

(This letter accompanied Mr. Armstrong's September 15, 1980 letter to the brethren.)

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Dear Brethren in Australia:

Last night I went to sleep thinking of you dear Brethren in Australia, praying for you. And I awakened thinking about you, and while you and your welfare in our common Lord and Savior Jesus Christ are on my mind, I sit down even before breakfast to write to you -- lest other responsibilities and concerns in our common Work in Christ fill my mind and take my time.

I do think of you often, and mention you in my prayers constantly, though in my prayers and thoughts I do share you with ALL our Family in Christ throughout all our far-flung earth. But we are all ONE UNITED FAMILY in CHRIST under the Great GOD our Father.

I had just received a letter from our beloved evangelist Gerald Waterhouse whom I had recently sent to you. I had read it shortly before bedtime, telling me of your faithfulness and dedication in our common Work, especially in helping increase The PLAIN TRUTH circulation that we may put Christ's precious Message before more and more of the people in your great country.

Actually, I am now reminded this is probably the first time I have written a letter just to you brethren in Australia. I have visited you a few times, though I am now actually a few years overdue on a visit to your country.

My thoughts on awakening this morning went first to the time when I knew none of you -- and you had never heard of me. How did it all start? Right now, without looking up some records, I don't remember the year -- it must have been along in the middle of the 1950s -- God put it into my mind that He had many people He would call to Him in Australia. So I flew there with our international advertising agent from New York, and made plans to place The WORLD TOMORROW program on a number of Australian radio stations.

At first I was stoutly opposed by established Protestant churches in Sydney and elsewhere on the continent, but for years we managed to keep the program on the air. But though you may not realize it, I did have to really fight to keep God's TRUTH going out on the air waves in Australia.

The fact that God used me and all this effort to bring you dear brethren into the begotten Family of God is certainly worth it, and I rejoice in it with you now. But that is the way Jesus Christ has worked that YOU might now be blessed with HIS TRUTH and HIS HOLY SPIRIT -- by which we may know you have an earnest down payment on joyful ETERNAL LIFE in the KINGDOM OF GOD -- where we all share a common heritage!

That common heritage is neither Australian nor American, nor European, nor African. It is a common heritage as co-heirs with Jesus Christ in the great Family of GOD-BEINGS, far transcending any heritage in this world!

The scanty embryonic Work in your country took root and began to grow. I sent Mr. Waterhouse to Sydney to establish an office. Then I visited the office and the few brethren already brought into Christ's fold at the time.

We had opposition. The newspapers opposed. The churches opposed. It has always been, in Australia, NOT a matter of Australia against us in the United States -- but SATAN who is in EVERY country AGAINST CHRIST! Satan battles us in Pasadena -- throughout America -- in England -- in Africa, Germany -- everywhere!

It is not a matter of nationality! It is not a matter of color, race or country. Satan fights us in Black Africa -- in all countries. But in God's CHURCH we are neither Jew nor Greek, black, yellow or white, Australian or American -- WE ARE ALL ONE FAMILY -- BRETHREN IN THE SAME FAMILY AS BEGOTTEN CHILDREN OF GOD!

How WONDERFUL that is! And we share the common HOPE -- we shall be together as ONE divine FAMILY OF GOD --

actually immortal GOD-Beings -- bound together in LOVE.

But as of now, Satan would like to DIVIDE US in prejudices, misunderstandings, false rumors, suspicions. Satan is working in EVERY country.

But there was a time when I myself -- and YOU ALSO -- were spiritually DEAD "in trespasses and sins." We walked and lived according to the ways of THIS world of Satan's -- the way of the "PRINCE of the POWER OF THE AIR" (Ephesians 2:2) with a suspicious, resentful, hostile spirit and attitude -- as a part of THIS WORLD.

But now Christ has rescued us from that -- has "quickenened" - - given us GOD'S SPIRIT (Ephesians 2:1). First He called me, back in 1926-27.

Jesus Christ had all of YOU in mind -- but He had to deal with me a while first. After I had been successful in Satan's world, in business as a young man in his twenties, making the equivalent of \$175,000 a year by age 28, God had taken that all away. He had reduced me to poverty and hunger -- one threadbare suit, one pair of "righteous" shoes with holey soles, no home, no car, paying \$7 a month rent.

This is how Christ STARTED getting His Truth to YOU! Without anything to give, I was started out by Him, first GIVING my very self and life to HIM -- then starting to GIVE His TRUTH which He had given me, to others by preaching in a one-room country schoolhouse with 36 seats. I was started GIVING with no money or worldly goods to give -- but God had made me rich in HIS TRUTH and I had much of that to GIVE.

God started the present continuation of His Church for the Philadelphia era through me. It really made no difference in what country. I happened to be living in Oregon in America. The only way it made any difference which country Christ started this generation of His Church out in, is that America is the only country where the common poor people could afford to START the Work of God, and where one was free to take money from that country and go to other countries to spread that wonderful Message.

I had to suffer hardship, persecution, opposition, even from the time of my conversion. It was a long, hard struggle for years.

I had no SELF ambitions. I had no ideas of becoming a world leader. I DID have what Christ had put within me, a desire to GROW in grace and His knowledge -- and I wanted the Work to GROW -- not stand still or go backward. He had called me as His servant in building HIS KINGDOM. And in Isaiah 9:7 is the prophecy that of the INCREASE of Christ's GOVERNMENT there shall be NO END. It will increase gradually more and more until it fills the WHOLE EARTH. And then? Then it will INCREASE into other planets outside this earth, through the entire UNIVERSE -- throughout endless space FOR EVER AND EVER. But it must grow GRADUALLY!

So, though I was converted and my mind opened to God's TRUTH in 1927, the present era of His Church was not raised up until 1933. And the Work did not expand beyond the United States until 1953, when it leaped to Europe and England over Radio Luxembourg. It was 1955 or thereafter before it went on the air in Australia.

But now, today, God has several churches in Australia. Satan is ON THE JOB! He wants to SPLIT you people there. He wants you to get your minds on "THE AUSTRALIAN WORK" as if you are a SEPARATE work CUT OFF from the REST of God's Church. Satan wants you back into his way of carnal, selfish, worldly antagonistic and hostile thinking and prejudices where I was before Christ changed me, and you were before CHRIST reached over there into Australia and changed YOU. Satan wants to change you back into CARNAL attitudes. He wants to cut us off from being ONE FAMILY. He wants to DIVIDE US. He wants to UNDO all that Christ has done in YOUR hearts and mine -- to weld us TOGETHER IN CHRIST as ONE FAMILY bound by the LOVE OF GOD!

Well, Brethren, as for me, I will not let Satan take out of my heart my LOVE FOR YOU. I want to stay in GOD'S FAMILY, and I want YOU to stay in GOD'S FAMILY, and I want all of you and all of us here and all of us in Black Africa and in Asia and Europe who are in GOD'S FAMILY to REMAIN TOGETHER IN CHRIST and in HIS LOVE AND PEACE!

Now what does God, through His Word, instruct us about our relationship together IN HIS CHURCH?

He explains that, in overview, in the chapter I quoted above -- Ephesians 2. Verse 1, we -- you and I -- were spiritually DEAD in trespasses and sins. But He "quickenened" us -- changed OUR WAY OF LIFE -- CONVERTED -- put HIS SPIRIT

in us -- after (verse 2) we formerly had lived according to Satan's way. And we are now GOD'S workmanship -- God's people whom HE is working on and changing -- UNTO GOOD WORKS (verse 10).

NOW, therefore, we are fellow citizens with the saints (verses 19-22) of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD -- that is, of the FAMILY of God. We are begotten into the DIVINE FAMILY -- the GOD Family -- citizens of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD.

And that family is built upon a FOUNDATION -- (verse 20) the Apostles (New Testament) and Prophets (Old Testament) -- Jesus Christ being the chief or main cornerstone -- the main Foundation. And in CHRIST (verse 21) we are a whole BUILDING -- a HOLY TEMPLE -- the spiritual TEMPLE to which Christ shall soon come.

When Jesus came 19-1/2 centuries ago, He came as a PHYSICAL human man, to a MATERIAL Temple built of stone, wood, gold and materials. But this time Christ is coming as the GREAT SPIRIT BEING to His SPIRITUAL TEMPLE -- His CHURCH -- to YOU and me and the Church from all parts of the earth, NOT an "Australian Church" -- NOT an "American Church." But the CHURCH OF GOD! NOTICE: We -- this BUILDING -- this spiritual TEMPLE -- must be "FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER." We must be (chapter 4, verse 16) "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint (every member) supplieth."

We MUST NOT (verses 17-19) go back to living as unconverted people -- as we used to -- in vanity of mind, thinking "we are an AUSTRALIAN work" -- we are vain and superior -- having our understanding darkened, so we believe false rumors and slanderous lies about Christ's Apostle through whom God called us into HIS FAMILY to inherit HIS KINGDOM!

Study these verses in your own Bible.

Now HOW has God joined us together, like the many boards and pieces of a building all joined together -- COMPACTED? (And that word compacted means GLUED or WELDED together.)

Notice chapter 4 of Ephesians, verses 11-12: Christ has set officials in His Church to ORGANIZE it and OPERATE IT -- Apostle, Evangelists, Pastors, teachers (of whom some are preaching elders and some nonpreaching local elders, as shown in other New Testament scriptures).

Now this all ties in directly with I Corinthians 1 and 12.

In I Corinthians 1, we are commanded by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ "that ye all speak the same thing, and that THERE BE NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU" (verse 10). You Australian brethren must not be divided APART FROM those in America, in England, in Germany, in Black Africa, in the Philippines. We are all ONE in Christ!!!

In verse 12, some of you must not be followers of one human leader apart from another and others followers of other ministers. We must be JOINED TIGHTLY TOGETHER! We must have ONE doctrine and belief. And HOW did God put doctrine and belief into His Church? By Jesus Christ -- but Christ taught the Apostles and the CHURCH received its teaching and doctrines through the APOSTLES. Now Jesus is the Word of God in Person. The BIBLE is the Word of God in writing -- but the SAME TRUTH! Brethren, I did not put myself into God's Church nor make myself Christ's Apostle -- HE DID! Just as God taught the first century original Apostles through Jesus the Personal Word of God, even so He taught me the SAME TRUTHS AND DOCTRINES through the WRITTEN Word of God, the Holy Bible! If I teach not accurately according to this inspired WORD OF GOD, write to me and show me, and on proof I will correct it for the WHOLE CHURCH!

You see, God's CHURCH is not a matter of a German church separate from the rest or an Australian church separated off all alone by itself. This is NOT an association of HUMAN PEOPLE, joining ourselves together as WE desire, leaning to OUR OWN understanding, separate from and hostile against other churches. THAT IS THE WAY SATAN'S CHURCHES ARE ORGANIZED! WE ARE THE CHURCH OF GOD! -- not of PEOPLE!

Now further in I Corinthians. Chapter 12 shows the Work and organization of the Church.

God has called and put every one of us -- every single member -- into His Church (verse 18). But God has given, BY HIS SPIRIT, special gifts or abilities to different ones (verses 1, 4). For, to fulfill the PURPOSE of the Church, there are in the Church different OPERATIONS, and to oversee and direct them, different ADMINISTRATIONS (verses 5, 6). Now God has given through the Holy Spirit special abilities for the many different operations and administrations "dividing to every

man severally as HE will" (verse 11) -- NOT as different members choose or wish. Yet all the many members, with different jobs, functions, parts to take, are all ONE UNITED ORGANIZED BODY (verses 12-13) -- not many different churches. There is only the ONE Church that is the true Church of GOD! At Christ's coming He is going to marry only ONE Church -- not the Associated Church, the Church International, Luther's church, the Catholic Church, the Methodist, Baptist, Australian, Egyptian and Russian churches.

So GOD has given special gifts, spiritual talents and abilities to certain ones in the Church AS HE HIMSELF CHOOSES! And He has set the chain of AUTHORITY and officers in the Church (verse 28).

Now WHY should there even be the CHURCH? Yes, W H Y? Did you ever stop to think that very few ever asked that question -- very few know the REASON FOR, or the PURPOSE OF the Church? It is NOT just a club, a human society or a social group for human pleasure. There is a GREAT PURPOSE!

As I write, we are nearing this year's Feast of Tabernacles. We are LOOKING AHEAD to the coming KINGDOM OF GOD -- when Satan will be gone and we shall have WORLD PEACE -- the world ruled by the GOVERNMENT OF GOD administered by the KINGDOM OF GOD, and God shall call EVERYBODY THEN LIVING TO SALVATION.

But to understand the PURPOSE of the CHURCH we need to look BACK briefly to the first created man, Adam.

Prior to Adam's creation, angels had inhabited the earth. God had set a THRONE on earth. He placed on it the super-powerful archangel LUCIFER to administer the GOVERNMENT OF GOD. Lucifer and his angels REBELLED against God's Government, and God's Government became UNoperative on earth -- BUT LUCIFER, NOW CALLED SATAN, STILL SAT ON THAT THRONE. And the UNIVERSE Government of God requires that SATAN remain on that throne HAVING POWER U N T I L Christ shall SIT ON THAT THRONE, restoring the GOVERNMENT OF GOD over the earth.

Now Adam was given opportunity to resist Satan, reject Satan's WAY of life, and to CHOOSE the GOVERNMENT OF GOD. Adam had to make a CHOICE. He could have rejected Satan's way, chosen GOD'S way, taken of the tree of LIFE symbolic of God's Holy Spirit, and been made an immortal GOD-BEING and replaced Satan on the throne of the earth, restoring the Government of GOD to the earth.

But Adam let his wife lead him. He was the father the progenitor of the entire HUMAN RACE. He was making the decision for all mankind that should be born from him. He succumbed to Satan, rejected God as revealer of knowledge, as Supreme RULER, as Savior and Giver of eternal life.

Adam made that decision for HUMANITY AS A WHOLE -- and God made it binding UNTIL Satan is removed and GOD'S GOVERNMENT is restored over the earth -- which meant mankind as a whole was cut off from God for 6,000 years!

Now the whole matter hangs on GOVERNMENT! But to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, God has purposed to REPRODUCE HIMSELF out of HUMANS made from matter -- dust of the ground -- but finally made immortal SPIRIT GOD-BEINGS -- as spirit-BORN children of GOD! And these converted, spirit-BORN GOD-BEINGS -- all to be sons of GOD -- are to RULE administering the GOVERNMENT OF GOD! Under CHRIST!

THAT IS THE GREAT OVERALL PURPOSE GOD IS WORKING OUT HERE ON EARTH! Does your mind grasp that?

Now God knew that only His one associate GOD-BEING, "THE WORD" (John 4:1-4), by being born as a HUMAN through a human woman, but begotten by GOD (and therefore both God and Man) could overcome SATAN, and qualify, AS A HUMAN, to RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD to the earth!

But the supreme creative feat God has set out to accomplish takes TIME. God is not in a hurry -- a thousand years to Him are as a single day and a day as a thousand years. God knew it MUST BE DEMONSTRATED BY 6,000 years of human experience, with humans living SATAN'S WAY, contrary to GOD'S LAW, to PROVE that God's way of LOVE is best for all, and Satan's way of HOSTILITY, antagonism, coveting, vanity, self-glory, is NOT GOOD FOR THOSE WHO DO IT!

That is why God did not send Christ, the SECOND ADAM, into the world for some 4,000 years after the first Adam!

But, meanwhile, to RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD to earth, Christ was going to need a whole ORGANIZATION of other born GOD- BEINGS under Christ in all the many operations and administrations of ruling the

earth with the GOVERNMENT OF GOD. Even a human king or president can't do all the ruling himself alone. He must have many UNDER him, in an ORGANIZED GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION!

So God made an exception to making binding Adam's decision to cut himself and all his human family off from God. God would specially call certain ones He would choose, to be reconciled to Him, to have contact with Him, to be prepared to be resurrected as immortal GOD-BEINGS when Christ should come to RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD OVER THE EARTH. They would be called to be trained, IN THIS MORTAL HUMAN LIFE, through the Holy Spirit of God, to be PART OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT ruling with and under CHRIST!

So God called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob -- gave them the PROMISES of this divine heritage. Four hundred thirty years after Abraham, God called the three or four million of Abraham's descendents, then the Children of Israel, to be His NATION, having God's GOVERNMENT as one of earth's nations. But GOD DID NOT GIVE ANCIENT ISRAEL HIS HOLY SPIRIT! He did specially call out of them His PROPHETS, and He gave to them His Holy Spirit. These Prophets were prepared to be a CO-FOUNDATION of the CHURCH when God later, through Christ, would raise up His CHURCH. No prophets in the New Testament Church had administrative or preaching functions in the Church -- none contributed the doctrines or customs to the Church. But Old Testament Prophets' writings did become part of the FOUNDATION of the Church.

So then came CHRIST, the second Adam.

Now WHY did Jesus say, "I will build my CHURCH"? To CALL OUT FROM THE WORLD CUT OFF FROM GOD a special BODY to become a SPIRITUAL BODY -- to be given the HOLY SPIRIT -- to be trained in LIVING THE WAY OF GOD'S LAW -- to be trained to RULE WITH AND UNDER CHRIST when He RESTORES THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD OVER THE EARTH -- to replace the RULE OF SATAN who still sits on the THRONE OF THE EARTH!

And THAT'S WHY Christ put His GOVERNMENT in God's Church! We are being trained to administer the GOVERNMENT OF GOD over the whole earth, when Christ comes to RULE and Satan is taken off that throne!

That's WHY we read in Isaiah 9:6-7 and other prophecies that Jesus was to be BORN to be a KING. That's why Jesus told Pilate He was born to be a KING. Do the preachers of the churches of this world ever preach Christ as a KING -- as coming to restore the GOVERNMENT of God? They know NOTHING of the real PURPOSE of the Church -- or even WHAT THE GOSPEL IS!

Read again Revelation 3:21 and 2:26-27. If WE in His CHURCH overcome Satan, we shall sit with Christ in His THRONE and be given power to RULE THE NATIONS!

That's WHY Christ put GOD'S GOVERNMENT into His CHURCH -- a government of LOVE, based on God's Law, which is LOVE. And if we will not BE ruled by that Government now, we shall not be given power to RULE in God's Kingdom!

Brethren, Satan hates this Church because WE are being trained to REPLACE HIM ON THAT THRONE! Satan wants to divide us! Satan wants you in Australia to think of yourselves as just "THE AUSTRALIAN WORK." He wants to instill in your hearts a feeling of prejudice against your BROTHERS in America, in Africa, Asia, South America. He wants you to think Christ's Apostle hated his own son and did wrong in disfellowshipping him from the Church -- whereas you DON'T KNOW how it hurt me through and through to have to do that! But I must serve CHRIST first of all -- and so must you!

So let us put all prejudicial or partial thinking out of our minds. Let us REPENT and turn from all that -- and a few of you have let Satan deceive you in it! GOD LOVES you and as His servant so do I. I have made great sacrifices that the precious Truth of GOD might come to you -- that you might be called into this common heritage with us all! I love you all -- I pray regularly for you all -- I need your prayers and love. In LOVE we will go forth into the KINGDOM OF GOD, and God's PEACE and SALVATION shall come to all.

I wish you all a JOYFUL Feast of Tabernacles, looking forward to the THOUSAND YEARS' REIGN AND RULE OF CHRIST -- when we shall be changed into GOD-BEINGS -- IMMORTAL -- and reign with and under Him over all the earth!

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong