

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

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President and Pastor

Dacca, Bangladesh
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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers in Christ:

I, with the small entourage accompanying me, am now in the midst of a five-week tour in the Far East. I am writing from Dacca, capital of Bangladesh. Bangladesh borders India on three sides. It is a country about the size of Wisconsin in area, but with approximately 100 million population--almost half of that of the United States. It is one of the poorest countries on earth. Less than 29 percent can read or write and many of this number can only barely be called literate.

You people in America, Western Europe and Australasia cannot conceive of the condition in which uncounted millions of human masses live in parts of the world such as we are visiting. We came from Nepal, where I had another meeting with King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya in the palace at Kathmandu, Nepal's capital. Nepal is in the Himalaya mountains with Mt. Everest and other peaks almost the same fantastic height. There also, 80 percent of the people are totally illiterate. Most of them have no idea of sanitation. One of our pilots, in a car driven out of the city in a more rural area, saw children on the ground picking lice out of one another's hair.

You people in supposedly civilized countries have no conception of the poverty and ignorance of masses of human beings in this part of the world, or even in some areas in Africa and South America. Yet in our more "advanced" and supposedly civilized countries, we are plagued with crime, violence, illicit sex, drugs, excess alcohol, broken homes, and hospitals filled to overflowing, and jails and prisons likewise. The evils are appalling in a Western world of awesome progress and advancement. We certainly should pray, as Jesus said, "Thy Kingdom come." Only the coming of Christ in supreme power and authority can save humanity.

I visited this country about 11 years ago, soon after the end of the Pakistan war, when Bangladesh became a new country. I thought then that it was the most impoverished nation in the world. But great strides have been made since. This is due to two factors. The United States, Japan and other developed countries have poured many millions of dollars into this country to help get it started on development. This has resulted in many new modern buildings. The other cause we saw this afternoon. A one-hour drive to one of the villages to inspect one of the village elementary schools. I was driven in a government Mercedes, since I am here as a guest of the government. On the road to the village we had a flat tire. On the return we lost the muffler because of knotty tree roots protruding through the rough unpaved road. The schoolhouse was a dilapidated sort of shed built of old corrugated iron or tin, half rusted. One class of about 60 children were being taught in a shady spot outside this makeshift building. I visited a third grade mathematics class in a small room of 35 children. At least the country is beginning to teach many of the little children, although the Minister of Education told us many drop out because their parents can't see any need for education.

On this present tour we have visited Tokyo, where I met several cabinet members and Congressmen who call themselves my "Japanese sons." One senator in the Diet flew here with us.

In China I and my entourage were guests of the government that rules over nearly one fourth of all humanity. Our visit was on national TV and on front-page newspapers with nationwide circulation of some 200 million. It was even on Hong Kong television news. I was received in both Beijing and also in Shanghai with all the honors of the head of a nation. We were housed in both major cities in government VIP guest houses. In fact, I was told I slept in the same bed in Shanghai as President Reagan.

Deng Xiaoping admitted to me that China has made some serious mistakes which he is trying to correct. It was heartening to hear so powerful a man admit mistakes and work to correct them.

More than ever before I see the need to pray earnestly, "THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

I have been given opportunity to speak some very straight truths in China and Nepal, and I may have a similar opportunity at the banquet tomorrow night.

Brethren, this world is being destroyed for lack of knowledge of and from GOD, as we read in Hosea 4:6. Through my personal visits, and the PLAIN TRUTH magazine, on TV and radio and through other literature, we are proclaiming that knowledge in POWER and AUTHORITY. Some listen. It is God's last witness against those who do not. BUT WE MUST DRIVE RIGHT ON UNTIL CHRIST COMES!

More than ever I need your earnest prayers. God's great Work needs your generous support. And YOU need the great matchless blessing that comes from having YOUR PART in such a wonderful Work.

We go from here to Sri Lanka, then another visit to the King and Queen of Thailand, then Tokyo once again, then home. All my love to you all.

All love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

P.S. Traditionally the income for God's work has fallen off sharply in the month of December. It seems that many co-workers are spending so much money on Christmas gifts, that they never think of a gift for God on the day the world regards as Christ's birthday. One would think the biggest gift of all would go for Christ and his work at this season. I know that our brethren and co-workers will do their best to make up for this deficiency during December.

PPS: 11/19/84: Word has just come by telex and telephone of the death of my brother, Dwight Leslie Armstrong. He composed the music for all but 12 of the hymns in the hymnal used in all the local churches of the Worldwide Church of God. He died on Saturday morning, November 17, of cancer. A full account of his life and work will appear in The WORLDWIDE NEWS.