

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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OUR LIGHT IS SHINING!

--And Not the Cosmetics on Our Faces

by Herbert W. Armstrong

ARE WE the true Church of God? Jesus said of His people: "Ye are the light of the world....Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is heaven."

I want you to read a letter I received from a restaurant operator regarding our people at the Feast of Tabernacles:

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"We own a franchised Perkins restaurant here in Rapid City, South Dakota. Our business is one that we have been very proud of the past few years, but this year is one that really made us feel very special. We had the pleasure and opportunity to serve members of the Worldwide Church of God while they held their convention here in our city.

"During the course of a year being in a tourist location we have had the pleasure of meeting many nice people from all over the world. But the members of the Worldwide Church of God are a very special people. We have never known such considerate, courteous, kind and gentle people. Our staff numbers 100 and we were all very sad to see the convention come to an end. To think that we would have to wait another whole year to see these great people. The love and affection shown on the faces of these great people makes one feel like he wants to be around them all of the time.

"Congratulations Mr. Armstrong. If all of your church members are like the ones we had here in Rapid City, South Dakota we tip our hat to you. We shared in an experience we will never forget."

Brethren, have you read my booklet, "WHY Were You Born?" And the booklet, "Just What Do You Mean--BORN AGAIN?" You were born for a PURPOSE! That PURPOSE is to be born into the GOD FAMILY--and that means to first develop God's own perfect spiritual CHARACTER! I know a woman who said, "I'd rather have a well-made-up face than perfect Godly character." But that woman has never been called to be a child of GOD--to develop His CHARACTER and enter eternal life in His Kingdom.

The restaurant operator was not impressed with painted faces, but with SPIRITUAL CHARACTER exemplified by performance. He could SEE God's people's GOOD WORKS!

God says: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Also, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

When rumors leaped over telephone wires during the recent Feast that I had made a remark about cosmetics, a few protesting letters came in, informing me of "the woman's viewpoint." Of course I was concerned with our women's viewpoint, but far more with the way GOD looks at it. It's one thing to say, "Here's how I look at it"--and quite another thing to be concerned with how GOD looks at it!

I want to quote a woman's viewpoint when she heard the rumor, and also after she had read the article in the WORLDWIDE NEWS:

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"I LOVE YOU! I have just read your article in the WORLDWIDE NEWS on make-up. While reading through I could feel the love and concern you have for us women. You are like a very dear and very wise father to us.

"When I first heard about the issue of make-up, more or less four weeks ago through my husband who works in the Johannesburg office, who heard from Mr. Frank Nelte who just returned from a ministerial conference--my heart sank!

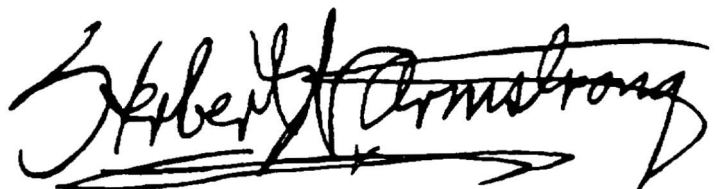
"Then I analysed my feelings. Of course you are right. It is vanity. But I didn't fully realise how it, the use of make-up, debased God by exalting the self, until I read your words. God forgive us women for doing that and our husbands for allowing it, and help us to start again on the right road.

"Recently the pastor of the Johannesburg Church in a sermon said, 'Let us be concerned with what Jesus Christ would have us do or be.'

"He is choosing His bride; He wants her to have a clean face. Soon we will be changed and will shine like the sun. What comparison to have a painted face for a few years and that? None! Thank you for your loyalty to God and the good example you set for us all."

Here at the Headquarters Church, as soon as the rumor spread our women, the very next Sabbath, almost universally appeared in Church without make-up. There has been NOT ONE complaint from this largest of all our congregations. GOD BLESS OUR WOMEN!

Let me give you a few other letters from women after having read my article. These letters begin on the following page.



COMMENTS ABOUT MAKE-UP ARTICLEOne Step Closer in Pleasing God

"Thank you for your love and concern in the recent correction on make-up. Everything you said about the subtilty of Satan deceiving us and our vanity and desire in wanting to be a part of this world is exactly right. After reading your article, it was so plain to see! We would not have known it by our own understanding, though.

"Because you seek God's righteousness, He has allowed you to show us that we have been doing something that is sin in His sight. Now we can be one step closer in pleasing God.

"Please continue to ask God to show us where we need to change in behavior and for the deeper understanding of spiritual knowledge. The sooner we learn our lessons, the sooner Christ can return!

"In deep love and respect, A.W."

Now Sees How Wrong It Was

"I wanted to write to you to let you know that when I heard you say no make-up I did remove it. But I also felt like the women who made excuses and didn't think it was that wrong.

"I just read the WORLDWIDE NEWS and I want to thank you for the article on this subject. I now see how wrong it was. I was just fooling myself. I now know that I was full of vanity, desiring to be beautiful, exalting myself, and wanting to be in the Kingdom but also looking like the women of this world.

"I believe you have the mind of Christ and I'm glad He has shown you through His Spirit that He was unhappy with us women, and that He has shown us one of our hidden sins.

"Your spiritual daughter through Christ, B.G."

Salvation More Important Than a Little Paint

"I must admit when I first heard about the make-up 'crisis,' which I heard through the grapevine, I was angry and started running off at the mouth. But after a little while I shut my big mouth and thought about it. I realize it's true. I felt like a differant person with it on. I wanted to catch the eyes of passersby.

"I was angry because Christ threw a sword right in the heart of 'my' pride--and it hurt deeply. Because I had to battle pride and self-righteousness in myself and Satan was winning, I kept asking God to help me to be humble, then the make-up discussion came up. Salvation is much more important than a little paint.

"Now after a couple of weeks I'm used to not wearing make-up and it doesn't really bother me anymore now. I'm so glad to be without it. I'm not trying to hide behind the outward shell. It's making me feel more the importance of the inner me, the part that

God sees. It's scary to see my lack of character which I thought I had.

"Your daughter in Christ"

Minister's Wife Now Sees Herself

"I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the decision you made regarding make-up. (I realize God was the One who did it--through you!) My initial reaction was not very good, I must admit. I think Satan thought he really was going to get me on that one. You see, I didn't realize how important it had become to me. (I have been coming to Church since I was twelve years old and never wore any make-up until I was twenty-five!)

"It took much prayer, even tears, to get my attitude right. Afterwards, I realized how close Satan had come to getting me! My own intense disappointment at your announcement shocked me! But I'm sure it didn't shock God. He knew what was going on in my heart, if not in my mind, regarding make-up. I'm sure, if I had been asked, I would have said all the things you mentioned--'I can take it or leave it, I don't do it for vanity, I don't see any harm in it,' etc. God knew I needed to be tested on this--and soon--before Satan went too far and I would have been unable to extricate myself from a wrong way of thinking. Now I SEE myself! And I see that Satan was influencing me. That, of course, makes it much easier!

"The things I have learned about myself since your decision was read have been multiple. I am extremely grateful for your help in learning these necessary spiritual lessons, painful though they are. I know that Christ loves His spiritual Body--His Church--and all the physical things will pass away. So only the spiritual things are of very great significance to Him.

"You know, this brings to mind an interesting thought! In the past, when the subject of make-up had been brought up (rumors that you were looking into it, or were considering changing the '74 decision on it), I would always think, 'We should let the women's husbands decide. If he likes it on her, allow him to make the decision, since he is her head.' (I was pretty sure my husband would've approved my wearing it!) And now our Husband-To-Be has made a decision! He doesn't like it!!

"My husband and I also found it interesting that there seems to have been a great deal of emphasis on make-up in the world in the past few years (right during the years it was allowed in the Church!), especially in connection with women who are pursuing careers and who desire to project a certain image. Not a few of our members (those who find themselves in positions where they must work outside the home) have expressed some concern about how their bosses would react and how it would affect them at work. It's a revealing commentary on our lifestyles and how we must, as Christians, survive in this world but not be part of it.

"Well, I didn't mean to go on so, though I thought you might be interested in some of the reactions God's women had. We have

found that most, like me, felt taken aback, disappointed, even angry, but repented after realizing the source of that terrible attitude. A few were (and are still) feeling very depressed and rebellious about it.

"God is surely readying a beautiful Bride for His Son. Thank you for fearlessly allowing God to use you in that deep cleansing.

"With love, your daughter in Christ"

Now Busy With the Inward Woman

"I want to thank you for getting us 'back on the track' about make-up. Don't get me wrong, now, I was not pleased at first--I liked to wear a little make-up! Your letter, however, made me take stock and realize how far we had strayed from 'a little.' Thank you for reminding me of my reasons for putting make-up on.

"My first reaction was, 'I will obey because I respect God's authority in His Church, even though I don't understand the reasoning.' Having decided to obey, I gradually began to see why you made the decision. I have now begun to busy myself more with the inward woman. You, through God's Word, have shown us true femininity.

"Society has put so much emphasis on youth and the beauty that youth holds that, if we are not careful, we too can become caught in the fervor of remaining eternally twenty years old! My father says, 'Sooner or later you can tell what kind of a life a woman has had by her face.' The women, who don't know better, want to live life their own way and then paint innocence and beauty on their face. We in God's Church can receive love, joy, peace and gentleness that will not only give us beautiful faces--but also Godly character to take with us into the world tomorrow.

"Thank you Mr. Armstrong for your part in preparing us to be the Bride of Jesus Christ. I would like to add also that my husband has been most encouraging and helpful by his loving remarks to me."

K.B.

Feels She's Coming More Out of the World

"I'm quite sure you've gotten thousands of responses on the subject of not wearing any more make-up. Well, here's another response. I'd like to thank you for speaking out and I thank Jesus Christ for most definitely inspiring you as to how wrong we all have been. I've worn make-up for 20 years and never thought I'd go without, but it's really nice to see what I really look like! The funny thing is, my husband who is unconverted, hasn't even noticed I quit wearing make-up. Anyhow, I'm glad you were inspired to do away with the make-up. Every day I feel I'm coming more out of the world."

J.

Church Promptly Washed It Off!

"I think you will be pleased to know that ALL who had any make-up whatsoever on their faces prior to hearing the PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT in which you spoke out vs. make-up, promptly washed it all off after services! The teens in our Church, who are under considerable peer pressure to wear make-up, also complied immediately--without parents telling them to--and they are glad to be doing the right thing."

L.P.

Needed to Be Told

"I have just read your article in the WORLDWIDE NEWS and heard your sermon concerning make-up....I have to admit, as our God has made me see, that every word you said about women and make-up applies to me, but I did not realize it until you told us.

"We know, as you continue to remind us, that Christ is going to return soon and we need to get ready. We also know that it is through you that He leads His Church. When we are displeasing in God's sight we need to be told. If you don't tell us, Mr. Armstrong, who will? I deeply appreciate your pleasing God and not men and speaking out on this and every other thing that God reveals to you. I pray that all our Father's begotten daughters will be thankful for this correction and free from the desire to look like or please the world."

S.M.

Thanked God for the Decision

"Thank you for setting the women of the Church straight on the subject of make-up. I have thanked God in prayer for making this decision and now would also like to thank you for communicating it to us. In common with many others, I was deceived about make-up and saw no harm in wearing a little. I used to wonder, however, if in the Millennium women would use facial paint, and it always seemed inconceivable that when the earth was full of the knowledge of God that such a thing would be done.

"You have always said that when our ways please God, the Work prospers. Thank you for showing us how we have unintentionally been disagreeing with God."

J.S.

THE MINISTER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. Armstrong asked me to mention a trend we have noticed on the make-up decision, a trend we have noticed many times before. In those Church areas in which the minister understands the decision and is confident that Christ has led His Church to see His will more clearly, the congregation he pastors is strong and confident in following Christ's lead too.

On the other hand, in those few areas in which the minister (or in the case of make-up, his wife) is uncertain, doubtful or even disagrees with the decision, the Church members in his care are the ones who are uncertain, doubtful and feel free to disagree.