

AND NOW CHRIST SETS CHURCH BACK ON TRACK DOCTRINALLY!

By Herbert W. Armstrong

UNTIL ABOUT 1969 we in God's Church *did* all "speak the same thing." By 1978 many of the ministers were speaking *different* things! God had withdrawn from us His blessing and power that for 35 YEARS caused the Work of His Church to grow at the approximate rate of 30 percent every year over the preceding year!

WHAT CAUSED GOD TO WITHDRAW HIS BLESSING AND POWER?

Precisely the same thing that choked the growth of the Church of God at Corinth from A.D. 56, 25 years after the Church was founded at Jerusalem. They were following different leaders, speaking different things, watering down the sacred and precious truths of Christ!

Christ's apostle wrote to the Corinthian Church, in A.D. 56,

"... HOW may we obey Christ by all speaking the same thing, when we — especially a small portion of the ministers — have not all believed the same thing?"

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Corinthians 1:10).

They were starting to follow different leaders teaching different doctrines. The Church was becoming divided! And a church divided against itself cannot stand!

Once such division starts among ministers it is a difficult matter to correct. For most who have gone doctrinally awry will today — just as in Corinth in A.D. 56 — not be willing to change back from error and watered-down doctrines to God's TRUTH!

This same deflection was occurring in the church at Rome. And God said through the apostle Paul, "Now I beseech you, brethren, *mark them* which cause divisions and offences *contrary* to the doctrine by which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Romans 16:17-18). Jesus Christ showed me that, much as it hurt,

the No. 1 deceiver with watered-down doctrines, in authority, whom I had to mark and put out of God's Church, was my only living son whom I loved as only a father can. Other liberals have had to go since. GOD'S CHURCH MUST BE CLEANED UP! We must all SPEAK THE SAME THING, as God commands!

But *HOW*? How does Jesus Christ put His doctrines into His Church? How did He in A.D. 31? How in A.D. 1933?

DID THE CHURCH OF GOD, of A.D. 31, believe and proclaim the TRUE doctrines? How did they come to believe as they believed? Did their doctrines come as a result of a vote of ministers on the ideas, opinions and convictions of the ministers in the Church?

HOW must the true Church of God today receive its doctrinal beliefs? Doesn't every human individual, by himself, KNOW

right from wrong — what is TRUTH and what is error? Is not the ability to know right from wrong acknowledged by society as the test of sanity or insanity? Does not mankind automatically know what is truth — what is good and right — as contrasted from what is wrong, evil and sin?

God says we in His Church must all believe and speak the SAME THING — we must be AGREED on what is truth and right and good as opposed to what is evil and sin.

Brethren, WE HAVE NOT OBEYED THAT COMMAND OF JESUS CHRIST! We have not all believed the same thing! There HAVE BEEN DIVISIONS among us for that very reason!

We therefore have been GUILTY before God of DISOBEYING HIS EXPLICIT COMMAND! I said, "have been." But God's time of trial and test is upon us! God says, through Daniel, that at "the time of the

end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried . . ." (Daniel 12:9-10).

God's sifting time is upon us! God is allowing those duped by Satan to bring upon us the GREATEST TIME OF TRIAL AND TESTING THAT His Church has undergone in our lifetime!

When I pray, as I do many times a day during this supreme trial of the forces of State government of America's most populous state and the forces of the public press lined up against us, falsely accusing us, picturing us to the public as if already tried and proved guilty — as CRIMINALS — I not only petition God to deliver us, but I also THANK GOD for this trial and test! We are being STRENGTHENED by it! We are being brought closer to God and welded closer TOGETHER than ever before! God, through this trial, is weeding out from our midst the liberals who did NOT believe or "speak the same thing." These I have LOVED sincerely, even as I have loved my own son!

I wonder, do we sometimes LOVE even the sin *within* us that we hate to purge it out? At least I know how I have so sincerely loved those individuals whom Christ has been purging out — that we MAY all be united in speaking the SAME THING — speaking GOD'S TRUTH!

Now *HOW* may we obey Christ by all speaking the same thing, when we — especially a small portion of the ministers — have not all *believed* the same thing?

I can tell you how my son, when he was executive vice president, with a small group of liberals at headquarters, tried to bring us into harmony. Some of the ministers did not believe many of the doctrines Christ had put into His Church. A minority (yet perhaps close to a dozen field ministers) had liberal leanings — did not believe the SAME THINGS Christ had put into His Church. So, *behind my back* — unknown to me, while I was in another part of the world carrying Christ's Gospel message to other nations — they produced what they called a Systematic Theology

Project, *changing and watering down* — making more liberal — many doctrines Christ had put into God's Church.

WHY did they do this? The one who wrote most of it stated to me in writing, "My only goal in coordinating the project was to bring doctrinal consistency, stability and unity to the ministry and the Church."

This reminds me of a saying we used to have on the tennis

"The Corinthian church was not in harmony. It was divided. WE had gotten out of harmony. WE were divided!"

courts. "The idea was fine, but the execution was rotten."

These deluded and misguided "scholars" were in fact IGNORANT of the central truth: that the "same thing" we must all speak *must be what CHRIST speaks*; and for unity in what He speaks, the doctrines MUST BE PUT INTO THE CHURCH BY JESUS CHRIST! Not by compromising, watering down Christ's teachings to satisfy rebellious liberals. JESUS CHRIST is the living HEAD of the Church. They overlooked that!

So it has become necessary for CHRIST, the HEAD of the Church, to SET GOD'S CHURCH BACK ON THE TRACK OF GOD'S UNITY — not confusion by trying to satisfy rebellious men by COMPROMISING GOD'S TRUTH!

Now *HOW* did God put His doctrines and teachings into His Church in A.D. 31? — before many in the Church turned to another gospel (Galatians 1:6-7)? And how did the living Christ put God's doctrines and teachings into His Church TODAY — before these "intellectual liberals" began trying to compromise and water down?

Only by His chosen apostles. As I quoted in the beginning, in I Corinthians 1:10 Christ says we must all speak the same thing. *WHAT* "same thing"? That which comes from the MIND OF CHRIST — "Let *this* mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

The Corinthian church was not

in harmony. It was divided. WE had gotten out of harmony. WE were divided! Those who do have the mind of Christ and are surrendered to the Spirit of God are being used by Jesus Christ in *rooting out* that spiritual CANCER from God's Church.

Ministers are being called in for conferences. The first thing we at headquarters are concerned about is *their attitude!* If the attitude is good, any doctrinal differences can be straightened out, and we may proceed in peace, harmony and UNITY in the faith — all speaking the same thing that CHRIST speaks! If the attitude is resentful, rebellious, bitter, the

one having it is "hooked" on a spiritual drug far worse than physical heroin. I have warned against this attitude for 49 years — ever since I began to preach in 1930.

It is only common sense to realize that if everyone teaches what he, personally, believes, or if we follow different leaders each speaking his own thing, WE HAVE ONLY CONFUSION!

Our teaching and doctrines MUST COME FROM GOD! Through CHRIST! And through His apostle! But *HOW*? Must some speak what they don't believe? We must BELIEVE what Christ SAYS, to be saved!

Jesus Christ is the Word of God in PERSON. The Bible is the same Word of God in PRINT! The very first man to be used in writing down the Word of God as CHRIST (in the Old Testament, Yahweh) inspired, was Moses, and he wrote more words of it than any other. Now did Moses seek this commission for himself? No, Moses had been reared a prince in the palace of Egypt's pharaoh, and he probably cared little or nothing about being a leader for God.

But God called to him in the incident of the burning bush (Exodus 3).

Immediately Moses protested. "I'm slow of speech," he objected. "I stutter." God was a bit angry at this. But God said He had provided for that. He had appointed Moses' brother, Aaron, to be his spokesman. Moses accepted God's rebuke and became strong and faithful in the Lord.

He believed what God said! God has always, in dealing with humans, worked through (See CHURCH, page 2)

"God says we in His Church must all believe and speak the SAME THING — we must be AGREED on what is truth and right and good as opposed to what is evil and sin."

CHURCH BACK ON TRACK DOCTRINALLY

(Continued from page 1)

ONE MAN at a time — one who believed God! Some in ancient Israel challenged this one-man leadership. Some, likewise, have challenged it today!

First, Moses' own brother and sister challenged his one-man leadership. Miriam and Aaron said, "Hath the Eternal indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?" (Numbers 12:2). "And the Eternal heard it . . . And the Eternal came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth . . . My servant Moses is not so [as the others] who is faithful in all mine house . . . Wherefore then we NOT AFRAID to speak against my servant Moses?" (verses 5-8).

"And the anger of the Eternal was kindled against them" (verse 9). And Miriam was afflicted with leprosy for a while.

Yet, though our members and ministers all know this, some are NOT AFRAID to speak contemptuously, in hostility, or defamingly against Christ's apostle today! They need not fear ME! For I will not turn on them or strike them.

WHY, then, do they not fear God? It must be one of two things. Either they do not really comprehend this teaching of the incident about Aaron and Miriam, or they do not believe that God has chosen me as His apostle and human leader today. Or, perhaps they think God is NOT the same yesterday, today and forever! In any event, this is

"They accused Moses of appointing himself — though there had been ample evidence by the fruits of Moses' leadership and even miracles God did through him, that they were without excuse, just as many are today."

a matter between them and Jesus Christ.

But there was an even more significant incident of opposition of Moses' leadership.

That is the case of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On. "And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes . . . famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses . . . Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Eternal is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Eternal?" (Numbers 16:1-3).

They accused Moses of appointing himself — though there had been ample evidence by the fruits of Moses' leadership and even miracles God did through him, that they were without excuse, just as many are today.

What happened to them? "And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up . . . They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished

from among the congregation" (verses 32-33).

GOD IS ON HIS THRONE! And He is the SAME GOD! He has not changed! Once again, the same God is going, very soon now, to shake this whole world — to produce astounding miracles — and those who take His Work lightly

"God is TRYING us as never before. He is drawing those of us who both love and fear Him closer to Him and to each other! He is permitting trials and tests, such as we never experienced before, to come upon us, so that we will RELY ON HIM in unshaken faith!"

and ought to know better are going to have TO REALIZE that He is the SAME GOD TODAY!

We are in the trying and sifting time, right now, for God's Church! Notice it, in Daniel 12:9-10:

At "the time of the end. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall UNDERSTAND" (Daniel 12:9-10).

My children in Christ, can we not see that we are IN THAT TIME, NOW? God is TRYING us as never before. He is drawing those of us who both love and fear Him closer to Him and to each other! He is permitting trials and tests, such as we never experienced before, to come upon us, so that we will RELY ON HIM in unshaken faith! But the self-minded among us, even the few in the ministry, DO NOT UNDERSTAND! They do not believe God is the SAME today

was the real leader. Jesus had told His disciples to go NOT to the gentiles, but to the "lost sheep of the House of Israel." The "House of Israel" never refers to the Jews — always to the kingdom that became known as "the lost ten tribes." They were in Western Europe and Britain

spoke to Ananias and Sapphira, causing them to drop dead. Verse 15, it was PETER's shadow as he walked by that healed the sick.

Acts 5:29: PETER said "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Acts 8: PETER with John went

made choice among them, choosing PETER to open salvation to the gentiles, and, now, to SETTLE this dispute over what God required of uncircumcised gentile converts. And that settled the matter!

Notice, once Peter had settled the dispute, "Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." Paul and Barnabas were NOT disputing Peter's decision. They were NOT giving their input to the disputed question — the question had been SETTLED — by PETER! Paul and Barnabas merely gave the ministers gathered there the NEWS of what God had wrought through their ministry.

Then James rose. James was pastor of the Jerusalem headquarters church. In today's language, we would call him chairman of the meeting. He did not make the decision. PETER had already made it. He merely said, "Sim-eon [PETER] hath declared . . ." And James merely CONFIRMED Peter's decision, making it official. That ought to make clear this crucial 15th chapter of Acts — the one classic example of settling any disputed doctrine in the Church. And, though there were other apostles, God worked primarily through ONE man — PETER! Has God changed? Or is He the SAME still today?

Finally, notice Galatians 2:7: "But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto PETER."

The Jerusalem conference (Acts 15) showed that PETER was predominant over even Paul, although Paul was the ONE MAN God worked through primarily in the ministry to gentiles.

The CHURCH is GOD'S Church. The HEAD of the Church, under God, is Jesus Christ. Under Christ, on the human level, is His chosen apostle, through whom He has raised up and built this SPIRITUAL (See CHURCH, page 4)

when Jesus gave this instruction.

Undoubtedly it was after Peter and the original apostles had left the Middle East and traveled to Britain that we read only of Paul and those under him.

Notice now PETER's preeminence. Few have ever put all these scriptures together as I shall now do. This shows PETER was leader.

"And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called PETER, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea . . . And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:18-19). This is the first mention of calling His disciples. It is significant that PETER is named first.

