

The GOOD NEWS Letter

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SEVENTEEN NEW MEMBERS GIVEN RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP AT FEAST OF TABERNACLES

By Herbert W. Armstrong

called, not of men nor by man, but by the will of God to be a minister of Jesus Christ: to the Churches of God, and the brethren scattered abroad, GREETINGS!

The 1948 Festival of Tabernacles was the most profitable, most enjoyable, we have been privileged to hold in these latter days since the precious light revealing the Festivals of the Eternal has once again shone forth.

The Festival, held for the fourth consecutive year at beautiful Belknap Springs in the lofty Cascades beside the swiftly flowing McKenzie, moved progressively to a grand spiritual climax such as none of us ever had experienced in any meetings anywhere.

Men could not have planned it that way. The Spirit of God was there in real power, dispelling every contrary spirit, welding brethren together in the Spirit of love and peace and harmony, working a spiritual revival in every heart, guiding the program by the power of God to the wonderful climax of the final afternoon on the last Great Day of the Festival when seventeen, mostly newly converted and baptised, and added to the Church by the Spirit of God, were given the right hand of fellowship.

It was an experience of a life time. Faces shone with a glory only the Holy Spirit could produce. Every eye there was wet with tears of joy, and, as one expressed it, it seemed as if a halo was shining over the happy arc extending, and receiving, the right hand of fellowship.

The only regret was the absence of some whose fellowship we have enjoyed so much at previous Festivals. But it was a great joy to all to welcome in this wonderful fellowship so many new brethren God has graciously added. This Festival pictures the great millennial harvest of souls under the world-rule of the Kingdom of God, and it was fitting and gratifying to witness this fruit borne during this past year for God's Kingdom. The attendance was the largest so far, most of whom this year were there through the entire eight days, filling the available space in the hotel and cottages to capacity.

The Feast of Tabernacles came unusually late this year. After a record-breaking rainy year in Oregon there was every reason to expect continual rain after the middle of October. But the first day some said they were praying for "Indian Summer" weather, and the prayers were surely answered. We had the most beautiful weather of the four years we have been going to Belknap Springs, -- almost continual sunshine.

The children were more interested this year than ever before. The program for the children, this year under direction of Helen Starkey and Esther Olson, and the increased showing of the "movies", along with the beautiful weather for outdoor play, made the Festival very attractive to the youngsters. As my own little granddaughter, age 4, said on being asked if she wanted to go back to her new home in Pasadena, "Yes, sometime -- but I want to stay here, now," This year we had a moving picture program every evening except the Sabbath eves, with instructional and educational films of special interest to the kiddies, sound news reels, sound pictures of the atomic bomb explosions at Bikini, sobering war pictures making the horrors of war almost too realistic for some; beside our own pictures in kodachrome showing the trip to Europe including the hurricane in the middle of the Atlantic, the 14,000- mile baptising tour around the four corners of the United States, and many pictures filmed by Basil Wolverton which included former festivals at Belknap, Ambassador College, and personal comedy films.

For years we have been hoping to have a new hymn book of our own, avoiding the unscriptural words of human writers who have not known God's Truth, by setting the inspired words of God -- the Psalms -- to music. Since last December my brother Dwight Armstrong has devoted his entire time to this task. And at last we had the first beginning of the new song

book we have wanted so long -- with 18 of the new songs printed in pamphlet form in our own printing department in Pasadena. The songs, of course, were all new and had to be learned. But we found them BEAUTIFUL -- some of the tunes so "catchy" they simply would not leave the mind -- yet of such quality, coupled with the exquisite words of divine inspiration, that they were described as "classics," carrying a dignity and character of divine royalty -- songs befitting the regal splendor of a King -- yes, songs inspired by and sung to, THE King! Somehow, after singing the gracious expressive words of Holy Scripture, the hymns written by mortal man seemed hollow and empty and cheap and common -- employing flowery words to say so little. The literal SINGING of Scripture added much this year.

We expect soon to have the first complete new hymn book published and ready for distribution, and it is planned to make phonograph records of the new songs so that all may play them in their homes and HEAR these new songs sung. We hope to have these ready some time after the first of the year.

Brethren, these great Festivals of the Eternal are HOLY CONVOCATIONS which means GOD COMMANDS their observance and our attendance. RIGHT NOW is the time to begin planning to be able to come next year. Start NOW saving that "second tithing." A brief Bible study giving you the Scriptures on this tithing will appear below. Those who have been to Belknap feel very certain that it is the place God has appointed for this service -- secluded from the outside world in God's great beautiful raw nature, with perfect facilities in every way, except for the limited space. There is possibility Mr. Bigelow, the owner of Belknap Springs, may sell or lease this beautiful mountain resort before next Fall, but if he is still there it will still be open to us, he has assured us, and plans have been made tentatively to provide additional hotel-room space for next year so we can accommodate a larger attendance. I know all the brethren will pray that God will permit us to continue on to Belknap.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR'S FESTIVAL

As all know who attend, the business of feeding this large gathering three times a day throughout the Festival each year is under supervision of Sister Annie Mann, along with Sister Hazel Wallace employed as full-time cook. I am sure all appreciate Sister Mann's careful and methodical management and Sister Wallace's superb cooking, but few if any beside these two efficient women have any conception at all of the real responsibility of planning they have assumed for the rest of us. We all owe them a deep debt of gratitude for the efficient manner in which they have planned the purchase and delivery of the exact required amount of various items of food, the nice variety of appetizing, wholesome and health foods for each day's menus. And if it were realized how much planning it takes -- how they must start planning even the 8th day's menus and supplies required before the first day begins, and constantly check and re-check every day in order to use up the groceries and supplies on hand without running short of anything -- well, very few would be capable of this task, and I know I can speak for all who were in attendance in expressing to these two sisters our heart-felt gratitude for their ability, pains, and efficient service. Certainly we were WELL FED! The meals were delicious, ample, and in conformity with health laws.

I pass on to you the following recommendations from Sister Mann:

"The Bible says, in Exodus 16:23 (before Mosaic rituals given): 'The Eternal hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Eternal: bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe (boil) that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.'"

"I think I can see where we would benefit come of our brethren who have families living in cabins allowing them to cook for themselves in their cabins. It would be a help to those who are taking care of the lodge guests. I feel it would make their expenses less. Also, I feel we do too much work in the kitchen on the Sabbath days. Instead, we might have everyone come to the kitchen and dining room and help themselves from the trays of food provided, and each one wash his own dishes, or at least the wife and mother of each family wash them for her family. The breakfast will be prepared and served as usual, then the buffet luncheon for late afternoon. Too, those who would like to purchase from the stores at McKenzie Bridge on Friday some tid-bits for the Sabbath luncheon may do so without offending others. We always have good co-operation in our kitchen work, and I'm sure this can be worked out to the good of all. Another thing, our children and youth must learn to be more patient in waiting to be served and give their elders a chance to get servings too. There is always enough after the first day or so and the children will always get enough. Sister Wallace and I especially thank the brothers for their good co-operation in the heavy odd jobs. Another thought -- we do have with us each year one or more brethren who have to have (because of not to good health) a little special attention in regard to their meals. It is our pleasure to have such come to me or Sister Wallace and state their request so that they may have proper food.

---Annie Mann."

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PATRIOTISM, ZEAL, FERVOR, IN CHRISTIANITY?

You've heard the patriotic saying: "Breathes there a man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, 'This is my own, my native land?'"

Jesus said "The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light." (Luke 16:8). That is, those whose minds are on material, worldly things only -- unconverted minds, are wiser in worldly things than those whose minds are illuminated by the Spirit of God are in spiritual things.

Are the worldly, unconverted people filled with more zeal and fervor and patriotism for the things of this world than real Christians for the things of God? Tuesday, presidential election day, will have passed before you read this. Those of this world will have shown their patriotism by voting. Those of the world feel a patriotism surging thru their very souls -- it may be patriotism for country, for their college, for their fraternity, lodge, club, business or whatever partisan organization they feel they are part of.

This is the football season. Nearly all the larger colleges and universities engage in the business of football. It is regarded by students as one of the important activities carried on by the university. Yet not one in a hundred students actually plays or takes direct part. Only eleven men play on the team at a time -- and not over 33 to 65 players compose the entire squad in any one school. The team is under the supervision of a coach, and is directed during actual contest on the field by the quarterback or captain. This year the University of Oregon is one of the two contenders for the Pacific Coast conference championship. Perhaps 40 out of 4,000 students are on the squad. Yet EVERY STUDENT IN THE UNIVERSITY FEELS A SENSE OF PATRIOTISM, OFTEN OF DEEP FERVOR, TOWARD THE PROGRESS OF THAT TEAM! Every student feels it is HIS team. Its main competitor this year is the University of California. If any student at Eugene favored California he would be considered disloyal and a traitor. Of all the 3,960 who do not even have a part on the squad, every single one feels that the Oregon team is HIS team. He doesn't boss it or manage it, or have any direct part in it whatever. No personal part at all. But he does not call it "Coach so-and-so's team." No, it's "OUR team!" If anyone should say a word against the team, the student would spring heatedly to its defense instantly. He stands up for it against all critics. And he attends all games he can, and wildly CHEERS for his team during a game, yelling his throat hoarse trying to encourage and cheer on his team, and whenever it scores a touch- down, he leaps high in the air with shouts of joy!

But how about the "children of light?" The main work of all the brethren in Christ is to carry out the Great Commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." It is a trillion times more important than football. True, only a small part of all the disciples of Christ can have direct personal part in proclaiming the true Gospel to all the world. So, how do they react? Well, some are just as loyal as worldly college students to their football team. Some are passively loyal in a lukewarm sort of way. But SOME say, "Well, why should I have any interest in the work, when I have no direct personal part in it?" They call it "Brother Armstrong's work." They are just NOT INTERESTED in it. They don't see how it concerns them in any way. If they hear it criticized or condemned, or falsely accused, they actually AID AND ABET THOSE THE DEVIL IS USING IN ACCUSING, by keeping silent. Do they spring instantly to its defense against its critics? No, by their very silence they indicate agreement with the critics and thus encourage injury to God's work! They seem unable to see that this is THEIR work, and that those of us having direct personal part are merely their TEAM, representing THEM, and that we need to be encouraged, cheered on, just as much as a college football team! Surely the WORK OF GOD is more important -- or ought to be -- to a Christian, than winning football games is to a college student! Then WHY NOT SHOW THE SAME ENTHUSIASM, ZEAL, AND PATRIOTISM FOR THE WORK OF GOD? It's a trillion times more important than football games. And when another soul is brought to repentance and baptism and conversion, OUGHT WE NOT TO LEAP WITH JOY?

"Breathes there a Christian with soul so DEAD that he never to himself hath said, 'This is our OWN, our very OWN activity in GOD'S WORK?'" -- Don't you feel a surge of JOY and GLORY when OUR TEAM wins another precious SOUL? Give all praise and thanksgiving to GOD -- but give enthusiastic encouragement -- not football cheers, but Christian GOOD CHEER -- to those of us actively out on the firing line, fighting adversity, the obstacles and opposition of the devil and his critics, giving our ALL to win -- DEFEND US when- ever you hear this WORK OF GOD being criticized or opposed -- SHOW THE CRITICS YOU ARE ON OUR SIDE -- GOD'S SIDE, and when the critics see how unpopular their fault-finding and opposition of the work of God is, perhaps they will cease it and BEGIN TO HELP! Let people know you are

FOR this work of God -- 100%. SHOW your loyalty! That's one way you can help. And remember, constantly, PRAY FOR THE WORK!

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With WHOM is Satan Most WROTH?

You are all familiar with the popular "Rapture Theory" -- the teaching, by most denominations, of the "Secret Coming" of Christ to "snatch away His Bride." They teach that the Second Coming of Christ is to be in "two phases" -- the first phase of it "FOR His saints," to take them to heaven for 3 1/2 or 7 years, -- the second phase "WITH His saints," after God has poured out HIS WRATH thru the PLAGUES in divine vengeance upon the world.

This theory mixes "the GREAT TRIBULATION" and "THE DAY OF THE LORD" together as if they were one and the same thing. Those who preach it simply do not know the difference. But it is "immediately after the Tribulation" that the signs appear in the sun, moon and stars (Mat. 24:29). And yet the signs in the sun, moon and stars occur before the DAY OF THE LORD (Joel 2:31). So the Great Tribulation is PAST before The Day of the Lord begins. The two are not the same.

Notice, in Mat. 24:9, 21, The GREAT TRIBULATION is a time when "YOU" -- that is, the saints -- the elect -- are to be delivered up before councils of worldly government to be killed -- a martyrdom of saints -- and according to verse 22, those days shall be shortened by divine intervention "for the elect's sake." And it is "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Now there can be only ONE time of trouble such as that -- the greatest of all history, or ever to come in future. It is, therefore, the same identical time described by Daniel: "a time of trouble (or tribulation), such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time" -- and the next words show it immediately precedes the coming of Christ and resurrection.

Then what causes the Great Tribulation? Daniel reveals that it follows when Michael, the archangel of our Israelitish nations America, Britain, and the Democracies -- and of Christians -- stands up. Michael would not CAUSE the tribulation against our nations and against the saints. Michael stands up against someone, in defense of our nations and of Christians. Against whom does he stand up? Rev. 12:7 explains the same identical time and incident -- he stands up against the "dragon" who is the Devil called Satan. (Verse 9). The devil with all his demons is cast down to the earth, and a WOE is pronounced upon the earth, for Satan has "GREAT WRATH, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Against whom is Satan's WRATH vented? Against the TRUE CHURCH -- "and the dragon was wroth with the woman (true church) and went to make war with the remnant (last generation in this age) of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 12:17).

DO YOU REALIZE that for the first time The PLAIN TRUTH is now coming out PROMPTLY the first of EVERY MONTH? The College is still going -- with twice the students of last year! Two new ones have arrived since the Feast of Tabernacles! Yes, in spite of Satan, in spite of the sour, criticizing opposition of those Satan would deceive and cast by the way-side, GOD'S PRECIOUS WORK IS LEAPING AHEAD CONSTANTLY IN GREATER AND GREATER POWER. And you, each of you, dear Brethren, must decide whether YOU will be entrapped in Satan's snare, caught in his cunning web, and become a critic, and embittered, or whether YOU will be a PART of God's precious work, and with ALL YOUR HEART, and with your face beaming in smiles and happiness and joy, JOIN WHOLEHEARTEDLY, (not lukewarm, lest Christ's spew you out of His mouth, Rev. 3:15-22 -- READ IT AGAIN) in this great last crusade of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Sincerely, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong