

SEVEN PROOFS of THE TRUE CHURCH

WHERE is the one and only true Church today - the Church founded by Jesus Christ in A.D. 31? Seven major eye-opening proofs identify it unmistakably.

*by Herbert W. Armstrong
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YOU LIVE in a world of religious confusion. WHY so many different religions? Taoism, Shintoism, Hinduism, the Moslem religion and Christianity with its many denominations and sects.

Religion is generally regarded as the worship of the Creator or the supernatural, although some Oriental religions are primarily philosophies.

The largest religion in the world, in claimed number of adherents, is Roman Catholicism. It has won near universal acceptance in the Western world as being the original Church of Christianity.

But *where* is the absolute AUTHORITY to identify the *true* religion and the one original Church of the Christian religion?

Or, is *any* authentic? Communism rejects religion, labeling it "the opium of the people."

I seriously doubt if *any* has been put though the experience that came to me to *settle* this question with PROOF POSITIVE.

WHY do most people believe the things they believe? The philosopher C.E. Ayers said truthfully that few, indeed, have ever stopped to ask themselves in retrospect *why* they believe the things they believe or HOW they came to believe them.

I have answered many times that most people believe that which they have repeatedly heard, read or been taught, and have carelessly *assumed* those things to be true without question and without proof.

The disturbing dual challenge

I was born of stable and upright parents, with an ancestry in the Quaker faith that had emigrated from England to Pennsylvania with William Penn, a hundred years before the United States became a nation.

At age 18 I dropped all but the most passive interest in religion. I had put myself through an intensive self-examination, coupled with a survey of the various occupations and professions to determine where I belonged - to avoid fitting the proverbial square peg in the round hole. This led into the advertising profession and a business life. I was unusually successful. I had continued through the years diligent study and application. I had planned that my business contacts were largely with the great and the near-great.

Then, at age 34, I was assailed by very disturbing dual challenges. My wife, after nine years of happy marriage, had begun keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. I was aghast! That, to me, was religious fanaticism! She claimed to have found this teaching in the Bible.

My first upsetting thought was, What will my business contacts and friends say? It was a devastating thought, humiliating!

All the *arguments* came quickly to my mind. They were of no avail. She said she found this teaching in the Bible.

"But the Bible says," I protested, " 'Thou shalt observe Sunday.' "

"Can you show that to me in the Bible?" she asked.

"No." I replied. "I don't know much about the Bible. My interest and studies have been in the area of business. But I know the Bible teaches Sunday observance because *all these churches can't be wrong*, and they receive their beliefs from the Bible."

"If," she smiled sincerely - but to me exasperatingly - "you can show me where the Bible commands Sunday observance, I'll go back to it."

There was no dodging the challenge. My marriage depended on it!

The second challenge

Coincidentally a sister-in-law, newly married and fresh out of college, hurled at me a second humiliating challenge.

"Herbert Armstrong," she accused contemptuously, "you are just plain *ignorant!* Everybody who has any education *knows* human life has come by evolution."

I was proud. I had not neglected study and education. I thought I knew the facts about evolution, and I didn't believe in it. But now I had to admit I had never pursued a thorough, in-depth research of the question.

The dual challenge drove me into a determined almost night and day research. That intensive study continued for six months before I found the *proved* answer. Yet the study to this day has never ceased.

I was not only humiliated and angered by these challenges - I was *determined* to prove both my wife and sister-in-law wrong. Both challenges focused on a common starting point - the book of Genesis in the Bible - although that was only the beginning.

These challenges came at a period in life when I had ample time on my hands. I plunged with intense concentration into the study.

Evolution researched

But I did not begin the research in Genesis. First I delved thoroughly into the works of Darwin, Lyell, Haeckel, Huxley, Spencer, Vogt, Chamberlin and Moore, and even into the earlier works of Lamarck and his theory of "Use and Disuse," which preceded Darwin's survival-of-the-fittest hypothesis.

Immediately those writings appeared convincing. They necessarily are, to have won virtual universal acceptance in the world of higher education. I readily understood how the field of education had been gripped in the clutch of the evolutionary concept.

Evolution, as I finally learned, is the atheists' attempted explanation of the presence of a creation without the pre-existence of a Creator.

This initial stage of my research rudely shook my faith in the existence of God. It brought me to the realization that I had *assumed* the reality of God, because from childhood I had heard - and therefore assumed - it. For a while my head was literally swimming. Was all I had ever believed mere myth and error, after all? I was awakened to the realization that I had never seen PROVED the reality of God! Now I was determined to know the TRUTH! My mind was being cleaned out from ideas and beliefs previously taken for granted.

Of all the writings on evolution, Moore alone had culled out many discrepancies in the theory. Yet he too went along with the doctrine overall.

But now I had, first of all, to prove or disprove the existence of God. It was not casual or superficial study. I continued in this research as if my life depended upon it - as, in actual fact it did, as well as my marriage. I studied books also on the other side of the coin.

Irrefutable proof of God

Suffice it to say here that I did find irrefutable PROOF of the existence of God the Creator - and I found proof positive of the fallacy of the evolutionary theory. I had the satisfaction of winning the admission of one thoroughly steeped in evolutionary thought - having spent years in graduate work at the University of Chicago and at Columbia - that I had definitely chopped down the trunk of the evolutionary tree, though like Dr. Moore, she had been so thoroughly brainwashed in it she had to continue in what she had seen and acknowledged was PROOF of its falsity.

Also I had the enjoyment of being able to cause my sister-in-law to eat those words branding me as ignorant. All of which was mere vanity on my part, which I had not yet eradicated.

I had proved the reality of THE GREAT MAJESTIC GOD! But my wife's challenge was still tormenting my mind. Already, in the evolutionary research, I had studied Genesis. I knew each of the world's religions had their own sacred writings. Once God's reality was proved, I had expected to continue in the pursuit of comparative religions - to see if any such sacred writings proved authoritative. Through which of these did GOD speak to mankind - if any?

Research continues

Since I had to research the Sabbath question anyway and already I had delved into Genesis, I decided to continue my study in the Bible - intending to examine in-depth the writings of other religions afterward.

In my biblical study I came across, early, the passage in Romans 6:23: "... The wages of sin is death..." I stopped, amazed. "Wages" is what one is paid for what one has done. Here I was staring at a statement diametrically opposite to my Sunday school teaching prior to age 18.

"Why," I exclaimed, "how can that be? I was taught in church that the wages of sin is EVERLASTING LIFE - in an eternally burning hell."

Another shock came on reading the last part of the same verse: "... but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. "

"But," I questioned in disillusionment, "I thought I already had eternal life - I am, or I have, an immortal soul. Why should I need it as a gift?"

I researched the word soul by means of a Bible concordance. Twice I found the words, "... The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4 and Ezekiel 18:20).

Then I remembered I had read in Genesis 2 how God said to the first human, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

In Genesis 2:7 read how God "... formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man (dust, matter) became a living soul." This stated plainly that a soul is physical - formed from matter. I found that the English word soul is translated from the Hebrew *nephesh* and that in Genesis 1 fowl, fish and animals, all three, were *nephesh* as Moses was inspired to write.

Next, I happened to read where Jesus said, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man..." (John 3:13). I researched the heaven and hell teaching further. I saw where the inspired Peter, on the day he received the Holy Spirit said, "For David is not ascended into the heavens..." (Acts 2:34).

Teachings opposite of the Bible

I was, in utter astonishment, coming to realize that what I had been taught growing up in church was the precise opposite of what the Bible says in clear language.

This is not the place for a lengthy, detailed account of my intensive search in the Bible - bent on proving to my satisfaction that "all these churches can't be wrong, for their teachings came from the Bible." The essential point here is the simple fact that I did find irrefutable PROOF of the divine inspiration and SUPREME AUTHORITY of the Holy Bible as the revealed Word of God as originally written. Even all the so-called contradictions evaporated upon unbiased study.

Yet, to my utter dismay and chagrin, I was forced to "eat crow" in regard to my wife's supposed "fanaticism." It was not what I *wanted* to believe, THEN! But by now I had taken a real beating. I had *proved* truth contrary to what I wanted to believe.

Let me pause here to add a point to what I wrote above, saying most people believe what they have repeatedly heard or read or been taught. There are two other psychological truisms in regard to WHY people believe what they do. One is, people carelessly accept what those around them believe. Most Thais are Buddhists because those around them in Thailand are Buddhists. There is the psychological tendency to go along with one's peers. One other reason for people's beliefs is that human nature tends to cause one to believe what he *wants* to believe, and refuse, regardless of proof, what he does not want to believe. There is the old saying, "One convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

God's Word is truth

That is why I have said the experience I was painfully subjected to in this six-months' intensive study was UNIQUE in human life and conduct. I know of no world religious leader who arrived at his teachings in such manner. Perhaps that is why GOD'S INSPIRED WORD *alone* - as I proved - is TRUTH. Only GOD is infallibly correct!

I was brought, by the spring of 1927, to a complete MIND-SWEEPING - my mind *swept clean* of previous assumptions and beliefs - surrendered to the WORD OF GOD, which by then I have proved TRUE, and the SUPREME AUTHORITY.

More, I had been brought to realize my own inadequacy and nothingness. I had been brought to a real repentance - CONQUERED by the GREAT MAJESTIC GOD - and with a solid rock-based FAITH in Jesus Christ. I was baptized, and the infilling of God's Spirit opened my mind to the JOY UNSPEAKABLE of knowing God and Jesus Christ - of knowing TRUTH - and the warmth of God's divine LOVE!

What I once hated I now LOVED. I found the greatest and most absorbing joy of my life in *continuing* to dig out those gold nuggets of TRUTH from God's Word.

Now came a new enthusiasm in biblical study and receiving the REVEALED knowledge of God.

Where is God's Church?

Now came the urgent desire to find the ONE and ONLY true Church of God as founded A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ. He had said (Matthew 16:18) that His Church would not die but continue through the generations.

My intensive biblical studies had shown me the basic evidences that would identify that continuing original Church.

1) It would have rightly discerned the revealed TRUTH of God as contained in His Word, the Holy Bible. I had learned that GOD is the Source of knowledge, and He REVEALS that knowledge through His written Word. This Word, remember, I had PROVED by irrefutable PROOF the divine inspiration and SUPREME AUTHORITY of the Holy Bible as the revealed Word of God. God is the supreme Educator - Revealer of TRUTH.

2) It would be, not a human secular organization, but a SPIRITUAL ORGANISM, yet WELL ORGANIZED on God's revealed pattern. It would be composed of begotten children of God - the "... household of God ... built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets," with Jesus Christ its guiding HEAD (Ephesians 2:19-20), as a "... building fitly framed together groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord" (verse 21) "... from whom the whole body [is] fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth ..." (Ephesians 4:16).

It would have UNDERSTANDING of GODS TRUTH. And it would be PRODUCING ABUNDANT FRUIT.

I did not find such a church immediately. But in His due time, God led me to find that ONE AND ONLY original Church of God. I now reveal SEVEN MAJOR PROOFS that identify it.

PROOF NO. 1

WHO AND WHAT IS GOD?

It seems utterly unbelievable! The religions of this world do not know WHO or WHAT God really *is!* Yet religion *is* the worship of God. How worship what is UNKNOWN?

The only answer is that the Bible reveals that ALL NATIONS have been *deceived* (Revelation 12:9).

The true understanding of the very identity of God is one proof that the one and only Church founded A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ is, today, the Worldwide Church of God.

It seems inconceivable - but you live today in a world of religious CONFUSION! Among the largest of the world's religions are Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Hinduism, the Moslem religion and Christianity with its hundreds of denominations and sects. The latter is the largest in number of adherents.

And yet only one, neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant, knows WHO and WHAT God *is!*

Modern science does not know. Higher education does not know or teach. The intellectuals of the world in the first century were the Athenians. Certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered the apostle Paul.

"... What will this babbler say?..." queried some in ridicule (Acts 17:18). Others sneered sarcastically, "... He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods..."

Paul on Mars' hill

They brought Paul to Areopagus, the supreme tribunal, on Mars' hill.

"May we know," they asked cynically, "... what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears..." (verses 19-20).

Here were the world's most scholarly. Paul was preaching the truth of GOD.

"... Ye men of Athens," said the apostle forthrightly and boldly, "I perceive that in all things you are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions [idol objects of worship], I found an altar with this inscription, 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.' Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. GOD that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he *giveth* to all, life and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on... the earth..." (verses 22-26).

WHO IS GOD? CREATION is the basic proof of God. These Athenian Epicureans and Stoics did not even know that. Perhaps the adherents of many religions do not.

But what of the real NATURE of God? Just WHO and WHAT is God? We need a more concrete understanding than to say merely the Being who created all. That is the starting point. Only the one original Church Jesus founded A.D. 31 has the full answer.

Unique understanding

It seems inconceivable that of all the religions and churches in the world today, only ONE is unique in UNDERSTANDING the nature of the CREATOR of all that is!

They *could* know! God reveals Himself in plain language in His Word, the Holy Bible. But no book has been so distorted, twisted and misrepresented as this ONE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF TRUTH!

The generally accepted teaching of traditional Christianity is that God is a Trinity - God in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which they designate as a Ghost.

By about A.D. 59 the Gospel Jesus Christ proclaimed had been suppressed (Galatians 1:6-7). A counterfeit gospel had replaced it. From about A.D. 70 there ensued "the lost century." All historic record of the true Church of God had been systematically destroyed during that hundred years - the curtain had been rung down on Church activities, and when the curtain of recorded history lifted an entirely *different* church appeared, calling itself Christian. Extreme persecution of powerful forces had driven the true Church of God underground.

The church by the fourth century was more like the Babylonian mystery religion, having appropriated the name "Christianity." (Revelation 17:5).

Passover-Easter controversy

There had been a heated dual controversy - one called the Quartodeciman Controversy - between Polycrates and the bishops of Rome on the Passover-Easter controversy. The other, between Dr. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, and the Roman bishops on the Trinity doctrine.

Emperor Constantine of the Roman Empire government called the Nicene Council in A.D. 325 and made both, the pagan Easter (from the goddess Astarte) and the Trinity doctrine, LAW!

The Trinity doctrine *limited* God to three Persons. More of that later.

The King James translation into English translated the Holy Spirit as "Holy Ghost," under the delusion that the Spirit of God was a third Person - a "Ghost."

Also the translators of the 1611 version usually used the pronouns "he," "him," etc., in relation to the Holy Spirit - but not always - and the pronoun "it" also is used.

But how does God reveal Himself authoritatively?

The real beginning of the Bible

If one should ask another, "Where, in order of time sequence, do we find the real beginning in the Bible?" the reply probably would be Genesis 1:1, beginning with the words, "In the beginning God..."

RIGHT?

WRONG! In order of time sequence the earliest prehistoric revelation is in the New Testament in John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Continue, "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (verses 2-3)."

The Word was one Personage. God was another Personage. Yet the Word was a Personage separate from God - as shown in verse 14: "And the Word was [much later] made flesh, and dwelt among us..." The Word *became* Jesus Christ.

The English "Word" is translated from the original Greek *Logos* meaning "Word," or "Spokesman."

That all things were made by Him is confirmed in Ephesians 3:9, where it speaks of God "... who created all things by Jesus Christ." "... he spake, and it was done..." (Psalm 33:9).

Here are TWO Personages, yet both are GOD. How is that? A man named David Smith may have a son named Paul. But Paul, though a separate individual, is also Smith. However Jesus Christ did not become the Son of God until about 4 B.C., when born in human flesh from the Virgin Mary. Prior to that, He had ALWAYS existed, even as had God. Christ was originally "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life..." (Hebrews 7:3).

In the beginning God...

Now come to Genesis 1:1:

"In the beginning God..." This was written originally by Moses in the Hebrew language. The English "God" is translated from the Hebrew *Elohim* - a uniplural noun. It is uniplural in the same sense as the words "family" or "church" - denoting more than one component forming one whole. Not two Gods - but ONE God consisting of more than one Person.

When, only 1,900-plus years ago, Jesus was begotten in the womb of His human mother Mary, He was the *only* human ever so begotten *prior to human birth!* Yet, as we shall see later, humans may become begotten children of God - *after* human birth, but preceding a spiritual birth.

Throughout the first chapter of Genesis the Hebrew name of God is always the Hebrew *Elohim*, including "the Word" and "God."

But in chapter 2, Moses began adding another name for God - *Yahweh* in the Hebrew, usually combined with *Elohim* - as *Yahweh Elohim*. In the King James English translation it is rendered "LORD God," which is somewhat misleading.

It is interesting, at this point, to explain this name Yahweh. There is no one word in the English language that adequately translates it. It means "the self-existent, eternal living creative one." The Moffatt translation renders it "the Eternal." The Ferrar Fenton translation uses "the Ever-Living." Personally, to use only one word, I prefer to use "the Eternal" instead of "the LORD."

In any event the English "LORD" in the King James translation refers to that *Person* in the Godhead who in John 1:1 is called the "Word" - the very one who later became Jesus Christ.

Who was the God of the Old Testament?

That leads to an important point in the UNDERSTANDING of WHO and WHAT IS GOD.

Many if not most seem to believe the God of the Old Testament was the one Jesus prayed to as His FATHER. But many New Testament passages *quoting* from the Old Testament prove that the one of the Godhead who was born in human flesh as Jesus Christ was the "YAHWEH" of the Old Testament and "the Word" of John 1:1. That knowledge is a portion of Proof No. 1 identifying the true original Church today.

Jesus came, among other purposes, to REVEAL the Father. Ancient Old Testament Israel knew of only ONE PERSONAGE in the Godhead - although their Scriptures contained the Hebrew *Elohim*. But to them, primarily, God was conceived as of not only ONE God, but only ONE Person! The truth is, Israelites generally knew nothing of God - the Person to whom Jesus prayed and the Father Jesus came to REVEAL.

However, another technical point is: God only *became* the FATHER of the GOD FAMILY when Jesus Christ was begotten and born as a

human. Yet He may become *our* Father in heaven when begotten by His Holy Spirit. More of that later.

Now notice that *God* (Elohim) is more than one Person even though only ONE GOD.

In Genesis 1:26, Elohim said, "... Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness..." Not "Let me" - but "Let us," - plural or uniplural.

In Genesis 2:2-3, "... On the seventh day God (ELOHIM) ended his work which he had made... And God (Elohim) blessed the seventh day..."

Then, verse 4: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God (Yahweh Elohim) made the earth and the heavens." Again it was through the "Word" in the Hebrew named "Yahweh" that the earth and heavens were made - as GOD created all things by Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:9).

Does God have form and shape?

God reveals that He is Spirit-composed (John 4:24). Unless supernaturally manifested, spirit is invisible to human eyes.

Jesus said to His disciples, "... Ye have neither heard his voice... nor seen his shape." (John 5:37).

Later, "Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus answered "... Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father..." (John 14:8-9). WHY? Because God the Father-*if* human eyes could see - looks like Jesus. And what did Jesus look like?

Certainly NOT like pictures you have seen supposed to picture Him. For one thing, HE DID NOT HAVE LONG HAIR (I Corinthians 11:14). He looked like other Jews then in Judea, else the chief priests would not have paid Judas Iscariot 30 pieces of silver to identify Him.

Now notice once again Genesis 1:26: "... God (Elohim) said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness [form and shape]..." God is described in the Bible as having eyes, ears, nose, mouth - hair on His head - arms, legs, fingers, toes. Jesus was "... the express image of his [the Father's] Person..." (Hebrews 1:3).

What is the HOLY SPIRIT?

If the Holy Spirit is not a Person - a Ghost - then what does the Bible reveal about the Holy Spirit?

The natural carnal mind of man simply cannot grasp an understanding of spirit. It is not matter. The Hebrew word for spirit is *ruwach*, and the Greek (New Testament) *pneuma* both are often translated into the English *wind*, or *air* or *breath* - because these *physical* words perhaps most closely explain *spirit* to the human mind - yet spirit is not physical or material. In Acts 10:45, the Holy Spirit was "*poured out*" on gentiles, comparing to physical water.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit (not Ghost) that emanates out from both God and Christ everywhere in the universe. Through His Holy Spirit, God projects Himself, in Spirit, everywhere in the universe - yet both God and Christ have form and shape, even as man.

The Holy Spirit is many things. It is the very LIFE of the immortal God, which, entering into a human begets him with GOD-life.

It is the POWER of God, by which, when Christ "spake" it was done. It is the POWER by which God stretched out the heavens - created the vast endless universe.

The Holy Spirit, entering into man as God's gift, opens the mind to UNDERSTANDING of spiritual knowledge, unknown to the human mind otherwise. It is the LOVE of God "... shed abroad in our hearts..." (Romans 5:5). It is the FAITH of Christ, which may be given to God's begotten children through the Holy Spirit. It is the POWER of God, begotten within humans, enabling us to overcome Satan and sin.

'How GREAT Thou Art'

We have covered something of the nature of God. Now consider HOW GREAT He is.

King David was meditating on this and man's insignificance by comparison. He wrote, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?..." (Psalm 8:3-4).

Isaiah was inspired to write: "Who hath measured the waters [oceans] in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?... Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as... small dust of the balance... All nations before him are as nothing..." (Isaiah 40:12-17). Then God is quoted, "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be

equal?... Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might..." (verses 25-26).

Yet, there is much more to come, in relation to David's comparison to man, and why God should be concerned about us - in a later chapter - and fantastically thrilling it is!

NONE but the Worldwide Church of God today possesses the REVEALED TRUTH of WHO and WHAT IS God!

PROOF NO. 2

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD AND CREATION OF HOLY, RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER

As Creator, the most important feat of creation is holy, righteous CHARACTER.

That is so stupendous an accomplishment that even the GREAT MAJESTIC GOD, in all His matchless supernatural power, cannot create such character instantaneously or automatically by fiat.

That ought to take the reader's breath! Is there actually something that even GOD cannot do - by Himself alone?

Such character is the ability of a separate conscious, thinking entity with free moral agency - capacity for free choice - to come to KNOW the right from wrong, good from evil, to make the decision, and then with God's help exercise the WILL to DO the right or good, even contrary to self-desire.

Angels created first

Now for the moment go back to John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

That is the very earliest prehistoric record. It could have been millions or thousands of millions of years ago. The two eternally living Spirit Personages, who together constituted the ONE God, were ALONE in empty space. There was no physical universe - YET!

But, even as man thinks, and designs and plans before making - so did God, who much later made MAN in His own image.

God - with the Word - first conceived the plan and design to create angels, also immortal spirit beings, composed wholly of spirit.

So God created angels before creating the material universe, as revealed elsewhere in the Bible.

The DUALITY in creation

There is the DUALITY principle in God's creative process. Angels were the first created thinking, reasoning, separate entities created by God.

Angels were created with minds - ability to know, reason, make choices. But their creation could not be a *finished* creation until CHARACTER - either good or evil - was developed in them. And this is a PROCESS, to be EXPERIENCED. That character development was the second of the DUAL stage of their creation.

God initially INSTRUCTED them in HIS WAY - that of righteous character. It was THE WAY of God's spiritual law - the basis of God's GOVERNMENT.

Then came the time of the creation of the PHYSICAL UNIVERSE. There was a vital connection between the creation of angels and the creation of the material universe. For that, too, was created by the DUALITY principle.

To illustrate, I compare this physical creation to the manufacture of unfinished furniture - sold in stores of most cities. Such furniture may be of fine quality, but lacks the finishing polish, paint or whatever.

So God created the heavens and the earth - the universe with its countless planets in sun or solar systems, galaxies, with the countless planets such as our earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, etc.

Genesis 1:1, where "heavens" is in the plural in original Hebrew and modern translations, together with Genesis 2:4, which speaks of "... the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Eternal God made the earth and the heavens," - indicated the earth was created as part of the material universe - all simultaneously created. Other scriptures imply this.

But, like the unfinished furniture, they were not at that time completed. Angels had been created prior to the universe, because they sang together and shouted for joy at earth's creation (Job 38:7).

A double DUALITY

Now we come to the fact of a double DUALITY in the creation of angels and of the earth. For the earth was inhabited by angels prior to the creation of man. Apparently God placed a third of the created angels

on earth. They were given opportunity to share in God's creating activities by FINISHING the earth - working in and with its many elements, improving, beautifying, completing it.

This required harmonious teamwork - all working together toward the common God-ordained goal. The earth was the *proving ground*, to QUALIFY them, by righteous CHARACTER development and finishing earth's creation, to share with God the same creative participation in completion of the myriads of planets of the vast universe.

To regulate this angel-effort, God placed on earth's THRONE the archangel, the cherub Lucifer, to administer the GOVERNMENT OF GOD over the angels.

I repeat - that GOVERNMENT is based on God's spiritual law - as *all* governments are based on a constitution of foundational law.

God's spiritual law is *the way* of God's holy, righteous CHARACTER.

Angels led into rebellion

The third of the angels (Revelation 12:4) on earth *completed* their creations by developing *evil* character - sinning (II Peter 2:4). The super archangel Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12-14) had been perfect in all his ways from the day of his initial creation, till iniquity - lawlessness - was found in him (Ezekiel 28:12-17).

Lucifer was not satisfied with rule over only the one planet - as the testing ground to prepare him for *all* planets. He wanted to rule all at once. He said, "... I will exalt my throne above the stars of God..." (Isaiah 14:13). He had been created with exceeding beauty, which "lifted up his heart" in vanity (Ezekiel 28:17). He became lustful, jealous and envious of God, decided on a WAR of invasion attempting to overthrow God on the heavenly throne of the universe. He led his angels into rebellion. These angels "... kept not their first estate, but left their own habitations..." - earth! (Jude 6).

But Lucifer and his angels were cast back down to earth (Revelation 12:4).

The creation of this third of all angels was *finished* - creation of evil character within them completed. Once their creation was completed, being spirit, *they could never change!* And they are immortal!

The GOVERNMENT OF GOD no longer was operative on earth! Lucifer's name was changed to Satan the devil. His angels became demons. Their minds had become perverted for eternity.

PROOF NO. 3

WHAT AND WHY IS MAN?

It must be as shocking to the reader as it was to me, to learn that NONE of the religions or churches but the Worldwide Church of God understands both WHAT man *is* and WHY humanity was put on the earth!

Science cannot give you the answer. Modern higher education does not know or teach the answer. And, with these basically important questions, WHY all the evils in this chaotic and sick world, now facing the No. 1 problem of whether human life can survive through the remainder of this 20th century.

I ask, HOW can even the most highly educated be SO IGNORANT of so IMPORTANT A TRUTH?

Earth's face in devastation

Instead of improving, beautifying, completing earth's creation, the sinning angels brought it to desolation and ruin.

Come now again to Genesis 1:1-2: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep..."

The original Hebrew for "without form and void" is *tohu* and *bohu* - meaning waste, desolate, deteriorated. The word *was* is also translated "became." All was oceanic surface - and light had been by angel lawlessness turned into darkness.

Let me here interject a biblical principle. The entirety of a subject is often not stated within the context of one place. There is this instruction in Isaiah: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?... For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little" (Isaiah 28:9-10). But most who try to apply this principle in biblical understanding take each "little" out of context, in order to interpret their *own* idea into it.

Much directly concerned with what is revealed in Genesis 1 is filled in by other passages of scripture in various parts of the Bible.

So now, let's UNDERSTAND the background. Earth's angels had *not* completed the creation of this planet by improvement, development

and beautification. Rather, they had brought it to desolation and ruin. The GOVERNMENT OF GOD had been nullified on earth.

And now *only God* could be *certainly* relied upon never to depart from *the way* of His law and His government.

No higher, more perfect kind of being could be created than Lucifer - and he had rebelled. Since GOD ALONE would never deviate or turn from GOD'S WAY, God now determined (or probably had already predetermined) to accomplish the SUPREME creative feat - to REPRODUCE HIMSELF!

In God's supreme wisdom He knew this must be brought about *through matter!*

Man in God's image

To prepare the earth for re-creation of MAN, God first renewed the face of the earth. This is explained in Psalm 104:30: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."

Now back to Genesis 1:2. The earth was in a state of ruin. "... And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

The first thing God did was turn darkness back into LIGHT as originally made. God said, "... Let there be light: and there was light" (Genesis 1:3).

So in six days God RENEWED THE FACE OF THE EARTH (not its original creation), preparing it for the creation of MAN!

Once again the earth was a perfect creation - but lacking the finishing touches.

The PURPOSE of man on earth

WHY did the Creator God put MAN on the earth? To *improve* the physical earth as God gave it to man, *finishing* its creation, which sinning angels had deliberately refused to do. And in so doing to RESTORE THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD, with God's WAY of life, and, further, in this very process FINISHING THE CREATION OF MAN by the development of God's holy, righteous CHARACTER, with man's own assent. Once this perfect and righteous character is instilled in man and man converted from mortal to immortal spirit, then is to come the INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL - man being BORN INTO the divine FAMILY of God and then participating in the completion of the CREATION of the entire endless expanse of the UNIVERSE!

So, on the sixth day of that (re)creation week, God (Elohim) said, "... Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." (Genesis 1:26).

Man was made to have (with his assent) a special relationship with his Maker! He was made in the form and shape of God. He was given a spirit (essence) to make the relationship possible. Much more of that a little later.

The soul is MORTAL!

But God made MAN *wholly* of MATTER! This was necessary for the supreme accomplishment God willed.

"And the Eternal God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath [air] of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). Man, formed from material dust of the ground, upon breathing air, BECAME a living soul. It does not say man is or has an immortal soul. What was formed from material ground BECAME a soul.

Therefore the SOUL is physical, composed of matter, and can die. This is a TRUTH believed by very few denominations and probably by no other religions - another PROOF that identifies the one true Church of God!

How human MIND functions

Now we come to another truth, so far as I know exclusive in the one true Church.

Did you ever wonder about the vast difference between human mind and animal brain? This incidentally is another PROOF of the falsity of the theory of evolution!

The physical brain of vertebrates in the animal kingdom is almost precisely the same in physical form, design, constituent, as human brain - and the brains of whales, elephants, dolphins are larger, and chimp almost as large. Yet the output of human brain is indescribably greater. Few indeed know WHY!

Many passages of scripture show that there is a spirit *in* man. Spirit is *not* matter, and man is wholly matter. But, as there could be a small metal object swallowed by mistake *IN* man, yet no part of the man himself, so with the spirit within each human. Because it is in the form of essence - not a ghost or being of itself, and to distinguish it from God's Holy Spirit, I designate it as the "human" spirit. Nevertheless, it is spirit and not matter.

This "human" spirit imparts the power of intellect to the human physical brain. The spirit cannot see, hear, taste, smell or feel. The *brain* sees through the eye, hears through the ear, etc. The "human" spirit cannot of itself think. The physical brain thinks.

What, then, is the function of the "human" spirit? It is NOT a "soul." But it 1) imparts the power of intellect, of thinking and of MIND power to the human brain; and 2) it is the very means God has instilled making possible a personal relationship between human MAN and divine GOD.

Two stages of man

God creates, as previously mentioned, by the principle of DUALITY. So it is with the creation of MAN. It is accomplished in TWO STAGES: 1) the physical phase, which began with the first man, Adam; and 2) the spiritual stage, which begins with the "second Adam," Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:45-46).

So also, man was made from creation (and birth) with the one "human" spirit - but he is INCOMPLETE. He was made to need another Spirit - the HOLY SPIRIT of God, and when that gift of God is received, His "... Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit; that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16) - in the begotten or first stage of the *spiritual* creation.

