

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

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PRESIDENT and PASTOR

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Dear Brethren in GOD'S CHURCH:

This is most URGENT and IMPORTANT. I am writing at an altitude of more than seven miles above the Pacific Ocean below, at a speed of 585 miles per hour back to Pasadena, with a heart heavier than lead.

I have said before that Satan was attacking the Work of the living GOD, and that he would attack again. Now suddenly he is pulling out ALL STOPS in an effort to DESTROY God's Work. He has struck just as I was arriving at Manila, The Philippines, for the FIRST of the great PUBLIC CAMPAIGNS in world capitals, sponsored, endorsed and approved by those AT THE TOP of the national governments. Arriving at Manila mid-afternoon day before yesterday, I was greeted by a large white-uniformed brass band, a Minister of Education in the President's Cabinet, a president or Vice-President of the University and other dignitaries. This was all planned by high government and university officials. Local television cameramen and newspaper men also were there. I was taken into the VIP lounge, and there interviewed by TV news men and newspaper men.

It went out on TV news twice that evening, and my picture and story about the campaign appeared in all Sunday newspapers. I was told that a crowd of 50,000 or more was expected for the final meeting next Sunday night. The University was to confer an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree on me next Wednesday.

Satan HATES God's Church. He hates and seeks every way to DESTROY God's great WORK -- proclaiming the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD in all the world as a witness to all nations.

Brethren, GOD'S WORK is the REASON for the very GROWTH OF, and EXISTENCE of God's Church! I have told you how the WORK began in January, 1934, proclaiming the Good News of the KINGDOM OF GOD over radio. The PLAIN TRUTH began proclaiming that Message of God's KINGDOM February 1, 1934. The Work grew, and GREW in power and scope, until it has come to reach the MILLIONS -- although mostly in the United States, Canada and Australia. I have told you how, when it came to getting that vital END-TIME Last Message into the BIG POPULATION nations, we were STOPPED. Radio, Television, and in many cases even the advertising columns in newspapers and magazines are GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED in the BIG nations -- China, India, Russia, Indonesia, Japan, Bangladesh -- the middle-east nations, Britain and the nations in Europe, Africa, South America, Central America. Those facilities were always closed to us.

I prayed earnestly that God would OPEN DOORS to reach THOSE nations. I've told you how we have discovered they can be reached only FROM THE VERY TOP -- the top of the GOVERNMENTS.

And these past four years God has been giving me almost UNBELIEVABLE grace and favor in the eyes of Kings, Emperors, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and others high in governments in Asia, Africa, Europe, Central and South America. After repeated visits, I have been able to deliver the Message of the KINGDOM OF GOD, never heard by them before, select and distinguished groups of 55 to 100 in many Capitals -- among them Tokyo, New Delhi, Bangkok, Saigon, Manila, and Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). Other such meetings are set up for Nairobi, Kenya; San Jose, Costa Rica; Beirut, Nepal, Jamaica and others.

Following these meetings of high government officials and national leaders, come the big PUBLIC campaigns, approved, sponsored, endorsed by the nations's top officials and leaders.

NEVER IN ALL HISTORY, so far as I know, had the living GOD opened such doors to one of His servants, going in great HONOR and credibility before thousands of nations' leading people with the only true GOSPEL that was not proclaimed to the world for 1,850 YEARS.

No wonder Satan moved in his subtle, deceptive and diabolical way to influence a few of those who have been God's MINISTERS to start a campaign of character assassination against myself and Garner Ted Armstrong, and against the HEADQUARTERS ministers of GOD'S WORK!!

It struck suddenly, like a hydrogen bomb blast.

It seems incredible -- unbelievable !! -- but some of these ministers have allowed themselves to be blinded to the ONE BIG MISSION of God's Church -- to the TRUTH -- to the FACTS, and to start denouncing in scathing and bitter tones, the very WORK, and chosen Ministers, of God.

They began by "questioning" this, that, and the other doctrine, finally exposing their REAL intent and purpose, questioning the doctrine of TITHING, and saying the tithes ought not to go for the GOSPEL WORK from Headquarters, but the tithes should stay in the local churches where, of course, it could go into their own pockets.

