

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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Greetings, Ministers and Wives:

It was just about two years ago that I died, just past my 85th birthday. I had completely stopped breathing. There was no pulse--no blood pressure. But by frantic life-and-death effort, and a "touch-and-go" battle with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and pounding on my chest, they started my heart beating once again. Two women did that--but it WAS GOD who brought me back to life FOR A SERIOUS PURPOSE!

Two years have gone by--as if they were only two weeks. About nine months were required for convalescing. But since then much has been accomplished.

I look back and ask, "WHY did God bring me back?" "What has He done with and through me these past 15 months?" Primarily He has used me in SETTING HIS CHURCH BACK ON THE TRACK! The Church and entire Work had been derailed--sidetracked. It had become a non-spiritual, secular organization like any commercial organization in this world. Christ was scarcely in it any more--nor even thought of by those at Pasadena any more than officials of big steel, automobile, and oil corporations think of Christ in connection with their plans and everyday operations.

These past 15 months the living Jesus Christ has been moving swiftly to set God's Church on the track.

My job is not easy. There can be NO THOUGHT OF RETIRING! Once God calls one to His ministry, and he "sets his hand to the plow," Jesus said he must never leave it or turn back into the secular field of occupations. "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). Paul wrote Timothy that we in the ministry must stay with it, "in season and out of season" (II Tim. 4:2).

When I receive a letter from a minister who is discouraged and wants to leave the ministry, I feel very depressed. I want so earnestly to see ALL of us in God's Kingdom, but the greatest of disappointments is when one turns back and leaves the ministry of Jesus Christ.

In Luke 17:32 Jesus reminded us of Lot's wife, who turned back. It is he that ENDURES "UNTO THE END" that shall be saved. Yes, I am distressed and discouraged when I have to see some who have "put their hands to the plow" turn back and leave the ministry.

On the other hand, a letter like the one I shall quote here, gives great inspiration to me--and I believe it will to YOU--so I shall quote it in full. It came from one of our ministers of many years of faithful service: I am thankful and inspired that we have so many dedicated, tried and proven ministers in God's Church. Below is the letter:

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Your letters and sermons, articles and editorials have been truly inspired and inspiring to all of us. Your latest letter to the ministers, CHRIST NOW MOVES TO PUT GOD'S GOVERNMENT BACK ON THE RIGHT TRACK, shows clearly once again why indeed you are God's Apostle. My wife and I want you to know that we are back of you 100%, and so is the vast majority of the members in our area.

You mentioned in the article that: "There came to be a total lack of response from ministers when I repeated requests during 1975 and thereafter." Actually, Mr. Armstrong, many of us did respond but the response never reached you. We would write but could never be sure that you would ever receive the letters. The Pastor's Report, Worldwide News and other publications did not mention what you were doing except only in vague terms. I can see why some perhaps believed that you were senile or even dead. If it were not for your own letters and articles we would have heard virtually nothing about your activities. I would call Headquarters and ask about you--no one seemed to know anything. As late as last December I wrote a memo to the Pastor's Report staff humorously saying I was getting more news about you from the grapevine out of Tibet than I got from Headquarters. That Memo went to Wayne Cole but created no response or change. Indeed, when the Receivership struck the only news we received was Mr. Cole's side of the story--and it just didn't sound right.

Please don't think that the majority of ministers are not behind you. Only a handful left in comparison to the number that have remained loyal. It is sad that so many of your "spiritual sons" have revolted against you while at the same time Japanese Congressmen, who have no interest in the Church, have asked to be your sons. Well, Mr. Armstrong, I consider myself one of your sons as well, and my wife considers herself your daughter. You have taught us everything that counts, you've fed us God's Words of Life. I feel that the majority of true, loyal ministers and members today consider themselves your children as well.

When my wife and I returned from overseas in 1973 we were saddened to see the state of the Work and College. Ted was "in charge" and we tried to back him up. But, I finally asked to be transferred to the field where we could at least do something constructive in feeding the flock--Headquarters was just too much like the worldly institutions and businesses we had come out of and we were frustrated in our attempts to do anything about it. We are extremely thankful and relieved that God has once again placed you over the whole Work and Church. That is exactly as it should be.

In my sermons and teaching I have repeatedly quoted Isaiah 50:10: "Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant...?"

You certainly are the Servant of God and as such I honestly feel the one we must follow. I believe we are being trained to obey you and follow your lead, not just as a man, but as God's Servant. I continually point my flock to your leadership--where you are, there is the Work and there is the leadership of the Church of God. Obviously God backs

up your decisions and teaching and when you give us instructions I want my people to quickly respond or they may just have to go through the tribulation.

Some may still question or doubt but they are the minority of Church members. The farther this world and its governments sink into the cesspool of ignorance and corruption, the more this Church stands out as God's one and only Church, the only true Body of Christ. How grateful we should be for this blessing!

My wife and I wish there were something more tangible that we could do to assist you, but we know that God is giving you the strength and inspiration to clean us up so we go to Him in prayer for you, our leader and the Apostle and Servant of the Living God. Don't be concerned for those who are against you, Mr. Armstrong. Most of us are for you 100% and are instructing our congregations to back you up all the way. Hopefully all those opposing you and Christ will soon repent or be removed.

Thank you for all you have done--for teaching us, training us, cleaning us up, encouraging and inspiring us. Please continue to make the Hot Line telephone messages. I record them and play them for the Church as part of our Sabbath services. Your sermons are always instructive and inspiring and we are all looking forward to this Feast of Tabernacles and hopefully seeing you in person. We need your leadership, Mr. Armstrong. May God strengthen you physically and spiritually more and more as we approach the end of this age and the coming of Christ.

In sincere love, respect and gratitude,
(Name withheld by Mr. Armstrong)

Ministers and wives, Jesus Christ brought me through an experience in which he struck me down in a manner quite different than He did the Apostle Paul, yet in which He CONQUERED me--brought me to complete surrender to Him in repentance and FAITH--and started me in His ministry. I have said before, He had taken from me a successful business, and I walked the gravel highways on shoes with "holey soles." I started against severe persecution and opposition--and the start was the smallest possible, but Jesus Christ used me to start (the smallest possible) and build the Work that employs so many of YOU and in which you have learned the precious TRUTH of God, known by NO OTHER church or sect or denomination. Directly or indirectly, you are all my sons and daughters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do have to push myself a little harder now than I did 20 or 30 years ago. It is not as easy to "get the job done" now as it once was. But I know God brought me back to life to set HIS CHURCH back on the track, READY for the soon-coming of the Lord and KING JESUS CHRIST. And, with your help, I intend to keep right on the job.

Sometimes, now in my 88th year, I almost feel like the Apostle Paul (when he was much younger), when he said "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart /this life/, and be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless TO ABIDE IN THE FLESH IS MORE NEEDFUL FOR YOU. And having this confidence, I KNOW THAT I SHALL ABIDE AND CONTINUE WITH YOU ALL FOR YOUR FURTHERANCE AND JOY OF FAITH" (Phil. 1:23-25).

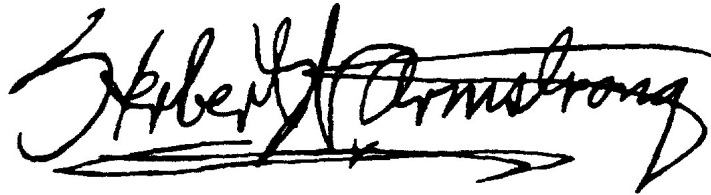
Great progress has been made in these past 15 months--but we are NOT YET READY for Christ's return.

Let us continue with ONE MIND--the mind of Christ--spending more time on our knees--drawing closer to HIM. HE is the HEAD of this Church!

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Minister's Conference for early next year will be held in Tucson, Arizona, on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, February 11, 12, and 13.

All reservations have been made. Ministers and wives will have food served in special dining rooms at the Convention Center. It will be announced later whether all Preaching Elders will attend--depending on the financial situation.



FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Excitement fills the air in Pasadena as the new sabbatical ministers begin arriving for a year of challenges, development, and growth! Each of them, as well as every one of us ministers worldwide, needs to recognize this is a time to rededicate ourselves to the very special calling that the Great God has given us.

We have a very great responsibility to the flock God has placed in our care. And like any good shepherd who is truly concerned about the health and condition of his sheep--truly concerned about leading them to wholesome, nourishing pastures and sufficient water--we should keep our sheep healthy, strong, and safe, thereby preventing any disaster from harming a portion of the flock.

As Jesus says in John 10:14, "I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine;" so we must also, as ministers of Christ, through constant vigilance, and much personal contact, know our sheep and be known of them, so that they can be prepared to withstand all spiritual predators, disease, and danger which could otherwise destroy the flock, or any portion of it. We must earnestly and enthusiastically drive ourselves through fervent prayer and fasting, to stay close to God, and by hard, selfless work assist Mr. Armstrong in making God's church ready for the imminent return of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Armstrong strongly urges the ministry to keep him informed about the trends, problems, pertinent news, needs, and any matters that may require his immediate attention.

The Ministerial Services Department is a service oriented department, designed to assist the ministry in maintaining open communication with Mr. Armstrong, as well as carrying on the day-to-day ministerial operations as it has done in the past. The function of Ministerial Services is to see