This is most clearly explained in I Corinthians 2.

"... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart [mind] of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (verse 9) - spiritual knowledge. The natural mind can know only what the brain can physically see, hear, taste, smell or feel. The natural mind is *confined* to physical, material knowledge!

"But God hath revealed them [spiritual things] unto us by His Spirit..." (verse 10).

"For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?..." (verse 11). A cow, sheep or dog cannot know the things a MAN knows - and neither could a man, except by the spirit of man, which is in him. Likewise, the natural man with this one spirit is *limited* to material knowledge - "... even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (verse 11).

ONLY when the Holy Spirit enters, combining with the "human" spirit, can a man come to know that which is spiritual. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness

unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (verse 14).

That is why, the most highly educated are overall the most ignorant. They are confined to knowledge of the material. Knowledge of God and the things of God are foolishness to him. But, of course, God says, "... the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God..." (I Corinthians 3:19).

World CUT OFF from God

Now back to the first human, Adam.

Remember God's PURPOSE in creating man on the earth: 1) to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD on earth, and by regulating human life through that GOVERNMENT, a) complete the physical creation of earth where angels turned it to ruin, and b) in the process complete the creation of MAN by developing righteous spiritual CHARACTER: and 2) establishing the KINGDOM OF GOD and eventually the incredible human potential of finishing the creation of the vast UNIVERSE.

This supreme PURPOSE required: 1) that MAN reject Satan's WAY, embracing GOD'S WAY of LOVE, based on God's spiritual law, and 2) that man be made first of matter so that, if he was led into Satan's way of GET, he could be CHANGED, converted to GOD'S WAY of LOVE.

Spirit, once a finished creation, as angels became evil characters, *cannot be changed!* Spirit is constant and eternal - not subject to change. But physical matter is constantly *changing*.

Through God's master plan for His Spiritual creation, to be covered later, it had been master-planned by God and the Word that the Word would divest Himself of His supreme glory, and in due time take on Him the likeness of human flesh as Jesus Christ, making possible the spiritual phase of the creation of MAN - God REPRODUCING HIMSELF! What a MASTER PLAN for the extreme ULTIMATE in creative accomplishment! How GREAT is our God - in mind, purpose, planning, designing, as well as CREATING - from the tiniest germ or insect to the most huge sun, dwarfing our own great sun to insignificance!

And the incredible human potential is that the GREAT MAJESTIC GOD IS, in MAN, reproducing Himself - man can be born into the GOD FAMILY!

The first human, Adam, was created with the potential of qualifying to replace Satan, the former Lucifer, on earth's throne, restoring the GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

But it was necessary that he resist and reject Satan's GET way and choose GOD'S WAY of His law - the way of LOVE (GIVE!).

His Maker talked first to Adam and Eve - instructed them thoroughly in the GOVERNMENT and spiritual LAW of God - even though in Genesis 2 only the most condensed summary of God's instruction to them is revealed. Satan was restrained from any contact with them until God first had completely taught them.

Two symbolic trees

In the gloriously beautiful Garden of Eden, into which God placed them, were two symbolic trees. One was the "tree of life." Taking its fruit, freely offered, symbolized obedience and faithfulness to God's law of outgoing LOVE and receiving the gift of the holy spirit.

The other was the tree of "the knowledge of good and evil." Taking of its fruit was taking *to themselves* the knowledge of what is good, and what is evil - deciding for themselves what is right and what is sin. This, of course, meant rejection of GOD'S LAW, which defined *for them* the right and the wrong.

The glorious archangel Lucifer, as God originally created him, was the pinnacle of God's creative power in a single being. Few today remotely realize the great power, now turned to cunning deception, possessed by Satan. Apparently Adam completely underestimated him.

The wily Satan got to Adam through his wife Eve. He did not say, "CHOOSE MY WAY." He appeared as a subtle serpent. He cleverly deceived her.

He put DOUBTS in her mind about God's veracity. He deceived her into believing God had been unfair - selfish. He subtly injected vanity of mind. He misled her into thinking it was *right* to take of the forbidden fruit.

Adam, not deceived, nevertheless went along with his wife. With her, he took to himself the determination of what is right and what is wrong - thus DISBELIEVING what His Maker had said, REJECTING God as Savior and Ruler - rejecting God as the source of revealed BASIC KNOWLEDGE. He believed and followed Satan's WAY!

Man's sentence pronounced

When God "drove out the man" from the Garden of Eden and barred reentrance - *lest* he go back and receive eternal life in sin (Genesis 3:22-24), God PRONOUNCED SENTENCE!

God said, in effect, "You have made the decision for yourself and the world that shall spring from you. You have rejected me as the basic source of knowledge - you have rebelled against my command and my government - you have chosen the GETTING, TAKING way of Satan. Therefore I sentence you and the world you shall beget to 6,000 years of being CUT OFF from access to me, my revealed knowledge, my WAY of life - EXCEPT for the comparatively exceeding few I shall specially call for special service preparatory to my Kingdom. Go, and produce your own fund of knowledge with your carnal, hostile minds. Produce your own carnal scholarship and system of disseminating it. Go and create your own gods and religions. Go, form your own human-devised GOVERNMENTS. Satan, in all this, will deceive your world into receiving his ATTITUDE of vanity, lust and greed, envy and jealousy, suspicion and disbelief, competition and strife and violence - into unrealized REBELLION against me and my WAY of outflowing LOVE! After your world has written the lesson of your WAY in 6,000 years of evils, troubles, frustrations, sickness, sorrow, suffering and DEATH, I will INTERVENE! I will by supernatural divine POWER take over the government and education of the whole world, calling all to me - to repentance of your false way, and to eternal salvation."

Except for those specially *called* for special duty preparing for God's KINGDOM, ALL HUMANITY HAS BEEN CUT OFF FROM GOD THESE 6,000 YEARS!

I know and privately discuss world conditions with many heads of state - kings, emperors, presidents, prime ministers, ambassadors, men high in governments. They all have to deal with problems and evils with which they are utterly unable to cope.

WHY? Few indeed know. But I have just told you the CAUSE. This KNOWLEDGE makes the one true Church of God UNIQUE in the world!

The TRUTH that all are CUT OFF from God except those specially called by God was emphasized by Jesus. He said, plainly, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which... sent me draw him..."(John 6:44). No scripture contradicts that.

The only day of salvation?

The most universal false teaching, believed by virtually all churches called Christianity, except the one and only true and original Church of God is that ALL are automatically *lost* unless they profess Jesus Christ as Savior - and that now is the *only* day of salvation.

Those cut off from God are NOT lost - unless called and then lost. They are simply NOT YET JUDGED! All so far called since Adam have been called, not alone for salvation, but primarily for special mission - and salvation goes along automatically if they do repent, believe, receive and be led by the Holy Spirit.

All still living will be called during the millennium, with Christ ruling all nations - and all others uncalled (previously) will be resurrected and called in the Great White Throne Judgment following the millennium. There will be no Satan to overcome then.

Just as Adam was required to reject and overcome the pull of Satan to qualify to succeed to the throne of the earth, so was Jesus Christ, the second Adam. Jesus Christ did qualify. Those converted prior to His return must also qualify, in order to sit with Him on His throne (Revelation 2:26, 27 and 3:21).

PROOF NO. 4

THE TRUTH ABOUT ISRAEL

The Holy Bible is essentially the book of and concerning the nation Israel. It is concerned with other nations only as they come into contact with Israel.

But the answer to WHY God called that nation and the fact of their division into the TWO nations - the kingdom of Israel, and the kingdom of Judah - and the present day identity of the house of Israel forms another vital PROOF that identifies the one and only original Church of God.

God's true Church knows, that ONLY those specially called by God for special purpose have had access to Him from Adam until now.

Certainly it is almost without exception that those called did not first seek God - He sought out and called *them*.

Noah was not seeking God, but God called Noah to build a great ship on dry land away from any ocean. Noah carried out the assignment amid persecutions and jeers.

Abraham was not seeking God, but God called Abram - and without protest or question Abram obeyed and went and became the "father of the faithful," to whom the promises of both the national Israel birthright and eternal salvation through Christ were given.

Moses was not seeking God, but God called Moses at the burning bush. But Moses made excuse, protesting the assignment - saying he could not do it because he had an impediment of speech. But God called his brother Aaron to speak for him.

The children of Israel, 430 years after Abraham, were groaning and crying out because of their slavery in Egypt - but there is no statement recorded that they were seeking a relationship with God. However, God heard their groanings and delivered them by supernatural miracles out of Egypt under Moses.

There must have been two to four million of them - for there were 600,000 men, not counting women and children.

At Mt. Sinai God proposed to them His covenant that they become His nation and His congregation("... the church in the wilderness..." Acts 7:38). God offered them, for obedience to His government, material and national rewards - but *no spiritual salvation*. The Holy Spirit was given *only* to the prophets whom God called and chose.

Now WHY did God call a carnal, unspiritual people into a husband-and-wife relationship, as well as His nation with His government?

Wonderful abilities of natural mind

Natural carnal MAN, with the one "human" spirit imparting materialistic intellect, has been - even without contact with and help from GOD - able to accomplish wonders in the physical realm. This is *not* testimony to the goodness of MAN, but to the wonderful creative ability of man's Maker!

At the tower of Babel God said: "... this they *begin* to do: and now nothing will be restrained from... which they have imagined to do" (Genesis 11:6). Invention and production of the modern computer - sending men to the moon and safely back - are two modern examples.

Cut off from GOD - having only the one "human" spirit that empowers intellect - MAN has developed a scholarship that says, "Given sufficient KNOWLEDGE and we can solve every problem." The modern university is a KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION factory.

Yet, I have said the most highly educated are the *most ignorant* - because their development of knowledge has been LIMITED - confined to the physical and material. Without the Holy Spirit of God, they are, in the vernacular, "not all there!"

God says of this "intellectual" human mind, that it is "... deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked..." (Jeremiah 17:9) - and, "... the carnal mind is enmity [hostile] against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7).

God had shut man off from God's revealed knowledge.

WHY carnal Israel!

One reason God raised up ancient Israel was to *prove*, eventually (not yet realized) to all humanity that the carnal mind with all its intellectual accomplishments simply *will not* accept and live by the revealed knowledge of GOD - even though God should reveal it to them. (Romans 1:20-21).

Other nations were cut off completely from the revealed knowledge from God. But, as stated previously, God retained the prerogative of calling out of man's world certain few in preparation for His Kingdom. So God deliberately called a NATION, and through Moses revealed to them the knowledge of HIS LAW - His WILL - His WAY OF LIFE, which is outflowing LOVE!

God DID NOT give them His Holy Spirit. He gave that only to Moses and the prophets - all specially called.

But God did give them His spiritual LAW. As a *substitute* for the shed blood of Christ, He gave them animal sacrifices, which could not remit sins - were only a reminder of sin. He gave them also, as a temporary *substitute* for the Holy Spirit, a law of physical rituals, meat and drink offerings and carnal ordinances. These instilled the *habit* of obedience. Then, of course, as a civil nation He gave them His GOVERNMENT, with its basic spiritual law and its statutes and judgments. He gave them HIS SYSTEM of government - authority from the TOP DOWN. God Himself was their Congress, Parliament, Knesset or Diet. He, through Moses, was their Law-giver.

Under God was "the Word" - *Yahweh* - who was to become Christ. Under Him was Moses. Under Moses were captains over thousands, captains over hundreds, over fifties.

When Aaron and their sister Miriam wanted equal authority in the government with Moses, God punished! When Korah and his group wanted equal "say-so" and authority, God destroyed them. It was GOD - not the people - who chose and put Moses in authority. There was no democracy.

HOW did carnal Israel respond?

But how did carnal-minded Israel respond to God's great generosity, love and blessings?

Let God answer!

He says: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Eternal hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people do not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Eternal, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger. They are gone [have done] away backward (Isaiah 1:2-4).

After Moses

After Moses, the Israelites were led into the promised land by Joshua. Israel served God - to a degree - until Joshua died at age 110.

Then, true to human experience, when that generation died, "... there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Eternal... And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Eternal, and served Baalim" - a pagan god of the Canaanites (Judges 2:10-11).

Repeatedly they would forsake God, turn to idolatry of neighbor nations, go into captivity - cry out to God for deliverance, when God would raise up judges (heroes, leaders) by whom God freed them - then after a degree of peace amid idol worship when the judge died, God allowed them to be taken into captivity ,again.

This continued for some few generations.

Then Israel was ruled by the priest Eli. Eli had two sons, also in the priestly service. These sons were taking unlawful gain from the people, misleading the people, having immoral relations with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle. Now Eli was very old - near 90 - and said to his sons, "... Why do ye such things?..." (I Samuel 2:22-25). "... Notwithstanding they hearkened not to the word of their father..." The sons continued the evils, and the priest Eli did not put them out of the priesthood.

When sons go wrong

God said to Eli, "Wherefore... honorest thy sons above me?..." (I Samuel 2:29) and decreed they should die. When news came to Eli, past 90 years, that his sons had been killed and the ark of God taken in battle, Eli fell backward, broke his neck and died!

Perhaps another evidence of the Worldwide Church of God being the one original Church of God is that its apostle did remove his son, who was secularizing God's Church and college, besides other sins. It is a difficult and heartbreaking thing for a father to have to do. Eli honored his sinning sons, holding priestly office, above God. God's apostle of our day, crushing and heartbreaking though it be, was given the courage by the living Christ to do that very difficult thing.

Samuel had been trained as a prophet from a child under Eli. He was Israel's next leader. But the people rejected God as King over them and demanded a human king "that we may be like all the nations" of Satan's world (I Samuel 8:4-7, 20).

God gave them Saul, tallest man in Israel. But in due time Saul disobeyed God and sinned. God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse where God had chosen Jesse's youngest son David to be the next king over Israel.

Samuel's sons had not continued in Samuel's ways. And now King David had sons who conspired to take their father's throne. First, Absalom, having been exiled for committing murder, on being received back by kindhearted David, conspired to steal his father's throne. Later another son, Adonijah, conspired to seize it and overthrow his father.

But God had chosen David's son Solomon to succeed to the throne over Israel. After Solomon's death his son Rehoboam became king.

Solomon had reigned in splendor. Not only had he built the world's finest edifice, the Temple (as God had willed and approved), but he spent lavishly on great public works, buildings and other projects. He lived in gorgeous splendor, exceeding every king before him. For this he grievously overtaxed the people. He plunged, in old age, into idolatry and turned to women.

After Solomon's death the people sent a delegation to King Rehoboam. "Reduce the excessive taxes," the people's delegation said, "and we will serve you" (I Kings 12:4).

Rehoboam consulted the older, wiser men, who advised him to heed the complaint of the people. Then he sought advice from the younger men, whose advice he followed, saying to the people, "... My father

hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (I Kings 12:11, 14).

Again, a younger son departed from the wisdom of older men, and willfully sought to lead God's people on his own rebellious way.

But the nation thereupon rejected King Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king. However, the tribe of Judah, with Benjamin, seceded in order to maintain David's dynasty and formed the new kingdom of JUDAH.

Jeroboam established the capital over the kingdom of Israel at Samaria, north of Jerusalem. And so the Israelitish nation was now divided into two NATIONS - the kingdom of Israel with its capital at Samaria and the kingdom of Judah with Jerusalem its capital. Often, in biblical history, they were called, respectively, the "house of Israel" and the "house of Judah."

Jeroboam immediately led Israel into idolatry. After a succession of 10 kings and seven dynasties of continuous idolatry and other sins, God drove the house of Israel into captivity. King Shalmaneser of Assyria conquered them in a siege from 721 to 718 B.C., removing them from their land, carrying them as slaves to Assyria on the southern shores of the Caspian Sea.

Shalmaneser thereupon "... brought men from Babylon..." - and other cities following the Babylonian Mystery religion - "... and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof" (II Kings 17:23-24).

Kingdom of Israel NOT JEWS!

So here is another TRUTH unknown in the teachings of most churches called Christianity - Israel was divided into two nations - and the people of the kingdom of Israel *were NOT Jews*, nor are they ever called Jews in the Bible!

The first place where the word Jew or Jews occurs in the Bible is in II Kings 16:5-6, where ISRAEL and ally Syria were AT WAR against THE JEWS!

But those of the house of Israel did not remain more than a generation or so in Assyria. They migrated northwest. They became known as "the LOST Ten Tribes." And indeed they were *doubly* lost - lost in identity until they themselves, after a generation or more, did not know who they were - and lost spiritually from God.

The knowledge of this, from the Bible, is ANOTHER PROOF of the one original true Church today!

This mystery is cleared up in a substantial booklet, "*The United States and the British Commonwealth IN PROPHECY*" - sent free upon request. It is one of the most amazing, exciting, eye-opening books ever written. Shocking - but TRUE! Meanwhile the house or kingdom of JUDAH (the Jews) continued to an extent in God's ways, but within a hundred years were sinning worse than Israel had done.

Judah driven out

By about 604 B.C. King Nebuchadnezzar had become king over the world's FIRST EMPIRE - the Chaldean Empire, often called Babylon. In 604 to 585 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar's armies captured the kingdom of Judah and moved the Jews into Babylonish territory as slaves.

Seventy years later, the Persian Empire had succeeded the Chaldean. God caused King Cyrus, by communicating via "stirring up the spirit of Cyrus" (Ezra 1:1) - his one "human" spirit to issue a decree sending a contingent of Jews back to Jerusalem to build the second temple. Zerubbabel was the governor of the contingent and builder of the temple to which Christ came, at His first appearing on earth as the human Jesus. Also, prophetically, this Zerubbabel was the type of one to come in the LAST DAYS of this world whom Christ would use in building the temple to which the glorified all-powerful Christ shall come at His second appearing. Apparently none but God's true Church understands the truth of the building of this temple.

Some of Judah remained in and near Jerusalem - others were scattered into Russia, Poland, Yemen. Most of the Israelis in today's Israel have migrated into the original "promised land" from these countries. (To be continued next issue.)

Good News - December 4, 1978

SEVEN PROOFS OF THE TRUE CHURCH

WHERE is the one and only true Church today - the Church founded by Jesus Christ in A.D. 31? Seven major eye-opening proofs identify it unmistakably.

*The first four proofs of the true Church appeared in the Nov. 20 Good News.
This installment continues with Proof No. 5.*

by Herbert W. Armstrong
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PROOF NO. 5

THE TRUE GOSPEL

Could anything sound more unbelievable? To say the true Gospel of Jesus Christ was not proclaimed to the world during 19 whole centuries - from the middle of the first century until the middle of the 20th - may sound preposterous!

Incredible! But TRUE!

The world has heard much preaching *about* Jesus Christ as a person. That is well - but the Gospel of Christ is the MESSAGE Christ proclaimed and taught.

Jesus Himself said that many would come in His name - claiming to represent Him - saying that He, Jesus, is the Christ - and deceiving the MANY (Matthew 24:4-5).

Good news proclaimed

But the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news - the message - He proclaimed and taught.

The word *gospel* means "GOOD NEWS. Jesus brought the GOOD NEWS of the world's ONLY and SURE HOPE! And I do not mean an ethereal, spiritualized unreal hope. He brought the good news of a coming entirely new and real world. A time when the earth will be filled with PEACE, HAPPINESS, Joy and ETERNAL SALVATION!

God's one original *true* Church is virtually alone in proclaiming *that* GOOD NEWS today!

Jesus was the world's first NEWSCASTER - a FORECASTER, with news for the future - of our generation near the end of the 20th century - when all the world's problems shall be solved, and its evils eradicated! He taught His apostles from the fall of A.D. 27 to the spring of A.D. 31. Yet by about A.D. 53 to 58, that GOOD NEWS of the world's ONLY HOPE had been SUPPRESSED by powerful world forces!

True Gospel SUPPRESSED!

What *was* that Gospel message? One of the proofs that identifies God's one true Church in our time is the fact that as Jesus foretold, His

Church would, at this crisis end time, be proclaiming that same Gospel at last! But first, notice what was written in the book of Galatians around A.D. 53 to 58 to the churches in Galatia:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ *unto another gospel*: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Galatians 1:6-7).

Again, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of men who by their wickedness **SUPPRESS THE TRUTH**" (Romans 1:18, Revised Standard Version).

No wonder we read of "... the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world..." (Revelation 12:9).

Gospel prophesied

The prophet Malachi lived among the Jewish colony that had been sent to Jerusalem out of the captivity in the ancient lands of Babylon and Medo-Persia to build the second temple. Malachi wrote about a generation after Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah. He wrote about 397 B.C.

This is important, because his writings reached only a small portion of Judah and none of Israel (the "lost" 10 tribes). Yet Malachi's prophecy is addressed to Israel, not the minimal Jewish colony among whom he lived. It never reached Israel of those days - hence it is a prophecy for ISRAEL (not Judah or the Israelis of today). **IT IS A NOW BOOK!**

The prophet Malachi foretold the proclamation of the Gospel, saying, "... the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the Covenant..." (Malachi 3:1).

Jesus Christ was that Messenger - of the new covenant. Actually Malachi here is referring to the TWO appearances of Christ on earth - but verses 2 to 6 definitely refer to His yet-future **SECOND** Coming.

Yet, he did refer also (in verse 1) to Christ's first coming, because this prophecy is quoted in Mark 1:1: The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee" (Mark 1:1-2).

Actually, this latter statement applies to *both* Jesus' appearing more than 1,900 years ago and to preparing the way before His second coming in power and glory, as **WORLD RULER**. The latter is *now* being

prepared from within the one true Church of God! That is another evidence of its identity!

However, in Mark 1, the account continues describing John the baptist preparing the way before His first appearing, then, verses 14-15: "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the KINGDOM OF GOD IS at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (emphasis added).

Gospel of the coming Kingdom

The Gospel Jesus brought from God, proclaimed and taught His apostles was the prophetic message of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD.

Jesus went all over the Holy Land teaching this same Gospel. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom..." (Matthew 4:23).

He taught in parables about the KINGDOM OF GOD. Jesus said "... Unto what is the KINGDOM OF GOD like?... it is like a grain of mustard seed..." (Luke 13:18-19). Again the KINGDOM OF GOD "... is like leaven..." (Luke 13:21).

Again, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the KINGDOM OF GOD, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

Jesus sent His 12 disciples out to proclaim the KINGDOM, "And he sent them to preach the KINGDOM OF GOD, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:2).

He sent another 70 disciples out on a special mission: "... the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two... into every city and place whither he himself would come... And he said unto them... heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke 10:1-9).

After His resurrection "... unto the apostles whom he had chosen... being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to [concerning] the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:2-3).

The apostles proclaimed the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD. Philip, who became an evangelist, proclaimed it, "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..." (Acts 8:12).

Gospel proclaimed to gentiles

The apostle Paul proclaimed the Kingdom of God to the gentiles, "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the KINGDOM OF GOD, shall see my face no more" (Acts 20:25).

Again, Paul "... expounded and testified the KINGDOM OF GOD..." (Acts 28:23) and "Preaching the KINGDOM OF GOD..." (verse 31).

To the Corinthian church Paul wrote, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the KINGDOM OF GOD..." (I Corinthians 15:50).

To the Galatians Paul wrote: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). And in verse 9 it was made a DOUBLE-curse to preach any other Gospel!

Yet THAT GOSPEL was SUPPRESSED about or just past the middle of the first century and was not again proclaimed to the world until 1953 - 19 centuries later - and THEN by the present living generation of that same ONE and ONLY true original Church of God, established by Jesus Christ A.D. 31!

The proclaiming of that *only* true Gospel message taught by Jesus *identifies* the one and only true Church of God TODAY!

What is the Kingdom of God?

IF "traditional Christianity" has NOT proclaimed that Gospel - when the Bible is replete with passages showing that was the Gospel Jesus preached, HOW DO THEY EXPLAIN IGNORING IT? The Roman Catholic church simply claims that their church *IS* the Kingdom of God. It is not generally realized, but the pope's title, "Vicar of Christ," means, literally, "*in place of Christ.*" Not one merely serving Christ but one who has REPLACED Christ! The Kingdom of God was already here! The papacy had come IN PLACE OF Christ, to rule the nations for 1,000 years. And the papacy did rule the "Holy Roman Empire" of Europe 1,260 years - A.D. 554 to 1814! But the popes and all Catholics are "flesh and blood," and flesh and blood cannot inherit or enter into the Kingdom of God!

Many Protestant churches have simply designated the Kingdom of God as "the church" in general, not necessarily their particular denomination.

Others have spoken of the Kingdom of God as an ethereal something (or nothing) "set up in men's hearts."

But none of those square with the teaching of Christ and of Paul about what *IS* the Kingdom of God.

The prophet Daniel knew

The prophet Daniel, who lived 600 years before Christ, knew that the Kingdom of God was a real kingdom - a *government* ruling over literal PEOPLE on the earth.

Jesus Christ brought additional knowledge about it, which the prophet Daniel might not have known. Still, Daniel knew there was going to be a real, literal Kingdom of God on the earth.

Daniel was one of four extra-ordinary, intelligent and brilliant Jewish lads in the Judean captivity. These four men were stationed in the palace of King Nebuchadnezzar of the Chaldean Empire, in training for special responsibilities in the Babylonian government. Daniel was a prophet who had been given special understanding in visions and dreams (Daniel 1:17).

Nebuchadnezzar was the first real world ruler. He had conquered a vast empire, including the nation Judah. This king had a dream so impressive it troubled him - moved him to tremendous concern. He demanded that his magicians, astrologers and sorcerers tell him both *what* he had dreamed and what it meant. They could not. They were baffled. Then Daniel was brought before the king.

Daniel disclaimed any more human ability to interpret dreams than the Chaldean magicians. "BUT," he said, "there is a GOD in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days..." (Daniel 2:28).

First, God's purpose was to reveal to this world-ruling human king that there is a GOD in heaven - that GOD IS SUPREME RULER over all nations, governments and kings - that God RULES THE UNIVERSE! Even though, during the past 6,000 years, God has *allowed* nations generally to be left altogether to their own devices. But God was giving Nebuchadnezzar a special opportunity to accept GOD rule.

This Chaldean king knew only about the many pagan demon gods. He knew nothing of the true *living* ALMIGHTY, God. Like people and rulers, even today, he did not know that GOD is the living, REAL, active, RULING and GOVERNING PERSONAGE who actually and literally *governs* not only what is on earth, but the UNIVERSE ENTIRELY!

The whole purpose of this DREAM was to *reveal* GOD'S GOVERNMENT - the *fact* that God RULES - the truth of THE KINGDOM OF GOD - the very thing that is the one and *only* true GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! And, secondly, to reveal - preserved in writing for us TODAY - what is to happen "*in the latter days*" - probably within the next two decades - THIS LAST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY!

For US, today!

This is no dry, dull, dead writing for a people of 2,500 years ago. This is LIVING, TREMENDOUS, *BIG NEWS* for *OUR DAY!* It is *advance news* for us, NOW. News *before it happens* - of the most colossal event of all earth's history certain to occur *in your lifetime* - during the very next few years!

This is THE TRUE GOSPEL! It is the very Gospel Christ preached! It is intended for you and me TODAY! It is vital that you UNDERSTAND!

Read, in your own Bible, verses 28 through 35. In his dream, this king had seen a stupendous statue - larger than any image or statue ever built by man - so tremendous it was terrifying, even in a dream. Its head was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, legs of solid iron, feet and toes a mixture of iron and clay.

There was a time element. Nebuchadnezzar had viewed it *until* a supernatural STONE came from heaven, smashing the statue on its feet. Then the whole of the statue broke into small fragments and was actually blown away by the wind - it disappeared! Then this STONE expanded miraculously and quickly became a great MOUNTAIN - So great it filled the whole earth!

What did it mean? *Did* it have meaning? Yes, because this was God's doing. Unlike ordinary dreams, this one was caused by God to convey the message of God's sovereignty to Nebuchadnezzar - and, because it is part of the written Word of God, to us today - to reveal important facts of the TRUE GOSPEL!

"This is the dream" said Daniel (verse 36), "and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

This, then, is GOD'S interpretation. Men ought never to *interpret* the Bible. The Bible gives us GOD'S OWN INTERPRETATION! Here it is (verse 37):

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings" - he was the first real WORLD RULER Over a world empire - "... for the God of heaven hath given thee a

kingdom, power, and strength, and glory." God was revealing Himself to this human world-dictator as the MOST HIGH *Ruler over all*.

People today, like this Chaldean king, seem not to think of God as a RULER - as the Supreme One who GOVERNS - as the Head of GOVERNMENT. The Eternal was revealing Himself through Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar - and through the Bible to *you and to me* TODAY - as a SOVEREIGN, ALL POWERFUL, GOVERNING GOD who *is to be obeyed!*

This knowledge is another PROOF of the modern identity of God's *one true Church!*

"... Thou," continued Daniel to this human emperor, "art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another KINGDOM inferior to thee, and another third KINGDOM of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth" (verses 38-39).

What IS a kingdom?

Notice! This is speaking of KINGDOMS. It is referring to kingdoms *that bear rule over the people on earth*. It is speaking of GOVERNMENTS! It is not speaking of ethereal sentiments "set up in the hearts of men." It is not speaking of churches. It is speaking of the kind of GOVERNMENTS that bear RULE and AUTHORITY over nations of PEOPLE here on earth. It is literal. It is specific. There is no misunderstanding, here, as to what is meant by the word "KINGDOM."

There is no misunderstanding the interpretation. GOD gives His own interpretation through the prophet Daniel. The great metallic image represented national and international GOVERNMENTS - real, literal KINGDOMS.

It represented a *succession* of world-ruling governments. First was the head of gold. That represented Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom - the Chaldean Empire. *After* him - later in time sequence - was to come a second, then a third KINGDOM, "which shall bear RULE over all the earth" - *world empire!*

Then, verse 40, the legs of iron represent a *fourth* world empire. It was to be *strong*, even as iron is strong - stronger militarily than its predecessors. Yet, as silver is less valuable than gold, brass than silver, iron than brass, though each metal was harder and stronger, the succession would deteriorate morally and spiritually. The two legs meant the fourth empire would be divided.

After the Chaldean Empire came the still larger Persian Empire, then the Greco-Macedonian and fourth, the Roman Empire. It was divided, with capitals at Rome and Constantinople.

Now - verse 44! Read it! Get your Bible. See it with your own eyes in your own Bible. Here, in PLAIN LANGUAGE, is God's explanation of what the KINGDOM OF GOD IS:

"And in the days of these kings..." It is here speaking of the 10 toes, part of iron and part of brittle clay. This, by connecting the prophecy with Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 and 17, is referring to the new UNITED STATES OF EUROPE, which is *now forming*, out of the European Common Market, before your very eyes! Revelation 17:12 makes plain the detail that it shall be a union of 10 KINGS OR KINGDOMS that (Revelation 17:8) shall resurrect the medieval "HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE."

So, mark carefully the *time element!* "In the days of these kings" - in the days of these 10 nations or groups of nations that shall, *IN OUR TIME*, resurrect briefly the Roman Empire - notice what shall happen:

"... shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever!"

Yes, in OUR TIME!!

Now here we have described FOUR universal world empires - the *only* four that ever existed! Revelation 17 shows that after the fall of the original Roman Empire there would be SEVEN revivals that would be ruled over by a gentile CHURCH - the "daughter" of ancient BABYLON - a church claiming to be Christian, but actually named by God "MYSTERY BABYLON the Great" - or more plainly, BABYLONIAN MYSTERIES!

Six of those have come and gone. The seventh is now forming - the last, final, *brief* resurrection of the "Holy Roman Empire" by 10 European groups or nations. These are the 10 toes of iron and clay mixed.

In their days - and they shall last but a very short space, possibly no more than two to 3½ years - shall the GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM.

This, then, shall be THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

Compare with Revelation 17. Here is pictured a church. Not a small church - a GREAT church. She rules over "many waters" (verse 1),

which are described in verse 15 as different nations speaking different languages. She posed as the Church of GOD - which scripture says (Ephesians 5:23; Revelation 19:7; Matthew 25:1-10, etc.) is the affianced "bride" of CHRIST, to be spiritually MARRIED to Him at His second COMING.

But she has committed fornication. How? By having direct *political* union with HUMAN GOVERNMENTS of THIS WORLD! She "sat on" (Revelation 17:3) all seven of these resurrections of the Roman Empire - called the "Holy Roman Empire." She RULED OVER the human kingdoms - as a common-law and unmarried "wife" ruling her paramour "husband" - a totally unnatural and ungodly relationship.

She is, therefore, to "sit on" this last "head of the Beast" - this final resurrection of the Roman Empire. It will be a *union* of church and state. It is to endure but a very short time. It is to FIGHT AGAINST CHRIST at HIS SECOND COMING! That will be its END.

We see it in process of rising now. Therefore we are CLOSE to the coming of Christ! We are now *very near* the END of this world!

When Christ comes, He is coming as KING of kings, ruling the whole earth (Revelation 19:11-16); and HIS KINGDOM - the KINGDOM OF GOD - said Daniel, is to CONSUME all these worldly kingdoms.

Revelation 11:15 states it in these words, "... The kingdoms of this world *are become* THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST; and He shall reign for ever and ever!"

This is THE KINGDOM OF GOD. It is the END of present governments - the governments that rule Russia, China, Japan, Italy, Germany - yes, and even the United States and the British nations. They then shall *become* the kingdoms - the GOVERNMENTS of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, then KING of kings over the entire earth.

This makes completely PLAIN the fact that the KINGDOM OF GOD is a literal GOVERNMENT. Even as the Chaldean Empire was a KINGDOM - even as the Roman Empire was a KINGDOM - SO the KINGDOM OF GOD is a government. It is to *take over* the GOVERNMENT of the NATIONS of the world.

Jesus Christ was BORN to be a KING - A RULER!

When He stood, on trial for His life, before Pilate, "Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the

world..." But Jesus also said to Pilate: "... My kingdom is not of this world... (John 18:37, 36). His kingdom is of THE WORLD TOMORROW!

Have you not read what the angel proclaimed to Mary, the mother of Jesus, prior to His birth? Jesus told Pilate He was born to become a KING. The angel of God said to Mary: "... thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the THRONE of his father David, and *he shall reign* over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be NO END" (Luke 1:31-33).

These scriptures tell you PLAINLY *that* GOD IS supreme RULER. They tell you in plainest language that Jesus was born to be a KING - that He is going to RULE ALL NATIONS OF THE EARTH - that His Kingdom shall rule eternally.

But all this is only *part* of the fantastic, amazing, actually SHOCKING TRUTH about the KINGDOM OF GOD.

The KINGDOM OF GOD will rule *over* the peoples and nations of the earth. Yet these mortal peoples and nations will *NOT* be the Kingdom, not even *in* the Kingdom of God. They shall be merely RULED OVER BY IT!

We still have to learn of WHAT or OF WHOM it is composed. Can *YOU*, as an individual, ever become a part of this Kingdom?

Can be entered

In Jesus' day, the religious leaders *knew* He was a teacher sent from God with GOD'S TRUTH. They branded Him a false prophet, heretic and seditionist. Yet *they knew* His was the voice of GOD!

One of them, a Pharisee name Nicodemus, occupying an office of authority over the Jews, came secretly by night to see Jesus.

"Rabbi," said this Pharisee "we know that thou art a teacher come from God" (John 3:2) Yes, *we Pharisees*, he said, *know that!* He did not say, "I know it". He said, "*We know*" - *we Pharisees!* They knew He spoke the TRUTH - yet they not only rejected it, they crucified Him!

But Jesus hewed straight to the line! He told Nicodemus about THE KINGDOM OF GOD. He told him some things you need UNDERSTAND!

Notice! "Jesus answered and said unto him. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

(John 3:3) Yes, notice! The Kingdom of God is something that CAN'T be seen, but only by those who had been "born again." It is some thing others *cannot see!* Request our free booklet [Just What Do You Mean - Born Again?](#)

But what about the CHURCH? Can carnal people SEE A CHURCH? Of course! But they *cannot* see the Kingdom of God SO SAID JESUS! Then, if you believe Jesus, the CHURCH cannot be the Kingdom of God!

Notice further: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God". The Kingdom of God is something that *can be entered into* - BUT, only those "born of water and of the Spirit" can enter into it!

He said, "... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh *IS FLESH*; and that which is born of the Spirit *IS SPIRIT*" (John 3:5-6).

Notice further! In the resurrection chapter of the Bible we read, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (I Corinthians 15:50). The Kingdom of God is something no human, of flesh and blood, can enter or *inherit!*

In hearts of Pharisees?

Let's take a good look at this. First realize, if it does say that, it is contradicted by all the other scriptures I am giving you in this article. If the Bible does contradict itself, you can't believe it anyway - so then it still would prove nothing.

First, *to whom* is Jesus speaking? Read it!

"And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20-21).

He was speaking to the unconverted, carnal, hypocritical, lying Pharisees. Notice, "He answered *them*, and said..." It was the Pharisees who asked Him the question. Were they in the CHURCH? No, never! If one thinks the Kingdom is the CHURCH - and the Kingdom was "within" the Pharisees - was THE CHURCH *within* the Pharisees? Such an assumption is rather ridiculous, now, isn't it?

Notice again, precisely WHAT JESUS SAID. Remember the CHURCH had not yet been set up. Jesus *did not say*, "the Kingdom of God shall be set up in your hearts." He said *none* of the things people interpret *into* this verse. He said to the Pharisees "the Kingdom of God *IS*" - present tense *is*, *NOW!* Whatever He was saying the Kingdom of God is, He made it present tense, not future.

Luke *wrote* these words, originally, in the *Greek* language. The Greek words he wrote were translated into the English words "within you." But, if you have a Bible with the marginal references, you will notice that this is alternately rendered "*in the midst of you* " or "*among you.*" The *context* indicates that this indeed is the better translation. If your Bible is a Moffatt translation, you will notice that the translation recognized that Jesus was talking of His *reign* or *rule*, at the head of *government*.

This is the Moffatt translation of the same verse: "He answered them, 'The Reign of God is not coming as you hope to catch sight of it; no one will say, Here it is or There it is, for the Reign of GOD IS NOW IN YOUR MIDST.'"

The Revised Standard translation renders it "the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you." All these translations render it *present tense*.

Jesus was not talking about a church soon to be organized. He was not talking about sentiments in the mind or heart. He was talking about His REIGN, as the Messiah! The Pharisees were not asking Him about a church. They knew nothing of any New Testament church soon to be started. They were not asking about a pretty sentiment. They knew, from the prophecies of Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others, that their Messiah was to come.

The two fateful alternatives

This world trouble began in 1914, with World War I. There was a recess from 1918 until 1939. We are in a second recess now - although we have been in what we call "COLD WAR." But now at last we have nuclear energy. We have hydrogen bombs stockpiled in such power and volume that they could blast all human life off this planet several times over. There are two other destructive weapons today in existence, either of which could erase humanity from the earth.

Today world-famous scientists say only a super world government can prevent world cosmocide. Yet MEN cannot and *will not* get together to form such a world-ruling government.

It's time we face the hard, cold, realistic FACT: humanity has two alternatives: either there *is* an almighty, all-powerful GOD who is about to step in and set up THE KINGDOM OF GOD to rule all nations with supernatural and supranational *FORCE* to bring us PEACE - Or else all human life would be obliterated (Matthew 24:22).

If the deceived religionists, who think the CHURCH is the Kingdom of God, were right, and there is not going to be any supernatural and all-powerful WORLD GOVERNMENT, which is the Kingdom of God, then humanity is utterly without HOPE. All human life is in danger of extinction.

But notice what Jesus Christ said!

Can you BELIEVE JESUS CHRIST?

Where is your trust - in the Word of God or in paganized, empty, deceiving teachings falsely labeled "Christianity" - inherited as "Christian tradition" - which says the CHURCH is the Kingdom of God; or, that the Kingdom is merely a meaningless, frothy and ethereal sentiment "set up in our hearts"? It's about time you come to know who are the false prophets, and WHO is speaking the true Word of God faithfully!

PROOF NO. 6

WHAT AND WHY THE CHURCH?

When we come to the question, WHAT and WHY is the Church, it is equally astonishing that the one original true Church of God, still extant after 1,900 years of persecution, opposition, martyrdom, remains UNIQUE in having the answer.

The real PURPOSE and function of the Church is as little understood as the knowledge of who and what God is, what and why is MAN, what was the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the government of God and His supreme creative achievement - Holy righteous CHARACTER.

Isn't it incongruous? Man invents numerous religions for the worship of God - yet doesn't know WHO or WHAT God is? Man does not know what HE is! Or WHY! Seven hundred million join "Christian" churches who do not know the purpose or function of the church!

True, indeed it is, that the whole world has been DECEIVED!

Church error No. 1

The first and most widespread false belief in this world's churches is the assumption that this is God's world - that God is desperately trying to get everybody "saved," while Satan is trying to *keep* everybody "lost." Satan is surely winning that battle - if it were true! But 1) God is NOT trying to "get everybody saved" spiritually, NOW! And 2) those uncalled are NOT "lost" - just not judged - YET!

We need first to understand the world out from which God's Church has been called to be a separate, holy people.

Let me restate it briefly. The first man Adam was given two MUSTS: 1) to *reject* Satan's way of "GET" and 2) to give himself to God's way of "GIVE" - the way of God's law - outflowing LOVE, thus developing the holy, righteous CHARACTER to *qualify* to restore the government of God on earth.

But Adam rejected God's way. He rejected God as the source of basic knowledge and as the God to be worshipped and obeyed.

