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CHRIST'S APOSTLE TO THE MINISTRY:

"WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANTS!"

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Fellow Ministers, Satan tried again -- God's Church has been through troublous times these past few months -- but the Head of God's Church, Jesus Christ, was interceding for us -- and thanks largely to you ministers, the Church has come through stronger than ever!

I simply cannot find words to adequately express my THANKS and GRATITUDE and LOVE for the LOYALTY of you ministers standing staunchly and unitedly behind me, behind the living Christ, and behind the GREAT MAJESTIC GOD OUR FATHER!

We have just had a splendid and successful meeting of the area coordinators. Reports from them show that God's Church -- His one and only Church -- has weathered this latest storm and now presses on with renewed vigor to finish the GREAT COMMISSION.

All indication confirms this. The Work's income holds steadily with a slight increase. The mail response confirms it. The atmosphere at Headquarters has taken on a "NEW LOOK" -- it seems everyone is smiling -- there is TOGETHERNESS, peace and harmony. Sometimes the barber shop is a reflector of campus atmosphere. The campus barber told me that he, too, notices the happy change -- all seem to be looking forward to a leap ahead in God's Work.

Let me give you just a few brief excerpts from State-of-the-Work reports from scattered areas.

From the populous New York area Mr. Elbert Atlas reports: "There are no indications that the difficulties we have been experiencing during the last few months have adversely affected Church attendance. Attendance figures for the area" /New York state, New England states, Delaware, New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania/ "are either holding steady or are slightly up. The brethren then...are remaining steadfast and stable. The fine manner in which the ministry in this area has responded to your leadership has resulted in the high degree of stability and unity. I feel the men have been doing an excellent job in shepherding their flocks during these traumatic and troublesome times.

"To the best of my knowledge only three members have left the Church...that is three out of 5,600. One lives in the New York City area, and the others -- a man and his wife -- live in New Jersey.

Press releases to 5 or 6 newspapers announced the time and place of a meeting...in Clark, New Jersey, two Sabbaths ago. Letters were also sent to members whose addresses he had, encouraging them to attend...a grand total of 6 or 8 people showed up. Only one was a member...not yet identified.

"Mr. Armstrong, because you are the head of this Work under Christ, the ministry looks to you for direction, guidance and correction. But you are also our 'Father in Christ,'...I can say as your representative in this area, the ministers are doing highly commendable jobs in shepherding the flocks over which Christ through you made them overseers."

From the West Coast Sacramento area, Mr. Norman Smith reports: "The ministry and the people are committed to keeping the body of Jesus Christ working together as one unit. There have been a few families that have departed in the past few months, but generally speaking, it has been only about one family per church or less. The ministry believes in the Government of God and is remaining loyal to the offices God has established."

From the Cleveland area: Mr. Guy Englebart reports: "Mr. Armstrong, the churches here are basically very stable. The ministers and brethren are behind you 100% as Christ leads you in accomplishing the Work of God in these last days. I know of no one here who has left God's Church and is following Mr. Ted Armstrong. Even though the churches are basically stable,...some...understood you to say in your letter that we should not pray for Garner Ted Armstrong's repentance and return to God's Work. Many are confused as to why you said this."

Let me interrupt Mr. Englebart's report here to say that I'm sure I never said that! I myself pray for him and his restoration daily. What I did write was that I had been praying earnestly for him, and a real repentance, ever since 1971. In the letter to the membership I did add a quotation from Hebrews 6:4-6 -- that some refuse to repent, but I'm sure I indicated how I hoped desperately that he would. I still do, and ask all to do the same. Mr. Englebart continues, "Let me assure you, Mr. Armstrong, that the ministers here are solidly behind you and fully loyal to you as you accomplish God's Work. The attitude and the feeling of the ministry and brethren is to forget the past and let's get on with accomplishing the Great Commission....The most encouraging thing for the brethren right now would be for them to continue to see God's Work forging ahead and dynamically accomplishing the commission Christ has given to the Church."

The report from Mr. Dennis Pyle, Kansas area: "Mr. Armstrong, all of us in the ministry are behind you. We are supportive and loyal to you and the Work of God. We want to preach the truth of God as you instruct us based on God's Word. I want you to know that the ministry daily and zealously supports you and God's Church. They earnestly need your trust, your confidence, your support, and your leadership."

