

RADIO CHURCH OF GOD  
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*Publishing*  
*The PLAIN TRUTH*  
*a Magazine of UNDERSTANDING*

October 16, 1961 Dear Brethren of God's Church:

GREETINGS, in the name of Jesus Christ! I have to tell you, now, about our most serious problem in God's work. I made some mention of this -- or part of it -- at the Feast of Tabernacles, both at Squaw Valley and at Gladewater. It is SERIOUS and it is URGENT, and so I hope you will, as a begotten child of God, take this to heart, and pray very earnestly about it.

I was ordained and put into the ministry in early June, 1931. But this Philadelphia era of the Church of God did not begin until July, 1933. At that time I had no car. There was no radio broadcast--no Plain Truth magazine. A one-room country school house was opened up for meetings -- no rent to be paid. I walked over country roads -- or drove a car loaned to me part of the time -- in a rural district where houses were a quarter to a half mile apart, inviting people to attend meetings. Average attendance was about 36. It resulted in the beginning of the present Church of God at Eugene, starting that fall with 19 members. THAT WAS AS BIG AS THE WORK COULD GROW, THROUGH MY OWN EFFORTS WITHOUT HELP.

You already know most of this history. But it is IMPORTANT that we all understand one ALL-IMPORTANT point right here! Jesus Christ said "I will build my Church." He did not build it to be a social club. He built it primarily for two tremendous purposes: 1) as HIS BODY -- that is, His instrument -- empowered by His Holy Spirit, to carry on GOD'S WORK; and, 2) for the development in spiritual character of all its members -- their TRAINING to become kings and priests in His Kingdom when it rules the world. And a large part of the individual spiritual development of each of us is received through our part in GOD'S WORK. Primarily, this work consists of PROCLAIMING and PUBLISHING Christ's GOSPEL in all the world as a witness to all nations. It also includes FEEDING the members on the spiritual food -- conducting the various local churches.

Now you realize, of course, that I, alone, cannot do all this work. It is not the work of Herbert W. Armstrong -- it is the WORK OF GOD, and God uses HIS CHURCH to do it. I had no help in that first school-house campaign. But when radio opened, even at the unbelievably low cost of \$2.50 per week, I could not do this alone, I didn't have the \$2.50. Several members of God's Church pledged \$1.25 per week. I started on FAITH, trusting God to send in the other \$1.25 per week. HE DID! But He sent it through CO-WORKERS who began to join with me in God's work. SMALL AS THIS WORK BEGAN, its very first expansion -- going on the air -- was made possible by the help of others joining me in the effort. It was THEIR PART which made possible the broadcast.

At first a few of the ministers of the Sardis era of the Church with whom I had co-operated worked with me. But none of them ever was really of THIS "PHILADELPHIA" CHURCH, or the great work God is doing through us. So after a few years I was the only minister in this work -- in this CHURCH OF GOD. God was raising up a NEW ERA OF HIS CHURCH, for a SPECIAL MISSION (Mat. 24:14). God needed OTHER MINISTERS.

God knew He was going to need many trained and dedicated men -- office managers, department managers -- people trained for important positions in London, in Sydney and Melbourne, Australia, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in Vancouver, B.C., Canada, in Gladewater, Texas, and pastors for many Churches to be raised up. I didn't foresee all this, but God did, and used me as His instrument in founding His first college, here at Pasadena, California. The college grew. The work grew. The CHURCH grew. Other churches were raised up, and, with recent passing years, more and more every year. TODAY THIS HAS BECOME A GREAT WORLD-WIDE WORK.

Now we have two colleges, and, in one or two years there probably will be three.

GOD'S WORK CANNOT STOP GROWING! For 27 1/2 years it has continued to grow 30% a year. Now RIGHT HERE is our TOUGHEST PROBLEM!

Do you realize that most churches don't grow at all -- or they grow at a very slow rate, compared to our 30% a year? Do you realize that most business corporations grow very slowly -- or not at all? DO YOU KNOW WHY?

One reason is that when a business man or a corporation starts an expansion program, they soon learn that expansion demands the advance investment of MONEY, and trying to finance this expansion often causes a firm to go bankrupt. Commercial business corporations finance GROWTH and expansion programs by borrowings. But both the Church and the two colleges are NON-PROFIT corporations. And neither banks, nor loan companies, nor insurance companies, nor private investors, will loan money to non-profit corporations. Do you know why? They are afraid that IF they had to foreclose on the mortgage, or whatever is given as security, on a church, a college, or a hospital, there would be a great howl of public protest. The bank or association loaning the money would suffer great loss of public prestige and good will.

SO WE CANNOT FINANCE NECESSARY EXPANSION BY NEGOTIATING LARGE LOANS. And, with an operation that MUST OPERATE ON MONEY, we cannot MEET A 30% INCREASE IN OPERATIONAL EXPENSE EVERY YEAR out of a 30% increase of income, and at the same time accumulate large special funds for the purchase of additional properties and the construction of additional buildings.

Now look at this PROBLEM. I have to face it! But I can't solve it WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

We have plans all drawn for converting old cow barns into a new student dormitory, and the former electric light plant into a new much larger dining hall, at our college in England. UNLESS WE CAN NOW PROCEED IMMEDIATELY with this alteration and building project -- UNLESS IT IS COMPLETED BEFORE OCTOBER NEXT YEAR, we cannot accept any more students at the college in England -- IT MUST STOP GROWING. If this work stops growing, it cannot be the WORK OF GOD -- and it will die.

Here on the Pasadena campus, some 15 to 25 students are required to stand up in our outgrown Assembly Hall, squeezed in behind the last row of chairs, because the room is too small for any more chairs.

Do you realize how we have to feed our students? We have never been able to have a Dining Hall. We have had to use the first floor of Mayfair, one of our girls' student residences. Much of that first floor is direly needed as bed-rooms for housing girls, and the remainder is needed for study and lounging rooms. But we have to use the entire ground floor for kitchen and dining room space -- and in addition, a sun-porch, the hall-ways -- actually putting tables in the hallways -- in the basement, and even in the boiler room -- and even then we can't seat them all, and some have to go outdoors to eat!

Did you ever notice that, while we have a BEAUTIFUL college and campus, we have built no buildings, but use only former HOMES? Now we need real COLLEGE BUILDINGS.

We have outgrown our class rooms -- do not have enough this year. In other ways we are outgrowing all our present facilities.

This college WILL STOP GROWING, unless we can proceed with this necessary plan: By building our planned new dining hall, it will serve several of these purposes, temporarily. In addition to its intended function as our permanent dining hall, the four special dining rooms designed for our Ambassador Clubs, Women's Clubs, and Foreign Language Clubs, can also serve as class rooms until more can be built. By removing the dining tables, and arranging folding chairs, it can double up as our assembly auditorium, until the planned permanent one can be built, two or three years later. Also it will serve as a center for social functions, whereas the students now have to rent halls in other parts of the city for such functions.

There is one more urgent need I feel cannot be longer neglected. I feel that I must have an office in which to do my work. For the past several years I have used a small room on the third floor of the Library as a place to do my work -- but it is not really an office. I do not even have a desk -- there is not room enough for one, so I do my work on a lady's dressing table. Now I did have an office -- but there was no privacy -- everybody knew where I was -- I was constantly interrupted, and could not get my work done. So I moved up to this smaller room in order to get enough seclusion to write and get my work done, and my former office is now used by Garner Ted Armstrong. All of our other executives and department managers have offices, and office desks, and secretaries and stenographers. I have none, for there is no place to put a secretary.

More than ten years ago, our architect made preliminary plans for an executive office for me. But it was part of a new wing on our administration building and we couldn't build it then, because funds were not available. They have never been available since. Then about two and a half years ago, the architect completed plans for a much-needed new wing on Ambassador Hall to provide additional class rooms. We have published pictures of this. It included an office for me. But we did not have funds on hand sufficient to build such an addition -- and have not had since. So that office never materialized.

Next, with the need of an office for myself growing desperate a year and a half ago, the architect completed plans for a remodeling job that would expand my present work-room and give me an office -- and provide a suitable one also for Garner Ted Armstrong, adjoining mine, with a mutually-shared reception room and space for a secretary or two we could share between us. This would put us both just a few steps from the radio studio -- which is rather important. The plans were approved by the city building commissioner's office, and building permit was taken out. But then, we simply did not have the funds on hand for this remodeling job. I wrote all our members, and urged you to keep up, or increase your special offerings for the property and building fund. But, instead, these offerings slacked off. SO WE NEVER STARTED THIS ALTERATION JOB -- and I still do not have an office.

Now, dear Brethren, LISTEN! We simply cannot delay some of this building program longer! This IS the Church of God -- this IS the very WORK OF GOD, being done by HIS CHURCH! God's work CANNOT stop growing. I am unwilling to simply grab it by the neck, and STRANGLE IT TO DEATH -- which I would be doing if I allowed it to STOP growing, because we can't somehow induce YOU BRETHREN to do anywhere near as much for the building and property fund as you did do three years ago.

There IS a way we can provide for this NECESSARY BUILDING. We can't finance it by making a big loan, payable in somewhere between 8 and 20 years. But there is a way we CAN finance it. Over three years ago we were paying out \$18,000 per month to pay for the new 7,000-seat Tabernacle near Gladewater, Texas. You Brethren DID SEND THAT IN THEN, as special offerings, over and above regular offerings for the Gospel, and tithes. THERE WERE LESS THAN HALF AS MANY OF YOU, THEN!

Today there are MORE than TWICE AS MANY OF US. Today I KNOW WE CAN RISE TO MEET THIS IMPERATIVE NEED! If we don't, it is not because God has not made us able -- IT WILL BE ONLY BECAUSE OUR HEARTS ARE NO LONGER IN HIS WORK!

As God's minister, whom He uses in the over-all direction of His work, I am not going to wait around any longer for lukewarm, or half-hearted, or rebellious "brethren" -- and if your hearts are NOT in God's Work, ARE you really brethren? ARE you going to be in God's Kingdom -- OR IN THE LAKE OF FIRE? As God's Apostle, I now put it squarely to you! WE CANNOT WAIT LONGER!

So, I tell you, NOW, that I HAVE GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT! THIS ENTIRE WORK OF GOD IS GOING TO SINK OR SWIM ON IT! I have ordered work to begin IMMEDIATELY on the office for myself and the Vice President. I have given orders for work to start, FORTHWITH, immediately, on THE NEW DINING HALL for the Pasadena campus. I have given order for the work to proceed forthwith, on the dormitory and dining hall in England. I am not willing to see this work DIE.

Brethren, I have written you -- I have begged you -- I have pleaded -- I have quoted the Scriptures of how God's people of old responded MORE than asked -- BUT YOU HAVE NOT RESPONDED. Right now, with nearly TWO AND A HALF TIMES more members, you are sending in only an average of \$12,500 per month -- about two-thirds as much as less than half of you sent in three years ago.

By creating this SPECIAL fund for property and building -- now of \$35,000 per month -- over and ABOVE, and apart from regular offerings for the work of the Gospel, and your honest FIRST TITHES -- we can proceed and keep this work from dying. THIS IS THE WORK OF GOD, Brethren! But God uses us as His instruments. You GIVE a little more, and GOD WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH MORE! IF you are HIS BEGOTTEN CHILD, you will respond.

Now, once again, I call on YOU for a totally RENEWED statement of intention. When I asked you for a conditioned PLEDGE, YOU SIMPLY DID NOT RESPOND! And, Brethren, let me tell you, THIS HAS BEEN THE MOST DISCOURAGING EXPERIENCE I HAVE HAD TO SUFFER IN YEARS! I know that God's people would respond, many did -- but too many did not!

I made it mighty plain that, if for some unforeseen cause your income dropped, or you found yourself, later, UNABLE to

continue to send in regularly whatever you pledged, that you are automatically released -- the pledge would not be binding, if you become UNABLE to continue it.

I did not ask for a VOW -- I have said to you that God does not require us to vow -- ever, and He teaches us that it is not wise to vow -- for if we do, God will hold us to it, regardless of circumstances. But that is not what I asked. I asked for a conditioned pledge -- a statement of INTENTION, as long as you are able. That is something altogether different from a vow!

The program I have now authorized is going to have to run two or three years. But I will ask you to send in a STATEMENT OF INTENTION, or a Conditioned Pledge, to be binding as long as you are able, for the coming year.

Those of you who are already sending in these extra SPECIAL offerings regularly, are also asked to send in once again such a statement. Perhaps you can increase it, now. Those who sent in such a pledge before, yes, YOU are to send in a new one, now, which will automatically cancel and replace the former one. AND THOUSANDS OF YOU WHO NEVER SENT ONE IN, I call on you, now, BY ALL THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME BY JESUS CHRIST, IN HIS NAME, TO SEND ONE IN FOR THE LARGEST AMOUNT YOU CAN PLAN TO SEND, according to your ability.

During the war, people dug down deep and GAVE TILL IT HURT, to have a part in WARFARE OF THIS WORLD -- in killing! People are PATRIOTIC toward their NATION -- but are YOU toward your GOD? Are you willing to give extra special, even till it hurts, toward SAVING LIVES for all eternity? Are you less loyal to GOD than carnal unconverted people to their HUMAN government?

Do you realize that this very addition to the building and property fund might influence one of your own unconverted loved ones getting into God's Kingdom -- being saved for eternity? Listen! Even though this is not the time God is calling everyone -- nevertheless, if you PRAY earnestly enough for your unconverted loved ones, with FAITH, God may call one or more of them NOW -- convict them by His Spirit. And it could well be that, through the physical facilities made possible by our property expansion program, and the continued GROWTH of the colleges turning out additional ministers and workers in this globe-encircling work, that the right spiritual help would be available for them at the right time. And if we have to STOP the growth of the work, such needed help might NOT be available.

IN ANY EVENT, additional PHYSICAL facilities for TRAINING men and women for spiritual service DOES MEAN more precious lives converted and finally born into God's Kingdom for eternity! THIS NEED MUST BE MET -- N O W!

NO PEOPLE ON EARTH have been blessed in material prosperity like we in America. Our Brethren in England give MUCH MORE, in proportion to income, than you Brethren here. They don't get to enjoy all the luxuries you do, but they do give till it hurts.

Now I am FORCED TO ask every member to give this conditioned pledge for whatever you are able. PRAY EARNESTLY over this, see how you can re-arrange your own budget -- readjust it so you can spare something extra for this property and building fund. PRAY earnestly that God will AWAKE AND AROUSE HIS CHURCH, that all other members, too, will respond generously. We HAVE to do this, or see the work die -- and we are NOT going to let such a powerful work of God die. THANK YOU, and GOD BLESS YOU! This time, I know we are going to GO OVER THE TOP!

With much LOVE, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

P.S. EVERY MEMBER is expected to fill in and mail the enclosed coupon IMMEDIATELY!