Some evidently have figured that the tithes of the members of their churches would be MUCH BIGGER than their salaries! Yet NONE so far as I know has complained that he was being deprived of proper remuneration for his services.

Brethren, this letter is going to have to be long. I want you to have ALL the facts -- because the very life of GOD'S WORK is now being attacked with diabolical intent to DESTROY THE WORK!

It is of VITAL importance that you read my letter on WHY God put you in His Church NOW, instead of later when He will offer salvation to the whole world. I had written that as an article for The GOOD NEWS. A very few days ago, before knowledge of this sudden attack had reached me, I ordered it typed in Pasadena as a letter, and mailed to all members. I know God IMPRESSED that urgency on my mind. You will receive this article in a day or two.

I want to explain to you the four primary accusations of these ministers -- but it comes ultimately to the BIG point -- THEIR GREED TO TRY TO GET GOD'S TITHES MIS-APPROPRIATED SO THAT IT MIGHT GO INTO THEIR OWN POCKETS!

Did you ever observe that one who ACCUSES (and it is SATAN who is the ACCUSER of the Brethren -- Revelation 12:10) is always guilty of the very thing of which he falsely accuses another?

The REAL ISSUE is whether the COMMISSION the living Christ has been carrying out through me and HIS CHURCH, of which HE is the living Head, should be carried on -- or whether it should be abandoned, and your local churches become autonomous -- self-governed by the local ministers, independent of any Headquarters where GOD'S WORK is directed and carried on. This means the local churches would be precisely like the Baptist churches in organizational structure and government. That concept is TOTALLY UNSCRIPTURAL. God's Church is now established GOD'S WAY -- the BIBLE WAY, under the biblical pattern, with Jesus Christ the living Head, under God the Father, and next under Christ those on earth He Himself has called and chosen, and through whom He has raised up this Church, and USED IT TO CARRY ON HIS WORK FOR THIS END-TIME as covered in the prophecy for OUR TIME in Matthew 24:14. GOD'S Church is organized the BIBLE WAY as directed in the Bible -- through those HE has chosen and set in the various offices to get HIS WORK done.

In the 12th chapter of I Corinthians we read how God has conferred various spiritual GIFTS -- special ABILITIES through His Spirit, for specific and special administrations in the Work. Like the human body, all members cannot be the mouth, or the eye. Other Scriptures show that God gives us these special talents or abilities (spiritual gifts) according to our several natural abilities. And God bestows the special spiritual abilities on each one AS HE WILLS, (verse 11) not as we choose. I myself was specially prepared, with talents, abilities, and experience before called to the Work. Also, Garner Ted. Then GOD'S SPIRIT enhanced them.

This chapter concludes with, as you should know: "Now you are the (collective) body of Christ, and individually members of it. And GOD has appointed in the Church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues" (languages). Prophets can mean preachers. This word is used in two ways. In the New Testament Church, prior to the time the Bible was completely written, God a few times gave a direct special message to a prophet, who in turn relayed it to an apostle. The Bible is complete now, and God has not used any prophet in this sense.

Again, in Ephesians, "And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and

teachers." (Eph. 4:11 -- RSV.) There are no apostles nor evangelists in the local churches. ALL ministers, from Apostle on down, are called Elders in the Bible. It is evident that the Apostle Paul ordained some elders who were preachers, in charge of one or more churches. Also, that some who were not preachers were ordained elders, who were teachers but not preachers in the sense of inspired or pulpit preaching. Sometimes these were in a small local church where there was no preaching elder, but who presided at meetings, and sometimes they were under a preaching elder. Although the terms "preaching elder" and "local elder" are not specifically used in this manner, there is sufficient biblical example that the Church in our day has used those titles for rank of office.

Those now advocating this Scriptural HERESY want to abolish all authority which Christ as our Head SET in His Church. Their contentions would lead to VOTING -- the "democratic way" -- the very OPPOSITE of God's Way. They want to be "LIBERAL," and soon this liberality would lead into general and widespread SIN. They would become just a few more churches OF THIS WORLD -- Satan's world.