Fellow ministers, you certainly have my confidence, trust and support -- and as I said above, I cannot find words to properly express

my GRATITUDE, and LOVE for you in your loyalty and faithfulness, especially during the recent few traumatic months. And I am now working some 14 or more hours daily to try to give you the leadership under Christ that you need. Your diligence, loyalty and faithfulness, coupled with the leadership that the living Christ enables me to give you -- THAT IS THE TEAMWORK AND UNITY, under Christ's guidance, inspiration and power, that has continued to pull God's Church through all attacks by Satan. I do not blame humans for the trauma from which Christ has delivered us. I attribute it to Satan, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [wicked spirits] in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

I pray for you daily and I still pray for my son daily whom I love deeply. Christ, our Head, is daily interceding for us on God's throne, and will in His way bring us all in the UNITY OF THE FAITH. I remember that my mother's favorite Bible passage was, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalms 133:1).

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A POLICY STATEMENT

by Herbert W. Armstrong

A statement in a recent issue of The GOOD NEWS was emphatically not intended to reflect distrust of the ministry.

I want ministers and lay brethren alike to know that no longer are communications to me shut off and forbidden to reach me. The office of executive vice-president had demoted or shanghaied to other fields ministers close to the top and they were threatened with being fired if they communcated with me in any way.

When one is forcibly restrained from communicating or reaching anyone higher than any certain office, he is shut off from Christ and from God.

What I had in mind was a case example which occurred many years ago; a member stirring up controversy about praying to "Our Father, which art in heaven," -- that is, God the Father. He insisted it was "taking it over Christ's head," and we had no right to go to any higher than Christ. I explained how Jesus' sample prayer was a prayer to God the Father, in Jesus' name. I explained how Jesus said that if we ask the Father anything in his name, the Father will do it. I showed him Acts 4:23-31, how the early Church prayed to God the Father, saying, "Lord, thou art God...for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed,...and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." I showed this man how miraculously God answered that prayer. Yet he persisted in saying we cannot contact anyone higher than Jesus -- we were forbidden to reach the Father.

I wanted to make plain that no one is forbidden to reach me, as no one is forbidden to go to Jesus Christ or to God the Father.

However, I want to straighten out two points that were not understood -- or perhaps I did not make them plain:

1) In ordinary cases of a member having or feeling any criticism against his pastor, he should, first, obey Matthew 18:15 and take it to his local pastor in private. In this regard I am reminded of a case history in my ministry. A member whom I had made a deacon insisted on being ordained an elder. When I did not comply, he became offended. I went to him about it, my wife accompanying me. Later he accused me of not obeying Matthew 18:15. When, in astonishment, I reminded him of how I had come to him privately, he got technical and said, "Yes, but Jesus said go to him alone, and you did not come alone -- your wife was with you." Anyway, I explained that he was alone and therefore I had gone to him alone -- and not to others -- but one whose feelings are hurt will not admit it if he is wrong.

Now 2) if anyone brings to me any accusation about a minister -- or if anyone brings a complaint against anyone higher than he in authority, I have always, through the years, adhered to one policy. I uphold the accused in the higher position, and the burden of proof is upon the complainant. The minister, or the accused in the higher office is always innocent in my eyes until proved otherwise.

But as all are free to go to God the Father direct, so on the human level I want our people to understand no one is shut off from me by someone under me who might (as was done) forbid him to contact me. That is all I meant and this will be published also in The GOOD NEWS.

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CLEARING THE AIR ON HEALING

by Herbert W. Armstrong

There has been some confusion on the subject of healing due to STP teaching, with a tendency to place DOUBT regarding GOD'S WORD and His PROMISES -- as well as MISUNDERSTANDING what I have taught and written.

First let me say that, as I write these lines September 10, you have not yet read Part 5 of my series of articles on healing in The GOOD NEWS, and there will follow Part 6 after that. And God says through Solomon, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly to him" (Proverbs 18:13).

This series of articles in The GOOD NEWS will be published as a booklet -- the official teaching of The Worldwide Church of God.

Let me here comment more briefly on a letter from one of our field ministers whom I know wants to follow and teach God's TRUTH as revealed in the Bible -- but has not understood clearly what I have taught -- or, more properly appears to have a misunderstanding about what I have taught, or intended to teach. What he has written may be typical of what some others have misunderstood.

First let me say that I have often wondered why God called and used a man such as myself in committing to him Christ's GREAT COMMISSION when I have known scores -- perhaps hundreds of men of greater ability, perhaps far better minds, superior personality, appearance and other qualifications than I. Of course I had been driven by ambition -- had diligently studied and applied myself and been successful in business -- but at conversion I realized I was no better than a worthless "hunk of junk," unfit even to be cast on the junk pile. But I did BELIEVE GOD -- that is, I believed what He says in His Word -- and I have never compromised with His precious TRUTH and will not water it down. Perhaps that is a reason, although even that was given to me by God, and not to my credit. The fact remains, regardless of my unworthiness, God chose none of these others who were far my superiors -- He did choose me, and He has used me, and has borne rich fruit through me -- which has been HIS doing.

But I do mean to BELIEVE GOD, and not to use human reason to water down His TRUTH. And it is, after all, through God's using me that you, directly or indirectly, have been brought into this TRUTH, and the high calling of His ministry.

Now to try to clear the air at least partially, prior to your receiving the two installments yet to be published in The GOOD NEWS.

This minister's letter states: "From your articles on healing, every member that I talked with got the impression that we were not to use doctors -- that the medical profession was condemned, of Satan. That doctors, medicine and drugs were condemned of God."

If I wrote that and you can show it to me, I will correct it. I'm quite sure that I wrote what THE WORD OF GOD SAYS, and if that is wrong in human eyes for human reasoning, I'm sorry -- but I shall keep on teaching what God SAYS and believing Him!

I did not say our members must never use doctors. The medical profession, in my mind, is not condemned. In the two remaining installments in The GOOD NEWS, this I hope will be made clear. For it will become the official Worldwide Church of God teaching on the subject.

I have sensed a tendency by some members who have come into the Church since it became a Worldwide Church, and since it has grown into a well-organized worldwide organism, to appear to look upon God's Church as just another of this world's organized activities.

But we are God's "called-OUT ones" -- called out of the world, to be separate -- to be DIFFERENT -- God's own spiritual organism (although organized according to God's pattern) -- a "peculiar people," not of this world.

Some have forgotten how the present era of God's Church was started, and how it developed. God had put me through a most unusual experience. I had been forced to see and believe what I did not want to believe. God had swept my mind clean of all previous concepts, assumptions and beliefs. He had proved to me His own existence. He had proved to me the INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY of the Bible as His inspired Word. I had

craved UNDERSTANDING, and after God took me to a beating, being CONQUERED by Him, He revealed a good UNDERSTANDING of His revealed Word.

This era of God's Church was raised up by a six-week's, six-nights-a-week series of meetings in a country school house eight miles west of Eugene, Oregon. It started, like a grain of mustard seed, with nineteen members.

Those nineteen believed what the living Christ taught them through me. As God added to His Church continually, all members came into the TEACHINGS Christ had given through me, His chosen apostle. As each new member has since come into the Church, there was no understanding or agreement that he was to have a part in changing the truth that Christ had given the Church through His apostle. Until some two or more years ago, all teachings in this Church had been given by Christ through HIS chosen apostle.

Then, a few years back, somehow a "doctrinal committee" had gotten into the Church, composed of the more "scholarly" at Headquarters. Before we realized it, more study was being devoted to finding out whether the doctrines received through Christ's apostle were, after all, correct. On two different questions -- counting Pentecost and "D & R" -- I did perceive a correction should be made -- and I made each, on PROOF which GOD REVEALED. And not from the "scholarly arguments."

In the case of Pentecost I had researched that thoroughly and in-depth some 45 or more years ago. It was a simple matter of counting 50 days. Every translation then extant, translated the Hebrew to instruct us to count 50 days from a Sunday. Forty-five years ago a woman raised a controversy in the Church (then in Oregon) insisting on a Sunday Pentecost. But for the wrong reasons! As long as every Hebrew scholar of every translation said count from Sunday, I did not attempt to use what knowledge of Hebrew I possessed to translate the term differently than the many Hebrew scholars had done. I remained firm on a Monday Pentecost -- and I would have, in spite of all arguments (all of which had been in error) had not I finally found PROOF through two of the official translators of the RSV, and through a Jewish woman in Israel who is a teacher of Hebrew, and also well versed in English. The Hebrew word properly, I finally had proved, should be translated not "from" but "on" or "beginning on" a Sunday. From them I received an explanation of why all preceding translators had used the word "from." On evidence, I made the change immediately.

My mind, fellows, IS open -- on proof! But I will not compromise or "water down."

In the D & R question, I stood firm against some of the "scholars" on the doctrinal committee -- as did some others of the committee, as long as their reasons were in error and consequently their conclusions were in error!

How, then, did the change come to be made official by me? I think many of you have never heard the details of the real reason. My son had come to me asking, "If two totally illiterate aborigines, who never heard of God or Christianity marry, is such marriage bound

by God?" I answered "Yes." Then Dr. Herman Hoeh said, "Mr. Armstrong, you have said that most errors are based on a false PREMISE which appears so correct it is never questioned, but is assumed. And when the premise is proved false, the arguments or reasons based on it topple with it. Now suppose the General Motors Corporation makes a legal contract with United States Steel Corporation. Is GOD concerned? Does God bind that contract?"

I answered "NO, because this world is CUT OFF from God." "Then," pursued Dr. Hoeh, "are not the Aborigines also cut off from God?" He was right.

Next step. My son came to me one day saying, "I find there was more divorce and remarriage going on in the area in which the apostle Paul worked than there is today. Yet the D & R question never seems to be mentioned as a problem in the Church in Paul's writings and today it is our biggest problem. WHY?"

At least the three of us, and perhaps more, began studying to find the answer. I remember going back for perhaps the 57th time over I Corinthians 7. Now I saw something that somehow had escaped us before.

Paul first gave instruction regarding the unmarried single persons, and then regarding the marital state. Then, verse 8, "I say therefore to the UNMARRIED..." and in verse 10, "And unto the married I command" Then, verse 12, "but to the REST speak I...." Who were "the rest"? Paul had just spoken of the unmarried, and then of the married. The context now became for the first time clear: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away." Then the same applied to the woman member with a non-believing husband. Then, verse 15, "If the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister /Church members/ is not under bondage in such cases." And those I was counseling with on the doctrinal committee agreed that such member is not bound -- that is, the marriage is no longer binding. God has not called us to strife and contention, but to peace. And often the unconverted mate insists on strife and contention because of his mate's belief. Later, I believe it was, Dr. Hoeh came up with the fact that the leaving or putting away here was not an "annulment" but a "divorce" -- unbinding the innocent member -- free to marry within the Church.

You will find my mind open, on PROOF. If I am proved wrong, I shall change. But I shall HOLD FAST uncompromisingly with proved proof!

In what I have outlined above, God's Church continues precisely as it was in the first generation of the Church of God.

Jesus had personally instructed the apostles. After His ascension to heaven, the only function of a prophet, as one through whom God reveals, seems to be to convey a message from God to the apostle. However, the word "prophet," from the time of the King James translation, more often meant one who preaches, usually not casual teaching but inspired preaching with conviction and power.

But in the days of the Church, starting 31 A.D., the Church received all its beliefs and teachings through the apostles. There was no "doctrinal committee" and there no longer is today. In the sense of prophets through whom God communicates to the apostle, there are none in God's Church today. So we have, apostle, evangelist, pastor, and teachers who are elders -- both preaching and non-preaching.

Now back to the comment on clearing the air on healing.

I did not say our members must never use doctors. The medical profession is (as later installments in The GOOD NEWS will make clear -- as the official booklet and teaching of God's Church) the commonly accepted (in the world) leading, if not the best means of coping with sickness, diseases, etc., that human man, cut off from God, has produced. But, of course, completely outside the bounds of God's revealed knowledge.

I do not say it is condemned by God. When God, as a result of Adam's choice, cut humanity off from Him (except such as He has specially called for a special purpose, including His Church) God does not hold the medical profession guilty of sin -- because, since GOD cut humanity off, the responsibility is God's. And He will see to it -- in the great white throne judgment -- post-millennial.

Meanwhile, God has said, in effect, to Adam applying to the world that sprang from Adam, "Though, since you have REJECTED ME as your God, your Ruler, your Revealer of Truth, and go and devise your religions, your own governments, your own fund of knowledge and means of its dissemination -- your own CIVILIZATION." But God retained the prerogative of calling to His service such as He chose in preparation for the coming KINGDOM OF GOD. He has called His Church to "come out from among them, and be ye separate."

But God has not said to those of us He has called to come out of the world and BE SEPARATE, that we should place our faith in, and rely on, this world's devices. Especially when HE has said, "I am the God that healeth thee" -- Yahveh-Rapha, our HEALING God."

God does not condemn this world's medical profession -- neither does HIS CHURCH. Nor do we command the members not to use such services. Rather, we teach our members "A MORE EXCELLENT WAY" and God does want us to learn to RELY ON HIM.

As you will read in the forthcoming article, for God's people, healing is included -- one of the benefits God has made available to His people, which He tells us not to forget (Ps. 103:2). It is there stated as GOD'S WILL along with eternal salvation to immortal life. If I can't believe the one I can't believe the other.

No, I have always taught that we have a need for doctors -- but I have not taught that drugs and medicines heal -- which emphatically they cannot -- yet I have cited cases like delivery of babies, including instruction on diet and other care etc., during pregnancy. I have used the example of setting a broken arm or leg -- and GOD will cause it to heal.

I have written of similar case histories. One of a small girl whose thumb was torn off all but one piece of skin by which it was hanging loose. I directed the parents to drive us immediately to a doctor, asking him to put the end of the thumb back in place, properly binding and bandaging it up. The doctor wanted to amputate. I insisted, saying "GOD WILL HEAL!" Reluctantly the doctor said, "Oh well, I'll do as you say -- and when it does not heal we can amputate later." But it did heal, because I prayed over the girl and anointed her and called on God's PROMISE to heal -- and He did -- without a scar!

I think one trouble with all this misunderstanding about healing is the fact that so many have never experienced it -- and it seems difficult to put one's trust in a God one can't see, and does not really KNOW by personal experience. I KNOW God heals because I have experienced it many, many times.

This minister writes further: "Perhaps we totally misunderstood the articles you wrote on healing." Yes, perhaps, and perhaps I did not write clearly enough -- though I have been told by many that I do make what I say so plain and clear that even a child may understand. If I am deficient in this I'm sorry -- but I do try.

I definitely remember discussing with my son -- prior to last January's ministerial conference -- the fact that some doctrinal matters had been discussed the preceding year at the ministers' conference, and I said that if he intended bringing up any doctrinal questions, then definitely I was going to remain personally for the entire conference. He assured me no doctrinal questions would be brought up. On that assurance, I left after opening the conference on the opening morning. But of course the very fact I was there for that opening session rendered credence to the false claim that I had approved the "STP" -- when in fact I knew nothing of it. It was just one more of several things done without authority, behind my back, and keeping it from me.

I could get affirmed affidavits from several ministers who had served in top or near-top capacities who were demoted, or shanghaied away from Headquarters and forbidden to contact me in any way on pain of being fired.

One last question brought up by this minister. He said "What about the many of our dead we have buried -- Mrs. Loma Armstrong, your own son Dick, Dr. Rea, Mrs. Hunting, Mrs. Meredith? Does it show that the ministry lacks faith?"

You will find that point fully covered in the coming articles in The GOOD NEWS. God made to Abraham, and repromised to Isaac and Jacob the PROMISES upon which your eternity and mine depend. Jesus came to "confirm the PROMISES made to the fathers." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob all died IN FAITH, not having received the PROMISES. Yet, those promises remain ABSOLUTELY SECURE! I learned that lesson when my father died in 1933. I had faith -- I anointed and prayed for him -- he had faith -- I continued praying over him all night, yet at 9:40 a.m. he died. He, like Abraham, like my wife Loma, like my son Dick and others died IN FAITH not having received the PROMISES -- YET! God says through Paul, "If in this life only we have hope in

Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

When one loses consciousness in death, in the next fraction of a second, in his consciousness, he is ALIVE, in God's Kingdom. I am going to see my father, my wife, my son Dick healed -- and in the next second of their consciousness.

Fellows, we are inclined to be a "NOW" people. The world lives just for NOW. How often have I heard "Pentecostal people" shout to God over one they want to have healed, "Right NOW! Lord, right NOW!" Yet I never saw God jump to the crack of their whip!

Our lives are preparation for GOD'S KINGDOM! We should point our brethren TOWARD GOD'S KINGDOM -- and TOWARD FAITH! The great commission to which we are called is to proclaim the GOOD NEWS of the soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD. That glorious kingdom will appear in less than a second from the time my father, my elder son, my wife-of-my-youth, Mrs. Hunting, and Mrs. Meredith lost consciousness -- so far as they are concerned! God's PROMISE of healing has not gone by default. That PROMISE WAS A PROMISE AND IT REMAINS INVIOATE! There is yet much more to come in the healing articles. Please bear with me.

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Greetings fellow ministers:

Things continue to move along at a rapid pace. On August 31 a board meeting was conducted on the campus at Bricket Wood. For any official board action it is necessary that three members of the board from the United States be present in the meeting. (Les McCullough, Raymond McNair and I were there for this meeting.)

The principle purpose was, of course, to pass a resolution for the sale of the campus. I won't go into detail concerning the pending sale as I feel it would be presumptuous on my part. It would be better if Mr. Brown would write this up for you as events develop -- and it does look like a sale will be finalized soon.

At this time let it suffice to say that it appears the campus will be sold for a relatively good price. If this is God's will -- and we believe it is -- then we trust He will give His continued blessing to the pending transaction.

Mr. McCullough returned to Canada before the weekend following the meeting and, I believe, met with some of the ministers in the Toronto area.

Raymond McNair and I stayed over the weekend so we could speak in church services -- Mr. McNair spoke to the London church and I spoke to the Bricket Wood congregation.

On Sunday, September 3rd, we had a meeting with the ministry attending from every area of Britain and some from the continent. Mr. and Mrs. Bram Debee, recently moving from Montreal-Quebec to