Matthew 10:2: "Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called PETER . . ." Notice PETER is called "the first."

Matthew 16:16-19: ". . . Simon PETER answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee [PETER], That thou art PETER, and upon this rock I will build my church . . . And I will give unto thee [PETER] the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou [PETER] shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou [PETER] shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In Matthew 18 Jesus appears to be speaking to the 12 as a group, and in verse 18 the binding and loosing is again mentioned. The binding and loosing was given to APOSTLES, but PETER was unquestioned leader of the original 12 apostles.

John 21:15-17: The commission, "Feed my sheep" is three times given to PETER.

Acts 2:14: On the Day of Pentecost, it was PETER who gave the first sermon, converting some 3,000. Verse 38, PETER gives the instruction for baptism.

Acts 3:4, 12: It was PETER who healed the cripple. And it was PETER who gave the sermon to the assembled crowd, and God added 2,000 more to the Church.

Acts 4:8: It was PETER who spoke boldly to the rulers, after imprisonment, and, verse 10, said, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

Acts 5:3, 15: It was PETER who

to Samaria. Verses 18-23: It was PETER who rebuked the first pope, Simon the Sorcerer.

Acts 9:32-34: PETER heals Aeneas.

Acts 9:38-41: PETER raises Dorcas from death.

Acts 10:1, 9: PETER used by Christ to be the first to open salvation to gentiles. Verses 19-24, circumcision not required.

Acts 11:1-2, 18: Apostles hear from PETER how God had granted repentance to gentiles and salvation with eternal life.

Acts 15: Here is the crux chapter, not generally understood. Paul and Barnabas had come to the church at Antioch. Certain Pharisees had come down from Judea and taught that "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Paul and Barnabas have much dissension and disputation with them.

Now here was a classic EXAMPLE of HOW DOCTRINES were put into the Church and doctrinal disputes settled in the Church!

It was determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others go up to Jerusalem for apostolic settlement through the Holy Spirit.

"And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter." Now notice, "there had been much disputing" between the apostles and elders. They were not of one mind!

How was the matter settled? By the Holy Spirit, but through WHOM? "PETER rose up and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us." Notice, PETER was specially chosen, "that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

Notice, it was GOD leading Peter, as chief apostle. For these gentiles to be required to be circumcised, would obligate them to become a debtor to do the whole [ritual] law" (Galatians 5:3). Therefore Peter concluded, "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

PETER had spoken! God had

and will act the same — IN HIS OWN TIME! They do not TREMBLE at His Word (Isaiah 66:5). But THEY SHALL!

God has always worked through one man, primarily, at a time. God chose David and worked through him. Two of David's sons, at different times, conspired to wrest David's throne from him.

At this point I noticed beside my typewriter a letter I had not seen before from Queensland, Australia. I paused to read it. I quote a sentence from it that is apropos to what I have been writing. This member wrote:

"Take courage, Mr. Armstrong. God took it personally when Miriam spoke against Moses, and when Israel spoke against Samuel." HOW SIGNIFICANT that this letter caught my eye at this stage of this article. The letter continues: "NO DOUBT but that God also takes it personally when they speak (and act) against you (and His Church)."

In founding God's Church, Jesus worked primarily through one man, Peter, even though He originally chose His 12 disciples. Few have ever noticed how Peter

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WHAT IS A LIBERAL?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

GOD SAYS to His Church, through the apostle Paul, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

This passage continues saying the church at Corinth, precisely like today's Church of God, was following various and differing men with differing doctrines. They, like many today, were forgetting that the HEAD of the Church is Jesus Christ — that Christ is ALIVE today! That HE really is leading us!

Satan has been striking at God's Church and Work from within and from without! And as in the Ephesian church, where Paul said "... of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

What happened in those

Jesus Christ says a house divided against itself cannot stand. A few "liberal" ministers have caused "division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." God's House has been divided. But NO LONGER!

States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy, was attacked, greatly deleted and later put out of circulation — the same with a number of other basic and important booklets written by Christ's apostle.

This group of liberals assumed the authority of setting Church doctrine. The one who primarily wrote the Systematic Theology Project later wrote, "My only goal in coordinating the project was to bring doctrinal consistency, stability and unity to the ministry" — that is, unity in watered-down doctrines that older loyal ministers did not and never would accept! THAT WAS NOT UNITY — IT WAS DIVISION!

But what do we mean — 'LIBERAL'?

Let's understand what defines a liberal — and God's WORD about it.

What is the basic difference

"They, like many today, were forgetting that the HEAD of the Church is Jesus Christ — that Christ is ALIVE today!"

churches in the first century has happened to us today. Those guilty of causing division are fighting God and shall be judged by Him!

My son, Garner Ted, fell under the influence of certain liberals, with whom he surrounded himself. He had had some liberal leanings prior to that. There were those around him bent on changing the doctrines of God's Church, watering down God's TRUTH.

I am learning now that my son was swayed under this liberal and secular-oriented influence. Because of his position of executive vice president, and because he assumed authority beyond that delegated to him, those who were sound in the doctrines Christ had put into God's Church, who had been taught directly by me in earlier days of the college, were demoted, shanghaied away from headquarters.

Gradually, subtly, systematically, while I was in other parts of the world carrying Christ's Gospel message, doctrines were being watered down, the college was being made secular, God and Christ were being cast out and a conspiracy was in progress to get rid of Christ's chosen apostle, unless he accommodated the conspirators by dying.

Church teachings were being changed. The most resultful booklet of all, *The United*

between Old Testament teaching and that of the New Testament? The same BASIC SPIRITUAL LAW was given to both Old Testament Israel and the New Testament Church. But there was still a great difference. Notice how the apostle Paul defined this difference.

"[God] Who also hath made us able ministers of the NEW testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (11 Corinthians 3:6).

It's the same basic SPIRITUAL law. But without the Holy Spirit, the people of Old Testament Israel could keep the law of God only by the strict *letter* of the law — not by the SPIRIT or its obvious *intent* or *principle* involved.

Years ago God showed me, by an incident, what He means by the *spirit* of the law. My elder daughter, Beverly, was in school, possibly the seventh or eighth grade or high school — I don't remember the year. She was an avid and a rapid reader. One day her teacher sent me a note, saying Beverly was injuring her eyes and her progress in schoolwork by excessive reading. She had been bringing books of fiction — love stories

— from the school library. She would read a whole book in two or three evenings at home. I spoke with my daughter and told her she must stop bringing the fiction books from the school library and stop her excessive reading — because her teacher had sent me a note saying it was interfering with her schoolwork.

The very next evening I noticed Beverly reading a book, and she was almost halfway through it.

"Is that another fiction book?" I asked.

"Yes, Daddy," she replied. "Didn't I tell you to stop reading these fiction books?"

"Yes, Daddy, but you said to stop bringing the books from the school library, and I obeyed you. I didn't bring this book from the school library, I borrowed it from Helen."

She obeyed the strict letter of the law, but certainly not the spirit or obvious intent.

Jesus gave some examples of the spirit of the law. He said: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill. . . . But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. . . ." (Matthew 5:21-22).

Speaking of the Old Testament observance of the law, Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28).

The SPIRIT of the law

The spiritual law of God is a general principle, which, in its spirit, covers EVERY act. God intends for us today to apply the principle to every act. It is summed up in Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

The law of God is a WAY OF LIFE. It is all-encompassing, IN PRINCIPLE — that is, according to its spirit. It is an *attitude*.

It may be summed up in ONE WORD: LOVE. That one word is a *principle* of life. It is the way of OUTFLOWING love toward God and man. It is the way of GIVE, instead of GET.

It is then magnified into the

two great laws — love toward GOD and love toward neighbor. In turn this is magnified into 10 general principles — the first four of the Ten Commandments express the principle of love toward GOD, the last six the principle of love toward man.

We are commanded to love God *more* than self — with all our hearts. We are told to love neighbor AS, or equal to, ourselves.

A principle — not every specific detail

In the Bible God does not

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write down every specific detail of the PRINCIPLE or SPIRIT of His Law! He expects us, with His Holy Spirit, to apply the principle to every circumstance, act or question.

The whole duty of man is keeping God's law IN THE SPIRIT — far more than the specific detailed letter. It is the ATTITUDE or the principle of the law. The law does not list every detail included in the duty of man.

Reduced to its simplest overall denominator, the whole law is the one word, LOVE.

How does God's Church receive its doctrines, beliefs and teachings? Direct from God, through the channels of Jesus Christ as HEAD of the Church, and from Him through the apostles! NEVER by any others! NEVER by a group of ministers appointing themselves as a Doctrinal Committee! So it was in the first century.

How did the Worldwide Church of God receive its doctrines, beliefs and teachings? EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH CHRIST'S APOSTLE! True, I have practiced the biblical principle that "in multitude of counsel there is safety." On many occasions some top-level ministers have contributed certain input that has helped me in setting doctrine. BUT EVERY DOCTRINE, BELIEF AND TEACHING IN THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD HAS COME FROM CHRIST THROUGH HIS CHOSEN APOSTLE!

Now, for example, we have a teaching that smoking is a sin. How did the Church receive that belief? Let me tell you. Fifty-two years ago, at the time of my conversion and baptism, I had to decide that question. I had been smoking — believe it or not! But only lightly about three cigarettes a day. But I had to decide whether it was right or wrong.

Now Adam and Eve took to THEMSELVES the knowledge of right and wrong. Only God can give us that knowledge. I knew that. I had to decide at the time, for myself, but I knew I must look to CHRIST, the Word of God, for the answer. Of course I knew the Bible contained no teaching specifically on smoking tobacco. But I had learned the truth of 11 Corinthians 3:3 that sin is violation of the principle or intended meaning of the law.

So I asked myself: "Why do I smoke? To love or honor

God?" Answer, NO! "To express love, or outgoing concern, for the welfare of other people?" Again, NO! I knew that some found second-hand tobacco "smoke" objectionable. "For my own good — health or otherwise?" Again, NO!

For although I did not know, or anybody else 52 years ago, that smoking was a cause of lung cancer, I did know the function of the lungs in filtering out impurities from the blood and expelling the impurities through the breath. And I knew that inhaling smoke only clogged up the lungs with added impurities and interfered with their normal functioning. On every count I found smoking was CONTRARY to the PRINCIPLE of GOD'S LAW! Therefore I knew it was a sin, and I stopped smoking and have not smoked for 52 years. Jesus Christ through me put into God's Church the teaching that smoking is wrong — mild or not, nevertheless, it is SIN!

Now if I had decided that as some of our ministers wanted to decide doctrine, I would have said, "The Bible does not contain a specific LAW against smoking." That is the way of the LIBERAL — who wants to water down the truth of God and go as far into this world — which means as far in Satan's way — as possible and still get into God's Kingdom.

The liberal is one who has a DIFFERENT APPROACH to questions of human conduct than God, or those who have been CONQUERED by God and are being led by God's Holy Spirit.

What is God's attitude?

What is God's ATTITUDE? (See WHAT IS A LIBERAL, page 4)

"... The LIBERAL... wants to water down the truth of God and go as far into this world — which means as far in Satan's way — as possible and still get into God's Kingdom."

WHAT IS A LIBERAL?

(Continued from page 3)

Does God really *want* to sin, but, because He has power of resistance, He uses willpower and does not ALLOW Himself to sin? Can you realize that SIN is absolutely ABHORRENT to God? God DOES NOT WANT to SIN! He has no such desire! He HATES sin! He is not tempted to sin!

God loves and *desires* righteousness and holiness. That's what He LOVES, DESIRES AND DOES!

Listen, my children in the living Christ! Do you really WANT to smoke — *want* to have birthday parties — *want* to go along with this world in its ways? Is *that* what you *really* want to do? Do you have to use self-resistance, self-discipline and willpower to prevent going along in this world's ways?

If so, you have not yet been really CONQUERED by the all-loving God! If so, you do not yet have the mind of Christ or His attitude or approach to problems or questions! If so, you'd better begin *TREM-BLING* at the Word of God!

Or, do you really *hunger* and *thirst* for God's RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS? You can't have both attitudes! You have one or the other! Which is it?

Are you like Mrs. Emma Smith, one of the new converts in 1933 who formed the parent church of the Worldwide Church of God? She came to me one day saying her father had died, and his will left her some money.

"How much of this do I have to tithe?" she asked. "I don't want to tithe any more than I have to — to still get into God's Kingdom."

The doctrine of Balaam

She was, in principle and attitude, like Balaam, mentioned as an evil man in Jude 11 and Revelation 2:14. The story about Balaam is found in

Numbers 22. Balaam was a liberal — only perhaps more so. The Israelites under Moses had finally encamped on the east side of the Jordan River in the vicinity of Moab and Ammon. They were just across the river from Jericho.

Balak, king of the Moabites, was afraid, for the Israelites greatly outnumbered Moab. So he sent messengers to the sorcerer Balaam, a pater or pagan leader, apparently with bribe money, asking Balaam to remain overnight. He prayed to God, for he knew he could not do this evil unless God allowed.

The point is, Balaam wanted the rewards of divination, which the messengers from Moab had brought. He wanted to go as far in the GET way of life, even for doing evil, as he could. But he knew his curse against Israel would be ineffective unless he had God's permission.

God said to Balaam, "... Thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:12).

There is much more to the story, but the point I want to show here is the ATTITUDE of wanting to go as far in the way of evil as possible.

In Jude 11, God says, "Woe unto them! for they... ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward..." And in Revelation to the church at Pergamos, Jesus said, "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam..." (Revelation 2:14).

Christ is now purging out of His Church those that "hold the doctrine of Balaam!" Balaam was a liberal.

The liberal is going also in the way of Satan.

Satan's evil attitude

"... there was a day when the sons of God came to present

themselves before the Eternal, and Satan came also among them..." The Eternal asked Satan if he had considered God's servant Job, "... that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man..." (Job 1:6-8).

Satan argued that Job served God in SELF-interest, for God had given him all his material wealth. But if God would allow Satan to take all his possessions from him, Satan said Job would curse God.

The Eternal answered, "... Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand" (verse 12).

Satan destroyed all Job's wealth and even his sons and daughters. But Satan caused other humans to do his evil. Yet Job maintained his own righteousness and refused to curse God.

Satan tried again. Satan argued that a man would give all he had for his own life. But he contended that if God would allow him to do evil to Job's person, Job would curse God. God allowed this, but said, "save his life."

Did you ever have a boil? I did — just once, many, many years ago. I shall never forget it. The pain was nearly unbearable. And that was only one boil. Job was covered with boils from head to foot! But still he did not curse God! In the end God spoke to Job. Job's one great sin was one Satan could not ascertain. It was SELF-righteousness. When God spoke, opening Job's eyes to his self-righteousness, Job repented deeply, and God restored to him two-fold for all he had allowed Satan to destroy.

The point I want to make here is, Satan CANNOT go farther than God allows — but Satan *wanted* to inflict as much evil and destruction and harm as possible.

It is Satan's ATTITUDE that is his prime evil. He does not hunger and thirst for God's righteousness. He harbors only the deep-rooted desire to DO EVIL — TO GO CONTRARY TO GOD'S LAW OF LOVE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS! He wanted to go as far as he could in the evil way contrary to GOD'S WAY. That was in his heart.

The liberal attitude

The liberal among us today wants to GET! He wants to GET into God's Kingdom, but he *wants* to go along with this world's ways AS FAR AS GOD WILL ALLOW AND STILL LET HIM MAKE IT INTO THE KINGDOM!

The liberal has deceived himself! I do not believe the liberal realizes his own attitude. He really wants to *get* into the Kingdom of God — he wants to RECEIVE the eternal rewards of happiness, joy and eternal life in security. But he still would like to hang on to some of this world's ways.

He doesn't want to tithe, unless he can see beyond any of his arguments there is a specific LAW compelling him to tithe. He wants to be free to vote, at least in local elections.

The argument was made to me that our Church people actually outnumbered others living in Big Sandy, Tex., BUT (what a big word is "BUT") you see, if they did not vote, the minority would vote to incorporate the Ambassador College campus into the town of Big Sandy, and we'd have to pay big taxes. It never seemed to occur to the liberal mind that CHRIST will solve our problems, and we do not have to go contrary to HIS ATTITUDE!

Like Mrs. Emma Smith, who was too new as a child in Christ and had not grown sufficiently as yet in His grace and knowledge — like Balaam — like Satan — the liberal wants

to see how close he can come to the precipice without falling and losing his eternal life. Like Mother Eve, they use HUMAN REASON to justify straying partly away from the SPIRIT of God's LAW. They want to keep the law in the strict letter, *but not in the spirit!*

In his heart, the liberal would like to "go along" at least part way with this world.

What is the mind of Christ?

But God says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

What is the mind of Christ? What is His attitude — His approach to viewing and deciding all activities? Does He, as I asked before, really WANT to sin, to think and act contrary to His law, but because of His super power, restrain Himself? We know He has never sinned. But why? Is He sinless because He has such supernatural POWER to restrain Himself?

A THOUSAND TIMES, NO!

The living Christ has never sinned because He does not *want* to sin! What is HIS MIND, that should be also in us? It is a mind that HATES sin, that LOVES righteousness. It's a matter of ATTITUDE! The liberal is not hungering and thirsting after RIGHTEOUSNESS! He WANTS to ease off a little on God's law. He wants to do only as much as he has to, to receive the "reward of eternal life. He has not yet fully gotten rid of the GET attitude, and come into the GIVE attitude.

It is Satan who deceives and puts into many human minds the *desire* to go as far into this world as he thinks God will allow — and into its ways of VANITY and INTELLECTUALISM (carnal, secular) — vanity of mind.

Having the ATTITUDE of the "SPIRIT OF THE LAW" is the attitude of the mind of CHRIST!

CHURCH BACK ON TRACK DOCTRINALLY

(Continued from page 2)

TEMPLE to which the reigning CHRIST shall soon come in glory (Ephesians 2:20-21).

Now in closing, back to the theme of this article. God COMMANDS that we all SPEAK THE SAME THING! It must be that thing which the mind of Christ speaks — and He speaks only as the Father commanded (John 12:49).

All doctrines in the Church as it began, A.D. 31, were put in by the apostles. All doctrines in the present Philadelphia era were put into the Church by Jesus Christ through His chosen apostle.

Now WHY does Christ use such caution in putting HIS doctrines into God's Church through His apostle?

LET ME MAKE THAT POINT CLEAR!

You have just read a case in point — Acts 15. This crucial crux chapter has been misinterpreted, twisted and distorted. I have tried to take space to MAKE

IT CLEAR in this article. The other apostles and ministers were all in confusion, arguing and disputing. But CHRIST silenced them by speaking through His CHOSEN chief apostle, PETER!

Let us UNDERSTAND!

First of all, in human history, God spoke direct in person to Adam and Eve. They did not believe what He said!

But God chose Moses, and God chooses only a man who believes what God says. Moses wrote more words of the Bible than any person. The prophets were chosen by God — not by themselves — and they believed what God inspired and wrote it for us.

Christ came and preached to many THOUSANDS. Yet only 120 believe what He said! And even of the apostles, there was disputing, until Christ spoke through PETER, whom HE chose!

In our day, God brought about my conversion in a manner

UNIQUE in our time. He CONQUERED me, first, by making me realize 1) that what I had previously believed was untrue, and 2) that I had to REPENT and BELIEVE — that is, turn from former ways and beliefs, to a different way of life — GOD'S WAY — and to BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAYS! — my mind SWEPT CLEAN of all previous beliefs.

When Christ chose His apostle for this time, he chose one who, 1) does believe what God says, 2) will not compromise or water down truths and doctrines Christ has given, and 3), has an OPEN MIND to receive further truth from CHRIST, and to be WILLING to acknowledge error when PROVED and turn from it! I do TREMBLE at the Word of God! I LOVE it, and I FEAR to go contrary to it or to mislead you, my brethren and my children in the Lord!

As long as this Church believed and spoke THE SAME THING Christ put in it through His

apostle, HE BLESSED IT, and it GREW 30 percent a year for 35 years. But when my son Garner Ted came to take over more authority than had been delegated to him, surrounding himself with a group of liberals, who LED him, and misled him into watering down God's doctrines — under their false influence a Laodicean lukewarmness and indifference, losing the LOVE of God's TRUTH, found root in the Church. Christ BUILT this Church through His chosen apostle! We did, perhaps imperfectly, but certainly in general, SPEAK THE SAME THING! We GREW in Christ's KNOWLEDGE and truth as well as in size and scope of the Work.

Then my son fell under the influence of a group of liberals, with whom he surrounded himself. He began to DISAGREE with Church doctrines more and more! AND GOD WITHDREW HIS BLESSING!

For 10 months now, the living

CHRIST has been setting His Church BACK ON THE TRACK! Also His college. The liberal element MUST GO! Either the liberals must TURN FROM their liberalism, as defined in my recent article (see article, page 3), and put IT out of themselves and the Church, or they must go out with it! I hope the former.

God has allowed this terrible trial and test to come upon us, with the government of the state of California trying to take over and manage and operate God's Church! In defiance of the Constitution of the United States! They do not, now, and they SHALL NOT, SPEAK, manage or destroy the Church and Work of the LIVING GOD! His authority is infinitely greater than theirs. Perhaps, like those who crucified Jesus, they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). But they are drawing God's Church closer to Him, and, to each other, PRAISE GOD! for cleaning up His Church!