Yes, SATAN is the real author of this rebellion against God's WORK.

But now to get to the contentions they enumerate. Their gripes, complaints, or problems, ostensibly fall into four categories, which I shall outline, and explain:

1) The belated understanding on the part of some of the ministers, as well as some of the brethren, as to the specific reasons for Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong's leave of absence early in 1972. Brethren, you all know well that there are TWO sides to most questions, and you in all probability will now hear only one prejudicial and unfair side. I ask you to hold an open mind until you read what I wish to tell you.

Some ministers, getting confused between this world's politics in the American "democratic" system, and THE WAYS OF GOD, accused "cover-up"! What the newspapers refer to as "cover-up" is based on the contention of CRIMINAL and ILLEGAL obstruction of justice according to man's law. There is no connection whatsoever between that and the case of my son. When that terrible nightmare was brought to my attention -- and I did not then myself know of what are now being alleged as prior events -- I want to ask you, dear Brethren, how would YOU have felt, had you been in my place? You love your children, don't you? Would you feel hurt -- crushed beyond measure had you been in my place? But I had to be conscious of the position the living CHRIST had set me in. I HAD TO ACT! No matter how difficult, no matter how much it hurt, I HAD TO ADMINISTER JUSTICE! And I say to you truthfully, I DID NOT HESITATE.

I felt like Abraham, not sparing his son -- or God, not sparing Christ, His dear Son, although the circumstances were totally different. But I say that, IF it had been Jesus who sinned, and had to pay the penalty for His OWN sin, instead of YOU and me, and Garner Ted's present accusers, God would not have spared His son. If you say it would have been IMPOSSIBLE for Jesus to have sinned, I remind you that He was TEMPTED IN ALL POINTS even as you and I. He was even TEMPTED by Satan in a far sterner way than you or I. But, of course, because Jesus NEVER sinned -- because He was STRONG, where we are WEAK -- there is FORGIVENESS upon real repentance for YOU, and for ME, and for even these deceived ministers allowing Satan to use them to try to DESTROY GOD'S CHURCH AND GOD'S WORK!

So first, let me say, difficult though it was, I did not treat my son ANY DIFFERENTLY than I would have any other minister in the same circumstances. Perhaps you can appreciate it was not easy. I didn't fly into a rage of accusation and denunciation when I heard it. I was just hurt -- crushed in spirit. But I had to ACT -- I knew that, and I DID!

But I had to think, first of all, not of my son, but of THOUSANDS OF YOU brethren who had been brought to conversion, and on the way to ETERNAL LIFE in God's KINGDOM as a result of having HEARD HIS VOICE!

I've not been able to tell you before, but now I tell you truthfully, it was YOU to whom I gave FIRST consideration. I knew I had to put my own son completely out of God's Church. And I DID!

But FIRST consideration had to go to YOU, Brethren. IF I came out and exposed his sin that just about broke more than one heart, HOW MANY OF YOU, NOW ON THE WAY INTO GOD'S KINGDOM, would become discouraged, lose faith, and just GIVE UP! HOW MANY, I asked myself and others, would I send from God's Kingdom and eternal life into A LAKE OF FIRE! I said, "The number of lives I might destroy forever, if I expose to the public the details might be as many as ten thousand!"

I had to banish my son whom I love, possibly above any living now. That was not the big question. The BIG question was, how could I do it, AND NOT SEND THOUSANDS OF BABES IN CHRIST TO A LAKE OF FIRE? HOW?

I believe the living HEAD of this Church, Jesus Christ, inspired what I DID say -- that he was gone because of personal, emotional problems. THAT STATEMENT WAS 100% THE TRUTH. For the sake of thousands of you Brethren, I did not state the specific details of the personal, emotional problems.

