

# PERSONAL FROM **HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG**

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**F**or about the past year, I have been thinking about the similarity of Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1. Both start with the very beginning of creation — and all things as we know them.

And they have a definite application to God's Church, and His Work, as it is *right now*.

The Old Testament begins with "In the beginning, God CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH." In the original Hebrew language, as Moses originally wrote, the word "heaven" is in the plural — "heavens." Also, the English word "God" is translated from the Hebrew *Elohim* — a uniplural word meaning *one* God, but composed of more than one Person. *It means* GOD IS A FAMILY — one *family* and the FAMILY name is "God."

John's account in the New Testament appears to begin even earlier, before the Creator became *family*. It states: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This, in time sequence, was *before* verse 14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Until the birth of Jesus Christ, He was not God's Son. He was made — *became* the Son of God through His human birth of His human mother, Mary. By that human birth His only Father was God. So God as a family BEGINS WITH CHRIST.

A point to notice here: "The *only* begotten of the Father." Yet we, through Christ, may be begotten children of God. But our original begetting as human beings has been of our human fathers. As a human,

Jesus was the *only* one directly begotten by God.

But John's account shows the existence, before all else, of *two* divine, immortal, all-powerful Personages. *Both* were of *God* rank. But one was the "reveatory thought" — the "Word" — Spokesman. He BECAME Jesus Christ, and in Ephesians 3:9 we find: "... God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." And of Christ: "... He spake and it was done" (Ps. 33:9).

So God creates all things — the *universe* — by Jesus Christ.

But when God — *Elohim* — the two Personages — created the *earth* (Gen. 1:1), *Elohim* included the one called "God" in John 1:1, and also the "Word." But in Job 38:1-7 we find the angels shouting for joy *when* God created the earth. So the angels had been created *before* the creation of the heavens and the earth. "The heavens" here implies THE ENTIRE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE.

Angels are spirit beings. Therefore, God evidently created spirit beings composed of spirit *before* He created matter and the physical universe.

Point one I want to make in this article is what actually took place between "God" and the "Word" who became Father and Son — *prior* to the actual creation.

Do you suppose they designed angelic beings — later the earth, the animals, trees, flowers, plants, fish, birds — finally MAN — *instantaneously* — without preplanning? Look at the leaf of an oak tree — then the leaf of a maple tree. They are beautifully designed. But does God design and create them, and

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all the other trees and leaves, all flowers — body mechanisms of all animals — even all the creation we find here on earth — without pre-thought and planning?

Examples: We humans are made in God's image — form and shape. We have MINDS like God's, only incomplete as yet. About 1960 it was in my heart to build an auditorium for God — IF *it was* GOD'S WILL. I never did ask God to let me build it. But I asked Him to show me whether *He wanted it*, and if He did to provide the money to complete it — not merely start it. We began making plans for it in 1960. God did not give me His answer until January 1972. I had to be PATIENT and wait on God. But it took most of that twelve years to complete the plans! Then the incredible thing happened — 100 percent financing provided (most of it by long-term insurance company loans still to be paid off) — and I broke ground to *begin* the actual construction. It had taken some twelve years of *planning, designing*, until every single square inch of that whole super-fine edifice was designed in complete detail, on paper. It took two years and about two-and-one-half months to build.

Since I have had not only that experience, but also with several other buildings on the Ambassador College campus, and God made us to become like He is, I feel it gives me some insight into how God Himself does things.

And so I come to the conclusion that GOD and the WORD must have taken a *long time* in thinking, planning and designing before they actually created the first angels.

And then, how LONG, do you suppose they took to plan and design matter, and all its properties, before they created, and brought into existence matter in all its forms and shapes composing the physical universe? That includes our Sun, and its planets, like Jupiter, Saturn, this Earth, Mars, etc. — all of which is only one small part of the galaxy, our Milky Way — and countless other galaxies all through endless space.

How long do you suppose God

allowed Himself to think out, plan and design the human mind and human body — with all its various systems — such as the digestive system, the circulatory system, the nervous system, the respiratory system, the eliminative system, and the reproductive system? And all of these systems, marvelously inter-related and connected, had to function *together!*

To contemplate all of this makes me stand in abject wonder and AWE of the MIGHTY God.

But now He is working out a PURPOSE here below on this earth, in our time. Some 43 years ago, He committed His great commission to me — to carry His message of the Kingdom of God to all the world. For an ordinary human that was a staggering responsibility. But, of course, I would not do it all alone. God supplied me with the help of others.

Even before He committed that commission to me, He brought about my conversion through the wife He had given me earlier. Then, apart from my desire or planning, He caused our son Garner Ted to be born. God planned to use his voice to carry His message to *millions*. But Ted was unable to talk until he was well past two years old. An apparent speech impediment seemed to prevent it. God put in my mind to pray for the healing of his voice when I was anointing him for pneumonia. The very next day he was talking in whole sentences — and he's been talking ever since — now to *millions!*

We have reached the very generation when the KINGDOM OF GOD will be set up, and the GOVERNMENT OF GOD restored to earth. God wants that fact announced to all the world. He has raised up my son Garner Ted to stand with me in that staggering commission — and He has raised up others — brethren in His Church, co-workers and friends — to stand back of us to make the fulfilling of this commission possible. This is GOD'S WORK for this time on this earth.

Could it be one more EVIDENCE that this truly is the Work of the living God, that, as He and Christ — divine FATHER AND SON — are directing the whole UNIVERSE, He has

raised up and He is using a *human* father and son for directing His Work this time ON EARTH?

And, as a divine FATHER AND SON are of ONE MIND so are the human father and son — but *not* our separate individual minds, but as we are commanded in Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

At all times since my son's conversion, that same mind has been in him as the mind God put in me — never any deviations from the TRUTH. As nearly as humanly possible, we have tried to have only that mind of Christ.

This is the human LEADERSHIP which God put in His Church.

God's Church, doing the WORK of God, follows the pattern He set and put within His Church. For truly this is His Church. □

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