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Dear Inner Family of Co-Workers with Christ:

Can you believe it? -- another year has flashed by; another year of world troubles, overthrow of more governments, increasing violence and crime -- whisking us rapidly into and through the END time of this present evil world. We now have little time left to finish God's Work.

In my last letter (November 18) I wrote about the most important activity on earth -- the WORK -- explaining just what the Work is. And I used that same letter as my "Personal" article in the January Plain Truth.

The WORK is the great commission to which the Living Christ has called us NOW. And that commission is to proclaim Christ's MESSAGE for the first time in 18 1/2 centuries to all the world.

In the first issue of the new Plain Truth (February will be the first issue), my "Personal" article will explain more clearly than you've probably ever understood it before what the MESSAGE really is. That MESSAGE is Christ's Gospel. But those who lived in the first century suppressed it! They prevented the MESSAGE God sent by Jesus Christ from being proclaimed to the world. Instead, for 18 1/2 centuries, the world heard preaching about the MESSENGER, calling that the "gospel." Thus, they suppressed God's MESSAGE and deceived the whole world.

Jesus Christ was crucified for bringing and teaching that MESSAGE. All His original apostles were martyred (with one possible exception) for proclaiming it. What the world has been led to believe is "the gospel" is not the MESSAGE Christ brought from God. People have thus been deceived as to what IS the true Gospel. Christ's Gospel -- His MESSAGE -- was the good news of the coming Kingdom of God. It was NEWS. It was a new ANNOUNCEMENT. It was the message of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD. That is a tremendous subject, but Satan has manipulated men to withhold it from the world.

But Jesus said, "And this gospel OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end [of the world] come" (Matt. 24:14). Until God began proclaiming that MESSAGE of God's Kingdom through me, it had not been proclaimed to the world since the first century. His disciples had asked Jesus for a sign so they would know when the END of this world was coming. The only sign He gave them was that when this Gospel MESSAGE of God's Kingdom was proclaimed in all the world, THEN shall the end come!

It could not be the sign by which we know that we are in the very end of this present world if the true Gospel had been proclaimed all through the centuries!

Through the Apostle Paul, God says of those who SUPPRESSED Christ's MESSAGE: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness SUPPRESS THE TRUTH [the real Gospel!]" (Rom. 1:18, RSV.) Yes, Satan influenced (Rev. 12:9) men in the first century to SUPPRESS the MESSAGE of truth -- and thus all generations since have been DECEIVED!

Jesus called His disciples to the most important mission on earth -- to learn and proclaim His all-important MESSAGE of TRUTH. For 3 1/2 years He taught them. Then He gave them the great commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel [His message]" (Luke 16:15). His disciples became the original apostles. They went forth proclaiming the good NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD. But they too were martyred for proclaiming it.

WHY has God called YOU and me today in this END-time of the present evil world? This is NOT the time God is trying to "save the world." It is the time when, as Jesus said, none can come to Him "except the Father...draw him" (John 6:44). God

is drawing and calling only a very SMALL FEW today for the purpose of helping and standing behind those whom He has chosen to proclaim His MESSAGE to the world for a witness to all nations. The coming of the Kingdom of God is now just around the corner. Its coming -- with the coming of Christ in all the POWER and GLORY of the Mighty God -- must be announced. It IS being announced around the world! That is the most important, most vital mission on earth today!

Today the world is IN GREAT TROUBLE. The troubles are increasing! We are rapidly being hurled into the time of the greatest trouble since the world began -- or ever shall be again -- so GREAT that if God does not step in supernaturally and intervene, no human would be saved alive -- all humanity would be erased from this earth!

Right now a new "GOLD RUSH" is on. It is falling far short of expectations, but the best investment RIGHT NOW is the soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD!

As a young man I was ambitious. The goal I had set ahead was to be a big success in business -- to attain STATUS -- to be considered successful by other successful men -- by presidents and board chairmen of the great corporations, banks, and industries. I was going places, too! But when I was challenged, in a challenge that led to intensive study of the Bible and to my conversion, I read where Jesus said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven .... But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [material needs] shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:19-20,33).

When I read these words 48 years ago, I decided to make the "sacrifice" (as it seemed then I was making), and I gave up seeking to GET money and status and changed my "life-style" to GIVING -- giving of this precious knowledge of the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. And God has given me status and honor in the great capitals of the world, while giving of His message, many times greater than the status I aspired to acquire in the city of Chicago where I lived.

I invested MY LIFE -- MY ALL -- in the KINGDOM OF GOD. That investment already has paid tremendous dividends, in giving the precious knowledge of God's Kingdom to many millions, and in the changed lives in many, many THOUSANDS. First of all, God added the spiritual blessings beyond price. Then, even material blessings. And ETERNAL LIFE, with its "down payment" in the form of God's Holy Spirit now, and the reality to come later!

The knowledge of God's Kingdom and all it includes is AWESOME knowledge -- incredible knowledge -- priceless knowledge; knowledge that money can't buy. THANK YOU for helping me GIVE it. People can't obtain it anywhere else. No one else, except this Work of God, so far as I know, proclaims it.

Science has never discovered it. RELIGION has never revealed it. Higher education cannot teach it.

It's like the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE Jesus spoke of in the parable. It's worth selling everything you have to obtain, IF that would buy it.

This year, 1975, is due to be the BUSIEST of my life. I am planning from five to seven big campaigns in big capitals this year. We hope for upwards of 50,000 in Bangkok. Government heads are endorsing and cooperating in it. The same in Cairo, in Jordan, in Jerusalem and/or Tel Aviv.

I am often asked what happened to Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia. I have been unable, so far, to find out. Ambassador Mekasha was called back to Addis Ababa and went. At last report, his wife in New Delhi had not heard.

Let me make one important thing clear at this point. I do not enter into politics in any way. God does give me almost unbelievable favor in the eyes of heads of state all over the world. But I take no sides with them in politics. They look upon me as an educator, as an editor, and as the spiritual leader of the Worldwide Church of God. They look upon me as an ambassador without portfolio for WORLD PEACE -- as a "builder of iron bridges for PEACE between nations" -- yet representing none but the Kingdom of God. They look upon me as one revealing the WAY to world PEACE -- one revealing the most vital knowledge science has failed to discover -- knowledge no religion has ever given them -- knowledge not taught by higher education, except at Ambassador College. They do not think of me as coming with any religion.

As it is, when Prime Minister General Kittikachorn of Thailand was driven out and his government overthrown, even though I knew him well and I had been given the same unusual favor in his eyes, I already knew the next prime minister, and he had attended my "testimonial dinner" -- which means that he heard the message of the Kingdom of God -- the true Gospel. And I remained in the very top favor of the king. And I have already had two or three meetings with the new prime minister.

God gave me great favor in the eyes of Prime Minister Eisaku Sato of Japan. I visited him three times as prime minister and several times at his home and elsewhere since. But also, I knew the next prime minister, Tanaka, and had exceptional favor in his eyes before he came to power, visited him twice while prime minister, and now that he has resigned, I was the very first non-Japanese to be warmly received by the new Prime Minister Miki. I take no part in their politics. I go to them as the ambassador from God. When one government is overthrown, God gives me favor with the next one. I am merely there with Christ's Message.

Isn't it significant that I held a testimonial dinner in Cairo with one hundred of the VERY TOP people present, speaking to them as the ambassador for WORLD PEACE, and a week later, had scheduled the same kind of testimonial dinner in Tel Aviv, where important officials speak highly of me? They knew that I had spoken the week before in Cairo. The officials high in the government of Egypt know how I am always so well received in Israel. The Israeli officials know that King Hussein welcomes me warmly, and King Hussein knows that I am welcomed in Israel. They all know how I have been honored and decorated in Japan, etc., etc., etc.

Through our friends in Israel, the world's greatest pianist, Maestro Artur Rubinstein, is giving a very important recital in our new auditorium -- the House for God -- on Wednesday night, January 15. He is donating his services. He will be 88 years old this month, and is still the greatest pianist in the world! We had dinner together in New York a week ago. He is still strong and full of vigor. So perhaps I have another several good energetic vigorous years left to get God's Work finished.

This is the very Work of God. He is guiding it, blessing it, opening doors for it. The living Christ is the HEAD of it. He is using you and me as His Co-Workers in it!

When you stand loyally behind me and this Work of God with your earnest and prevailing PRAYERS, your tithes and generous offerings, you are LAYING UP TREASURES IN HEAVEN. And the NEED has never been greater. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong