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Aloft out of Bangor
June 8, 1979

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

I'm in flight, just out of Bangor, Maine, where we cleared immigration and customs. We had a very successful trip to Morocco and Tunis in northwestern Africa. I had never been to either Morocco or Tunisia before. At Tunis, I not only met many V.I.P.s, including ambassadors from other countries, but many high in the government.

We met and picked up some of my "Japanese sons" -- members of the Japanese Diet -- at Paris, had a visit with the Prime Minister at Rabat, Morocco, and in Tunis. There was a large banquet in my honor at Tunis, at a resort hotel on the Mediterranean shore. Congressman Yamashita, leader of the Japanese party and the Japanese Ambassador, spoke briefly, with interpreters, and I gave them the GOOD NEWS of the coming Kingdom of God, as the world's ONLY -- and SURE -- HOPE!

Brethren, a year ago God's Church was in very bad shape. Until my heart failure in August 1977, I was away from Pasadena an average of 300 of the 365 days in the year, and my son assumed authority beyond that delegated to him. Under him, God's Church, the Work, and the College, had been turned around until actually it was scarcely GOD's Church any more. Everything was run as a strictly secular and worldly organization. I was shut off. Any authority above Garner Ted was shut off. Even leading ministers were personally threatened that if they informed me of the state of things, and the way the Church was drifting, they would be fired. When my son shut me off, he shut off all authority above him -- and that means the living HEAD of the Church, Jesus Christ, and God the Father, were simply left out of all consideration.

Let me give you one example. A certain minister, in charge of a church of around 250 or 300 members, was working to take his church to himself, starting a new and different church.

This minister, quoting no Scripture, but speaking directly contrary to the Scriptures, said, "If you don't want to tithe, you don't have to!" He was RIGHT -- you don't have to -- but you will be stealing from God, and will be PUNISHED IN A LAKE OF FIRE, instead of making it into God's Kingdom!

Tithing was not preached in general. Healing was discouraged -- and WHY? Because some ministers themselves were not converted, did not have God's Holy Spirit, knew they were not fit to pray for the sick, and even if they did, God wouldn't hear their prayers! Ministers -- too many of them -- were neglecting prayer in their own lives!

During the past year, what has happened?

I refused, dear Brethren, to be like Eli. Eli had two sons. Listen to what happened when a man of God allowed his sons to do evil IN OFFICE:

"Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did, unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" (I Sam. 2:22). "And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house ... because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (I Sam. 3:11-13).

When I knew of my son's sins, I sent him away -- privately put him OUT OF THE CHURCH. I told him he had to leave Pasadena, and go to a place away, and not attend church services. That was in the fall of 1971. I hoped that he would repent, so I did not tell the Church membership I had put him out of the Church. He went to El Paso, Texas. A few days before the Feast of Tabernacles, he called me by telephone, professing complete repentance and saying he just could not bear to miss the Feast. Already he and I had started appearing at every Feastsite. He sounded sincere. I told him to come on back. He shed tears on arriving back home, put his arms around both me and his wife. But I later had to learn that temporary remorse, with tears, is not necessarily repentance.

I received a telephone message from Jekyll Island of his gross misbehavior at a restaurant there, in the evening.

I received a telephone message from Squaw Valley of his misconduct at a Lake Tahoe (Nevada) gambling casino. I had an all night plane ride, and cut him off at Penticton, Canada, disfellowshipping him from the Church again. This time he went to Colorado. From there he wrote me another pleading, tear-jerking letter, professing that his repentance, this time, was real. I called him back, and received him with open arms.

But in early February 1972, I had to disfellowship him again -- this time for an offense known to all evangelist -- rank ministers at Pasadena. Together, some eight or ten evangelists and I disfellowshipped him again, this time publicly. Again he went to Colorado. This time it hit the newspapers. I refused to divulge what he had done -- or where he went. Time magazine came out with a headline, "Garner Ted, Where Are You?" This time I worked with him by a series of letters, desperately trying to bring him to repentance so I could bring him back on the job.

And of all those leaders at Pasadena, only ONE stood with me, helping me phrase the letters to reach through to Ted's heart and work a real repentance so I could bring him back. Who do you suppose that one friend of Ted's, helping me, was? Not one of the evangelist -- rank ministers, some of whom are themselves disfellowshipped now, and "buddying up" with Ted, hoping he will attract enough money to pay them a salary. No, it was none of them. It was the man Ted despises the most -- Stanley Rader! Mr. Rader then was Ted's only friend!

The rebellion of 1974, when several ministers left the Church, was caused by disagreement in allowing Ted to come back.

But in June of 1972, I felt Ted really had truly repented. Mr. Rader, Albert Portune (then executive vice-president in Ted's place), David Antion, Ron Dart, and I, flew over to Colorado to see Ted. I took these other men because I did not want to trust my own judgment on Ted's professed repentance again. Ted put on a good show for us -- all were convinced he had repented. We asked him to come back on the job.

But now, Ted has been out permanently more than a year, devoting all his time and energies trying to DESTROY the Church of the living God!

Never again will I bring him back! A father naturally loves his son, but too often sons do not love their fathers. I do love Ted, but I know he despises and hates me with all the hate Satan will give him. He is not trying to proclaim the Gospel Message Jesus preached to the world, he is only trying to cause DOUBTS in the true sheep of God, and turn the tithe money to him.

Misery, they say, loves company. Or maybe it is better said that those who are WRONG like the company of others who are wrong.

The one man I did rely on and felt was completely loyal and sincere, C. Wayne Cole, it turned out, was not. He was "IN" on this mass assault against God's Work, but cleverly kept his name out. He, with David Antion, tried vehemently, with raised voices, on the phone, to get me to dump Stanley Rader, and let their prosecuting attorney, who CAUSED THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL TO BRING THIS SUIT, name our defense lawyer. There were a few times when I wanted to talk with Mr. Cole IN PRIVATE on the telephone. I asked him to call me back on a private phone that could not be tapped or bugged. And Mr. Cole showed the very depth of dishonor by tape-recording these private confidential talks, and now is actually using them against me! GOD showed me the TRUTH about C. Wayne Cole!

All those now working against God's Church are trying to destroy it, and, like vultures of the sky, hoping Christ's chosen apostle will die very soon, are waiting to swoop down and profit themselves on the remains.

But this is the WORK OF THE LIVING GOD! They seem to FORGET that God is in it.

I am reminded of verse 6 in Zechariah 13: "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

But this IS the very Work of the living GOD! Those who dare to fight GOD'S WORK are going to pay a fearful price!

The past year has seen this Work TURNED AROUND again. The job of setting it all back on GOD'S TRACK is not yet completed -- but tremendous strides have been accomplished in the past year -- and the living Christ is moving swiftly to set back on the track the few remaining derailed pieces!

GOD IS STILL ON HIS THRONE! Jesus is there with Him, leading and running this Work from there.

Christ is our JUDGE! And He LOOKS ON THE HEART -- the real ATTITUDE!

I feel I should correct one point my son has tried to use to defame his father (instead of obeying God's command to honor one's father).

Go back for a moment to a year ago last April. I had recovered sufficiently from total heart failure to take charge of God's Work again. I had come to see how both Christ and God the Father were being ignored in the Work -- the whole Church derailed on the wrong track. I knew the living Head of this Church, Jesus Christ, had brought me back from death to be His servant in setting His Work -- including Church and College -- back on GOD's track! My son and a very few others (now put out of the Church) had produced and given to all ministers without my knowledge a sort of Church Doctrinal Bible -- CHANGING AND WATERING DOWN THE WORD OF GOD! It was called the "Systematic Theology Project," mostly written by Garner Ted's assistant, Robert Kuhn. It was distributed to the ministers at the Ministerial Conference in January 1978.

I was really not physically strong enough to attend the entire Ministerial Conference. I knew that the year before, in my absence -- behind my back -- my son had gone into a number of doctrines, watering them down. I asked him in December, prior to the Conference, if he intended again bringing up doctrinal matters in the Conference. He assured me he didn't -- A DIRECT LIE! But unknown to me the doctrinal CHANGES were brought up and discussed - - and this printed doctrinal project given to them.

For example, the "STP," as they called it, CHANGED God's law of TITHING, by deceiving God's people, saying tithing is not commanded -- not a law -- and calling it "giving" -- IF YOU WANT TO! Also, because some ministers (now, I believe all put out of the Church) were neglecting prayer in their own lives (as I'm sure Ted also was), and knew their prayers would not be heard by God, they were terribly embarrassed if asked to pray for and anoint the sick. These ministers had been clamoring for a CHANGE in Church teaching, throwing healing OUT of the Church. The "STP" obliged them. Other such changes were made, CHANGING God's teaching in His Word.

So, in April last year, when I felt I had gained sufficient physical strength to take charge of the Work again, I knew THE WHOLE WORK -- both Church and College -- had to be TURNED AROUND, put back on God's TRACK! I knew this could not be done with Garner Ted sitting in his headquarters' office, professing AUTHORITY, and countering everything Jesus Christ was having to do through His servant. So I asked Ted to take a leave of absence for at least the rest of the year, 1978, leaving Pasadena -- so I could do the job Jesus showed me clearly He intended doing through me. But Ted contacted me three ways -- by personal visit and angry threatening words, by defiant rebellious letters, and by telephone. Because of his attitude I had my telephone number in Tucson changed -- I wanted to avoid more of the bitter, strong contention if I could.

But Ted did not obey my instruction to go on a leave of absence. Of course, that would have been on full salary. Finally I told him if he again went to the newspapers trying to destroy God's Work by going to the world, I would have NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO DISFELLOWSHIP HIM FROM THE CHURCH once again -- this time permanently! The very next Monday morning there was a big tirade against me and God's Church from Ted in the Los Angeles Times.

Thereupon I DISFELLOWSHIPED HIM, AND, ACCORDING TO ROMANS 16:17-18, MARKED HIM, and put him permanently out of God's Church.

I did NOT WANT TO HAVE TO PUT HIM OUT! BUT I WAS NOT WILLING TO FALL UNDER GOD'S CONDEMNATION LIKE THE ANCIENT PROPHET ELI! If God calls a man, as he prepared me and called me, and built His Church of this Philadelphia era through me, and his son, in an official position -- as were Eli's sons -- is following SATAN instead of God, God demands His servant to correct his son if possible (I think this letter shows you the great length to which I have gone to try to correct and SAVE him), and if impossible, to remove him from all positions of authority.

That, very regretfully, I have had to do.

I did not want to have to put him out. I think the FACTS in this letter make that clear to you Brethren. But he is not only disobedient to me, he is disobedient to Jesus Christ and to God, and he is SERVING SATAN!

After I put him out, he wrote me one real nice friendly and loving letter, begging for financial help. I thought it over --

prayed for guidance. He had, from 1953, for probably more than ten years, served God's Work well, although by 1965 or 1966 it was regretfully necessary for me to correct him for vile conduct unbecoming a minister. I decided, as I had on two or three similar cases, and as he himself had done at least once in retiring an employee, that for the present, till he could get on his feet financially, to give him, in view of those GOOD years, one third of his salary, plus a home as good as he had in Pasadena, plus full use of a house on Lake Tahoe. I told Mr. Rader my decision. He agreed to take the job of writing this offer to Ted off my hands -- but the whole offer was mine.

I said above, GOD LOOKS ON THE HEART. God well knows -- and I'm sure Ted knows -- the idea of "hush money" never entered my mind. Yet he immediately ACCUSED me of offering a bribe, or "hush money." As God is my judge, I never thought of that as "hush money," or anything but a loving father's offer to help a wayward son when he was down.

When my son called my sincere offer "hush money" he was deliberately using a term that implies WE were the sinners -- not him. We have nothing to hide -- we are the loyal servants of Jesus Christ, being used of Him doing His Work. There is nothing in THIS WORK OF THE LIVING GOD TO HIDE -- BUT RATHER TO OPENLY DECLARE TO THE WHOLE WORLD! It is Garner Ted who has sins to HIDE -- and which Christ, in His mercy, has led His apostle to COVER in LOVE -- because as God says, "LOVE COVERS" -- and in James 5:20 it shall "hide a multitude of sins." This I have tried to do for a rebellious son.

No matter what is in my heart, my son will misjudge it, and if possible use it to try to DESTROY his father and God's Work, while he strives to build a work of his own by taking members from God's Church!

I dislike more than I can tell you to have to write things like this. But my son prompted and engineered this massive assault on God's Work through the California Attorney General's office, though he managed craftily to keep his name out and let other stooges take the blame.

I would gladly welcome Ted back into my arms if he would REALLY REPENT. Many ask, "Did Garner Ted ever receive God's Holy Spirit -- God's salvation -- or will he, hopefully, have a chance at salvation in the Great White Throne Judgment?" I can't answer that question -- I am not his judge. But I certainly did feel, back in 1953 and for some years, that he did have God's Holy Spirit. But I SEE ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE OF IT NOW!

God says, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4-6).

Ted has sinned. YOU have sinned. I have sinned. All but Jesus Christ have sinned. But as long as my son has not committed the UNPARDONABLE SIN, all his sins, just like all of yours and of mine, CAN BE FORGIVEN -- if he will ever be willing to repent. The Scripture quoted above does not say it is impossible for God to forgive. It says it is impossible for those who really have been given the supreme gift of God's Holy Spirit to BE WILLING TO REPENT. The blood of Jesus Christ was so precious it paid for ALL OF OUR SINS! So please pray for Garner Ted's WILLINGNESS to REPENT! God stands willing to FORGIVE, as He has forgiven you and me.

THANK YOU, DEAR BRETHREN, FOR YOUR PRECIOUS LOYALTY -- FOR THE WONDERFUL MANNER IN WHICH YOU HAVE STOOD BEHIND ME AND GOD'S WORK IN THIS TIME OF TRIAL AND DISTRESS! THANK YOU FOR KEEPING YOUR TITHES AND GENEROUS OFFERINGS COMING. It is necessary to continue sending them to me in Tucson, Arizona. We have moved the entire staff that opened and counted the mail to Tucson. God be with you.

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong