

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

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President and Pastor

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Dear PLAIN TRUTH Subscriber:

Semiannually I send a personal letter to our more than two million subscribers. At this time I want to offer again a most important and eye-opening book -- not a pamphlet or a small booklet, but a full-sized book -- GRATIS to you as a subscriber, and no request for contributions.

This may seem strange. I don't know of anyone else who gives in this manner. But I learned, 54 years ago, that there are only two ways or philosophies of life, broadly speaking. One is the way I simplify by the word "GIVE" and the opposite way is "GET." The world travels the way of "GET." But I started living the way of "GIVE," and I have found that truly it is more blessed to give than to receive.

In this letter I want to tell you how I discovered that truth -- and how The PLAIN TRUTH came to be published, without subscription price or commercial advertising.

I'm sure you have noticed that The PLAIN TRUTH IS AN UTTERLY UNIQUE MAGAZINE. It gives you the MEANING behind the important world news. It brings you UNDERSTANDING of life itself -- and CAUSES of troubles and evils -- the purpose and meaning of life -- the way to peace, happiness and abundance. How did such a magazine ever come to be? None has ever been like it.

We are watching closely the fast-moving world scene right now. Momentous events are in the making. Not only the Iraq-Iran war, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Syria-Lebanon-Israel disturbance -- the Northern Ireland strife. But there could be significance in the recent assassination attempt on the Pope at Vatican Square in Rome. This followed shortly the attempted assassination of President Reagan in Washington. Such assassinations have triggered world war. Such a war now could threaten human extinction on this earth. For the first time in human history, the weapons exist that can erase human life from this planet. These world events are of tremendous concern right now to all of us. The PLAIN TRUTH keeps you informed -- and especially in the light of Bible prophecy.

These prophecies, direct from the Creator of all, have never before been understood. There is a vital reason. That reason concerns my personal experience and the answer to the question of HOW The PLAIN TRUTH magazine came to be published. To explain I'll give you a glimpse into my personal life.

As few men are today, I was self-educated following high school. From age 18 I was in the publishing business -- newspapers, trade journals, magazines. That was before the days of radio and television. Then, at age 34, I was violently challenged on the doctrine of evolution and the truth of the Bible. I had read somewhat about the theory of evolution, but was then challenged into an in-depth study. I had been reared by upright and stable parents in a Protestant church, but had little religious interest and had dropped out of church attendance at age 18.

It was the autumn of 1926. I delved into the works of Darwin, Lamarck before him, Haeckel and Huxley, Vogt and Chamberlin. Their arguments seemed at first convincing. I began to question whether there is a God. My head was swimming for a while in confusion. I realized I had never proved the existence of God. But in this night-and-day intensive study I disproved the theory of evolution and proved the existence of God. Then my study of the Bible became a real eye-opener. I found I had been taught religious beliefs from childhood that were diametrically contrary to the Bible. My intensive research proved its authenticity as the Word of God. I knew in the business world that manufacturers generally send along with the gadget, instrument or commodity of their manufacture an instruction manual to explain to the consumer how to operate the mechanism. I learned that the Bible is the instruction manual the Maker of humanity gave mankind to explain how to operate and live with others this most complex and wonderful of all physical mechanisms. I proved its divine AUTHORITY. When I found my own religious beliefs -- which I had taken for granted as taught or heard from others and in church -- to be false, my mind was swept clean of ALL religious ideas, beliefs and suppositions.

I learned that this was GOD speaking in the Bible. I asked Him to teach me, and with open mind divested of former beliefs, I started from scratch to be taught.

I learned that Jesus Christ is the living Word of God in Person. The Bible is that same Word in writing. Jesus said He spoke nothing of Himself -- that God the Father had instructed Him what to say and speak.

Where do people get their religious beliefs in our day? Religions outside of Christianity originated in the mind and imaginative reasonings of some man -- for example, Buddha, Mohammed and other religious founders. The Christian religion came from the Creator God, through Jesus Christ. But Jesus said He spoke only as God the Father gave to Him -- He and God were of one mind in agreement precisely. He taught His disciples, who became the first apostles of the Church. The Church received its teachings and doctrines directly from the apostles.

But -- even in the true Church of God -- the second generation of Christians received their teaching and beliefs from the first generation. The third from the second generation, and so on. Succeeding generations did not receive their teachings direct from Christ or the apostles, but from PEOPLE of the preceding generation. And, like a rumor received third- or fourth-hand, this teaching became somewhat distorted from original truth.

In the early centuries of Christianity there were no Christian schools. There were no Christian textbooks in schools. Printing had not been invented. Books were slowly written by hand a page at a time, and all texts were pagan. Children in schools imbibed much pagan teaching and philosophy. Gradually pagan religious teaching found its way into traditional Christianity. It came as a real shock to me to discover that the Christian teaching I had received in church was, to a considerable extent, the diametric opposite of biblical teaching. And yet this biblical record is the exact and precise original truth as the authoritative Word of God!

Where do preachers in churches receive their teachings and beliefs today? From other PEOPLE -- not from God -- often in religious seminaries or Bible or church schools. And the teaching is primarily from their traditions -- NOT from the Bible! I was astonished to learn this. That is why the Bible, in the book of Jude, tells us to "earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints" -- who received it directly from the original apostles.

My personal experience was most unusual. I was not taught by PEOPLE -- not after my mind was swept clean of all previous beliefs. And so I say to you, as the apostle Paul said (Galatians 1:15-17, RSV), "But when he who had ... called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me ... I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go ..." to a religious seminary or church school, but I was taught directly by Jesus Christ through His written Word -- even as the first apostles were taught by the personal Word of God!

This intensive study (which has continued through 54 years) resulted in a real and definite personal conviction, repentance, faith and GIVING myself to Jesus Christ who had bought and paid for me by His shed blood. Instead of "receiving" -- "GETTING" -- Christ, I GAVE myself to Him for Him to use, though I didn't think I was giving Him anything of much value. But God gave me His Holy Spirit -- which is the Spirit of a sound mind, of UNDERSTANDING -- of God's LOVE, of Christ's FAITH and of the begetting of God-LIFE eternal!

My continued study of the Bible -- God's direct revelation of truth to mankind -- revealed the meaning and purpose of human life, the incredible human potential, the CAUSES of all human troubles and evils, and what is determined for the immediate future for our time. I found the Bible to be a "NOW" Book -- alive and revealing truth of conditions in our time. I found that it -- and it alone -- MAKES REAL SENSE!

Among the truths I found revealed in continued study and research of God's Word was the KEY that unlocks biblical prophecy to our understanding.

Having spent 16 years in the newspaper and magazine field -- writing magazine articles and newspaper editorials, I was inspired to start publication of an utterly new and different magazine, The PLAIN TRUTH, in 1934, dealing with life's problems, its purpose and meaning and the real meaning behind world news and changing conditions, as revealed through biblical prophecy and biblical UNDERSTANDING.

Along the way, during more than 1,900 years since Christ taught the first apostles, much truth was lost and much pagan belief became injected.

Among truths lost was the KEY that unlocks biblical prophecy to our understanding. That key has been preserved in the Bible. But the churches called Christian have lost it.

This vital key concerns the true identity of the American, British and English-speaking peoples. WHERE, for instance, is the United States mentioned in the Bible or its prophecies? Where Britain, Canada, Australia or New Zealand? The TRUTH is more astonishing than any fiction.

I have written a book on this subject, titled The United States and Britain in Prophecy. Approximately a third of all the Bible is prophecy -- yet this third is largely overlooked. This newfound key opens up the real meaning behind world conditions right now -- and reveals what now lies immediately ahead. I'd like to send you a copy, gratis. Also I'll see that another full years' subscription to The PLAIN TRUTH magazine is entered in your name. This, I know, is a most unusual offer. But, as it already has brought important and valuable UNDERSTANDING to thousands, I want you to share in this revelation of lost TRUTH.

A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your reply. I'm sure you will find it exciting, interesting and more than helpful. And we have some most interesting, informative and important articles coming in each issue of The PLAIN TRUTH.

THANK YOU sincerely for enjoying it.

Sincerely, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

P.S.: The book I offered last November, The Missing Dimension in Sex, was greatly delayed by the publishers. Those books have just been mailed out.