

**History  
of the  
Church of God Seventh Day**

A Master's Thesis by Ken Durham

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## Biographical Sketch of the Author

After graduating from high school in 1966, I attended Midwest Bible College in Stanberry, Missouri. I graduated in 1971 with a Bachelor of Religion degree.

St. Louis, Missouri was to become home for the next three years as I served a one year internship followed by two years as pastor. My responsibilities included the development of the entire program for an inner-city mission church.

In the summer of 1974, I accepted the invitation to pastor a predominantly Spanish-speaking church in St. Paul, Minnesota. This position provided me with the challenge of full responsibility for all aspects of the church ministries including the oversight of construction of a new church building.

While in St. Paul, I had the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors for the Washington County Developmental Learning Center. While serving as chairman of the program committee, we developed a new system of scheduling the participants for training based on their needs rather than just by groups.

I left the position in Minnesota to return to Grand Rapids, Michigan to pursue a Master of Arts Degree at Calvin College in September of 1980. For the past two years, while completing my program at Calvin, I have been working as a substitute teacher in the Grand Rapids area.

## Preface

This work will attempt to present the history of the Church of God (7th Day) from its background to the present time. It has been a history that is not without its disappointments. In fact, it is from one of these experiences that the Church has its beginning.

While attempts have been made to convey our history, none seems to be objective and/or comprehensive enough to offer a balanced picture of how we have gotten to where we are now. The work done by others has been invaluable in helping to organize the material that was to become this document.

I owe a special thanks to Professor George Marsden of Calvin College for his assistance in helping organize this material. I also appreciate his patience as I waded through the research and writing of this project.

Appreciation also needs to be expressed to Diana Guernsey who graciously volunteered her time to type and retype the drafts of this project.



## Abstract

The Church of God (Seventh Day) is an outgrowth of the sabbatarian and advent movements of the 1830's, 40's, and 50's. It was first organized with ten churches in southern and western Michigan in 1860.

As this state conference began to publish a paper, The Hope of Israel, in 1863, it established contact with various other individuals and congregations from Iowa eastward.

A state conference was organized in Iowa that spread into Missouri in the late 1860's.

It was primarily from these separate state conferences that the General Conference was formed in 1884. The legal incorporation that was affected in 1899 still serves the Church today.

The Church has survived serious splits in the 1930's. Attempts at reunification in the late 1940's brought the two main factions back together but resulted in two new groups being formed.

With some of the internal turmoil of 1950's and early 60's behind the Church, it is now looking toward the goal of doubling its membership in the decade of the 1980's.

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### Chapter 1: A Time of Unrest 1840 - 1860

The 1830's and 40's were a time of unrest, unequalled in our history. The election of Andrew Jackson, a non-aristocrat, as President is symbolic of the extent of foment that was going on. It reflected the questioning of established patterns and practices that was so prevalent. This questioning expressed itself in the form of political, social, medical, and religious change.

Jackson's election to the presidency in 1824 brought in an age of the common man. It was the time when the old order of well bred and well educated people were turned out of office. They were replaced by a wave of people that were more interested in the common people and their needs. This trend offered hope to the "poorer" people of the country who now seemed to be charged with a new energy and enthusiasm as their president was in office. This tremendous release of energy and enthusiasm was contagious and spread over into nearly every facet of life.

The social change expressed itself in the hope and aspiration that an utopian society could be built for the world, beginning, of course, in America. Several attempts at communal living were hoped to be the start of this new society. The Oneida Community is just one example of many such communities that were established. The somewhat tenuous linking of social and religious reform brought many to feel

that Christians would remake society in the United States according to a pattern fashioned in heaven, and that such a restructuring of relationships would eliminate poverty, banish the curse of drunkenness, elevate womanhood, provide equal opportunity in education, and free black men from slavery. Thus they would prepare the way for the coming of Christ to rule over his kingdom.

Gaustad, *Rise of Adventism*, page 18.

During this period, the field of medicine was to undergo such varied and constant onslaught of ideas, treatments, and therapies that it was difficult, if not impossible, to keep up with the "new ideas" even for those in the profession.

Newspapers of the time carried pages of advertisements for all sorts of remedies and cures. Everything from herbs to hydropathy, from elixirs to exorcisms were thought

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to cure a whole panacea of diseases. While a lot of false hopes were raised, there were some medical benefits to show for the period. Increased consciousness of one's health in relationship to one's diet was no small accomplishment. The experimentation with medicines opened the way for some of the modern day medical research.

Many medical societies and clinics were established to treat a variety of illnesses. Some of this took on a certain religious flavor as churches became involved in the establishment of clinics, hospitals, sanitariums, and medical training facilities.

Religion, itself, underwent a period of turmoil in the mid-1800's. The energy in part generated in Methodism was to spill over into most of the established churches of the day. People found it easy, in this age of questioning, to challenge the traditional positions of their churches. Movements that went outside of and crossed denominational lines were not uncommon. The establishment of a new church if one could not find one to his liking was no longer taboo. It was in this fertile soil that the Mormon Church was formed. The advent movement of William Miller, begun in about 1836, found a ready audience.

The Church can trace its heritage for formation to two basic movements in religious history in the United States. These movements were the sabbatarian movement and the advent movement. It is as we see the convergence of these two movements that we see the formation of what has become the Church of God (7th Day).

William Miller began, in 1836, to preach that Jesus Christ would return in 1844. This was based on what he felt was a careful examination of prophecy. His preaching was not intended to form a denomination but rather to awaken people in all denominations to the realization that Christ's return was near. He was not involved in arguing about other doctrines because with Christ's return so near he felt that he didn't have time left to worry about a lot of the other teachings. When many of his followers waited in anticipation on October 21, 1844 at sites across the country and at dawn the next day Jesus had not returned, the question had to be asked as to what do we do now? Many returned to their homes, families, and churches to face the jeers of those around them. Some gave up on religion altogether. Still others felt strongly about the advent of Christ and tried to figure out what had gone wrong. It is this latter group that we are going to look at. Had they figured incorrectly? Had they confused the events for that date?

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Prior to and continuing at this time there was a sabbatarian movement in the United States. While there are indications that Sabbath (Saturday) observance may have come over with the Pilgrims on the Mayflower in 1620, by 1646 it had become a source of discussion and controversy in New England. Just who these Sabbatarians were or what else they believed is a little unclear. In 1664 the Seventh-Day Baptists in England sent Stephen Munford to the United States. His efforts were responsible for the solidification and organization of a lot of the Sabbatarians as well as the persuasion of a number of First Day Baptists to his position. By 1671 this group covenanted together to form a sabbatarian church organization. By 1802 the Seventh-Day Baptist had grown sufficiently so that they were able to organize a General Conference in that year. It appears that this movement embraced most of the Sabbatarians in the United States at the time.

It is the convergence of the advent movement and the sabbatarian movement that we want to examine. While William Miller admitted, in his disappointment, that, We expected the second coming of Christ at that time and now to contend that we were not mistaken is dishonest. I have no confidence in any of the new theories that grew out of the movement. (*Advent Message*, pages 410-412.)

Other First Day Adventists held that it was simply the wrong event that had been identified. James White, who later cofounded the Seventh-Day Adventist Church with his wife Ellen G. White, were among this group. They held that the age of salvation had come to an end and that the event to take place at that time was the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven. Christ was then to have begun an investigative judgment of all those that had lived to determine their eternal destiny.

It was during the spring of 1844 that Rachel Preston, a Seventh-Day Baptist, spoke to an Adventist Church in Washington, New Hampshire. Captain Joseph Bates, an Adventist, was among the earliest to hear and become convinced of the Sabbath. It was he who in 1849 and 1852 came to the Jackson, Michigan area preaching the Sabbath. Among the converts of this work were M. E. Cornell and Gilbert Cramer.

During this period, from 1845-1861 there was a rather free association between Sabbath keeping Adventists. Since church organization was confined to local churches there developed an exchange of ministers between local congregations. During this period, there was a great deal of "sheep stealing" going on between Sabbath keeping Adventist and the Seventh-Day Baptist. This practice continued in some areas for more than 20 years until the then developed Seventh-Day Adventist

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Church and the Seventh-Day Baptist in conference passed resolutions of mutual respect.

As the sabbatarian advent movement began to develop, James White began to assume a prominent role in leadership. He started publishing the *Present Truth* in Middleton, Connecticut in 1849. In the fall of 1853 Harian S. Case and D. P. Russel, having parted company with the Whites, began to publish the *Messenger of Truth* at Jackson, Michigan. This is significant in that this group, labeled by the Whites as the Messenger Party, identified a division in the sabbatarian advent movement. J. M. Stephenson and D. P. Hall, both prominent Adventist preachers in Wisconsin, separated from the Whites and worked with the Messenger Party in trying to promote the age-to-come doctrine. This, along with the questioning of the visions of Mrs. White, appears to be the main doctrine controversy that divided the sabbatarian advent movement.

The Messenger Part " existed for only about five years, but during that period of time they served to clarify several issues in the sabbatarian advent movement. First, they called in question the closed door doctrine of salvation and taught instead the age-to-come idea of a millennium. Second, they called in question the validity and accuracy of the visions of Mrs. Ellen White. Third, they questioned the use of the name Seventh-Day Adventist as being descriptive rather than biblical. Many of them preferred the names Church of God or Church of Christ. Last, many questioned the authoritarian leadership of James White.

Based on the material available at present, it seems clear that from the beginning of the sabbatarian advent movement there were two schools of thought present. As the movement began to grow and organize these differences became more clearly defined. There were no state or national conferences organized in the 1840's and 50's. By the time the organizations were being affected in the early 1860's it is evident that there were two distinct organizations forming. The apprehension about organizing at all is the result, in large part, of the disappointment of 1844 and the resulting fear of denominational designations. This is probably best stated by Joseph Marsh in the *Voice of Truth*, May 21, 1845. In expressing concern about the 1845 Albany (New York) Conference of Adventists he says ...because the proceedings as (a) whole looked like forming a new sect under a sectarian name, instead of coming to the order of the New Testament under the name there given to the true Church... This concern over the organizing of a denomination was echoed by James

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White when he reprinted the previous article in the August, 1850 *Advent Review*. At the end of the article in volume 1, number 2, page 7, he concluded that those that had called for an organization had departed from the 'simplicity of the gospel,' and the pure meek spirit of the original advent faith.

It is interesting to note that within ten years this same man, James White, had organized a church denominational structure that was not organized around any principle of biblical organization. It was rather an organization that he ruled as an authoritarian supported frequently by the well-timed visions of his wife, Ellen.

It is important to look briefly at the history of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church to clear up some confusion that exists about the relationship between it and the Church of God (7th Day). Part of the confusion of the history stems from the use of the name Church of God by some of the sabbatarian Adventists that later formed the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. This was used as both a cognomen and as an organizational name. Roswell F. Cottrell, writing in the May 3, 1860 *Review*, says "I do not believe in popery; ... but in Bible order, discipline, and government in the Church of God. Five years earlier, when James White published a hymnbook, he wrote in the preface that "this work is prepared for the use of the Church of God scattered abroad to the Church of God waiting for the coming and kingdom of Christ, is this book commended." The pages of the *Review and Herald* contained numerous articles objecting to the use of the name Seventh-Day Adventist in the years 1860 and 1861. It was at Battle Creek, Michigan in a conference of the then established publishing association that the name Seventh-Day Adventist was officially selected as an organizational title.

This conference met from September 26 through October 1, 1860. It appears as though this set the stage for the name to be used when the church was formally organized and incorporated in 1863.

However, this selection of a name in 1860 did not meet with universal acceptance. Churches in Wisconsin and Iowa refused to go along with the new name for the church. The finance committee from the Ohio Conference sent a letter published in the April 9, 1861 *Review and Herald* in which they state:

Brother Smith: We conclude from present aspects that the name, 'Seventh-Day Adventist,' is being made obligatory upon our brethren. Without further light Ohio cannot submit to the name 'Seventh-Day Adventist,' as either a

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test, or an appropriate name for God's people. Being appointed a finance committee at the last conference, and having now on hand means for carrying on the cause in Ohio, we could not conscientiously expend those means in any other than the advancement and extension of the truth and the Church of God. If such means are expended otherwise it will be necessary for the churches in Ohio to assemble in conference, and to give instruction to that effect, and to choose some other committee to make the disbursements.

It must be noted that the terms seventh-day Adventists and Sabbatarian Adventist were used in a general way to identify members of a movement rather than a denomination prior to 1860. It was at about this same time (1860-1862), as the church developed a formal organizational structure, that the Visions of Ellen G. White began to be stressed as important for the believers to follow. It reached the point that by 1862 they actually reached the status of importance that their acceptance became a test of faith. In the January 14, 1862 *Review and Herald* Uriah Smith wrote:

The perpetuity of the (spiritual) gifts is one of the fundamental points in the belief of this people and with those who differ with us here we can have union and fellowship to no greater extent than we can have with those who differ with us in the other important subjects of the coming of Christ, baptism, the Sabbath, etc.... It is a fact that those who reject the gifts do not have true union with the body. From the very nature of the case, they cannot have it.

The gifts being referred to are none other than the writings of Ellen White.

By 1863 it is abundantly clear that there are two schools of thought present in the sabbatarian advent movement and that they are destined to remain separate organizations throughout the years to come. The three key issues were/are the age-to-come doctrine, the visions of Ellen G. White, and the name under which the church should be organized.

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### CHAPTER 2: The Church of God is Formed 1860

This now sets the stage for the organization of what has come to be known as the Church of God (7th Day). The Church, at this early time, went by several different names. Included among the names used were Church of Jesus Christ (Iowa), Church of the Firstborn (in the east), Free Seventh-Day Adventists (Iowa), Church of God (Wisconsin), Free Sabbath Keepers (in the east), Church of Christ (Michigan), and Congregational Church (Michigan). It is important to look at several occurrences that preceded the first State Conference organization. There are two key men whose efforts are largely responsible for the development of the Church. These two men are Gilbert Cramner in Michigan and Merrit E. Cornell in Iowa. Both men had been affiliated with the Advent Movement of 1844. They had both heard about the idea of the seventh-day Sabbath prior to their contact with Joseph Bates in 1852. It is interesting that both men were convinced of the Sabbath in the same year and by the same man.

Gilbert Cramner was born January 18, 1814 in Newfield, New York. His father died when he was 11 years old. This left him to assist his mother in raising 7 other children. He was converted and joined the Methodist Church when he was 17 years old. Shortly after his conversion he began filling occasional speaking appointments in the nearby churches.

After about two years, he left the Methodist Church over their teaching about the Godhead and joined the Christian Church. Upon receiving a license to preach, he began to devote a considerable amount of time and effort to preaching in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. His preaching even took him to the area of St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada where his efforts resulted in a congregation of about 300 people.

While in this area he married Mariah Averille. They along with a cousin made a six-week trip to reach the area where Chicago, Illinois now is. His work of trying to get settled and begin farming left him little time for preaching. It was here that his wife and two children took sick and died. Finding himself alone, Cramner moved to Augusta, Michigan where he married Betsy Heath in 1840.

It was at Augusta, in 1843, that Gilbert Cramner studied and became convinced of William Miller's idea of the advent of Christ. During this same year the seventh-day



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Sabbath was first brought to his attention through an advent publication called *The Midnight Cry*.

On October 22, 1844 Cramner, along with thousands of others, waited in anticipation for the return of Christ. When morning came and they were still waiting they returned home greatly disappointed. Some could not withstand the ridicule and criticism from those around them and simply gave up their faith. Others returned to the churches they had been a part of prior to the disappointment. Cramner, on the other hand, went back and restudied the idea of the second advent. He concluded that Miller had correctly identified the event in prophecy as the second coming of Christ. The date of that return was the problem that remained to be resolved. He remained firm in his conviction that it was imminent.

The harsh opposition that he met from others, including his wife's family, was largely responsible for his move from Augusta to a farm in the area where Holland, Michigan now stands. In this virgin area, the only neighbors that he had were Indians. With the difficulty of his conditions, Cramner states in his autobiography that he ... had become somewhat discouraged in the ministry.

Cramner was not content to live in this kind of seclusion so he decided to sell out and move near the village of Comstock in Kalamazoo County (about halfway between the present day cities of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo). While here, he once again became active in preaching with several small groups resulting. It was at this time (1852) that Captain Joseph Bates made a trip to the Battle Creek area. Through this contact Gilbert Cramner became convinced of and began to observe the Sabbath.

Between 1852 and 1860 Cramner preached across southern and western Michigan. These efforts resulted in the raising up of churches at the following locations; Waverly, Alamo, Banger, Hartford, Casco, Gobles, Bloomingdale, Hamilton, West Olive, and Otsego.

It is also important to note that during this same period of time (1852-1858) Cramner had contact with James and Ellen White. In December of 1857 Cramner had his first opportunity to meet the Whites. At that time there was no formal church organization functioning but it appears that there was a rather free association among sabbatarian adventists. By 1858 it was clear that the visions of Ellen G. White and resulting doctrinal positions of the White Party were being enforced on those sabbatarian adventists with whom they had contact. Cramner could not accept the visions as

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inspired, could not accept the closed door to salvation doctrine, nor could he accept the leadership of a woman at the head of the church. In the winter of 1858 Cramner finally decided that there was no way that he could work with the Whites and made the determination to sever contacts and remain independent of them.

By 1860 there were eight ministers, several hundred members, and the previously mentioned ten churches that were associated with Gilbert Cramner. After serious discussions, it was felt that it would be beneficial to organize the church work. In 1860 a conference of the churches was organized in Michigan. Gilbert Cramner was the first president of the conference. Fellowship meetings were held quarterly at various locations. The conference was to meet annually. In 1862 a hymnbook of one hundred and five hymns was printed for use in the churches. It is apparent that by 1863 the churches were using the name "Church of Christ" to identify their groups. At the State Conference meeting in June of 1863 at Banger, Michigan that authorization was given to publish a paper. A printing press and other needed materials were purchased. On August 10, 1863 the first issue of *The Hope of Israel* was published.

During the latter part of the 1850s there began to develop a similar work, to that in Michigan, in Iowa. Merrit E. Cornell, who had been convinced sometime earlier by Captain Joseph Bates to observe the Sabbath, started working in Iowa. His beliefs were similar to those of the Church of Christ in Michigan. He taught the second advent of Christ, the unconscious state of the dead, and the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. His efforts resulted several groups organizing themselves on the basis of a covenant in which they referred to themselves as the Church of Jesus Christ.

In early 1860, Cornell went to Marion, a small town near Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Soon a group of about 50 people were meeting. On June 10, 1860 they were organized under a covenant as the Church of Jesus Christ. Their principle beliefs as set forth in the covenant were:

We the undersigned, do hereby express our wish to be associated together in Christian fellowship, as a Church of Jesus Christ, at Marion, whose covenant obligation is briefly expressed in keeping the commandments of God and faith of Jesus, taking the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the rule of our faith and discipline.

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This harmony at Marion was to be short-lived. Cornell began to adopt some of the teaching of James and Ellen White, with whom he had contact years earlier in Michigan. By early 1862 he had held up volumes of the writings of Ellen White in church and suggested that they be held as equal authority with the Bible. The congregation was split in half. Some accepted the teaching of Cornell while others held to the original covenant.

During this time of discord, in the Marion Church, they learned of the Church of Christ in Michigan. They quickly discovered they had come from similar backgrounds and held many common beliefs. From this early contact the General Conference of the Church of God (7th Day) was to develop.

A circular letter from the Marion Church was published in the September 7, 1864 issues of *The Hope of Israel*. It outlined a brief history of the experiences of the church and at the same time called for a conference to be held November 15, 1862 at Marion, Iowa. This conference succeeded in pulling together the churches at Vinton, LaPorte City, Lisban, and Fairfield. All of these churches had gone through a similar experience to that of the Marion church.

Following the first conference held in Michigan in 1860, the Church of Christ began to establish contact with various individuals and groups within the sabbatarian advent movement. This contact seemed to be centered in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York, although, there was correspondence to other areas as well. This contact is part of what helped bring about the decision to publish *The Hope of Israel*. The first issue was published on August 10, 1863 at Hartford, Michigan (located in west-central Van Buren County). That issue showed Enos Easton as the editor. Since his name appears in only the first two issues, it is understood that he was only acting in that capacity until H. S. Dille, who had been appointed to the position by the June Conference in Banger, could assume the responsibility. The first six issues were printed in Hartford. After that the printing press and materials were moved about twenty miles northeast to the town of Waverly. Within about a year's time, the paper's circulation grew from less than 40 subscribers to where by November 10, 1864 it was being circulated in 18 states from Vermont to Missouri and parts of eastern Canada. It was at Waverly that the weekly publication continued to be printed until October 18, 1865.

*The Hope of Israel* seemed to have financial problems from almost the beginning. This problem continued to exist for about the next 80 years. The early financial

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problems were not unlike those experienced by the rest of the country during the Civil War. The lack of financial support finally caused a suspension in its publication.

In June of 1865, before *The Hope* suspended publication in Michigan, Samuel Everett of Iowa became the editor. In the spring of 1866, the Christian Publishing Association was formed in Marion, Iowa. Arrangements were made to purchase the printing press, type, and other materials from the Michigan Church. The first issue of *The Hope*, published in Iowa, was on May 26, 1866. William H. Brinkerhoff, a former associate of James and Ellen White, became the new editor. 1868 saw a change in editors for *The Hope*. B.F. Snook, an associate of Brinkerhoff, assumed the responsibility. He continued as editor until he was succeeded in 1871 by Jacob Brinkerhoff, the younger brother of William. In 1872 the name of the paper was changed to the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate and Hope of Israel*

The subtitle of the paper was dropped in 1874. In April of 1881, the paper went back to being published weekly instead of bimonthly. A.C. Long, a convert of B.F. Snook, became editor of the Advocate in 1887, replacing Jacob Brinkerhoff.

Just a year later another major change was to take place. William C. Long, the brother of A.C., purchased the equipment and moved it to Stanberry, Missouri. The June 26, 1888 issue, presumed to be the first published in Stanberry, shows several changes. First, W.C. Long is the new editor. Secondly, the publication is being published officially by the recently organized General Conference of the Church of God, Stanberry, Missouri. Lastly, it has now undergone a new name change to *Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Advent*.

At the annual meeting of the General Conference in 1900, it was decided to change the name of the church publication to *Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom*.

In December of 1905, W.C. Long left the editorship of the paper and A.F. Dugger, Sr. became the new editor. It was not long, however, until Jacob Brinkerhoff was again asked to assist in the publication of the *Advocate*. In the early part of 1907 he began to assist Dugger. They shared the responsibility until 1907 when Brinkerhoff again became the sole editor. He continued in that position until 1914 when he retired for the second time because of ill health.

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When Brinkerhoff retired, Andrew N. Dugger, son of A.F. Dugger, Sr., became the editor of the *Advocate*. He was to continue in his position until the split in the church developed in 1933. Several changes in editorship were to occur between 1933 and the present, but the nature and direction of the paper was not seriously affected by these changes.

The paper was to undergo another name change though. In March 1972, the subtitle of the paper was dropped and its publication was moved to its present location in Denver, Colorado.

It is important to understand and examine the history of the *Advocate* because through its pages we find the greatest source of the history of the Church of God (7th Day). It has served as one of the major vehicles for identifying groups of people that have believed like the church. It has also served as a forum for the exchange of ideas about doctrine, organizational structure, and church name. It is through its pages that we can see the changes and development of ideas over a period of time.

## Chapter 3

### Chapter 3: The General Conferences Grow 1860 - 1884

As the church began to develop, its efforts were carried on by state conferences. These conferences had contact with each other and sent representatives to the other state conferences. But, each conference operated autonomously as is evidenced by the use of different names under which the church operated.

The Michigan State Conference of the Church of Christ (as the organization was known in Michigan) was first organized in 1860. The conference held quarterly meetings at various locations around the state. These meetings, which still continue at the time of this writing, were for the purpose of discussing the business of the church, for hearing sermons, and for fellowship.

By 1863, the conference had begun publishing the weekly paper, *The Hope of Israel*. It is through the pages of the *Hope* that we get the first concise look at what the church subscribed to doctrinally. The first issue of the *Hope* dated October 10, 1863 contained an article entitled "Introductory" on page 2.

Reader the first number of The Hope of Israel is now before you. The author of its title was the apostle Paul. And as we start out with a Bible title, you will of course expect that it will be a Bible paper: and as you will naturally inquire what course we intend to pursue, and what principles we intend to advocate, we will try to inform you in as few words as possible.

In conducting the Hope the great head of the Church shall be our example. As when He was reviled He reviled not again, so we shall neither revile those who oppose us, nor suffer any others to do so in our columns. We shall stand firmly by what the Bible reveals to be truth, turning neither to the right nor the left, for friend or foe. We shall also heed Paul's admonition to Timothy, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

As principles we shall maintain,

1. That the Bible and the Bible alone contains the whole moral law; and that its precepts are sufficient to govern God's people in every age of the world, without the addition of any human creed or articles of faith.

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2. That sin entered the world and death by sin; and that the Dead know not anything, death signifies neither more nor less than a total extinction of being.

3. That Sin is a transgression of the law, and that we cannot know sin but by the law; and furthermore that the law by which sin is known is the law of Ten Commandments.

4. That man having sinned, and sentence of death having been passed upon him, he can have no hope of eternal life except through Christ; and that too by a resurrection from the dead.

This Paul says was his hope: For this he endured all his trials; all his afflictions and sore persecutions; and for this he finally laid down his life.

5. We shall contend that this was the hope of the twelve tribes of Israel, of the Fathers and of the Apostles, and all the primitive Church.

6. That God is about to set up His Kingdom in the Earth. That Christ as King will sit upon the throne of His father David. That the twelve apostles will sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

7. That the reward of the righteous as well as of the wicked will be on the Earth.

8. That the faithful saints, with all Abraham's innumerable seed, will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, on the new earth, which will be the final abode of the righteous.

9. That God will dwell in the New Jerusalem, that paradise will be restored or rather that the earth will be restored to more than its Eden glory and beauty.

10. That man will have a right to the tree of life, from which he was driven on account of transgression. That also "there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

These are in part, the principles we shall advocate, contending also that all the gifts and blessings that once belonged to the Church of Christ, belong to the same church in all ages. And in the maintenance of these, and other kindred principles, we solicit the hearty cooperation of all God's dear children.

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It was through this publication and direct personal communication that contact was established throughout the eastern part of the United States. This contact was with individuals as well as groups that believed similar to the church in Michigan.

The state conference was responsible for developing local churches and Sabbath schools as well as the coordination of evangelistic efforts throughout the state. It was also responsible for the identification, approval, and ordination of ministers. As a direct result, church membership, while decided upon locally, was issued by the state conference.

While we have already noted that the first Church of Jesus Christ (as it was known in Iowa) was organized on June 10, 1860, it was not until sometime later that a state conference was organized. It was not until November 15, 1862 that the first state conference met in Iowa. At first this conference met sporadically as the need arose. Later, as the church began to stabilize it met on an annual basis.

The Iowa Conference carried on much the same function as its sister conference in Michigan. The responsibility for the development and coordination of local churches and their programs was only one of its functions. At the annual conference session in 1865, it officially changed the name under which it operated from the Church of Jesus Christ to the Church of God. This is significant because it is the first time that the name Church of God is used to identify the organization. By 1866 the Iowa Conference assumed much of the leadership in coordinating the work of the church across the country. It was in that year that The Hope was moved to Iowa.

Another important outreach of the Iowa Conference was its extension into northern Missouri. Ministers were sent as early as 1866, at the request of individuals in Missouri, to preach and help organize churches there.

The Iowa Conference issued several calls for a General Conference to be held in Iowa in the late 1860's and early 1870's, but these appear to be intended primarily for the membership in Iowa. This is important to be distinguished from the later calls which established a national church organization.

Just eight years after the first request for assistance from Iowa, the Missouri Conference was organized. The Long brothers, A.C. and W.C., were the key individuals that helped get the church organized and going in Missouri. Both began preaching soon after their conversion in 1866. A.C. Long, the younger of the two, raised up several churches in the northern part of the state within just a few years.



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W.C. Long preached primarily in the state of Missouri, until the death of his wife. After that he reached out over a ten-state area but still concentrated his efforts in Missouri.

A call was issued in the summer of 1874 to the membership of the church in the state of Missouri. It was for a meeting to be held beginning July 30, at Denver, Worth County. The expressed purpose of this meeting was to organize a state conference similar to the one in Iowa. The purpose was accomplished when on August 2, 1874 the Sabbatarian Adventists Conference of Missouri was organized. S.C.B. Williams was elected president while A.C. Long served as vice president.

The second meeting of the Conference was held on August 13, 1875 at Pleasant Valley School House, Harrison County, about 20 miles from where the first Conference was held in northwest Missouri. This Conference is significant because it is here that the name of the group was changed to the Church of God. This brought it in line with the change made in Iowa in 1865.

The Church in Missouri quickly stepped to the front in leadership. They sent delegates to the conference sessions in Iowa and Michigan. This enabled them to get a feel for what was going on in the church in other parts of the country. The Missouri Conference sent evangelists into Kansas and Nebraska to start a work in those states.

On March 28, 1884, the Conference convened a meeting of the ministers within the State at Stanberry. This was a completely new practice for the church and sets the stage for what will develop into the Ministerial Council, the North American Regional Ministerial Council, and eventually the International Ministerial Congress. From its minutes we get this statement of objectives:

First, that our oblations, doctrine, and practice be in unison with the Bible and each other as much as within us lies.

Second, to have the combined experience and judgment of ministers and other living epistles ... to decide what is Gospel and Bible truth, and the most successful way of getting people to obey them.

Third, to encourage others to study the word, preach the gospel of the kingdom, and consider all interests of the Christian cause, that it may be advanced....

### Chapter 3

When the Missouri Conference met at Albany, Gentry County in the summer of 1884, it appears as though the setting was right to organize a national conference that would coordinate the efforts of each of the state conferences.

Representatives were present at this meeting from the Iowa and Michigan Conferences. It was at this conference session that the following resolution was adopted mandating the establishment of a general conference:

Resolved, that we recognize the present meeting and the gathering together of the brethren and sisters from different places, as in the providence of God, showing the progress of the cause, and the interest manifested in the good work; and that we see the necessity of a more thorough work and a greater effort to advance the cause; which could be carried out in a general conference of the different States of Missouri, Michigan, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas, and that we urge upon the brethren the importance of considering the same as early as convenient.

The challenge has been made and the stage is set for what will transpire later this same year in Iowa and then Michigan.

The States of Kansas and Nebraska had their first exposure to the message of the Church of God through evangelists sent from the State of Missouri in the late 1870's and early 1880's. The records for this area are not very clear or detailed for this time period. The two states were spoken of together and probably formed one conference. Later on the two states formed separate conferences as the work in Nebraska grew at a more rapid rate.

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### Chapter 4: The General Conference 1884 - 1933

As the work continued to grow more state conferences were organized. The more state conferences that were organized the more people began to throw off their fears of organizing a national church organization. In 1884, the conditions were right for organizing a General Conference.

The eleventh annual conference of the Missouri State Conference of the Church of God was held from August 21 to 27, 1884 at Albany, Missouri. The importance of this meeting is found in the resolution they passed calling for the organization of a General Conference. With the delegates present from the other state conference, it was easy to get this resolution carried back to the state conferences.

On September 7, 1884 the Iowa State Conference met. William C. Long, from Missouri, accompanied the delegates from Iowa back home. He, along with L.J. Branch and John Branch from Michigan, assisted the leaders in Iowa in getting the work better organized. The purpose of the Iowa Conference was to try to get the stage further set for the Michigan State Conference to be held in early October. This was accomplished by passing a set of resolutions similar to those passed by the Missouri Conference. The largest challenge to a national organization was yet to be met.

On October 3, 1884, the Michigan Conference of the Church of Christ met at Irvington, Michigan. If the idea of a General Conference was to become a reality, the Michigan Conference had to make some major changes. The first of those to be considered was the change in name from Church of Christ to Church of God. The conference agreed, in an unanimous vote, to make the change.

The second major change to be considered was the revision of the constitution and bylaws so that it would be possible for them to work as a part of the forming General Conference. This was accomplished by substituting a completely new constitution and set of bylaws for its old ones. The new constitution and bylaws were patterned after those that had been adopted by the Iowa Conference just a month earlier. This completed the groundwork necessary to be able to organize a General Conference.

It seems fitting that the church, having gotten its start in Michigan, was now going to organize the General Conference of the Church of God while meeting at Irvington, Michigan. The minutes of that meeting simply record that it was voted to organize a

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General Conference. The nearly identical state conference constitutions and bylaws served as the pattern for the new General Conference constitution and bylaws.

The purpose of this newly formed General Conference was stated in its constitution. It was:

To unite the different state conferences; to take a general oversight of the wants of the cause, and supply the same; to secure unity of action and belief, so that we may be of one mind and one spirit.

With the national church structure in place, the church now looked toward perfecting it by means that would promote the expansion of the work. Legal incorporation of the General Conference was effected in 1899 in Gentry County Missouri. Those Articles of Incorporation, as amended, serve as the legal basis for the church operations today.

The need to identify ministers within the church grew as the church grew. While the issuance of ministerial licenses and credentials was still carried on primarily by the state conferences during this time, the General Conference did maintain and publish a list of those ministers accepted as a part of the fellowship. It appears as though by 1907 the General Conference had become involved in the revocation of ministerial papers (i.e., the case of W.C. Long) but not their issuance.

The necessity of identifying, clarifying, and establishing church doctrine now became the responsibility of the General Conference. The original statements of belief, as published in the August 10, 1863 Hope of Israel, had remained virtually unchallenged as they guided the church through its formation. They had served as the common beliefs around which they functioned and grew. In 1888, at the fifth annual General Conference, the church formally adapted a set of "Articles of Faith."

The following Articles of Faith, expressing our belief in general, were adopted in lieu of former declarations.

1. We believe that God, the Creator, and Jesus Christ, His Son, the Redeemer, are personal beings.
2. We believe that repentance, conversion, baptism by immersion, a godly life through faith in the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, and His mediatorship for us, are the essential elements of salvation.

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3. We believe that the law of God, contained in the Ten Commandments, forms the basis of a godly life, the standard by which to regulate it.
4. We believe that man is mortal and has no consciousness in death.
5. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the righteous to everlasting life, and the setting up of God's everlasting kingdom on the earth at the second coming of Christ.
6. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the wicked to a judgment of deeds done in this life, wherein life and probation for them forever ceases.
7. The prayer of faith, for the sick.
8. The ordination of ministers by the laying on of hands.

These Articles of Faith were to remain virtually unchanged until 1917.

The church now recognized the need to develop the structure and mechanism by which to expand the work of the church. Committees were formed to coordinate the growth and development of the work. The efforts were so successful that by 1915 the work that started with just 5 states represented, now included 19. In addition to the original 5, the list now included; California, Oregon, Washington, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, North Dakota, and South Dakota. By 1933, the church had reached into nearly every state in the United States as well as across most of Canada.

The General Conference was also involved in helping the state conference and local churches to develop, grow, and reach into new communities. Financial assistance was provided in conducting evangelistic campaigns. Coordination of the work in various communities and states proved to be invaluable. While the initiative was taken by the people in Michigan, the support from around the conference made possible the establishment of a hospital in White Cloud in 1899. An older three story hotel was purchased by the White Cloud Hospital and Sanitarium Association. Rooms were outfitted by various local churches across the country. It was in this hospital that Gilbert Cramner died in 1903. It was operated by J.C. Branch, a stepson of Cramner's.

After the turn of the century, the church realized that its responsibility to the gospel was not confined to the United States. Missionaries were sent into Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, the islands of Trinidad and Jamaica, and England. It reached a point

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early on and continues to be the case today that the church's membership is larger outside of the United States than within its borders.

During this same period of time, the need for printed materials became increasingly apparent. In addition to the *Advocate*, the church began to publish the *Sabbath School Missionary*, a weekly publication for children, in 1887. Tracts on various doctrinal issues were written and printed for distribution.

As local churches and Sabbath schools grew there developed a series of lesson study booklets known as Quarterlies. They were first written only for adults but later a series was added for young people.

This period of time from 1884 to 1933 seemed to be a time of development and expansion for the church. There were few challenges to the growth of the church. That same thing cannot be said of the following years.

## Chapter 5

### Chapter 5: A Time of Division 1933 - 1947

While this period of time is known for its divisions in the church, it should also be noted that there were some positive things happening at the same time. Having experienced a rather rapid growth in the 1920's, it was now necessary to refine the ways in which the church attempted to meet the needs of its new members as well as its established ones. There was a growing need for coordination and development of specific areas of the church work. Separate committees were established to oversee the developing foreign missions and expanding home missions work. Another committee was appointed to direct the writing and production of new church tracts and magazines. As the radio increased in popularity and the church realized its potential as an outreach medium there was the need for still another committee to produce and distribute both weekly and daily radio broadcasts. By the early 1940's, all of this work had become more uniformly organized departments. This provided these various aspects of the church work with consistency and continuity as well as funding.

Another area where a marked improvement came was the quality of the church's publications. *The Advocate* no longer served as an open forum for differing opinions but rather addressed those issues that were established positions of the church. *The Sabbath School Missionary* underwent such an improved and expanded format that it was now being made available to almost every child in the church. A whole host of new tracts began to appear for distribution. They now addressed matters of salvation in addition to the purely doctrinal ones of the past.

In order to meet the increased need for more regional coordination of the work, the United States was divided up into nine areas called districts. Each district was made up of from five to seven states. An overseer was appointed by the General Conference and a district board was elected by the membership of the district. Together the overseer and the board were now responsible for the raising and distribution of funds as well as the development of the work of the church in their regional area. This system remains in place to the present with only some very slight modifications.

The years from 1933-1949 saw some of the most devastating splits in the work of the church. There had been a split in 1907 that affected only the church in Michigan.

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It appears to have been short-lived because within four years the church's membership in Michigan was larger than it had been prior to the division.

The year of 1933 brought about a more serious division. Some of its effects are still felt today. The General Conference met in Stanberry, Missouri in August of that year. There had been some concern about the direction the church had been taking in the last several years prior to the meeting. There was a growing uneasiness with the leadership of A.N. Dugger. From 1914 to 1933 he had served as the editor of the *Advocate*. Much of that time he had also served as the chairman of the General Conference. When the elections for conference officers did not place the men in office that he wanted, he, along with several other ministers left the church. While there were some minor differences of opinion on doctrinal matters, it seems clear that if Dugger and some of his close friends had been elected to the positions they aspired to they would not have left the church.

A.N. Dugger, C.O. Dodd, and W.W. McMicken issued a pamphlet and circular letter on October 29, 1933 from Salem, West Virginia. The letter and pamphlet called for the reestablishment of the church the apostles had directed in the book of Acts. They proposed that the headquarters of the church they were now forming should be located in Jerusalem, Israel. They also held that a scriptural organizational structure must be established. This meant that the church must function through a combination of committees and boards that would follow the pattern of having twelve, seventy, and seven members. It was actually believed that in so doing, they were filling vacancies in apostolic appointments.

The church was now to embark on its darkest hour. On November 4, 1933 a meeting was held in Salem, West Virginia for the purpose of setting up this separate church organization. Through the efforts primarily of Dugger and Dodd the church had divided itself nearly in half. Dugger began to publish a paper in Salem almost at once. He called it the *Bible Advocate* and used the same volume and issue number as the one being published in Stanberry, Missouri. This issue of the use of the name *Bible Advocate* was finally settled by pending court action. The name of the church paper from Salem was changed to *Harvest Field Messenger*.



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This split was to cause the church to experience little if any growth during the 1930's and 40's. In fact it served to provide the impetus for several splits that were to occur in 1937, 1949, and 1958.

Herbert W. Armstrong, founder of the present day Worldwide Church of God, became a member of the Church of God in 1927. In 1931, while still residing in Oregon, he was issued a ministerial license by the Oregon State Conference of the Church of God (7th Day). He assumed regular preaching responsibilities for the church.

When the division occurred in 1933, it appears as though Mr. Armstrong lent his support to the Salem Church. This information is based in part on the fact that he was selected as one of the seventy chosen at the organizational meeting in Salem in November. In the midst of the turmoil and confusion in the church, Armstrong started a radio broadcast in 1934 that he called The Radio Church of God. During these early years, Armstrong drew salary and other support from members of the Church of God. Many viewed his radio programs as an outreach of the church. He began about this same time to publish a magazine called *The Plain Truth*.

It was not long until he received ministerial credentials from the Salem Conference. He held this documentation until it was revoked in 1937. This action was precipitated by his insistence that he should not be under the direction of anyone and that he felt that the United States and England were direct descendants of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Mr. Armstrong originally named his church the Radio Church of God after his radio program. The name was later changed to Worldwide Church of God. In 1947 he moved his work to Pasadena, California where he founded Ambassador College.

The third split that occurred during this time was the group that formed the Sacred Name movement. It is an offshoot of the work of the Church of God in Michigan. In the mid 1930's, there were a growing number of people that felt that the Hebrew names for God and Jesus must be used. The exact spelling and pronunciation could not be agreed upon. This has given rise to no less than five separate church organizations.

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The first of these groups to be organized is the Assemblies of YHWH. It was chartered in Michigan in 1939. A wide variation in spelling was allowed by the original charter. *The Faith* was to become the official publication of the Assembly. It was edited by C.O. Dodd, a former close associate of A.N. Dugger and nominee for the Office of Chairman of the General Conference in 1933. Having been founded in Salem, West Virginia, *The Faith* was later moved to Michigan where it continues to be published.

There were several subsequent groups formed. They include the Assembly of Yavah (Junction City, Oregon), Assemblies of Yah (Albany, Oregon), Assemblies of Yahweh (Bethel, Pennsylvania), Church of God (Jerusalem, Israel), and Workers Together with Elohim (Jerusalem, Israel).

It would appear on the surface that the church should have ceased to exist with all of this turmoil, but it did not. In fact, the years just following this proved to be some of the best years in the church's history.

## Chapter 6

### Chapter 6: Attempts at Reunification 1947 - 1958

While there were those interested in the reunification of the Salem and Stanberry groups as early as 1942, the first successful attempts were made in 1945. That summer a group was formed in Michigan with the expressed purpose of bringing about a merger of the two groups. This group sponsored joint fellowship meeting throughout the State of Michigan in 1946 and 1947 as well as an active letter writing campaign on a national level. These efforts were a direct and vital link in the work that led to the appointment of a three member "Unity Committee" from both groups in 1947.

The Unity Committee had its first meeting at Owosso, Michigan on November 7, 1947. The representatives for the Salem Group were E.A. Straub, K.H. Freeman, and W.W. McMicken. The Stanberry Group sent S. J. Kauer, L.I. Rodgers, and Charles Adams. A.E. Lidell served as the moderator for the committee. He was well respected by both groups and was considered to be a neutral party.

The committee developed a plan for merging the two groups that was presented to the ministers and leadership of both groups in a joint meeting. The plan, as perfected at this meeting, was given unanimous approval by the 61 delegated present in Fairview, Oklahoma from February 12-17, 1948.

The stage was now set for a joint conference meeting to be held from August 9-21 at the City Park in Stanberry, Missouri. In separate business sessions the two conferences voted overwhelming in favor of the merger. One of the stipulations of the merger was that while publishing facilities were to be retained in both Salem, West Virginia and Stanberry, Missouri neither location was to serve as the location for the conference offices.

In early 1950, Denver, Colorado was selected as the location for the new conference offices. These offices were first housed in the basement of the church building. In 1953, a large house at 1510 Cook Street was purchased to house the offices of the General Conference.

Almost before the ink was dry on the unification resolutions, two groups had already split off from the newly organized conference. By January 1950, A.N. Dugger, M.L. Bartholomew, F.L. Summers, F.C. Robinson, and Ed Severson started a Back to

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Salem movement. This move was primarily because some of these men were not put in the leadership positions in the new General Conference.

The other group to leave at this time was termed by some as a Back to Stanberry movement. They formed a loose association headquartered in Meridian, Idaho. Their objections to a central organization (as opposed to local autonomy) and their belief that "unclean" meats could be eaten were the primary reasons for this groups beginning.

As a result of the merger in 1949, there was a major restructuring of the departmental work of the church. Seven departments were established to cover every aspect of the church work from programming for young people to the sending of missionaries. Through the efforts of the Radio Department "Faith for Our Time", a national radio broadcast, was produced and distributed.

In the early 1940's, there were several people in Michigan that felt a Christian high school should be established to educate the young people of the church. The Michigan State Conference appointed a committee in 1945 to locate and secure property for such a school. A 142 acre farm site located 5 miles south of Owosso, Michigan was selected. A school board was selected by the conference. They asked S.J. Kauer to come from Oregon to direct the new school. The plans developed so rapidly that in September of 1948 Spring Vale Academy opened its doors to students. While the school has grown and expanded its facilities, it still continues operations at the same location.

At about this same time, there were leaders in the General Conference that felt it was important to provide some type of training for ministerial candidates prior to placing them in the field. It was from this movement that Midwest Theological Seminary was established in Stanberry, Missouri in 1951. Roy Marrs served as the first director of the seminary.

The scope of the seminary training was later broadened and the name was changed to Midwest Bible College. The college continued to operate in Stanberry until 1973, when the ministerial training program was again restructured and put back into a seminary format.

This flurry of activities and developments in the church was to set off a new round of questioning and challenges for change within the church.

## Chapter 7

### Chapter 7: The Church in Internal Unrest 1958 - 1979

The years from 1954-1959 saw several movements that challenged and questioned the workings of the church. These were not attempts to split from the church but rather to bring about reform from within. The largest and best organized of these movements was the Laymen's Research Movement.

This movement seemed to get started and have its most strength in Michigan, California, and Colorado. The concerns of some of the laymen of the church had been building for several years over the centralization of authority and control in the conference offices. When several proposals for change were given only a limited hearing at the 1957 General Conference session, it was felt that some other means was necessary to bring the concerns before the membership of the church. The expressed concerns of the group as printed in the *Laymen's Examiner* center around the polity of the church. While there may have been some doctrinal differences with the church, they do not surface in their published works.

While the movement originally started out as a lay movement, it was not long until ministers began to side with it. Two of the key ministers involved were Roy Marrs of California and Harvey Otto of Michigan.

Even though the intent was to reform the church from within, when the 1959 session of the General Conference failed to enact the proposed changes a sizable number of people left the church. This number included both of the previously mentioned ministers. With most of those who were dissatisfied having left the church, the movement seemed to just dissipate. However, the questions they raised still continue to haunt the church.

Even though the church experienced only slight numerical growth in the United States during this time, it was experiencing tremendous growth in other parts of the world. This was particularly true in Nigeria and Central America.

The church, as a whole, was going through a period of development and refinement. In an effort to be more efficient, the nine regional Districts were redrawn to reflect current church needs. This resulted in six completely new District areas.

The Conference offices had outgrown the space they had available on Cook Street in Denver. A parcel of land was purchased in Broomfield (a northern suburb of

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Denver) to build a new office complex on. This building was completed in 1972 and houses both the Conference offices and the Bible Advocate Press.

Spring Vale Academy continued to grow. As the enrollment increased, it became necessary to construct larger dormitories. The new boy's dorm was first occupied in the fall of 1963. The first wing of the new girl's dorm was occupied in the fall of 1967.

The growing student body also called for a larger staff. A mobile home was moved in first. Apartments were made out of the original old farmhouse. A new duplex was built. An older home was moved onto the campus. Two more mobile homes were set up. All of this was to provide housing for the increasing number of staff members.

The fall of 1969 saw construction begin on a new classroom building and gymnasium. This new facility enabled an expansion of the curriculum so that the school could remain current with the course offerings of the public schools.

Midwest Bible College also went through some changes during this time. During the late 60's and early 70's it expanded its course offerings to meet the growing needs of the church. The spring of 1974 saw a decision made to close Midwest and open a new school in Denver, Colorado.

In the fall of 1974, MTC (Ministerial Training Center) opened for classes using space in the General Conference office buildings. Three years later a building was moved onto the Conference site to house the ministerial training program now known as Summit School of Theology. That building burned to the ground before it could be occupied. A new building was built back in its place.

The church was rapidly outgrowing its system of carrying out the work through the use of only seven departments. A change was needed in the organization structure. It was decided to appoint seven men to serve as a United Missions Board. There could be any number of agencies developed under this structure. The number of agencies would be free to increase as the need arose in the church.

The work of the church in other countries continued to grow. Missionaries were being sent into South America. As this foreign growth continued, there also grew a louder cry for participation in the decision making process of the church from other parts of the world. An International Ministerial Congress was organized to put all of the member conferences on an equal level in determining the doctrine and polity for the church on an international level. Each member conference would send a

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representative number of delegates to the Congress based on the number of members in that conference.

With all of the refinement completed, the Church now begins to direct its emphasis toward growth.

## Chapter 8

# Chapter 8: Beyond the 1970's

As the Churches membership leveled off and failed to show any significant growth in the late 1970's, a new set of programs and goals began to appear. All of these ideas were to help the Church meet its expressed goal of doubling its membership in the decade of the 1980's.

The Media Outreach Agency was to be responsible for developing the tools necessary to accomplish this goal. The Agency began producing new radio broadcasts, cassette tapes of sermons for personal use, and printed materials that would assist the individual in his personal outreach. Booklets were printed on how to witness effectively and how to conduct a home Bible study. John Roina, the Agency Director, has traveled around the United States presenting church growth seminars at state conference and local churches. Some of these training sessions have been put on videotape for use in local churches.

Summit School of Theology began expanding its programming to meet the growing needs of the Church. Short summer sessions were offered primarily for men already out in the field. Some of the courses were put on videotape so that they could be taken by individuals in their home.

In order to meet the need for more ministers in the field, there was a new system of ministerial recognition implemented. A provisional ministerial license was developed. It was to be issued by the district for an indefinite period of time. It would give the holder the rights and privileges of a minister for only one local area. It does not grant automatic recognition on a national level.

A change was made in the internship program and license. The intern would now be placed by Summit School of Theology rather than by the License and Credentials Committee as before. As a result, the internship license would also be issued by Summit. This license would be valid for only one year.

Ministerial licenses would now be issued by the Regional Ministerial Council where the applicant resides. This recognition could be used in two different ways. It could be used for a man to hold during his two year probationary period while he awaited eligibility for credentials. It could also be used for men that would continue in less than full-time church work.



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Ministerial credentials grant the holder all the rights and privileges of a full -time minister. This includes holding of a national or international church office. The credentials are granted for a lifetime, subject only to revocation, by the Regional Ministerial Council.

A change in the system of distribution of funds also developed at this same time. Two percent of the tithe money received was to be retained by the local church. This could be used by the local church to meet ministers' expenses (not salary) or in other ways they deemed important to the growth of the local program. This appears to be somewhat of a retreat to the congregational arrangement of the church prior to 1949.

With all the goals established and most of the mechanism in place to accomplish them, it still remains to be seen if the church will double in size from 1980 to 1990. It seems as though with all the plans, programs, and goals being developed, it is necessary to remind the Church that its real purpose is the salvation of individuals.

## APPENDIX A

### APPENDIX A: Pamphlet of October 1933 by A.N. Dugger

Pamphlet of October 1933 by A.N. Dugger:

WHEREAS, The dear Lord has informed us that two cannot walk together unless they be agreed, we have further mutually decided to agreeably turn over the publishing house with contents to these seven groups of dissenters, to run and to use as they see best; and

WHEREAS, Believing that the headquarters of the true Church of God in the last days should be located at Jerusalem, Palestine, while the faithful ones wait the return of their Lord, arrangements have now been made and the headquarters of the remnant church is officially located at Jerusalem; and

WHEREAS, The work of the Master in the Holy Land among the returning Jews is increasing, a report recently having been received for the work there of fifty-three Jews being baptized into Christ, and an association of Elders has been formed in the Holy Land, also a piece of property purchased free of debt, we earnestly appeal to every child of God to join us in prayer that God will lead His church onward into greater channels of usefulness, and each individual to deeper consecration, that the Third Angel's Message to which God has called the church may be quickly sent to the ends of the earth, backed up both the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit; and

WHEREAS, The New Testament teaches a continuation of the twelve apostles, with vacancies caused by death being filled through the choice of another, as the case of Mathias in the place of Judas, and Paul in the place of James the brother of John whom Herod killed with the sword, and later others became apostles when some of the twelve fell as martyrs for the precious truth. Furthermore believing in the New Testament practice to have been given for our example, this organization is again being set in order and will soon be perfected with the twelve set over the spiritual affairs of the church for life, or as long as they remain true to the doctrine and primitive faith; and

WHEREAS, The example is further given for the New Testament organization, in the choice of seventy disciples sent forth in the gospel work, this number is also soon to be chosen by lot accordingly as God when the church together enters into special prayer; and

## APPENDIX A

WHEREAS, The seven set over the business affairs of the church as in Acts 6:1-6 was given for our example, and as they were chosen for life, or so long as they remained true to the faith, this is being properly looked after according to the New Testament example; and

WHEREAS, The twelve chosen to look after the spiritual and the seven for the business affairs of the church, were appointed for life, this eliminates repeated elections which affords Satan an opportunity for injecting division, confusion, political scheming, and worldly campaigning so often witnessed in such procedure. Furthermore, presidents and vice presidents are no where spoken of in the scriptures of truth, and pertain only to civil worldly affairs; and

WHEREAS, - The end is very near at hand. Signs throughout the world show the Lord is soon coming. European diplomats are prophesying a world war involving all nations in 1934 which they say the League of Nations is powerless to avert. We know what this means. Conditions of the world, and also in the Holy Land, are set in order for Armageddon. Therefore the church must also be set in order, to meet the bridegroom. She must be a chaste virgin without spot or wrinkle. See II Corinthians 11:1-2. It is now time for his wife to make herself ready. Revelation 19:7-8. The New Testament organization must be arranged with no malice, hatred, or bitterness in any heart, free from debates, discord, and strife.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLYED, - That we herein call for a special period of seven days individual prayer in the homes or wherever God's dear children can get alone with their Heavenly Father, and earnestly pray for a revival in their lives, and a reconsecration to His blessed service. Also, to pray for the Holy Spirit, as in Luke 11:11-13, Ephesians 1:13,14; that each precious servant of His may have opened up to them ways and means wherewith they can be more useful and profitable in saving souls now out in darkness and sin, swiftly approaching eternal doom. We are to plead earnestly with the dear Lord to show us our place, and give each one a part in the Third Angel's Message now going forth to the world; this prayer period to commence Sabbath, November 4.

## APPENDIX A

FURTHERMORE, Be it moved that a copy of these declarations be sent to every member of the Church of God, as far as possible, and to scattered Sabbath keepers far and wide, inviting their cooperation and prayers, for the further perfecting of the church, and setting it in order for the noble work to which God is definitely calling His faithful servants, as they await the return of their Master.

NOW, May grace and peace from God the Father, and love from Jesus Christ, His Son, abide with you, both now and forevermore, and give you a part in the kingdom. Amen.

## APPENDIX B

### APPENDIX B: Notice by General Conference 1933

Notice by General Conference 1933

WHEREAS there is being sent out a pamphlet and circular letter under the signature of three men: (Namely A.N.Dugger, C.O. Dodd, W.W. McMicken) calling for the Restoration of the Primitive Organization of THE CHURCH OF GOD, Salem, W. Va., U.S.A., or Jerusalem, Palestine, be it known that these parties attended the last General Conference, and were defeated in election, after trying to dominate the conference by intimidation and otherwise, are now calling for means to finance another organization and whereas statements are made which we believe to be unfounded and untruthful, we hereby affirm that the principles of the Primitive Church of God have not been altered.

These men teach in said pamphlet that our General Conference has fallen into the hands of dissenters who deny the Holy Spirit, sanction the use of unclean meats and tobacco, and want the Bible Advocate opened to the discussion of these topics.

Furthermore, they teach that peace and harmony is no longer known in the Church of God, and the Lord's blessings have been withdrawn.

Brethren, do not be alarmed at these assertions as they are untrue. The Church of God is built upon the Rock, and cannot be shaken by human agencies....

We are accused also of using tactics in getting delegates to the General Conference which are untrue. They telephoned and went after delegates after the conference was in session -- still they could not control the conference.

These men were disappointed, and are now trying to draw away disciples after them; but the Church of God is going on victorious into the Kingdom.

It is furthermore stated that each General Conference for the past nine years has been a place of strife, confusion, discord, and debate.

Brother Dugger has published good reports of the conferences in the *Bible Advocate* for many years past, and we feel sure that if he had been elected to the office he aspired to, no criticism would be heard at this time.

## APPENDIX B

We deem it unnecessary to go into detail regarding each statement made in the circular letter and pamphlet, for we believe the brethren who have been supporting the work will continue to do so.

There may be a few who will be deceived by their call, but let all earnestly pray God that these men will see the error of their way, and again join us in laboring for lost souls.

A.S. Christenson, Pres.

Roy Dailey, Secy.

## APPENDIX C

### APPENDIX C: Proceedings of Meeting in Salem, West Virginia, November 1933

Proceedings of Meeting in Salem, West Virginia, November 1933:

The Choosing of the Twelve, the Seventy, and the Seven

Several weeks prior to November 4th, a call was sent to many countries for prayer that God would again choose men to lead His church as in the former time. These countries were: Jerusalem, South Africa, Australia, Egypt, England, Norway, Germany, Switzerland, China, India, New Zealand, Panama, Japan, Jamaica, Cuba, Trinidad, Guam, Canada, Nova Scotia, Liberia, Barbados, Venezuela, Syria, Madagascar, Burma, Newfoundland, and Mexico.

The practice of choice by lot is very ancient among the Jews, and was practiced also by the early church. Acts 2:23 to 26. Therefore, after a call to prayer throughout the world was sent forth, besides to about ten thousand people in America, ministers and brothers and sisters in Christ met at Salem, W. Va., according to appointment on November 4th. From one thousand miles westward to nine hundred miles northeast, and six hundred miles south, they came together, most of them arriving Friday. Although tired from riding great distances, some being up driving for the two previous nights, they all joined together with the Salem church, and spent the entire night in fasting and prayer. A wonderful meeting indeed it was. How good to be there, and how short the passing hours. The time was not simply endured but enjoyed.

In Salem, the city of peace, many hearts rejoiced with love, and the sacred presence of God hallowed the meeting.

The meeting was opened by singing, Oh, To Be More Like Jesus ; The Church of God ; and Humble Thyself to Walk With God . Beginning on Friday afternoon, we began to fast and remained in prayer until the early morning hours of the Holy Sabbath, then letters were gone over from ministers and names gathered, sent in from far and near. One hundred and forty names were presented, and a box was prepared from which to draw the names according to the leadings of God, for these respective offices. As we approached the set time, it seemed we could feel the presence of God. The power of His presence through the world circle of prayer was keenly apparent, and hearts rejoiced in the hope and joy of His salvation.

## APPENDIX C

The congregation then made choice of three men whose names were placed on separate slips on paper, and dropped into the box. A prayer was given that God would make choice of one of these three, whom He could best use and guide in drawing out the ministers names for the twelve and the seventy. Elder Dodd drew out one slip which contained the name of Brother John Adams of Salem.

Ministers names were then placed into the box, and a brief silent prayer given. It was just a few minutes past eleven A.M., Washington time. The names for the Twelve were drawn out in the following order, by Brother Adams:

No. 1, Elder J.M. Oren-Naerem, of Norway; No. 2, Elder F.C. Robinson, of Missouri; No. 3, Elder R.A. Barnes, of Arkansas; No. 4, Elder R.L. Taylor, of Oregon; No. 5, Elder C. Heywood, of Michigan; No. 6, Elder W.W. McMicken, of West Virginia, No. 7, Elder C.E. Groshans, of Indiana; No. 8, Elder Henry Wood, of Massachusetts; No. 9, Elder Raymond Saenz, of Mexico; No. 10, Elder H. Negby, of Palestine; No. 11, Elder John Kiesz, of Missouri; No. 12, Elder Charles L. Royer, of Connecticut. A prayer of thanks was now given by Elder Dodd.

These names were written down one by one as chosen, by Elder O.D. Grimm, acting as Secretary protem. Another short season of silent prayer was then called, and the names of the Seventy were chosen one by one.

They were as follows in the order of choice:

Elder John Anderson, Mo.; Elder D. Davis, Mich.; Elder H. Tavel, C.A.; Elder Adolph Gusman, Mex.; Elder William Sodine, Ark.; Elder Otto Haeber, Calif.; Elder E.H. Shadel, Ark.; Elder Robert Nance, Ark.; Elder L.M. Jackson, Ala.; Elder William Berry, South America; Elder W.A. Summers, Okla.; Elder John Brenneise, S. Oak.; Elder V. Amos, India; Elder Samuel Brown, London, England; Elder Will Barnes, Ark.; Elder Andrew J. Williams, Texas; Elder J.E. Benson, Pan.; Elder J.D. Bagwell, Ala.; Elder N.P. Daniel, India; Elder E.O. Bradberry, Ark.; Elder G. Flores, Elder L.F. Claspell, Ind.; Elder Kenneth Freeman, W. Va.; Elder V.J. Benjamin, India; Elder 8. Israel, South India; Elder Pete Bartsch, Ark.; Elder S.A. Oberg, Ore.; Elder H. Snyder, Wash.; Elder J.A. James, Jr., N.C.; Elder A.H. Stith, Idaho; Elder T.V. Taylor, La.; Elder D.B. Garcia, Mex.; Elder E. Campos, Mex.; Elder E.P. Roche, Mich.; Elder J.E. Codrington, Pa.; Elder Noah Barnabas, Palestine;



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Elder C. Sobers, New York City; Elder A.C. Turner, Mich.; Elder E. Echiavaria, Tx.; Elder Herbert Armstrong, Ore.; Elder A. Stiede, Mich.; Elder J.W. Tarver, La.; Elder J.A. James, N.C.; Elder J.G. Smith, Calif.; Elder L.W. Runyon, Okla.; Elder C.O. Vallery, La.; Elder J.M. Rodriguez, Tx.; Elder J. Cervantes, Mex.; Elder W.W. West, Calif.; Elder E.J. Younce, Elder V.J. Joseph, India; Elder C.O. Dodd, W. Va.; Elder J. Siler, Mich.; Elder Archie Craig, Okla.; Elder Roy Kanady, Ark.; Elder 8. Bernsten, China; Elder G. Thompson, Panama Canal; Elder James Relford, Kan.; Elder Chas. J. Ellis, British West Indies; Elder Charles Welch, Okla.; Elder E.H. Jenkins, Ark., Elder Ed Severson, Okla.; Elder W.C. Bryce, Tx.; Elder Albert Bodine, Ark.; Elder Arthur Barnes, Ark.; Elder Hugh Brown, London, England; Elder Will Briley, Ark.; Elder F.G. Zoller, Neb.

Following a prayer of grateful thanks to our dear heavenly Father for leading in this work, the assembly proceeded as in Acts 6:1 to 6 in choosing the seven men to place over the business affairs of the church. The choice resulted as follows:

A.N. Dugger, of Missouri, C.O. Dodd, of West Virginia, John Brenneise, of South Dakota, Hugh Miller, of Nebraska, F.L. Summers, of West Virginia, John Adams, of West Virginia, R.E. Winsett, of Tennessee.

A prayer service followed, in which the hands of those of the Twelve present were laid upon the Seven who were at this meeting and they were thus set apart for the work assigned, as in Acts 6:6. A prayer then followed for the officers chosen who were not present, that God would lead them and fully set them apart for the life duties thus involved.

It was late in the afternoon, and although the brethren had been fasting and praying since the beginning of the Sabbath the evening before, they were not hungry. They had been feasting on spiritual food, manna from heaven, and it was indeed refreshing to the soul. All were filled with joy, strengthened by the presence and power of God, and felt that it was good to be there.

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