Now a bitter, disfellowshipped former minister has failed to think of any of you, and blasted to the whole world even details I myself did not know at that time. And some shout "COVER-UP!!" Your Bible says "LOVE COVERS"! WHY do some want to shout FAR AND WIDE accusations of OTHER person's sins or evils, EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN TOTALLY REPENTED OF, FORGIVEN AND FORGOTTEN BY THE ETERNAL GOD? Do those who EXPOSE other person's sins, often with exaggeration, live wholly WITHOUT SIN themselves? I say you who throw stones live in glass houses yourselves!

Garner Ted Armstrong was not allowed back into God's Church until it was positively evident not only to me, but the most influential and highly respected evangelists in God's Church. They urged that he be received back. And ultimately, after the real FRUITS of that repentance had been manifested, he was restored to power and authority, but ONLY after advice and specific urging of those Headquarters' evangelists.

Now the FRUITS of a year and nine months are there for the whole Church to see. Not only the evangelists and I received him back, on real and thorough repentance, but JESUS CHRIST, THE LIVING HEAD OF THE CHURCH, received him back, and has wonderfully and powerfully USED him these past 21 months!

Some, apparently dedicated to the destruction of God's Work, were, during this nightmare of Garner Ted's banishment, circulating rumors of a POWER STRUGGLE "between the two Armstrongs." That rumor was a LIE!

Now let me tell you some more! Garner Ted's sins were minor compared to those of some of his accusers! For a man to blast before the world through the public press details of alleged or exaggerated sins on Garner Ted's part, YEARS after it happened, after complete repentance and Christ's forgiveness, and after Christ has USED HIM SO POWERFULLY for almost two years since his return, is about the LOWEST act, and one of the greatest and most dastardly sins I can imagine!

I want you to think a moment! Can you IMAGINE how much DAMAGE Garner Ted could have done to this Work if HE had set out, in revenge, to hurt it WHILE HE WAS AWAY? What if he had gone to the press and alleged that the power-struggle was true (which it was NOT) and that I had put him out to destroy him and take over myself. But he KNEW my fear of DISCOURAGING thousands of you. And he didn't want that any more than I. AT NO TIME was Garner Ted disloyal to God, to the Church, to the Work, to me. His sins were NOT REBELLION, which God says is as the sin of witchcraft. Rebellion against God and HIS WORK is a MAJOR SIN by comparison. His conduct at all times, when outside the Church, was exemplary, and totally LOYAL. Not once was there any rebellion against God, or Christ, or the Work, the Church, or me. Instead he drew closer to GOD in real repentance, closer to his family, closer to the Church in his mind and heart. As a result, he accepted his punishment without a whimper, he repented and he PRAYED, and PRAYED and PRAYED -- and he emerged a stronger, more dedicated, more USEFUL vessel for God's Work, and the BEST AND MOST RESULTFUL WORK OF HIS LIFE has been these past 21 months!

Shall we now condemn and throw stones -- we who live in glass houses and have sinned ourselves -- at him whom God has forgiven, and is now using so powerfully? Or shall we look at the FRUITS Christ is producing through him, and have forgiveness in our own hearts. If we forgive not, neither will Christ forgive us OUR SINS, which are MANY!

That is my answer to the FIRST of the four categories these dissenters have against God's Church.

2) It is only in the last three days that it has come to my attention that certain men, and even possibly a couple of evangelists at Headquarters, are still being troubled over the "Divorce and Remarriage" question, which we came to call the "D & R" problem. I had been led to believe that issue had been settled, satisfactorily to all.

Here are the true FACTS relative to this issue. In the past four years or so there has been a tendency to DOUBT -- to begin to "question" this and that doctrine -- to cause CONFUSION, and promote DIVISION in God's Church. I want to GET TO, RE-EXAMINE when necessary, any doctrine where questions are valid, but there is going to have to be a stop to this type of "doubt spreading" that can divide God's people. There has been some TOTALLY UNWARRANTED criticism, and even misrepresentation, whether intended or not, in regard to DOCTRINES. God's Church has God's TRUTH -- and way and by far more Scriptural truth than the Church of God we came to identify (Revelation 3:1-5) as Sardis -- and simply no comparison with the churches of THIS world. We are the ONLY Church I know that has constantly RE-EXAMINED, and

researched, and corrected any error when found. We are the ONLY Church I know that has accepted NEW truth when discovered. That is one of the PROOFS that this IS God's true Church, and when any of us imply just the opposite, we are serving Satan and injuring the Church of the living GOD!

