

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
PRESIDENT and PASTOR

November 2, 1972

Dear Brethren of God's Church,

Events have arisen making it imperative that I now write you the most important letter I have written in the past few years. And that, notwithstanding the fact I wrote you October 27th. Though long, PLEASE BE SURE TO READ CAREFULLY EVERY WORD!

In that letter I mentioned that, in spite of the vicious attacks instigated by the invisible but very powerful, and equally subtle Satan, the recent Feast of Tabernacles marked a definite TURNING POINT. Our attitudes, our spirits, have taken a definite upturn in hope, faith, and renewed dedication and unity behind the Work. I found people encouraged at all Festival sites in the United States and Canada. Reports from other parts of the world reflect the same TURNING POINT, everywhere.

I stated, as I reported at all sites I visited, that the income has NOT shown a decrease, as our enemies accused, and some hostile press reports falsely published -- but rather an INCREASE -- although not as big an increase as the Work seriously needs.

Yesterday the Budget Committee met to set the budget for the coming year, 1973. God's Work is a GROWING Work. It is geared to a pattern of CONTINUAL GROWTH. We cannot go on to successfully COMPLETE the Great Commission the living Christ is carrying on through us, UNLESS we do have a real healthy INCREASE in income year by year. For 35 years that increase was approximately 30% year by year. The increase is far short of that this year -- has been for three or four years.

After carefully reviewing all phases and departments of this great and growing Work, the Budget Committee has given me a very serious report.

This Work, under Christ's direction, is geared to a pattern that demands constant INCREASE. It CANNOT HOLD EVEN. It either goes on forward, or it goes backward!

Brethren, we have to face a VERY SOBERING AND SERIOUS SITUATION. Unless drastic CHANGES take place, we are going to have to reduce many vital phases of the Work, and eliminate others. That means seeing the Work of the living GOD start going BACKWARD for the first time in 40 years!

Brethren in Christ, WE DARE NOT LET THAT HAPPEN!

I am too reluctant to call on you for the drastic financial sacrifice I had to ask earlier this year, and also about the end of March more than 2 1/2 years ago. I AM going to have to call on you for a DIFFERENT KIND of sacrifice than a crippling financial one.

When we face a serious or alarming situation, there is a CAUSE -- and the cure is to find the CAUSE and cure that, rather than treat with the result. The place to find it is the THRONE OF GRACE. I have gone there. As I said in my recent letter, Satan has hit us with THREE MAJOR BLOWS in the past year. I know that these, coming one immediately on the heels of the other, brought a certain discouragement, a LETTING DOWN in our ZEAL for God's Work.

I know that it caused a tendency toward LETTING DOWN IN PRAYER -- in BIBLE STUDY, and consequently in that zeal and willingness to sacrifice for GOD'S WORK. We don't blame GOD in situations like this. We don't blame OURSELVES! We blame PEOPLE -- perhaps those God uses at the top, or we blame CIRCUMSTANCES!

Brethren, God allows such circumstances to TEST US! I explained in my sermons at most Feast sites where I spoke, that

there are TWO times of TRYING AND TESTING prophesied to come IN THESE LAST DAYS. The first is on GOD'S PEOPLE, to test us, that we may be made STRONGER spiritually, not weaker! Daniel foretold it: At the "... time of the end many shall be purified, and made white and tried; ..." (Daniel 12:9-10). Also, in Revelation 12, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels (demons) were cast out with him. ... And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman ..." -- that is, GOD'S CHURCH. (Rev. 12:7-14.) Later is to come the GREAT TRIBULATION, on the English-speaking nations, and on the whole world. But if WE are faithful in OUR testing, now, we shall be PROTECTED from that coming FAR MORE TERRIBLE TRIBULATION, in which not a single human being would be saved alive unless God cuts short those days. And He will intervene and save humanity alive "FOR THE ELECT'S SAKE." Brethren, WE are that Elect. One of God's purposes in having raised up this "Philadelphia era" of His Church -- one of His reasons for having called YOU, NOW, is to SAVE HUMANITY ALIVE!

Brethren, DO WE FULLY REALIZE the MAGNITUDE of that -- the GREAT, TREMENDOUS PURPOSE for OUR having been called to salvation NOW?

DO WE? Are we SURE?

WHAT is our Great Commission that the living Christ is carrying on through US? It is, FIRST, to proclaim to the whole world the good NEWS that GOD'S KINGDOM -- His world-ruling GOVERNMENT -- is soon coming to RULE ALL NATIONS, and to bring world PEACE, and SALVATION to humanity. That means CHRIST'S COMING in supreme POWER and GLORY -- to RULE! And so, combined with that FIRST Great Commission is the great Mission to PREPARE THE WAY for this second Coming of Christ, as John the Baptist prepared the way before His first coming, more than 1900 years ago!

The SECOND phase of our Great Commission is to FEED THE FLOCK -- to "feed" you brethren with the SPIRITUAL FOOD of God's Word, to PREPARE YOU to be a RULER and/or a priest or teacher, then made IMMORTAL, over the mortal humans that survive on the earth.

I said in my recent letter, "THAT IS THE REASON why the Eternal God put YOU into His Church NOW -- to carry on YOUR PART in this present GREAT COMMISSION -- rather than for what you GET out of it."

Let me make this absolutely CLEAR! God IS NOT CALLING THE WORLD TO SALVATION, NOW. Jesus said NONE CAN come to Him, except the Father draw him, by His Holy Spirit. Most of your relatives and friends CAN'T come to salvation NOW. He WILL call them to salvation -- either in the millennium, or in the Great White Throne Judgment by a resurrection to mortal life then. And in either the millennium or Great White Throne Judgment, SATAN WILL NOT BE THERE TO PLAGUE THEM.

I want you to REALIZE THIS: God could have refrained from calling YOU, now. He could have left YOU, like MOST of this world, to be called later, when there will be no devil to contend with. Then you wouldn't have had to fight constantly against that spirit of DISCOURAGEMENT, that tendency to LET DOWN in prayer and Bible study -- that tendency injected by Satan to get into an attitude of criticism, or even bitterness. Satan is constantly ACCUSING the Brethren (Rev. 12:10) -- he will accuse ME, and other ministers, injecting this attitude into the spirit of your mind -- IF you are not on guard to reject it!

CONSIDER THIS: WHY did not God wait to call YOU, at that EASIER time, along with the rest of the world? Do you realize that in GOD'S SIGHT YOU are something very SPECIAL, very PRECIOUS to Him? He selected YOU as one to be CALLED NOW -- and for ONE REASON ONLY -- that YOU might have YOUR PART, with me, under CHRIST, to PREPARE THE WAY for His Coming -- to ANNOUNCE the Good News of the soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD -- to prepare YOU, even by stern trial and test, even by DISCOURAGING situations He allows to develop, for YOUR PLACE IN HIS KINGDOM FOREVER, as well as for YOUR PART in His Work, NOW! That means a GREATER REWARD -- a GREATER GLORY FOREVER, than if He had called you LATER!

Do you suppose Satan does not know all this? He knows! He will do all in his power to get you DISCOURAGED -- to get you to find some fault -- to LET DOWN in prayer and Bible study -- to LOSE YOUR INSPIRED ZEAL for God's Work!

Brethren, as I said, there really was a TURNING POINT at this year's Feast.

But WAS IT ENOUGH?

Let me make PLAIN the situation AS IT IS! Our Head and Leader, the living Jesus Christ, is opening NEW AND MIGHTY DOORS to INCREASE the POWER of His Work -- much more THIS YEAR than ever before. But Brethren, WE have not rebounded as FULLY -- as WHOLEHEARTEDLY back into that inspired, energetic ZEAL as we MUST to GET THIS GREAT WORK BACK ON THE PATTERN OF A 30% annual INCREASE in power and scope.

I KNOW that most of us have not, yet, come back to that full WHOLEHEARTED energetic ZEAL for GETTING ON WITH THIS WORK that we MUST have to finish it! We have not yet rebounded back to that INTENSIVE DEDICATION to God's Work that is necessary for OUR OWN SALVATION IN GOD'S KINGDOM!

It isn't "he who gets discouraged and gives up" that shall be saved, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). That warning must be FOR US, because the very next words give us our Great Commission -- not the first century, but the END-time Commission -- of getting this Gospel of God's Kingdom to the whole world! We are commanded, "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing" (II Thes. 3:13).

Brethren, in this serious -- this CRISIS HOUR -- I know that just my writing these words ALONE, is not enough. I am going to have to ask you to DO SOMETHING that WILL get this Work back on the 30% per year GROWTH if you will do it WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART!

Let me explain. Many times this Work has faced a CRUCIAL CRISIS. We face one NOW -- we may face others in the future.

Back in 1948 we were in a most DESPERATE crisis. We had secured possession of the first block of college property here in Pasadena, on a lease-and-option basis. At that time income for the entire Work was running about \$470 per day -- and even that was running a 30% INCREASE over the year before. We had been paying \$1,000 per month on the lease basis for the property. December 27 that year was the date to exercise our option, turning it into a PURCHASE. The December 27th payment completed 25 months (from November 27, 1946) -- \$25,000 paid on the lease basis. On December 27th, 1948, that \$25,000 paid was to become the DOWN PAYMENT, on the purchase. BUT, no interest or taxes or insurance had been paid during the 25 months under the LEASE. Now all that came due December 27, 1948 -- amounting to several thousand dollars.

By late October I became urgently concerned. We didn't have the money -- and only about two months to go. Our auditor at the time was Bolivar O'Rear, who had been an Internal Revenue Service attorney in Washington for twelve years. In Washington D.C. in late October, we consulted an attorney friend of his. He tried to dream up ideas to help raise the money. We tried other ideas. NOTHING BROUGHT RESULTS. But I DID ask all Church Brethren to PRAY -- to FAST and pray in real earnestness.

The day after Thanksgiving, late November, \$3,000 came in one day -- virtually a full week's income! The next day, we received another \$3,000. And the next -- and the next -- and the next. And the next -- until more than \$50,000 had come in before the 15th of December, which was the day we really needed the money on hand to put into escrow in advance of our December 27th deadline. The letters I sent out didn't bring in the money. The ideas we tried brought nothing. THE FASTING AND PRAYERS OF THE BRETHREN DID! There was no other way we could account for it. All during the following year, 1949, the income remained fairly steady at a 30% increase over 1948.

Twelve to fifteen years ago, a number of times when the income was down, and the situation became SERIOUS, our students and brethren in Pasadena FASTED AND PRAYED -- and every time there was a jump in the income -- back up to the annual 30% increase!

In August, 1947, the city building inspectors condemned our first college building, demanding we make all walls one-hour fire resistant, and install complete new electric conduits and plumbing pipes throughout the three floors and basement. The cost was over \$30,000. That year the income for the Work was averaging about \$360 a day. I did send letters to the Brethren stating this crisis. But they were accompanied by FASTING AND PRAYER. The money came. One man -- not a member, but a radio listener on The PLAIN TRUTH mailing list, whom I did not know, borrowed \$5,000 on his own home up in central California and sent it to me. We had been threatened with never being able to open the college. But God answered our prayers, and the college opened October 8, with FOUR pioneer students. During autumn 1947, and nearly all of 1948, I had to hear some faculty members and others (NOT praying Brethren) constantly speaking discouragingly about "... when this thing FOLDS UP."

But it was a needed part of THE WORK OF GOD! God was on His throne. Our SAME God is still on His Throne TODAY. I am praying. I am going to FAST and pray, and I'm going TO BELIEVE! And God is going to ANSWER and SAVE HIS WORK now, as He has in the past!

Brethren, I KNOW the CAUSE of our present situation. WE AS A CHURCH HAVE BEEN LETTING DOWN -- letting down in PRAYER! Letting down in Bible study. Letting down in ZEAL for GOD'S WORK and HIS KINGDOM! God has ALLOWED this situation to come on us to WAKE US UP -- to REJUVENATE US -- to GET US BACK CLOSE TO HIM! Our minds, our thoughts, our interests have been gradually gravitating, MORE THAN WE REALIZED, back into material and worldly concerns and interests.

That means that NOT ONLY God's WORK is in danger -- MANY of YOU BRETHREN are in MORTAL DANGER! I say to you candidly, I know that some, if not MANY of you are in REAL DANGER of the LAKE OF FIRE!

We must now INTENSIFY this recent UPTURN in attitude and spirits.

Have we forgotten what the KINGDOM OF GOD is like?

What is GOD like? What will YOU be to be LIKE HIM?

God is PERFECT. Everything He does causes GOOD. NOTHING He does causes evil, or pain or suffering, or fear or worry or frustration. When we are ALL like HIM there will be NO pain, NO sorrow, NO discomfort, no evils, no fears or frustrations -- but PEACE, and JOY, an exuberant well-being. This GREAT WORK is God's INSTRUMENT in preparing the way to BRING THAT ABOUT OVER THE WHOLE EARTH. God is using US in this GREAT WORK OF HIS. Oh, Brethren, HOW we should REPENT of our letting down -- our neglect -- our increasing worldly interests these past few years.

The 30% annual increase in income began slacking off about four years ago -- after 35 years averaging close to 30% annual increase. That means a corresponding slacking off in the GROWTH OF GOD'S WORK!

WHAT WAS THE CAUSE? The living HEAD of this Work, Christ, has shown me!

The CAUSE was a corresponding SLACKING OFF in the urgent PRAYER LIFE of 51% or more of all our brethren in God's Church. The CAUSE was a slacking off in our interest in private Bible study -- and in our ZEAL for GOD'S Work, and for looking forward toward HIS KINGDOM. The CAUSE was a corresponding and increasing interest in material pursuits and pleasures -- and a tendency to criticize, perhaps the ministry, perhaps those Christ has placed under Him at HEADQUARTERS.

Let's not dodge the real issue -- let's not deny the REAL CAUSE -- let's not PASS THE BUCK! Our own personal, individual SALVATION is at stake. For each one of us!

I have gone to the THRONE OF GRACE about this present financial situation, and I know that the living HEAD of this Church, Jesus Christ, has shown me THE REAL CAUSE -- not merely of the present situation, BUT OF THE DIMINISHING INCREASE IN INCOME -- and consequently IN THE ENTIRE SCOPE AND POWER OF THE WORK these past three and four years!

I want to add right here something I recorded in my Autobiography.

"In January, 1920, the well-known statistician Roger Babson was the speaker at one of our Association of Commerce luncheons then being held each Wednesday in the Cameo Room of the Morrison Hotel. Through the Advertising Club, a division of Chicago Association of Commerce, I had been a member of the Association for some years.

"We were then at the very height of a wave of postwar prosperity.

"Gentlemen,' said Mr. Babson, 'we are about to enter the worst business depression that our generation has ever experienced. I advise you all to set your houses in order. I advise against any further plans of expansion until this depression has passed over.'

"Seated at tables in that large room were leading bankers and business executives of Chicago. I glanced around. I saw

amused smirks animate the faces of many prominent men.

"Through the next few months of 1920 business activity continued its boom upswing.

"Before the end of 1920, Roger Babson's predicted depression did strike -- with sudden and intense fury. By January, 1921, we had reached and passed its lowest ebb.

"At this time Roger Babson once again was the guest speaker in the Morrison Hotel Cameo Room Association of Commerce luncheon.

"Well, gentlemen,' he said, 'you will remember that a year ago I warned you that within one year we would be in the throes of the worst depression our generation has ever seen. I noticed many of you smiling unbelievably then. Well, that year has rolled around, and here I am again, and here is the depression with me.'

"Chicago business leaders were not smiling now. Mr. Babson then proceeded to explain why he knew what was coming and business executives did not.

"It is now mid-winter,' he said. 'If I want to know what the temperature is, now, in this room, I go to the wall and look at the thermometer. If I want to know what it has been, up to now, and the existing trend as of the moment, I look at a recording thermometer. But if I want to know what the temperature in this room is going to be, an hour from now, I go to the source which determines future temperatures -- I go down to the boiler-room and see what is happening down there.

"You gentlemen looked at bank clearings, indexes of business activity, freight car loadings, stock market quotations -- you looked at the thermometers on the wall; I looked at THE WAY people as a whole were dealing with one another. I looked to the SOURCE which determines future conditions. I have found that that source may be defined in terms of RIGHTEOUSNESS. When 51% or more of the whole people are reasonably righteous in their dealings with one another, we are heading into increasing prosperity. When 51% of the people become unrighteous in their business dealings with their fellows, then we are headed for BAD TIMES ECONOMICALLY.!

"I have never forgotten Mr. Babson's explanation. I hope my readers today, nearly 42 years later, may remember and profit by it, too.

"I paid with the loss of my business to learn the lesson"

And, Brethren in God's Church, that same principle applies in GOD'S WORK! When 51% of us become a little lax -- letting down quite a little in PRAYER and beginning to neglect personal Bible reading and study, and to let our interests drift more into the material pursuits and pleasures, think more of material possessions for ourselves than THE WORK OF GOD BEGINS TO SUFFER.

Then it is that the income for the Work begins to slack off.

This very thing did set in about four years ago!

BUT -- here's the silver lining to that cloud! When at least 51% of us AWAKE to become DEADLY SERIOUS about GOD'S Work, begin to INTENSIFY our prayers, and turn our hearts and interests MORE to God's Word, and the wonderful truths we find there, than to the material interests or pleasures, THEN, the income WILL BEGIN TAKING AN UPTURN!

BUT -- let's go further! WHEN 90% to 95% or 100% of us begin to put THE KINGDOM OF GOD -- AND GOD'S work above every other interest in our lives -- when we begin to POUR OUR HEARTS INTENSIVELY INTO OUR PRAYERS -- yes, even in SPITE of what may or may not be mistakes some of us make -- THEN, Brethren, I PROMISE YOU the income will go back up to 30% increase per year!

Looking at present FACTS, and TRENDS, that might seem impossible! But this is THE WORK OF GOD -- a WORK OF FAITH -- and existing facts, trends, circumstances, HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH FAITH. The living Christ has resources, and ways WE KNOW NOTHING OF! I know He has allowed this slacking off in prayer, in putting our whole hearts in HIS WORK, in our zeal. When we REPENT of that, and turn our whole hearts and interests to HIM, HE has ways and means to CHANGE RESULTS -- and He WILL!

When MOST of our Brethren begin pouring their whole HEARTS into this Work, in zealous PRAYER, in FAITH in what our GOD can do, THEN the number of non-member Co-Workers who become baptized members will start to INCREASE. The percentage of increase in members will begin to rise. There will be a new trend in the increase of CO-WORKERS. The WHOLE WORK OF GOD will take on NEW LIFE. God will open still more new doors. He will supply OUR NEED to finance walking through those doors. We at Headquarters will be given more wisdom. There'll be fewer mistakes.

AND WE'LL ALL BE FAR MORE HAPPY AND JOYOUS! We will come to fuller realization of the MAGNITUDE of the GOOD we have been called to do for humanity!

Brethren, just THINK of the terrible conditions in the world today -- over half the world's population living in conditions of ignorance, poverty, hunger and starvation, filth and squalor you simply can't imagine. Look at the EVILS in our supposed AFFLUENT society, where we have the highest living standards any people EVER had! WHAT A TRAGEDY!

And God has called US -- you and me -- as His instruments paving the way for His COMING to CHANGE ALL THAT! To convert the world! Finally all evils will be abolished. ALL will be happy, joyful, energetic in DOING GOOD, creating more and more happiness!

I CALL ON EVERYONE IN GOD'S CHURCH TO REPENT of whatever interest we have allowed to come into our minds and hearts in THIS UGLY, EVIL WORLD AND ITS EMPTY, NEVER LASTING, INTERESTS AND PLEASURES!

This letter is getting long. I will not apologize for that. I know that the ETERNAL LIVES of many -- perhaps more than HALF of us are now at STAKE. We've got to be MOVED! We've got to DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!

Now I want to quote for you something I'm sure most of you have never read. I think it will be surprising and shocking! It's not an imaginary proclamation. It's real!

It is:

"By the President of the United States of America:

A PROCLAMATION

"Whereas a joint Committee of both Houses of Congress has waited on the President of the United States, and requested him to 'recommend a day of public humiliation, prayer and fasting, to be observed by the people of the United States with religious solemnities, and the offering of fervent supplications to Almighty God for the safety and welfare of these states ..."

Before going farther, CAN YOU IMAGINE THE U.S. CONGRESS making such a request? Shocking? IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED. Continuing:

"And whereas it is fit and becoming in all people, at all times, to acknowledge and revere the Supreme Government of God;"

Can you believe it? The President of the United States saying we should revere the Supreme Government of GOD! Now continue:

"... to bow in humble submission to His chastisements; to confess and deplore their sins and transgressions in full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to pray, with all fervency and contrition, for the pardon of their past offenses, and for a blessing upon their present and prospective actions.

"And whereas, when our own beloved Country, once by the blessing of God, united, prosperous and happy, is now afflicted with faction and war, it is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in their terrible visitation, and in sorrowful

remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before Him and to pray for His mercy -- to pray that we may be spared further punishment, though most justly deserved; ... and that the inestimable boon of civil and religious liberty, earned under His guidance and blessing, by the labors and sufferings of our fathers, may be restored in all its original excellence:

"Therefore, I ----- President of the United States, do appoint the last Thursday in September next, as a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting for all the people ... in all humility, and with all religious solemnity, to the end that the united prayer of the nation may ascend to the Throne of Grace, and bring down plentiful blessings upon our country.

"In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed, this 12th day of August, A.D. ---(date)"

WHAT A PROCLAMATION! Who signed it? A news scoop I am sending you, signed by Richard M. Nixon? I wish it were! But I'm afraid he would only be laughed at, in our day when our nation has FORGOTTEN ITS GOD!

HOW FAR FROM GOD has our nation gone, since that Proclamation was signed, in 1861, by Abraham Lincoln!!!!

But, dear Brethren, HOW FAR have we slipped from our God -- we, who profess to be HIS TRUE CHURCH?

Let me APPLY that Proclamation to THIS ONE I am sending YOU! I think God INTENDED that I give you this, for I never saw or read it until TODAY, when, in the midst of deep prayer over our present serious situation, I just chanced to run across it, in a book in my library at home. Or, WAS it by "chance" -- or by GOD'S design?

Let's apply it.

I now say to YOU:

A P R O C L A M A T I O N

Whereas, in our present serious financial dilemma, the living HEAD of this Worldwide Church of God has moved me to call a day of Church-wide humiliation, prayer and fasting, to be observed by all members of this Church worldwide, on Sabbath, November 18, 1972, with the offering of FERVENT SUPPLICATIONS to Almighty God for the preservation and spiritual welfare of His Church;

And whereas, it is incumbent on us at all times to revere the Supreme Government of GOD, and to pray earnestly "Thy Kingdom come -- quickly -- thy will be done" -- and to bow in humble submission to His chastisements now laid upon us in this present financial dilemma, and to CONFESS and deplore our SINS in becoming LAX in prayer and personal Bible study, as well as our SINS in allowing worldly interests and pleasures to start drawing us away from our God, and our zeal for HIS WORK, I call on all Brethren to CONFESS this lukewarmness and this drift from the needed CLOSE WALK WITH GOD, and to PRAY, with all FERVENCY and CONTRITION, for God's pardon for these offenses, and for a permanent BLESSING on HIS WORK henceforth, continuously to its final completion.

And whereas, when this beloved WORK OF GOD and His Church was, until three or four years ago, blessed, united, and producing abundant fruit for God's Kingdom, it is now AFFLICTED WITH FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF UTMOST SERIOUSNESS, it is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of GOD in this terrible visitation, and in repentant remembrance of our own faults, and laxities, and neglects, TO HUMBLE OURSELVES before the living Christ, and to cry out to Him in deep earnest for His mercy, and HELP in overcoming -- to pray that we may be spared from further punishment though justly deserved.

Therefore, I, Herbert W. Armstrong, by God's grace His chosen Pastor over His Church, do appoint Sabbath, November 18th as a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting for all members, in all humility and solemnity, to the end that the united prayer of the whole Body of Christ may ascend to the Throne of Grace, and RESTORE THE INCOME FOR GOD'S WORK TO THE PREVIOUS 30% annual INCREASE!

Brethren, many if not most of us have let other interests creep into our minds and hearts till we do not have ANYWHERE NEAR the ZEAL for the GREATEST WORK ON EARTH, that the football players have for a football game. Football players get themselves "UP" for a game. They are "UP" emotionally, psychologically, physically. Last Sunday the San Francisco 49ers, supposedly "underdogs" for their game with Atlanta, got themselves "WAY UP" for that game, because they all HATED the Atlanta coach, and wanted revenge. They won by a big score.

WHY can football players get themselves "UP" in almost fanatical ZEAL, motivated by HATE, when we are indifferent, "DOWN," and lukewarm about the MOST IMPORTANT AND GLORIOUS CALLING OF ALL TIME?

Now, finally, let me state CLEARLY the REAL PROBLEM -- the SERIOUS LIFE-AND-DEATH PROBLEM -- that threatens the very DESTRUCTION of GOD'S WORK, unless we UNITEDLY, through HEARTRENDING REPENTANT AND BELIEVING PRAYER, GET OURSELVES "UP" IN ENTHUSIASTIC ZEAL FOR THIS PRECIOUS AND WONDERFUL WORK TO WHICH THE GREAT GOD HAS CALLED US!

It is much more than needing an immediate, temporary "shot- in-the-arm" financial boost for the moment.

It's actually FAR MORE SERIOUS than that!

We are looking forward, planning the budget for the entire year of 1973 -- and even looking forward into 1974.

The situation is just this: During the present year, 1972, we made several reductions in the budget that had been planned. We made a number of cutbacks, reduced operating expenditures -- in SOME areas. BUT God has been opening NEW POWERFUL DOORS for getting out His MESSAGE. One was the United States edition of Reader's Digest opening the purchase of advertising space to us. Another was the MOST IMPORTANT means of getting out the Message of all -- DAILY TELEVISION. However, since we have had to take an early morning period in most cases, it will TAKE TIME for this most EFFECTIVE medium to PRODUCE results that will help income. The NEWSSTAND PROGRAM in Britain and Europe has produced BIG results, and the LOWEST COSTS, per thousand circulation, we have experienced.

Yet ALL THESE had ADDED MORE to expenditures than the cutbacks had subtracted. But these additions are NECESSARY if the Work is to go forward. IN TIME, they will add Co-workers, new members, additional income -- but not immediately -- perhaps not noticeably until the latter part of next year.

Now looking into NEXT YEAR, we face THIS PROBLEM: If we allow NO increase in expenditures in ANY area of the Work, carrying on as at present, our total expenditures will be 12% higher than the total expenditures for the present year, 1972. Yet, the projected estimated income, supplied me by our Division of Finance and Planning, will be only 8%.

THAT WOULD BE DISASTROUS TO OUR FINANCIAL POSITION AND THE VERY LIFE OF THE WORK! Mr. Portune even warns it would forecast THE END of the Work!

You see, it is far MORE than just the NEED OF THE MOMENT! We cannot make further cutbacks in operational expenditures with- out serious harm to the Work. It would mean, either closing one or two of our college campuses, OR cutting down the radio broadcasting to a point of virtually going off the air, AND dropping television altogether -- OR, ceasing publication of The PLAIN TRUTH.

This is not merely a temporary danger of the MOMENT -- BUT, unless there is a rise in the INCOME, starting NOW, and continuing next year and the year after, it could MEAN THE END OF THE GREAT WORK OF GOD -- UNFINISHED! Jesus Christ is DOING HIS PART -- opening new doors. Only ONE THING has been WRONG! -- and we must FACE IT! -- too many of us have been GROWING LUKEWARM, DRIFTING FROM THE NEEDED CLOSENESS TO GOD! The trouble is SPIRITUAL -- and too many have been trying to PUT THE BLAME ELSEWHERE!

This day of FASTING AND PRAYER I am calling IS JUST THE STARTER! We can't stop there. We must all KEEP close to God, we must KEEP our minds and hearts ON THE THINGS ABOVE -- ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD -- ON THE PRECIOUS WORD OF GOD. Then God will hear and ANSWER.

No one realizes more than I, that WE BRETHREN, of OURSELVES, CANNOT PUT IN THE ADDED AMOUNT OF MONEY THE WORK MUST HAVE! We must be faithful and generous in doing our best, according as God makes possible. If we don't do OUR UTMOST, how shall we expect God to answer our PRAYERS and cause OTHERS to do it?

But, if we DO THAT, up to our own ability, and CONTINUE HEARTRENDING AND BELIEVING PRAYER, God will hear and ANSWER.

Remember, God says of US -- of THIS CHURCH: "IF my people, which are called by MY NAME, shall humble themselves, and PRAY, and SEEK MY FACE, and TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS; then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14). We may think, because we keep His Sabbath, that we have no wicked ways or sins to turn from. But laxity or neglect of prayer can be sin. Getting our hearts and interests more in worldly ways and interests and pleasures can be SIN.

One thing God shows me I DO HAVE TO DO! First, I have to tell Mr. Portune, and the Budget Committee, that I DO approve that they proceed, for the time being, on the PRESENT operational procedures, which will call for a 12% increase in income over the present 1972 year. I MUST rely on God, through our combined PRAYERS and FAITH, to bring up the income to AT LEAST that figure. And WE must all pray fervently that God will increase it well BEYOND THAT! But, AT THE SAME TIME, I am going to direct that we seek every possible way to further REDUCE operational expenditures in whatever way will not hurt the WORK!

THAT'S WHAT WE WILL DO HERE AT HEADQUARTERS! Then we will JOIN ALL THE REST OF YOU in CONTINUOUS REAL FERVENT AND BELIEVING PRAYER THAT GOD WILL GIVE US ALL THE NEEDED INCREASE IN INCOME!

Remember God's PROMISE: "My God shall supply ALL YOUR NEED, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). When WE repent, and humble ourselves, and PRAY, and BELIEVE, He surely will do that!

Brethren, the Work IS going forward now in GREATER POWER than ever -- but I have had to ADD expenditures the past six months to make that possible. I know God wants it to GO ON, and even INCREASE MORE. By His grace, I know it shall!

Now this coming fast-and-prayer day must be NO ORDINARY DAY OF FASTING. I want every one of you to READ Isaiah 58:3 to end of chapter. The kind of fast God will ANSWER is that we seek to learn WHERE EACH ONE OF US, PERSONALLY, is at fault, AND TO TURN FROM that fault, and get CLOSER TO OUR GOD AND HIS WAYS: On the day of fasting, BE SURE TO READ, on your knees, the following Scriptures:

Read Isaiah 40:12 to end -- and as you do, THINK on HOW GREAT AND WONDERFUL is our God. In Jesus' instruction on how to pray, He first said, "Hallowed be thy name." Or, "HOW GREAT THOU ART!" And while meditating on God's GREATNESS, think on WHAT A WONDERFUL PRIVILEGE that He grants us, in that we may have DIRECT CONTACT with Him -- we may TALK WITH HIM, in prayer, and as long as our hearts are right with Him, He LISTENS and ANSWERS! Then, HE talks to US -- when we read the Bible! We are privileged to HAVE ACTUAL PERSONAL FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM!

Think of His PERFECTION -- all HE does is for a GOOD result. He LOVES US -- think what it means He has made YOU His own son or daughter! THANK HIM that you can always have access to Him! He LOVES YOU!

Proverbs 3:11-12 -- THANK God for His correction and chastening. Also Hebrews 12:6-7, and then:

I John 1:8-9 -- AS A CHURCH, we have sinned, letting down in prayer allowing our minds to drift more and more to material interests. As ONE of God's people in His Church, confess your own, and the CHURCH'S sins, even as Daniel confessed his own and ISRAEL'S sins -- READ IT in Daniel 9:3-19, and, plead with God, as did Daniel (verses 16-17) to FORGIVE, and to restore us to a CLOSER WALK with HIM, and to cause His face to shine upon His Church, to BLESS US, to PROSPER US, and to open the windows of heaven and pour out a SPIRITUAL blessing, and then a financial blessing, that there may be sufficient that we may FOLLOW where our living Christ opens doors that His Gospel may go in GREATER POWER!

Read Romans 12, and as you do, ask yourself "Am I really presenting my body -- my whole self -- as a living sacrifice? Have I allowed myself to return a little to being conformed to this world?" As you read this chapter, apply every sentence to YOURSELF.

Read II Corinthians 13:4-5 -- and, as it says, EXAMINE YOURSELF, as you pray -- as to what extent Christ is really living His life IN YOU!

Read Matthew 5:6, and ask yourself, "Have I been really HUNGERING and THIRSTING for RIGHTEOUSNESS -- or have I allowed a little hungering and thirsting for the world and material things to enter my mind?"

On this fast day, try praying for one solid hour, then reading and studying the Bible for one hour -- then THINK about what you have read and prayed about in meditation for one hour, then start all over again, with an hour of PRAYER.

Brethren, Jesus has said He will NEVER LEAVE US NOR FORSAKE US! HE is the Head of this Church -- I'm not. But I'm His called and chosen servant, and He is using me to send you this letter. Meanwhile, I'm examining MYself, -- I've already been FASTING and PRAYING twice, before and during the writing of this letter.

Turn to Psalm 139:1-5, and apply it to yourself.

Then, finally, I'll give you the passage that was my mother's favorite verse: Psalm 133:1. Pray for that complete UNITY among ourselves, in LOVE. And remember, Jesus said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples: if ye have LOVE one to another." Let's forgive one another, love one another.

If the living CHURCH OF GOD will now raise up its voice to God in repentance, and in obedience and in FAITH, as ONE POWERFUL VOICE, we may see a result such as the early Brethren of this same Church did, as recorded in Acts 4:23-31. You, yourself will think of many other Scriptures to read, to apply to yourself, and to study.

Colossians 3:1-25. Dedicate yourself anew to this.

Brethren this past Feast of Tabernacles marked the TURNING POINT in our returning closer to God. NOW LET US UNITEDLY SPEED UP AND INTENSIFY THAT DEDICATION AND RETURN TO OUR GREAT GOD!

I pray daily -- often several times daily -- for all of YOU, and I NEED YOUR PRAYERS FOR ME! Thank you, from the bottom of my heart!

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong