

*the*  
**PLAIN TRUTH**  
*a magazine of understanding*

VOLUME XXII, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER, 1957



THE WORLD TOMORROW broadcast goes out to all the world from this modern studio. Thousands have long awaited the fascinating history of how Mr. Armstrong was led into the ministry and how this work began. The first installment of this moving story begins on page three of this issue.

# The PLAIN TRUTH

*a magazine of understanding.*

VOL. XXII

NO. 9

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

*Publisher and Editor*

Herman L. Hoeh

*Executive Editor*

Roderick C. Meredith

Garner Ted Armstrong

*Associate Editors*

*Sent FREE to all who request it, as the Lord provides. Address all communications to the editor, Box 111, Pasadena, California. Our readers in England should address the editor, B.C.M. Ambassador, London W.C. 1.*

Copyright, September, 1957  
By the Radio Church of God

NOTICE: Be sure to notify us immediately of any change in address. IMPORTANT!

## Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

**T**HE OTHER day a young man came out to the college to see me. He had written two or three times asking me to pray for healing of an affliction caused by an accident, and each time I had prayed for him and sent him an anointed cloth, according to the example set by the apostle Paul (Acts 19).

"I came to see you," he said, "to ask you to pray for me again. I simply can't understand why I wasn't healed."

"Oh, weren't you healed?" I asked. "How do you know you weren't?"

"Why, I still have this nervousness. I still FEEL it."

"Is that how you KNOW?" I asked.

"Of course," he replied.

Well, there was his trouble.

What would it be worth to *you* if I could tell you exactly how you could always pray to God for every need, for help and deliverance from every trouble, and *always get the answer*? If I could show you a way to always KNOW you are going to actually get what you ask of God?

I can tell you that. I have found the way, myself. Of course, in some cases, like that of this young man, where I have interceded for others, and asked God to do something for them, they have failed to receive the answer—while, on the other hand, many others have received the answer I asked for them. But as of the present moment when I now write, there is not one thing I have had to rely upon God for, and ask Him for in prayer, for myself and family or this wonderful work of His which He has committed to me, that has not been answered.

My wife and I have had to depend upon God for just about everything. Once I had to ask God to send us a dime, and we had to have it immediately. Believe it or not, in less than two minutes God sent it to our house. At another time, I had to ask God to send us \$35,000.00 by a certain date, for the work—and He sent it. Once, more than twenty years ago, I remember, before retiring at night, asking God to remove some painful canker sores inside my mouth. When I awoke, they were gone. Once we had to ask God to heal my wife of four or five serious afflictions which had come upon her simultaneously—quinsy with lock-jaw, blood-poison from a rose-thorn, a dog-bite, and two serious internal ailments. Her condition was so critical doctors did not expect her to live another twenty-four hours. She was completely healed of all these things *instantly!* When our youngest son was two years and four months he still could not talk. As a result of a fall, something obstructed speech. When we became sure of the fact of the affliction, we asked God to heal him and let him talk, and the very next day he was beginning to talk, and in a week he was speaking whole sentences like any boy his age.

I have had to ask God to deliver us, and His work, from enemies. I have asked Him for UNDERSTANDING of His will, and His word. I have had to ask for wisdom where I had none, and for guidance. I have been at my wit's end, in desperate trouble, and cried out to God for deliverance. God has answered, every time. Never once has there been a failure to get the answer.

On our return from Europe, nearly ten years ago, we found ourselves in a

full hurricane in the middle of the Atlantic. When it became known that we were in great danger—and no lifeboat could have been launched in those angry 65-foot waves—I went to my cabin and earnestly asked God to calm the storm. In two or three hours the sea was almost calm again.

*You can get the same results—if you will be willing to learn what I have had to learn, and to do what God has shown me I have to do.*

If money could buy you the absolute GUARANTEE that you would *always* get whatever you ask of God—ALWAYS receive the answer to your prayers, how much would this magic be worth? You'd be willing to pay a great deal for it, wouldn't you? Ah, but this is something far too precious to be purchased with money. The richest man on earth does not have enough money to buy it. Yet *you* can have it, if you'll pay the price of conforming to God's terms and conditions.

Another young man, almost like a son to me, could not understand why God refuses to heal him. He told me he had read, in our office, many letters from people who have been miraculously healed of many ailments and diseases after I had prayed for them and just sent them anointed pieces of cloth. I had also prayed for this young man, at least three times or more. Yet he knew God had refused to heal *him*. He couldn't understand why—was much discouraged. And how did he know? Why, by the EVIDENCE—he could still FEEL the affliction, and that PROVED God had not healed him!

I had no difficulty at all in seeing at once why these two fine, earnest, young men were not healed.

Before you ask God for anything, you must first know whether it is His will. He tells us His will in the Bible. He has made us hundreds of definite PROMISES—and He absolutely GUARANTEES He will keep them! Among them, He has promised to supply every NEED—not desire or want, but every NEED. He has promised to give us wisdom, to deliver us from every affliction, trouble, or temptation, to fight our enemies for us and deliver us from their power, to guide and direct us in making right and

*(Please continue on page 15)*

# How God Led me to the One TRUE Church

With this issue we begin the unusual story of Mr. Armstrong's life—how he was led into the ministry, and to find the one TRUE Church. Thousands have waited years for this detailed and revealing autobiography.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

**W**HERE *is* the one TRUE Church today?" That was the question that haunted my mind in 1927. That is the question that perplexes thousands today.

I had just emerged from an unsuccessful six months' intensive research in an effort to prove that "all these churches can't be wrong." Like most people I had been sure that the teachings and practices of these many large denominations were based on the Bible.

Late in 1926 that assumption had been rudely challenged. My wife had accepted a belief, and entered on a way of life and practice, contrary to the orthodox teaching and custom. To me it was religious fanaticism. To me it carried the stigma of disgrace. It was humiliating—and I was proud. What would all my friends think? What would my business associates say?

Unable to shake her from it by reason or argument, I was angered into the most determined study of my life. I set out to *prove, by the BIBLE*, that "all these churches couldn't be wrong." Although I had been reared in one of them, I had never really studied the Bible.

## Disillusioned and Confused

I entered upon this intensified night and day study with zeal. I was determined to drive this religious fanaticism out of my home.

But, as I began studying into the plain, simple statements of the Bible, I was dumfounded! I soon began to make the disheartening discovery that the teachings of my Sunday School days were mostly at total variance with the direct and plain "thus saith the LORD!"

I began to realize that I had been taught largely the exact OPPOSITE of what the Bible says in plain language.

I became confused—all mixed up. My head was swimming. All my foundations seemed to be crumbling beneath me. Simultaneously, I was making an intensive study of the "scientific" hypothesis of evolution, comparing it with the creation narrative in Genesis. The evolutionary doctrine began to appear plausible and convincing. Doubts assailed me.

Was there a God, after all? What *could* a man believe?

Gradually, as these months of 12 to 16-hour days of study progressed, the truth began to emerge that the beliefs and practices of these large and respectable church denominations were not based primarily on the Bible—but quite largely the very opposite of plain and simple Bible statements.

The plausible evolutionary pronouncements of Science, I saw, *refuted* the Bible and threw it out the window.

What was I to believe—the popular and highly respected churches, or Science, or the Bible? Or must I lose all faith in everything, and fling up my hands in despair?

It was a frustrating dilemma.

But I refused to give up until I found the real answer. Now I was *determined* to find the TRUTH! I was aroused!

"Oh God!" I cried out, "if there *be* a God, *reveal* yourself to me—give me irrefutable PROOF of your existence—give me PROOF of whether the Bible is really YOUR inspired Word and revelation to mankind—reveal to me WHY I was put here on earth—WHAT I am—*what* is the purpose and destiny of life—*what's* it all *about!*—It seems I've lost my way. Open my eyes and SHOW ME THE WAY!"

Then I remembered my mother's annual spring housecleaning days. At first

everything was more upset than ever. Hidden dirt and waste appeared. All was clutter, dirt, confusion. But Mother never got discouraged. She simply cleaned out all the dirt and waste, put everything back where it belonged, and then it was all in order and clean.

I realized I was undergoing a mental, philosophical and spiritual housecleaning. I was uncovering a lot of religious dirt—hidden error and superstition I had taken for granted because I had heard it, been taught it, or read it. And when all this "dirt" was discovered and swept out of mind, then order and peace and serene faith would appear for the first time.

It didn't come easily or quickly. It took effort, zeal, determination, patience, and a willingness to confess and get rid of error and to accept truth. But in due time the effort paid off.

I *did* find absolute and scientific PROOF that God Almighty exists, and actually RULES the universe! I *did* find PROOF—many proofs—that the Holy Bible, in its original writings, is the very inspired and direct revelation from God to mankind. I *did* find the ONLY firm and sound basis for FAITH, and source of TRUTH! I *did* find the PURPOSE of life, its destiny and THE WAY!"

And I found that Jesus Christ had said: "I will build my CHURCH!"

He did build it. Somewhere that one and only true Church had to exist today. But WHERE WAS IT?

## WHERE Was the True CHURCH?

These months of vigorous study had astounded me with the realization that the teachings and practices of the large, popular, powerful, organized churches were NOT based primarily on the plain and clear teachings of the Bible. The

real SOURCE of their beliefs and customs had to be looked for elsewhere. Nor were they carrying on the real WORK and MISSION of Christ. I could find no resemblance between them and the original true Church I found described in the New Testament.

Yet, somewhere, there had to exist today the real Body of Christ—the spiritual organism in which He dwelt in Spirit—the human instrumentality fused with His Truth and His Spirit, which HE USES to carry on GOD'S WORK!

But WHERE COULD IT BE?

I was to be many years in finding it.

Actually, like almost everybody else, I didn't know, then, *what* to look for. I had first to learn how God Himself, thru His Word, describes this one Church—what it is like—what it does and does not do.

Until this challenge that angered me into intensive Bible study, I had always said, like thousands of others, "*I just can't understand the Bible.*"

The real story of this search for the one True Church begins much earlier. I'm afraid it can't be made fully and interestingly clear without giving you first the background leading up to it.

Thousands have long wanted these details, many of them exciting, of my past life—the original years of preparation, my conversion, how I came to leave a business life and be plunged into the ministry, the years of struggle, opposition, persecution, experiences with ministers and churches, miraculous answers to prayer, and the start and growth of this present worldwide work of God.

For years I have felt that it should be written. But there never seemed to be time. On occasion, I have written very brief high-spot summaries of portions of this history—but never have the real human-interest close-up personalized details been filled in.

Even my own two sons, now both ordained ministers tremendously busy in the great work of God, have never heard from me much of the experiences I have lived thru, and, for the past 40 years, shared with their mother.

When I was along in the late teens, I was thrilled and highly intrigued by reading Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography. It made such impress upon me that I later read it completely thru again,

and then still later, even a third time.

Franklin's Autobiography was written to his son. I have often felt that I should write the life experiences that have come to me for the benefit, and, I hope, encouragement and inspiration of my sons. I never could seem to get around to it.

But now, today, the associate editor of The PLAIN TRUTH tells me they need an article from me for the September number of The PLAIN TRUTH, and they need it in a hurry—by tomorrow morning, the press dead-line.

I know of no other material I can write as quickly—so, after all these years, here is the first installment of this autobiography going down on my typewriter as rapidly as my fingers can click up these keys—not only for my sons, but for all the readers of The PLAIN TRUTH around the world.

I hope you won't find it dull. The experiences I'm now going to tell you have never seemed dull to me.

#### My Earliest Recollections

I don't think you'll be much interested in boyhood experiences. Yet a few of them did bear influence on what was to follow.

My earliest recollection is of a house where we lived on West Harrison Street, in Des Moines, Iowa.

I was born July 31, 1892, in a red brick two-apartment flat on the northwest corner of East 14th and Grand Avenue, in Des Moines. Of course I don't remember that, but my mother, now in her 92nd year and still happily enjoying life, as God intended, says she does! A friend in Des Moines a few years ago jokingly remarked that I had become famous too late. That flat has long since been torn down and replaced by a filling station.

But I do remember a few events, between ages 2 and 5, in this cottage on West Harrison Street, near 14th. My father's parents lived next door in a larger house to the east, and I remember scampering over there to sample the delicious apple pies my Grandma Armstrong used to make.

I remember my Great Grandpa Hole, then somewhere between 92 and 94, often taking me up in his arms—and the tragedy that occurred when he fell down the stairs, and died.

I started kindergarten at age 5. I can still hear the mournful clang of the school bell, one block south.

#### Swearing Off Chewing

It was at this advanced age of 5 that I swore off chewing tobacco. This is how it happened. A ditch was being dug in front of our house. This was quite exciting. In those days I spent most of my time out in the front yard watching. Ditch diggers in those days universally chewed tobacco. At least these particular diggers did.

"What's that there?" I asked, as one of them whipped a plug of tobacco out of his hip pocket, and bit off a corner.

"This is something good," he answered. "Here, sonny, bite off a chaw."

I accepted his generosity. I can remember distinctly struggling to bite off "a chaw." That plug was really tough. But finally I got it bitten off. It didn't taste good, and seemed to have a rather sharp bite. But I chewed it, as I saw him chew his, and when I felt I had it well chewed, I swallowed it.

And very soon thereafter—a minute or so—I swore off chewing tobacco for LIFE!!! I say to you truthfully, I have never chewed since!

This was very shortly after the days of the old horse-drawn street cars. The new electric trolley cars had just come in—the little *dinkeys*. I remember it well. The conductor on our line was Charley,

Here is Mr. Armstrong at the age of one year with his great grandfather Hole, age 92!



and the motorman was old Bill. The most fascinating thing in the world in those days was to park myself up at the front of the long side seat, on my knees, so I could look thru the glass and watch old Bill run that car. I decided then on what I was going to be when I grew up. I was going to be a street car motorman. But something in later years seems to have sidetracked that youthful ambition.

I do remember, though, that my father had a different idea of what I would be when I grew up. I was constantly pestering him with questions. I always seemed to want to know "WHY?" Or "HOW?" I wanted to UNDERSTAND things. At age 5 I can remember Dad saying (I called him "Papa" then—he became "Dad" later at the same time that other boys' male parents had their names changed from "Papa" to "Dad." I remember he didn't like the change, but I was more concerned with what boys my own age thought than with my father's opinions) —anyway he said: "That youngin is always asking so many questions he's sure to be a Philadelphia lawyer, when he grows up."

#### A Spanking in School

At age 6 the family moved to Marshalltown, Iowa, where my father entered into a partnership in the flour milling business.

I remember the events of those days at age 6 much better than I do those of age 56. The mind is much more receptive, and the memory far more retentive, in the earlier years. Believe it or not, every baby learns and retains more the very first year of life than any year thereafter. Each year we learn and retain a little less than the year before. Few, however, realize this fact. For each succeeding year, the total fund of knowledge increases. We have what is learned and retained this year, *in addition* to what has been the cumulative knowledge of all past years. Writing up these early experiences brings this forcibly to mind. Occurrences are coming back to me in my mind, now, as I write, that I have not thought of consciously for years.

At Marshalltown we virtually lived from that flour mill. Almost every evening for supper—the evening meal didn't become "dinner" until years later—we

*(Please continue on next page)*



This is a family photo of Herbert Armstrong with his father and mother, and his sister, Mabel. How differently they dressed when Mr. Armstrong was a boy!

## Mr. Armstrong as a Boy!

A typical childhood scene showing Herbert Armstrong playing with his sister, Mabel. He was about 3½ years old when this photo was taken.





Another childhood scene of Mr. Armstrong with his sister, Mabel.

had corn meal mush and milk. Distinctly I can hear my father, now, giving evidence of a small amount of Scottish-Irish in his ancestry, by calling it "mursh and milk." When he needed to silence me, with his strong, clear deep bass voice, he commanded sharply, "Hursh!"

Breakfasts at Marshalltown consisted of either or both of fried mush, and/or buckwheat cakes. Dinner, today called lunch, was largely bread and gravy, made from "a dime's worth of round steak," and, as my mother always instructed when sending me to the butcher-shop, "tell him to put in plenty of suet."

I went to school in the first grade in Marshalltown. One day the teacher called me to the front of the room and gave me a good spanking with a ruler. What for, I do not remember. The one thing I do remember, vividly, is trying to save face before the other children, as I walked back to my seat near the rear of the room. With my back to the teacher, I tried to make a face and laugh for the benefit of the "kids." So far as I can remember, that is the only time I was ever spanked or severely disciplined in all my school years.

It was also at Marshalltown, at age 6, that I had my first "girl friend." I remember only part of it. It must have been some kind of children's exercises at a church function. A little girl my age—her name, I well remember, was Velma Powers—and I, had some kind of

a part or act, opening or shutting a curtain between two rooms. Whatever happened to Velma after age 6 I have never heard.

### "Haw Goodie"

After a year or so the family moved back to Des Moines. My father bought, or built, a house some three or four blocks north of the place on Harrison Avenue.

It was while we lived there that my brother Russell was born, when I was 8. In front of our house was a very thorny hawthorn tree. Neighbor boys and I built a little one-room "house" up in the branches of that tree. It was great fun climbing the tree, and entering into our little wooden "house," where we were private and out of sight of our parents.

We named the tree and the tree-house "Haw-Goodie." I suppose it was because we liked to eat the haws—the little red berries of the tree.

When my little baby brother was a few months old we moved to Union, Iowa, where my father went into partnership in a hardware store.

### The "Pigeon Milk" Hunt

One day I wandered into the town job-printing shop. I must have been on one of my usual information-seeking forays, asking so many questions that ways and means had to be thought up for ridding the printers of the nuisance.

"Say, sonny, I wonder if you'd run an errand for us," asked the printer. "Run over to the grocery and ask them for a pint of pigeon milk."

"What's it for?" I asked. "Why do you want it?" I always had to understand "WHY?" and "HOW?"

"To grease the presses with," explained the printer.

"How'll I pay for it?"

"Tell 'em to charge it," was the answer.

At the grocery store the grocer explained:

"Sorry, bub, we're just out of pigeon milk. They carry that now at the jewelry store."

From the jewelry store I was sent to the furniture store, and then to the dry-goods store, then to the drug store, and after almost every store in town I went

to my father's hardware store. Dad explained that I had been chasing all over town on a fool's errand. Anyway I added to my store of knowledge the fact that pigeon milk is not to be found in stores. And I didn't think it was a more foolish errand than the one a rookie sailor was sent on when his ship was anchored at Pearl Harbor. Older sailors sent him to a dour Commandant on shore to get the key to the flag pole—and he got thrown in the brig.

Our barn in Union was badly infested with rats. I determined to do something about it. I obtained a large cage rat trap at the hardware store, and almost every morning I had a number of rats in the trap. When God says, thru Jeremiah, that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, he meant mine, as well as *your* heart. I took some kind of fiendish delight in gradually drowning those rats in the rain barrel, by lowering the cage into the water. I don't recall having received the severe whippings for this I should have had. Probably my parents didn't know I did it.

I remember a birthday party my mother had for me on my 9th birthday, probably because a picture taken at the party has remained in the family box of old pictures.

Another milestone event that lingers vividly in memory was the turn of the  
(Please continue on page 20)

This photo shows Herbert Armstrong at age nine with his sister, Mabel, and younger brother, Russell.



KEPT that law to set us an example. He was our "light," our example. A true Christian is simply one who follows Christ—who follows that example.

Do you begin to see the true nature of the living God?

He is the ONE who has set all physical and spiritual laws and energies in motion. He has an overall plan for this earth—He is Supreme Ruler.

God came in the flesh as Jesus Christ to preach the good news of God's kingdom—or government. Jesus always preached that gospel. Philip preached it (Acts 8:12). The apostle Paul preached it all through his ministry—even to the Gentiles at Rome (Acts 28:31). It is the ONLY true gospel!

### God's Character

God is RULER. If we become His children through repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), we may be "born again" (Jn. 3:1-8)—changed into, actually born of spirit as a literal son of God! God is reproducing Himself! He—the Creator and Ruler of the universe—is begetting human beings through His Spirit to be born as His sons—to be in His own family—to inherent eternal life. But we must first learn how to live before God will grant us eternal life and make us His own sons.

We must develop God's wisdom, God's character. We must "live by every word of God." Realizing that our Creator knows best, we should OBEY Him. To deny this is to admit a profound ignorance of the Eternal God's great wisdom and purpose! It betrays a lack of understanding of the character of the true God.

The apostle John summed it all up when he wrote of Christ—the God of the Old Testament, the giver of the LAW—"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a LIAR, and the truth is not in him (I John 2:4).

God himself calls these lawless ministers liars when they try to deny the authority of His RULE, the wisdom of His LAW, and the very basis of His great PURPOSE.

It is time to wake up! May God help you to repent of defying His rule, of breaking His laws, and guide you to accept Christ as your Saviour from sin.

Then you may begin to develop the character of God and be born of the Spirit as His son in the resurrection. You need to come to know the true God as your Father.

### Talk to God

Once you come to really know the true God—the God revealed by Jesus Christ—you will want to talk to Him. You may do this in prayer. This is the third way you may come to really "know" the true God.

As you come to know God in this way, you will soon realize that here, too, you have to OBEY God if you expect an answer. But you will find that God is LOVE and that He will gladly grant any request that is good for you under the circumstances. You will also discover that He has POWER to heal you when you are sick, to deliver you in miraculous ways from trouble, and to bless you in a manner beyond human comprehension.

So get to know God by talking to Him often.

And remember—the combined testimonies of nature, of the Bible, and of answered prayer all reveal the same true God. He is the All-Wise, All-Powerful, Law-Giving RULER of the universe.

Are you willing to acknowledge His government, obey His laws, and inherit eternal life as His child?

---

## Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

(Continued from page 2)

wise decisions. He has promised to heal us when we are sick.

Those are a few of the things we KNOW it is God's will to do for us—things for which we may ask, and be sure we shall get the answer!

But THERE ARE CONDITIONS!

It is like a contract, or an agreement. God promises to always do these things for us, IF we do just two things He demands of us! And an uncle of mine once impressed on me, so indelibly I shall never forget, that that little two-letter word "IF" is absolutely the biggest word in the English language. That great big

little "IF" is the obstruction that stands between you and getting the answer from God!

1st, you must OBEY. "What things soever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing IN HIS SIGHT."

2nd, you must BELIEVE, "According to your faith be it unto you."

Now these two young men are both sincere fellows who have surrendered to God, who seek to know His will, and to keep His commandments, and live HIS WAY, thru his power and strength. And both of them have sincerely SUPPOSED that they had FAITH.

But, like at least 99 out of every hundred earnest, surrendered Christians, they have not fully realized just what faith is, or how to exercise it.

The Bible definition of SIN is this: "Sin is the transgression of the law." (I John 3:4.)

The Bible definition of FAITH is this: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1.)

God PROMISES to heal you when you are sick. You follow His instruction, you call for the elders of the church, they pray over you the prayer of faith, anointing you with oil, and God PROMISES that when this is done, "the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the LORD SHALL RAISE HIM UP." (Jas. 5:14-15.)

Now these two young men confronted me with the fact God had not done as He had promised. How did they know—what evidence convinced them God had not done what He promised? Why, their EVIDENCE, in both cases, was that they could FEEL the pain, the nervousness, and weakness. They could see they were not healed. There was the EVIDENCE that God had not healed them.

But once again, what is FAITH? Faith is the EVIDENCE of healing that is NOT SEEN—or felt! It is impossible for God to lie. Impossible for God to break His promise. Do you believe that?

"Oh, yes, of course," you answer—or do you, now?

I know these two young men thought they had faith. As a matter of fact, at the time I prayed for them, undoubtedly they both believed. At the time, that is.

(Please continue on next page)

# How God Led me to the One TRUE Church

(Continued from page 6)

century. *That* particular New Year's Eve was a once-in-a-lifetime event. Then and there I formed an aversion to Church "Watch-nights" on New Years' Eve.

I couldn't see any fun, at 8½ years, in having to sit quietly in Church from about 8 o'clock until midnight, unable to get up and play or run around, just quietly "watching" the old century out and the new century in. Some thirty years later I was to learn that God had set the beginning and ending of years and centuries otherwise. We were only watching the passing of a humanly calculated point of time, anyway. I only knew that it was a droll and dismal evening for me. I went to sleep once or twice, only to be awakened.

Back to Des Moines we moved again after a year or so in Union, this time near East 13th and Walker. No events worth recording occurred until we had moved into a new house my father built on West 17th at Clark, when I was 10 and 11 years old.

## Learning to Swim

While living there, I began to play football on our grade-school team, learned to skate and to swim.

Two or three of the boys I ran around with at that time, most of them a year older than I, took me one day to the "bathing beach" on the Des Moines river. There was a diving barge out in the river where the water was deep enough for diving, and a couple of ropes stretched tightly about even with the surface of the water from the shore to the barge. I would go out to the barge holding on to the ropes, for I had not yet learned to swim.

One day two of my companions got me out almost to the barge, where the water was well over my head, pulled me loose from the rope, and yelled at me that I had to swim, or sink.

With my life at stake, I plowed des-

perately into the water with my arms and legs, and managed to keep above water until I churned my way into water shallow enough to stand on the river bottom. That's how I learned to swim.

In those days the automobile was in its earliest infancy—mostly built like the horse-drawn carriages, hard solid rubber tires, steered by a stick or handle rather than a wheel. We often called them horseless carriages. My father was always jolly, and he loved a joke. It was while we were living in this house that he called out to us:

"Hurry! Come quick! Here goes a horseless carriage!"

Seeing one of these early automobiles was a rare sight. We came running to the front window. A carriage was going by, drawn, not by horses, but a pair of mules. Dad's strong bass voice boomed forth in hearty laughter.

The two boys I "palled" around with mostly in those days were Harold Cronk, who lived across the street, and Clayton Schoonover, who lived a block or two away. We played baseball, football, marbles, and other games together. We dug a cave over in "Cronky's" yard. Then, from this cave, we dug a tunnel five or six feet long, that led into a second cave. We had shoveled out all that dirt thru the tunnel and first cave. The only entrance into the second cave was to crawl thru that tunnel, and it was too small to admit the passage of an adult. Thus, the second cave was a hide-out from parents. Altho I had sworn off from chewing tobacco at age 5, it was back in this second cave at age 10 or 11 that I learned first to smoke.

## Learning to Smoke

Boys will do idiotic, crazy, foolish things. How boys that age ever live into maturity I have never been able to understand, except that God must provide an angel for every little boy to preserve his life from violence and accidental death.

The only ventilation in that second cave came thru the tunnel and first cave. I don't believe we ever smoked more than once or twice back in that cave—just for the novelty of doing a forbidden thing—and I don't remember, now, whether we had real tobacco cigarettes or some other kind. I do remember once smoking corn silk down on "my cousin's farm"—which of course belonged to my uncle. I'm sure every man raised on a middle-west farm remembers the same experience. Actually I don't remember that smoking ever became a habit until age 19, and never a heavy habit—but it was not broken until my conversion.

Wrestling became a favorite sport in those days. These were the days of Frank Gotch, Farmer Burns, Zbysco, and others, when wrestling was a real sport and not a fakery show. "Clayt" Schoonover's older brothers had set up a real wrestling mat, and they taught us all the main holds. I think I loved ice skating perhaps more than any other sport, however. I had learned to take wide, sweeping strokes in a style so that my body would sway way over, from one side to the other, using the force of gravity to help propel forward. There was a rhythm and sort of thrill sensation to it that was enjoyable.

During these days I did a great deal of bicycle riding, developing big calf muscles on both legs. By this time my father had invented the air-circulating jacket idea around a furnace, and had gone into the furnace manufacturing business, with a small factory on East 1st or 2nd Street. I worked summer vacations in the factory.

I had a sister, Mabel, two years younger than I. She died, at age 9, in this house. Dad soon sold that house, after my sister's death, and built another new house back on the south-west corner of 14th and Harrison, only about three doors from the place where we lived from the time I was a few months old until age 6.

After my sister's death my mother prayed earnestly that God would give her another daughter. When I was 12, that daughter was born, and a half hour later her twin brother, Dwight Leslie. My mother, incidentally, is a twin. Her name is Eva, pronounced with the soft "E" to rhyme with the name of her twin sister, Emma, who is not now living.



Also incidentally, my younger brother Dwight is mainly the composer of the new Bible Hymnal now being prepared for the publishers, which we hope to have published within the next six months. He has composed some 38 or 40 new hymns, the music set to the Psalms or other Scriptures. In this Hymnal also will appear some 50 or 75 of the old favorite hymns known and loved by nearly everybody, insofar as their words are Scriptural. The words of so very many favorite hymns are not. Also there will be included a number of very old hymns from an old Presbyterian Bible hymnal, with the Psalms set to music. Many of the most beautiful old hymns nearly everyone knows will be published with the old unscriptural words replaced by the words of various Psalms. GOD Himself gave us the WORDS to sing. The Psalms are SONGS!

#### Early Religious Training

I think it is time, now, to explain what boyhood religious training was mine.

Both my father and mother were of solid Quaker stock. My ancestors came to America with William Penn, a hundred years before the United States became a nation. Indeed I have the genealogy of my ancestors back to Edward I of England, and thru the British Royal genealogy, back to King Herremon of Ireland who married Queen Tea Teph, daughter of Zedekiah, King of Judah. The Bible then carries the genealogy back to King David, and on to Abraham, and indeed back to Adam. My mother is something like a third cousin to former President Herbert Hoover, who also is of Quaker ancestry.

From earliest memory I was kept regularly in the Sunday school and church services of the First Friends Church in Des Moines. Apparently there are several branches of the Friends Church, like most other denominations. I never knew much about any of the others, but the one in which I was reared from a baby was *not* one of those quaint and unique meetings where everyone sits still until the "Spirit moves him" or twiddles his thumbs.

We had a Pastor just like most orthodox Protestant Churches. The style of service was almost identical with that of a fundamentalist Methodist, Baptist, Christian, or Presbyterian church.

From earliest boyhood I was in a boys' class, and we all sort of grew up together. I can't remember when I first knew those boys. I guess we were all taken there as babies together.

Anyway it was interesting, some ten years ago, to learn what had become of most of them—for I had drifted away from church about age 18, and had gotten completely out of touch. One of them was Dean of Student Personnel at San Francisco State College, with a Ph.D. from Yale. I contacted him, and he gave me considerable and valuable assistance and counsel in founding Ambassador College in 1947.

Another, who had been perhaps my principal boy-hood chum thru those early years, was a retired retail furniture merchant, who had enlarged and successfully maintained the retail establishment founded by his father. Another was a successful Dentist. The son of the Pastor of my boyhood days, had died, apparently early in life. Another had become director of a large relief agency in the Middle East. On the whole, the boys of that class had grown to become successful men.

For some little time during those church years—perhaps a stretch of three to five years—I had the job of "pumping" the pipe organ. We had in the church a small pipe organ that was not electrically powered. A long handle protruded out the right hand side near the rear. This side of the organ was placed in a corner, and a draw-curtain hung in front of the handle. When I was pumping the organ bellows I was hidden behind the curtain.

My father was, all thru these years, the main bass in the choir. He had a deep bass voice of unusual quality and power. He could reach down to low "C" with sufficient volume to fill a large auditorium. All thru those years, too, he sang in the church male quartette. I think it must have been the best male quartette in Des Moines, for they were in constant demand to sing at various places all over the city. The high tenor was proprietor of Des Moines' leading photographic studio. The second tenor was president of an insurance company. I don't seem to remember the occupation of the baritone.

Several in my family seem to have in-

herited good voices from my father. In my case it never turned out to be a singing voice, and has been used only in speaking. My brother Dwight has inherited a special musical talent for composing, beside playing the violin and piano. My elder daughter sang for years on The WORLD TOMORROW program, and has been heard around the world. My other daughter has a good voice but never studied music. My two sons both have unusually good speaking and singing voices, but only Ted has taken training for singing. He now speaks on the radio program about a third of the time, and often listeners cannot tell at first whether they are listening to him or to me.

A few years ago in New York I procured several original phonograph records of Caruso's voice, one personally autographed by him. On hearing them I recognized the same identical voice *quality*, or *color*, that was my father's, except his was in the lower deep bass range. I have often felt my father might have become a really great singer had he received proper training. I'm sure many hundreds who heard him believed the same.

#### Spark of Ambition Ignited

At this point I think it better to skip over the remaining boyhood days, and come to age 16. Between ages 12 and 16, beside school, I had many Saturday and vacation jobs. I carried a paper route, was errand boy for a grocery store, special delivery boy for a dry goods store, spent one summer vacation as draftsman for a furnace company, and there were other odd jobs.

But at age 16, during summer vacation, I obtained my first job away from home. The job was waiting on tables in the dining room of a semi-resort hotel in the next town east of Des Moines, Altoona. There was an electric line—an interurban street car—that ran out thru Altoona and on east to the little town of Colfax. This Altoona hotel served food of a standard that attracted many guests from Des Moines.

The owner was a single man of perhaps 45. He complimented my work highly. Soon he began to tell me that he could see qualities in me that were destined to carry me to large success in life.

He constantly expressed great confidence in me, and what I would be able to accomplish, if I were willing to put forth the effort.

The effect it had on me reminds me of an experience my wife has related when she was a little girl. She was in her father's general store. A man came in, placed his hand on her head, and said:

"You're a *pretty* little girl, aren't you?"

"I'll thank you," spoke up her mother indignantly, "not to tell my daughters they are pretty! That's not good for them."

Promptly little Loma ran to a mirror and looked into it. She made a discovery. She decided the man was right, saying to herself approvingly: "Well I *am* pretty am't I?"

I had never realized before that I possessed any abilities. Actually I had never been a leader among boys. Most of the time I had played with boys older than I who automatically took the lead.

But now, for the first time, I began to believe in myself. This hotel owner aroused ambition—created within me the DESIRE to climb the ladder of success—to become an important SOMEBODY. This, of course, was vanity. But he also stimulated the WILL to put forth whatever effort it would take to achieve this success. He made me realize I would have to study, acquire knowledge and know-how, be industrious and exercise self-denial. Actually this flowered into grossly over-rated SELF confidence and cocky conceit. But it impelled me to *driving* effort.

Returning to Des Moines, I began to spend extra hours outside of high school at the city library, mostly in the Philosophy, Biography, and Business Administration sections. I began to study Plato, Socrates, Aristotle and Epictetus. It was at this time that I first read Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography.

My first date with a girl took place at about this time—a date to escort a next-door neighbor girl in my class in high school to some school function. At that stage I was pretty much in awe of girls, and felt awkward in their presence. It has always been a puzzle to me as to why so many boys around that age are afraid of girls, ill at ease before them, and yet girls seem not to be shy or bashful in any way in the company of boys.

For the next 8 years I continued to date this girl on and off, but never did I put my arm around her, kiss her, or, as they would say today "neck with her." (It was called "loving up" in those days.) It just wasn't generally done in those days—or, if it was, my eyes had not yet been opened to the practise.

I went to North High School in Des Moines. Its total enrollment was only 400 then. In high school I went out for football, and for track, and played a small amount of basketball in the gym. In football I played end or half. I weighed only 135 in those days, and was too light to make the team, but I went along in a suit with the team to all of its home games, usually played in the Drake University Stadium. In track I went out for the mile run, but never was entered in the state meet. The best time I ever made was 5 minutes flat, on th Drake track, where the annual Drake Relays, nationally famous, are still run. Even then I fainted at the finish line. Today the world's best runners get over the mile under 4 minutes!

I was just an average student in school. I remember the botany teacher once compared me to a sponge.

"Herbert Armstrong," she said sharply before the whole class, "you are just like a sponge. You never study your lesson, you never contribute or give out anything in class. You just sit there and *soak up* what the other pupils recite, and then when final exams come along, you always get close to 100%!"

I never did apply myself in school until the awakening at age 16, and even then I became much more absorbed in outside studies of subjects of my own choosing in which I was more interested. But I remember that always I was able to get above 90% (they graded on the percentage basis in those days) in all final exams—and often 98% or 100%. I did real heavy cramming the 24 hours before the tests.

#### Choosing a Vocation

We skip now to age 18. High school behind me, I had to decide whether to go on thru college. The time had come to decide on a profession, vocation, or occupation for life.

In the public library I found a book titled "Choosing a Vocation." It took the

reader first thru a thorough course of self-analysis, as to talents and abilities, weaknesses and faults, likes and dislikes. Then it carried the reader thru a survey of the various vocations, to arrive at the one where the candidate best fit.

This self-analysis led the reader to the field of life work where his shortcomings and faults would handicap him the least, his talents and abilities help him the most, and the field he most liked so that he could put his heart into his work.

The answer, in my case, turned out to be the advertising profession.

It so happened that my father's younger brother, Frank Armstrong, was the most prominent advertising man in Iowa. He had been primarily instrumental in organizing Ad Clubs in cities all over the state, and finally in organizing the first State Association of Ad Clubs in the nation. He was its first president. He was the most sought-after banquet speaker in the state. Naturally I went directly to my uncle for counsel.

Where could I obtain the best training for the advertising profession? At that time none of the colleges or universities offered a course in this field that my uncle considered practical. I think it was a year or two later that the University of Missouri first offered a thorough course in advertising and merchandising. About the same time or soon after Harvard followed suit, then others. But at that time, my uncle advised me that the best place to start at the bottom in the advertising field was in the want-ad department of a daily newspaper.

I had not applied myself with much zeal, anyway, in class-room work in school; but I had studied diligently in fields of my own choosing outside of school.

My uncle was a self-educated man. Indeed he was one of the best educated men in Iowa, yet he had not gone past, I believe, the seventh grade in school. But he had studied constantly. He had acquired a very large library in his home. Some of America's greatest and most successful men have been self-educated, including George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Henry Ford, and Thomas A. Edison. As a matter of fact,

(Continue on page 24)

# “CERTAINLY, SIR!”

by Herbert W. Armstrong

“I would like another pat of butter, please.”

“Certainly, Sir,” replied the bus-boy as we breakfasted in a San Francisco hotel.

It was not so much what he said. It was the manner in which it was spoken that started a train of thought.

“Why is it,” I began philosophizing to my wife, “that we Americans are so ill-trained in good manners and the use of the English language? This bus-boy is evidently English. I doubt if one in a hundred college seniors in America, ready for graduation from college, could speak and act with the grace and culture of this English bus-boy. Yet in every other phase of education they would all probably show much further advancement than this young man.

“In other words, he probably has no more than a high school education, yet because he has been reared in an English home he *appears* to have more education than the average American college graduate.”

## Judged by Our Speech

“Remember when we were in England?” I continued. “Even servants and people with very little education, in the more humble stations of English life, spoke and acted with better speech, more poise and culture, than most Americans of considerable education.

“Did you notice the *manner* in which this bus-boy said ‘Certainly, Sir?’ It bespoke a developed, experienced *personality*. It wasn’t said in a hesitant, self-conscious manner. It was spoken in the manner to which he is accustomed by long experience. Back of it, and reflected in his voice, was a personality habitually trained in easy, courteous, respectful and fluent self-expression.”

We have just come to our room from breakfast, and so here I am turning this idea into an article for our readers.

This type of self-expression—this personality development—this training in good speech and good manners, cannot

be instilled in the school classroom alone. The English example demonstrates that it must be developed in the home—in a happy, cultured, well-mannered family life, where certain restraints are enforced by the parents, and slipshod carelessness, undue familiarity, and general letting down of the bars is not tolerated.

This requires careful diligence on the part of parents. When they, themselves, let down the bars, become careless about personal appearance, cocking feet on tables or chairs, speaking crossly, losing tempers, scarring the furniture or moving it out of place, they may expect their children to mature into uncouth, ill-trained, ignorant-*appearing* men and women.

Even when young parents firmly resolve to start out their family life with the most careful training, it is exceedingly difficult in an America with its public-school playgrounds, where young children come into daily contact with ill-trained youngsters from other homes.

I remember when our boys, along about the second or third grade, were heard saying, “Aw, that ain’t no good.”

“Where on earth did you learn that kind of language?” I asked.

“Why, at school, Daddy.”

I was amazed. But of course they didn’t learn that kind of grammar in the classroom. They got it from other children on the playgrounds.

When students who have graduated from high school come to Ambassador College, with most grades in the “A’s” or “B’s,” proficient in mathematics, history, and other subjects, but are not so well-trained in their English, we require them to take a special course in Remedial English for which no credit is given. We want Ambassador students not only to be well educated in the sense of possessing a large fund of knowledge, and sound understanding, but we want them to *appear* educated by the way they express themselves—in personality, in speech, and in manners. It is our most difficult task.

They study English, and composition, and public speaking, and use of the voice in speaking, and foreign languages, under very competent professors. Still, we find, it takes constant diligent drill, and it takes time, and it takes patience.

But I must add, there is a great deal of satisfaction in the realization that progress is really greater than we usually realize, watching the day-to-day development of students.

I would recommend to all parents whose children are still young that they take some reputable and approved correspondence course in good English and good speech. Take inventory in your own home.

Ask yourselves, “Do we eat at our family table with the same manners we would if we were visiting some friends or relatives? Do we speak softly, or do we yell? If we wish to speak to another of the family in another part of the house, do we remain where we are and shout, or do we go to the other room and speak quietly?”

“Do we teach the children to obey the fifth commandment, and honor their parents by courteous and polite speaking as well as in other ways? Or do we permit our children to ‘sass’ us, and speak impudently and disrespectfully?”

“Do we always put things back in their proper place after use, and diligently enforce this practice on our children, or do we carelessly leave everything just where we last used it, thus teaching the children by example to do likewise, and creating clutter and confusion?”

Remember, God is not the author of confusion. A real Christian home will be one that is neat, clean, and orderly, and where the family speaks softly with good manners. Otherwise you are breaking some of the Commandments of God, living in disorder and confusion, and doing serious harm and injury to the future of your children.

In all things, let us be circumspect and walk orderly.

## How God Led Me

(Continued from page 22)

if you stop to think about it, *Jesus Christ himself attended no college or similar institution!*

"Education," said my Ben Franklin type uncle, "does not consist of walking back and forth over the door-sill of a college class room, nor of warming an arm-chair class-room seat. A man can go to college and still not get an education. Education comes from books, but it also comes from experience, travel, and DOING. You can get the books outside as well as inside a college. The reason most young men have to go to college to get an education is that they have no self-starter—no drive—no purpose—no determination. Left to themselves, they would never study. They must have study forced on them by class-room assignments, with the lash of the grading system and the stigma attached to low grades to drive them into study.

"Now in your case," he continued, "you can't get the kind of course you need in college. You've proved you do drive yourself on to study more persistently outside of class-room work than in. I think you'll get your education, and keep up your study. I can steer you into the direction of study, and advise you of the books and texts and trade magazines for that study, that will not only train you for the advertising profession, but give you a broad and general education in other fields as well."

I took his advice.

I didn't look for just any job. I decided, on his advice, to get a job in the want-ad department of the Des Moines Daily Capital. How I got that job, and what then immediately began to happen will be recounted in the next installment of this series.

But little did I realize, then, that the advertising profession was NOT, after all, to be my final life profession. I could not have remotely DREAMED I would be called into God's ministry, and that I was now being launched on the *very identical training and experience* needed for God's ministry!

Nor could I then have had the slightest conception that the Eternal God was

purposely protecting me from becoming conformed to the groove into which this world's institutions of higher learning had descended, in order that in due time I might be used as His instrumentality in founding and building GOD'S OWN college—a college unfettered by the errors of tradition, and with a clear vision to recapture the TRUE VALUES.

It fell to my lot to seek out and obtain my education the HARD way, just as I was destined to have to seek out and find God's long-hidden TRUTH the HARD way. But it could have been no other way.

The unusual, somewhat amazing, and intriguing experiences I was to live and suffer thru will be continued in the next issue.

---

## The Inside Story

(Continued from page 10)

prophecy, the *understanding* of some scripture text or principle—these were almost invariably the topics of conversation.

I had mingled intimately with other fellows all my life in my large boyhood "gang," on athletic trips, at "Y" camp, at the various places I had worked during summer vacations. But I had NEVER met fellows like this before!

Yet they were *not* emotional or sentimentally religious in the usual sense at all. They didn't have the kind of "religious talk" that seems to characterize so many Bible college students.

They were *sound-minded—balanced—thoughtful*. They KNEW what life was all about and the meaning of world conditions. And I became increasingly aware that they KNEW God in a way I had never known of or experienced before.

The names of these men will be familiar to many of you—Herman Hoeh, Ray Cole, Raymond McNair and others. They are now among the top ministers in this work. You often read their articles in the PLAIN TRUTH.

Next month I will tell you more about these men and others, more about Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong, more about what makes this great work "tick."

The PLAIN TRUTH  
 Printed in the U.S.A.  
 Box 111—Pasadena, California