

THE SYDNEY CHURCH NEWS  
April 26, 1961

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SUMMARY OF SERMONETTE

Many times people will turn to Romans 14:5-6 and try to apply this to the Apostle Paul's doing away with the keeping of the Sabbath and Holy Days.

Let's go back and get the setting of these scriptures and we'll see what Paul meant.

This letter was written to the Church of God at Rome while Paul was down at Corinth in 55-56 A.D. The letter was written to straighten out a problem that had arisen in his absence.

The saints at Rome were having different opinions and were judging one another unworthy of Christ.

In Romans 14:5 we read "One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteems everyday alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." It does not say "God" but says "one MAN esteemeth one day above another."

We are not concerned with what man thinks but what God thinks (Jn.12:48). Jesus is not going to judge us by what man thinks, but by the Words He spoke. Romans 14:4 we're not to judge one another.

Paul was not sanctioning nor condemning any particular days.

We can only be fully persuaded in our own minds if we know what God's WORD says (II Tim.3:15) and by proving all things and holding fast that which is good. The problem Paul was concerned with here was their judging one another.

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SUMMARY OF SERMON

GOD'S CHURCH -- DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY IT WAS BUILT?

Three major reasons why Christ built a Church are: 1. Preserve KEYS into Kingdom of God, 2. Preach Gospel of Kingdom of God to world and 3. For perfecting saints for entrance into Kingdom. You need to understand these points thoroughly lest you be one Satan can buffet about, discourage and finally cause to forfeit an opportunity of entering God's Kingdom.

In Matthew 16:18 Christ said, "I will build my church" -- not churches. Few realize why! They fail to realize that only in this church are preserved the KEYS -- or means of ingress -- to the Kingdom of God. Few realize that certain keys are vital to ones understanding of God's plan and on which true knowledge and right understanding are built -- that Christ through the Church interprets the Bible by properly dividing the Word and accurately aligning Scripture with Scripture. No group or organization or church can understand the Bible apart from God's Church. Many, not understanding this, have taken it upon themselves to interpret the Bible and with their understanding, form various church movements. But all of these man-centered and man-made religions have brought upon this world of "Christianity" nothing but confusion, chaos and a lot of frustrated, unhappy individuals.

Many news items reveal that the churches are filled with people but that these people don't really believe the doctrines and teachings of the church. Yes, frustrated churchgoers are beginning to realize that the churches are not offering them what is satisfying -- the very purpose of life! Many admissions show the clergy is more concerned about pleasing the people than preaching the authoritative Truth of God. This condition was prophesied in the Bible.

Paul knew that because man in his carnality resents being told what he can believe, what he is to do, when he is to do it and just what is the true standard of righteousness that many would prefer to go the way of least resistance -- please the lustful desires and satisfy their vanity -- and refuse to take heed to the Word of God (II Tim. 4:1-4). The way of God, as Paul stated, would be opposed by evil men who get worse, not better, with the passing of time. These men would formulate all kinds of false doctrines and plausible arguments against the Old Testament and certain parts of the New Testament because to live by it would mean disciplining oneself as he is directed by those in authority in God's Church (II Tim. 3:12-15). The Scripture is given for true doctrine, reproof and correction and for instruction on how to become righteous -- showing a need for the church to make various doctrines clear and understandable, a form of government in the church to reprove and correct, to perfect the saints (II Tim. 3:16-17).

Since evil men get worse and worse, we should see the need of a church for such purposes -- especially should this be evident when we realize that evil religious leaders resisted Christ and tried constantly to refute the Truth He preached. The Gospel of Matthew reveals just why Christ, at a certain juncture, stated that He would build His Church.

Notice Christ had to meet and qualify to replace the present god of this world -- Satan (Mat. 4:1-10; II Cor. 4:4). Christ was born to be a King but had to qualify to assume such a position. When He proved worthy to depose Satan the Devil, He began preaching about the Kingdom He would go to heaven to obtain and return with eventually (Mat. 4:17; Lk. 19:11-12). Immediately He started healing the sick and afflicted and casting out demons -- this was to prove He represented a Kingdom which had power and authority over the evil spirits and sickness and disease (Mat. 4:23-24). Once this was established, He commenced to reveal the way by which one qualifies to enter the Kingdom at His second coming. This vital truth was set forth in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. Christ knew, however, that the carnal minded religious leaders would oppose and twist His teachings to mislead the people. So He warned against them (Mat. 7:15-20). But to show that many of their coined arguments and deceptive teachings would seem plausible to many people -- deceived by their perverted teachings -- Christ revealed that many would be deceived into worshipping Him all in vain (Mat. 7:21-23; Rev. 12:9; II Cor. 4:3-4). Only those who listen to Him and do exactly what He says, are going to enter the Kingdom of God (Mat. 7:24; Mat. 5:17-20). This means one must voluntarily place himself under God's authority -- an astonishing thing for the carnal mind to accept since it is by nature opposed to God's rule (Mat. 7:28-29; Rom. 8:7).

To clearly reveal the way such authority is to be carried out in the Church, God caused Christ to have contact with a Roman centurion. This example shows that the authority means one is told what to do, when to do it -- he is to be quick and unquestioning in carrying out orders -- and that it takes GREAT FAITH to believe in such government, primarily because in not seeing Christ, it is doubly difficult to believe He is always backing up the authority exercised in His Government (Mat. 8:5-10). Such a thing is especially hard for a stiffnecked, rebellious, hardhearted Israelite who believes in the rights and freedoms of the individual -- to do what he thinks is right (Mat. 8:11-13).

It does take faith to believe that God is responsible for the servant He is using and will back up the authority He has invested in the man -- it is too easy to see a fault in the man and through human reasoning, reject the authority -- feeling only the man is rejected. Mr. Herman L. Hoeh was once told by an officer in a worldly church, following his explanation of the system of government existing in God's Church, that, "I see it takes faith to believe in the system of Government carried out in your church"! Yes it does, brethren, you have to know that Christ obligates Himself to do many things in carrying out His responsibilities as HEAD of God's Church (Col. 1:17-18; Col. 2:19).

Christ called His disciples to learn the Truth of God, to exercise authority and to perfect the Saints. He set the example in this, then they were given the opportunity to learn by practical experience (Mat. 10:1-2). They were cautioned about being on guard against evil men who would twist their teachings and persecute them (Mat. 10:16-17, 25). We can expect the same thing in Australia and opposition is coming to the surface already.

Through experience, they were learning that the very Creator was opposed by the religious teachers who were trying to pervert the Truth about what constitutes obedience to God (Mat. 12:1-8). They saw that even when a notable miracle was done by God through Christ that instead of being thankful for the good done, the religious leaders took council to destroy Christ -- the very source of all Truth (Mat. 12:13-14; Eph. 4:21). Their accusations went so far as to claim the Devil, not God, was working through Christ (Mat. 12:22-24).

Can you imagine what must have, at times, gone through the minds of the disciples when accepting the fact that Christ was right and the whole world around them was wrong? A stumbling block to Mr. Ted Armstrong for years was trying to accept the fact that his father was right and everyone else was wrong -- he wondered why his father had the right to be right and other ministers were wrong. Christ had to continually explain that they were called to understand -- that this is a Day of Salvation only for the FIRSTFRUITS -- but others were not called (Mat. 13:10-15); that Truth is progressively revealed, therefore, they would be shown things not even understood by prophets of old (Mat. 13:16-17). A lack of this knowledge could have been a stumbling block had the Pharisees come to them saying, "You mean to tell me you are so holy that God has revealed things to you that even Moses and the Prophets didn't understand. What makes you think you are holier than they, etc., etc."

They were being taught to always rely on Christ to guide them -- that they could not put any confidence in the religious leaders of the world. They were being taught to view things God's way and not from a carnal viewpoint -- and that they needed help from Christ in this (Mat. 13:34-36).

The disciples were witnessing firsthand how evil leaders were twisting the Scriptures while in the very presence of their Maker (Mat. 15:1-3). And to show His disciples how they must beware of the religious leaders who view things from a carnal, material standpoint, Christ had another encounter with the Pharisees (Mat. 16:1-6). However the disciples continued to rely on human reasoning instead of coming to Christ for a clear and accurate answer. Consequently, he had to offer further help before they got the point (Mat. 16:7-12). They were gradually coming to see they could not rely on human reasoning or on the opinions of men about them -- but this lesson had to be impressed upon their minds more indelibly! By posing a question, Christ showed them that what comes from human beings, led by a carnal mind, are strictly unreliable opinions (Mat. 16:13-14). They were, then, showed how the Truth is made known -- it comes from God, not from men (Mat. 16:15-17).

To this juncture in the experiences of the disciples, they had not only seen that their Master was opposed on many issues by the religious leaders but also that they still looked at things too much like the natural human being does. They were probably wondering what would happen if Christ were not around to take care of things! They didn't have the ability to refute all the many trick arguments of the religious leaders nor fully withstand their opposition. Christ, therefore, gave them an absolute promise and guarantee that His Truth would be preserved -- that the KEYS necessary to properly understand the WAY into the Kingdom of God would always be preserved until He returns to personally deal with things. This assurance was in a Church which He would build and be responsible for governing and in which the KEYS TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD would be preserved (Mat. 16:18-19). And not only did He guarantee that these KEYS would be preserved but He also promised to be responsible for the decisions made by those placed in offices of government in the Church (verse 19).

Even after the promise of building His Church was made, Peter and the disciples had to learn more about not looking on things the way the natural mind views them, but instead, come to Christ at all times for an understanding of things. Notice Matthew 16:21-23 where Peter was again using human reasoning to discount what Christ said because he still wasn't viewing things with a spiritual mind and didn't just take what Christ said without question! HE WAS REBUKED FOR THIS -- Christ was showing the disciples that you are to do exactly what Christ says in spite of the way it may look to you when weighing the physical factors. Before Christ ascended to heaven, He made sure they HAD LEARNED THIS LESSON WELL! For this reason, He could start a government in the Church through them and know they would carry out rule in the church God's way and not the way which seems right to the natural mind. They proved faithful in this BUT HOW ABOUT YOU?? Do you still view things in a material manner or do you know that you are to obey just what Christ said? Too, do you have confidence and faith in the LIVING HEAD OF THIS CHURCH to know He makes sure those in offices of authority are seeing what He wants done and are yielding to His will? Each one of us stands before God Who is judging us on these matters -- let us have confidence that Christ built ONE Church and is the LIVING, DYNAMIC, ALL-POWERFUL HEAD of this Church!

In the future we want to follow through on this vital topic to understand that Christ has been faithful in preserving the KEYS TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD in this Church and that one of the primary reasons for which the Church was built was so this WORK could be raised up to PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF THE WORLD TOMORROW to the entire world just before the end of this present age comes! Brethren, how privileged we are to be a part of such a worthwhile, WORK OF LOVE!

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#### CHURCH NEWS

The brethren rejoiced when they hears Mr. Waterhouse read excerpts from letters received in the North Sydney office, revealing the GOOD which is being done by the Work of God in Australia! Many people are having their eyes opened as they listen to The World Tomorrow broadcast and study the literature received. Even some teenagers are being awakened to see the wrong direction in which they are headed and are taking steps to get right with God. Comments such as were heard by the brethren indicate what worthwhile fruit can be borne by God as a result of our prayers, tithes, offerings and diligence in helping in whatever way possible to proclaim the GOOD NEWS of God's soon-coming Kingdom!

It was staggering to hear Mr. Waterhouse state that the work of broadcasting in Australia is going to increase by FIFTY PER CENT with the addition of TEN STATIONS on the 1st of May. Think of it! An increase of such staggering proportions so soon after the establishment of the Work in Australia! Truly God is moving fast in this continent "down under"! Let us strive to develop spiritually as rapidly as growth is coming to this Work!

The PLAIN TRUTH magazine is to be increased to forty pages in June. Accelerating growth is coming to God's Work! To have a forty-page magazine of such quality -- without advertisements, poor set-up, and cheap features -- going to 300,000 people throughout the world is both wonderful and amazing! Who would have thought of such a thing back in the year 1934 when those first few copies were fun off on a borrowed mimeograph!

Word has been received from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong that he hopes churches with weekly Sabbath services can be established in both Brisbane and Melbourne in the near future -- you scattered brethren will rejoice in this news! Steps will soon be taken to carry through on this.

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For the second Sunday in a row, a number of men worked on one of the homes on Mrs. Burchill's property, arranging things for her tenancy within the very near future. She is just thrilled with the progress being made and has come to see even more fully the love the brethren have for one another -- always willing to extend a helping hand!

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#### BIBLE STUDY

Sixty-seven people were in attendance for the Wednesday evening Bible study. Think of the growth God has given us in Sydney! Just sixteen months ago the church started with twelve people. The Bible study attendance is far above what most thought the church would reach by this time. But the church attendance is rapidly approaching ninety! What will be the size of our Bible studies and Church services in another year?? Brethren, we can't possibly be thankful enough for all the manifold blessings our Heavenly Father has been showering on us! Let us strive to recognize more of our blessings, get on our knees and really pour-out thanksgivings to God and Jesus Christ for all that is being done for us.

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#### AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

Mr. Armstrong informed us that the third term in Ambassador College U.K. is underway with everything going fine. Now they are looking ahead to the second year of activity in the fine college God has raised up in England. There ought to be additional students from Australia next year -- remember Mr. Gunar Freibergs who is there now from this country, pray for him and the other students!

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#### SPOKESMAN CLUB

History was made in Australia again! The first Spokesman Club in the southern hemisphere was instituted at 7 p.m. Sunday evening, April 23rd, with twenty-six in attendance. This is only the first of many which will eventually exist in the vast continent as God's Work accelerates at a very rapid pace, sending forth a last-warning to a destruction-bound, worn-torn world! -- and showing millions why God's soon-coming Kingdom offers the only hope and lasting peace. Will all of you pray fervently for the success of this Club, we need a lot of help from God to progress as we should.