There have been FALSE accusations that doctrinal research is being neglected. This sort of thing is HARMING THE WORK!

Let me give you the record. It was some two years or more ago that the issue was raised regarding the "Hebrew names" for God and for Jesus and for Christ. I was told an outside minister was taking our members by scores and hundreds on that issue. I myself got into it immediately. I had been familiar with that heresy since the early days when our headquarters was still in Oregon. It took time, and it took more time after my manuscripts were written to get it printed, but it came out in the GOOD NEWS. I have heard no more "bad news" in regard to that issue and assume we settled that "doctrine."

Then the "D & R" question came to the front -- healing -- others. More immediately urgent, however, were technical questions on tithing, inviting people to church, etc. In November, 1972, I began calling meetings of evangelists to discuss and settle as many of these questions as possible. We did settle those last-named by the time of the last Ministers' Conference, January 1973. Then came the work on the "D & R" question. Prior to the 1973 Ministers' Conference, it was announced that a team was being appointed at Headquarters to re-examine, and thoroughly research every phase of the question. The former booklet had been withdrawn from circulation. I wanted the views, the careful research of our best technical biblical scholars and researchers. That is ONE of the contributions of Ambassador College to God's Work -- it has trained the finest men in this field. I did not personally select this research team but they were put to work. Mr. Leroy Neff was co-ordinator. I asked him for the papers contributed as a result of the various studies. With these, carefully studying them, and devoting weeks to my own personal study and research -- and even conferring with some of our best scholars on the Bricket Wood faculty, and having them study all the reports from the Pasadena team -- there was no reason to suspect that I did not have ALL the views, technical reports, etc., of those at Pasadena. The reports I had were not all one-sided.

The booklet was published. I was away from Pasadena more than half the time since, but I heard no more about it -- until the past three or four days -- and until now supposed it was accepted by all, and that "doctrine" decided and settled. Now it is reported that two or more evangelists at Pasadena plus other ministers are not in agreement. I do not know whether they were on the "Doctrinal Committee" researching this question. But the papers turned over to me, which I had to assume represented the whole research team, contained none from them, nor were any of their contentions, views or arguments given to me. The booklet was prepared and printed. No reservations or contrary opinions were voiced to me. And only two or three days ago the knowledge of reservations came to me through Garner Ted Armstrong and Dr. Kuhn by telephone clear across the Pacific Ocean.

Incidentally, my son Garner Ted voluntarily abstained from taking part on that research team, as he should, under the circumstances of the time -- saying he had confidence in the final decision, with all the collaborations of the team, and myself.

On hearing their reservations, since they were not considered in the preparation of the booklet, I telephoned orders to Pasadena to withdraw this new booklet from circulation, until I may discuss it with these evangelists and other ministers. And that is the present status on the "D & R" problem. It will be IMMEDIATELY once again re-examined with these evangelists whose views I respect.

Immediately on completion of the "Marriage & Divorce" booklet, I began intensive study on a new booklet on "Healing." It is perhaps 95% finished. The questions here are not on doctrine, but on its application. Again there will be thorough discussion with evangelists at Headquarters.

There is no basis whatsoever for any hostile action, or endeavoring to draw away members from God's Church on the "D & R" or any other doctrinal questions. God's Church is JUST THAT -- it is GOD'S Church, organized HIS WAY, DIRECTED by the living CHRIST, its Head, blessed by Him.

3) Now the THIRD area of complaint is Church authority and administration. These dissenting ministers want to desert God's authority and ASSUME IT THEMSELVES. In other words they want "DEMOCRACY," VOTING which is TOTALLY un-scriptural. They want to be part of THIS world -- Satan's world. They want to be autonomous in government -- INDEPENDENT of God's HEADQUARTERS.

This would DESTROY THE GREAT WORK OF GOD! This would put an END to the GREAT COMMISSION for our

time -- PREACH THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM IN ALL THE WORLD FOR A WITNESS UNTO ALL NATIONS, as we are now doing.

Why, dear Brethren, THAT is the VERY REASON for the GROWTH God has given His Church these forty years. That would destroy the very REASON for the Church.

Suppose we have local churches, all INDEPENDENT. We just ABOLISH THE WORK! We CLOSE DOWN the AMBASSADOR COLLEGES! Each local church, in time, could build its own local church building -- BUT THE GOSPEL WOULD STOP GOING TO THE WORLD! The PLAIN TRUTH would cease publication.

The TITHES, of course, would not come to Headquarters to be used in the WORK! Where would they GO? To each local minister? What will the minister do with the money?

4) Their FOURTH area of contention is their FALSE CLAIM of MISallocation of funds.

Brethren, the living CHRIST is guiding His servants at Headquarters in the allocation of funds. Would these individual ministers allocate the money more wisely? Could THEY get the Gospel to the WORLD?

What they REALLY advocate and will try to draw some of YOU into, is simply THIS: DESTROY THE WORK OF GOD! Let the local flock spend ALL its tithes on themselves, or, let the local minister spend it all on HIMSELF, any way HE wishes to allocate it!

SURELY, dear Brethren, God's dear sheep are not stupid enough to be "taken in" by disloyal, greedy, SELF-serving, rebellious local ministers who are rebelling against GOD, trying to engage in CHARACTER ASSASSINATION of myself and my son Garner Ted, WHOM GOD HAS USED TO PRODUCE SUCH ABUNDANT FRUIT for the Kingdom of God these forty some years!

Brethren, it has taken YEARS -- forty of them -- to BUILD the Work of God where it has the resources, the equipment, the facilities, the services, and the SPIRIT -- God's HOLY SPIRIT -- to get GOD'S JOB DONE!

God is now starting to proclaim HIS END-TIME Message to the GREAT-population nations -- to CHINA, INDIA, RUSSIA, Indonesia, Japan, Bangladesh -- to mention the seven LARGEST nations (with the United States). Also, in nations in Africa, in Europe, in South and Central America!

Heads of State are ASKING for this Message. This mutiny by two or more ministers in the field has caused me to fly instantly back to Pasadena, and LEAVE the very FIRST great PUBLIC CAMPAIGN that would have reached MANY THOUSANDS in Manila. But I told the officials there, as General MacArthur did in World War II -- "I SHALL RETURN!"

We have LOYAL ministers to follow up such campaigns. We have The PLAIN TRUTH. The Bible Correspondence Course. The COLLEGES.

Is all THIS a misallocation of FUNDS?

How would these would-be ACCUSERS allocate your tithes? Once they get them, WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO WITH THE MONEY?

Brethren, I ask you to FOLLOW THE LORD JESUS CHRIST -- follow HIS CHURCH, not some split-off by rebellious, bitter, greedy MEN! Follow the one you have called GOD'S Apostle, whom GOD has chosen, and USED these forty years! Stand by Garner Ted and me! The income for the Work has been up, once again, since January 1st to mid-February, to almost 30% increase once again. The BIG WORK is just now STARTING --LET'S GIVE IT A BIG PUSH RIGHT NOW! This is God's doing -- NOT the nefarious selfish scheming of little men with visions of financial grandeur for themselves!

PRAY that these men will OPEN THEIR eyes, and REPENT, as Garner Ted did. They are men I LOVE! I don't want to see happen to THEM what God has caused to happen to all who have fought HIS WORK during the past 40 years! Not ONE has succeeded.

This thing is of SATAN, and that's where I really place the guilt, rather than on these deceived men now allowing Satan to turn them the wrong way. Let's PRAY for them, that their eyes may be opened.

I think you WON'T LET ME AND GARNER TED, AND GOD'S WORK DOWN!

Remember, we shall be praying for YOU, too! God is ABLE to SAVE HIS GREAT WORK! Thank you from the very bottom of my heart.

With deep LOVE in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong