalted scholars of our day?

I think not.

Fellow ministers, we are not OF this world! We do not--must not--operate by its standards. God has called us OUT from the world, to be SEPARATE--His people, doing things His way.

So I say to you that the new book, The Incredible HUMAN POTENTIAL, is a portion of what the "STP" was supposed to be--an EXPOSITION OF THE doctrines, beliefs, practices and traditions of the Worldwide Church of God!

It is presented, NOT in the academic system of "higher criticism". Neither is God's Book, supreme over all, It is not an academically systematized order. But it is written in a style which we hope the reading public will find interesting, revealing, eye-opening, containing Christ's Message in an easy-to-read manner that does not require a Ph.D. to decipher. It is written as God has revealed to me He wants it written. And it covers a multitude of vital truths that have been totally glossed over by organized "Christianity", truths that neither science nor education nor organized religion can answer--the MOST IMPORTANT TRUTHS in life.

And so, as I know Jesus Christ would have me do, I make the reading, AND CAREFUL STUDY of this book AN ASSIGNMENT.

Please do not just read it. STUDY IT! Read it again and again. Preach sermons from it!

This book will be on the market in book stores, I am now informed, by April. Also an up-dated edition, hard cover, of The World T O M O R R O W--What it Will be Like.

I am presently coming in on the home stretch in writing another book I have decided to title, A VOICE CRIES OUT AMID RELIGIOUS CONFUSION. It will also present absolute PROOFS of the one true church--as well as SEVEN TRUTHS that decry religious confusion. This book will cover a certain amount of the same ground as the present book, but with an entirely different approach. I hope to have it in book stores by May or June.

Others on the way are The 7 Laws of Success--a much enlarged edition, hard cover, and The United States and Britain in Prophecy--also updated.

Millions buy books and spend time on books instead of TV and magazines. The book stores and shops offer us AN ENTIRE NEW OPEN DOOR--A TOTALLY NEW AUDIENCE to reach in the United States, Canada, and Britain, and English-speaking countries. If this becomes a big enough success, we can have the books translated and made available in other languages.

But be sure to read and study HUMAN POTENTIAL before the next January conference.

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FROM PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION

Greetings Again Fellow Ministers:

We had a very fine two-day meeting with the ministers and wives in Burk McNair's area in the Central Eastern region. Our meetings were held in an isolated mountainous area near Boone, North Carolina. Accommodations and facilities were not the "Ritz" to make an understatement, but they were adequate at relatively low cost to provide for a fine get-together. Ken Smylie did a fine job in making arrangements and we appreciate his efforts.

Both Doris and I thoroughly enjoyed being able to spend some time with you who were present in casual and relaxing circumstances.

On Sabbath, November 18th, we visited the Charlotte, N.C. Church and appreciated the opportunity to meet a few more of our brethren. Mr. and Mrs. Burk McNair (Burk and Suzie to us--and very dear friends) and their son Mark were exceptionally gracious and kind to us making us very welcome guests in their home.

Now to a subject very much on my mind and I believe extremely important to all of us.

Recently I have been accused of being a "soft and weak" administrator. My leadership of the ministry has been labeled as indecisive, weak, without firmness, not specific enough, not direct enough.

In this Pastor's Report it is not my purpose to react to such accusations, misinformed statements, silly allegations or whatever they might be labeled. Rather, I would like to devote the space to discussing what I believe is strength in leadership and management of people and processes as opposed to weaknesses.