BUT let it *now* be emphasized that when God sentenced man, on Adam's choice, to 6,000 years being *cut off* from God, the Eternal retained the prerogative of specially calling to Him those He chose for special service. And, ALWAYS - in every case - those specially called *were called for a mission PREPARATORY TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD!*

Understand this! Everyone God called was chosen for a special mission PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

God is no respecter of persons. He called no "favorites" merely to bestow upon them His gift of eternal salvation. Each has been called for use preparing for the KINGDOM OF GOD.

BUT, understand also *this*: That special mission or service to which each "called-out one" has been chosen was GOD'S MEANS of developing in him the holy, righteous CHARACTER to QUALIFY him to reign and rule with and under Christ in God's KINGDOM - in THE WORLD TOMORROW!

Only the prophets in ancient Old Testament Israel were called in this sense. The Holy Spirit was never made available to others in Old Testament Israel. The purpose for the special calling of that nation has been covered in Proof No. 4.

Man's spiritual creation begins with Christ and the Church

Remember, God creates in DUAL stages. The first stage of man's creation was the *physical* stage. It began with Adam. The second phase of man's creation is the spiritual phase and begins with Christ.

As a group or nation, Israel was called under the physical stage of man's creation. The SPIRITUAL stage began through Christ with righteous Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets in Israel. But as a *group calling*, the Church of God begins the spiritual phase.

The Church was called for a very special PURPOSE, in preparation for the KINGDOM - a purpose not fully realized from the first century until the present generation.

Adam's creation NOT COMPLETE

The first Adam, formed altogether from the dust of the ground, was given a spirit to empower the human brain with intellect. This was explained fully in Proof No. 3. But he was *incomplete* - he was created to *need* also a *second* Spirit - the Holy Spirit of God. Old Testament Israel was not given God's Holy Spirit.

Man, possessing only the one "human" spirit, is, truly, "*not all there*" - yet he is unaware of the fact. He is a natural-born carnal person. He has only the physical, carnal mind.

And what says God of the carnal mind? It is hostile against God and not subject to the law of God, "... neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). Also as Jeremiah explained, this natural carnal mind is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). Hundreds of years of Old Testament Israelitish experience proved this! They were given God's revealed knowledge, hidden from other nations, yet they rebelled and sinned even above other nations!

The world into which Jesus came

It was in such a world - and *to* such a people (Judah) that Jesus came. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

First, before teaching or preaching His Gospel of the Kingdom, Jesus had to QUALIFY to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD and establish the KINGDOM OF GOD. In *the most titanic battle ever fought for the greatest stakes in the universe*, Jesus overcame Satan, rejected Satan's "GET" way, proved 100 percent obedient and loyal to God (Matthew 4:1-11).

He called and chose the disciples He trained to be His apostles.

Then He said, "... Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell [the grave] shall not prevail against it. And I will give *unto thee* [His chief apostle] the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever *thou* shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever *thou* shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:18-19). Plainly Jesus was speaking to one man, His chief apostle, when He spoke of binding and loosing - not to the Church.

For 3½ years Jesus taught His apostles-to-be about the Kingdom of God.

Church members must qualify

The first Adam, in order to qualify to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD on earth, had to overcome Satan - Satan's way ("GET") - and prove obedient to God. Adam failed.

Christ, the second Adam, had to qualify by overcoming Satan and proving loyalty to God and God's way. He QUALIFIED!

Each one in the Church must also qualify in order to sit ON CHRIST'S THRONE with Him! "And he that overcometh [Satan], and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron..." (Revelation 2:26-27). Again, "To him that overcometh [Satan] will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame [Satan], and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

I have shown that the whole world, except those specially called by God, is CUT OFF from God - cut off from access to Him who has eternal life to give. Jesus CONFIRMED THAT plainly and definitely. He said, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him..." (John 6:44). NO SCRIPTURE CAN OR DOES NULLIFY THAT! All others are CUT OFF from God. No one of them CAN COME to Christ!

The Church of God founded

Jesus was crucified, resurrected after three days and three nights in the tomb (another incidental proof of the one true Church), and after 40 days ascended to the right hand of God in heaven.

Then, on the day of the Feast of Firstfruits (Pentecost) A.D. 31, God sent the Holy Spirit in an amazing display, founding His Church!

The number of disciples who still believed after Jesus' 3½ years of preaching was a mere 120 (Acts 1:15).

"... They were all of *one, accord* in one place. And *suddenly* there came a *sound* from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and *it* filled all the house where they were sitting. And there *appeared* unto them *cloven tongues* like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-3).

I have purposely emphasized certain words in this scripture, because it was a ONE-ONLY incident. It never occurred before. It never has since. Modern "Pentecostal" meetings and "tongues speaking" are emphatically not the same thing at all.

Notice carefully! First, they were all *of one accord* - something often not true today. Secondly, the Holy Spirit came *suddenly* - they did not "work it up" by emotionally shouting, as is usual in such meetings today. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit came with a *sound* - they *heard* it, like a blast of a rushing mighty wind. No such thing occurs today. Fourthly, the Holy Spirit is here twice called "it," not "he," not a Ghost or Personage. Fifth, they saw the Holy Spirit. It appeared as divided tongues *like fire*. This was actually *seen* sitting on each of the 120. NO such thing is ever repeated in so called "Pentecostal" meeting today!

Now, further, do they today speak with the *same kind* of tongues? Here again the REAL Pentecost experience is not in any sense duplicated today. Read on:

"... There were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad..." Word spread rapidly of this once only amazing experience - *hearing* and seeing the Holy Spirit. "The multitude came together, and were confounded, because that *every man* heard them [the 120] speak in his own language" (Acts 2:5-6).

Study this again carefully. The Mede among these devout Jews who came running in heard *them* - the 120 - speaking the language of the Medes. And he understood what they were saying! The one Mede heard and understood 120 Galileans speaking the language of the Medes! But the Parthian heard *them* - the same 120 - speaking his Parthian language! And so on! It was not a "jibberish" - unintelligible - as "tongues people" speak in their meetings today! And it needed no interpreter. I well remember experiences in such meetings, where in service after service the same man rose to interpret - and although the "jibberish" of different ones was entirely different, the "interpretation" had been memorized, and in every case was the same! I saw that kind of experience drive sincere people hungry for God's truth away in disgust!

Let me add here that God's Holy Spirit is the Spirit of a SOUND MIND (II Timothy 1:7).

The one and only original Church of God was founded that day of Pentecost, A.D. 31. They were all of SOUND mind - like-minded - of ONE accord.

God ADDS to His Church

The multitude, who came running in, were all amazed - in wonderment doubting and asking, "What does this mean?"

Then God's chief" apostle, Peter, stood up to explain - to deliver to these thousands the first inspired sermon by an apostle.

These devout Jews were "pricked in their heart" by Peter's sermon and asked, "What shall we do?"

Peter gave no 20th-century "altar call" - pleaded with none to talk them into conversion - but answered their question, "... repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). It was the power of the Holy Spirit that had struck straight in their hearts. GOD HAD CALLED THEM!

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there *were added* unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

"And they continued steadfastly *in the apostles' doctrine...*" (verse 42).

Note here this important point! They did not appoint among themselves a "doctrinal committee" to decide intellectually where they could believe God's apostle. *GOD gave them the true doctrine through His apostle*, and they continued together with one accord in "... the *apostles' doctrine* and fellowship..."

Now WHO added members to the Church? Not apostolic or evangelical salesmanship - but "... the LORD added to the church daily such as should be saved [were to be saved]" (Acts 2:47).

Apostles preached; Church backed them

But what was the FOUNDATION of the Church? It is referred to as a "building," and a solid building must be built on a solid foundation.

Of course Jesus Christ is the foundational Rock. But the Church is built on the FOUNDATION of the apostles (New Testament) and prophets (Old Testament), Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner STONE (Ephesians 2:20). Jesus taught the apostles. The CHURCH followed the apostles' doctrine. Lay members were not free to set, change or decide doctrinal TRUTH - but only to receive and *believe* it.

A day or two after the Church was founded, Peter and John went up to the temple. At the Beautiful Gate entrance was a crippled beggar, lame from birth. Peter, being asked for alms, took the cripple by the right hand, lifting him up, saying, "... In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk". (Acts 3:1-6). "And he, leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple..." (verse 8).

The beggar was known to all. This miracle drew a huge crowd. Peter, explaining, preached to them about the resurrection of Jesus. He proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom, saying the heaven had received Jesus *until* the time of restoration of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD by the KINGDOM OF GOD (Acts 3:20-21).

As Peter spoke, the priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them and threw them into prison for the night.

Next morning, Peter and John were brought before the rulers, elders, scribes, the High Priest and his family. Peter spoke briefly but boldly to them. They then threatened the apostles, forbidding them to preach any further about Christ and His Kingdom.

Naturally Peter and John, though now inspired by the Holy Spirit, were human, and naturally somewhat shaken up and frightened.

Being released, they went immediately for moral support and encouragement to "... their own company..." (Acts 4:23), the Church.

The Church "... lifted up their voice to God with one accord..." (verse 24). And when they (the Church) had prayed, God answered by shaking the place where they were assembled, filling them with His Spirit, courage and power.

Another incident: The apostles had continued preaching, healing the sick and performing miracles. God added to the Church, but also the persecution grew. Peter again had been imprisoned. Steven had been stoned to death. In Acts 8:1 "... there was a great persecution against the church... and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

By the following Passover, persecution had mounted. "... About that time, Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison... intending after Passover to bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison..." (Acts 12:1-5).

Why members called

Now came another example of how the Church stood back of the apostles. Remember, the word *apostle* means "one sent forth." Jesus had given the great commission to Peter and the apostles. The other members of the Church were not sent forth with the Gospel. They were called:

- 1) to support and encourage the apostles in getting out the Gospel message, as GOD'S MEANS of,
- 2) developing in them God's holy, righteous CHARACTER, qualifying them for places as kings and priests in the KINGDOM!

So here came *another incident* showing how the Church supported the apostles. Continue, verse 5 of Acts 12, "... but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" - Peter. The brethren stood loyally 100 percent back of God's apostles.

What happened, when the Church so unceasingly prayed? "... The same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands" (verses 6-7), and Peter followed the angel on out of the prison. Peter fled on to Caesarea.

The GREAT COMMISSION to apostles

Jesus gave His GREAT COMMISSION to the apostles - those sent forth with the message. The lay brethren *were added* to the Church to *support* the apostles.

Notice the GREAT COMMISSION as recorded by Matthew: "Now the eleven disciples [Judas had left them] went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them... And Jesus came and said to them [not the whole Church], All authority in heaven and on earth is given

to me. Go, THEREFORE, and make disciples of all nations..." Notice, make disciples OF, or within all nations. A disciple is a student - one learning, being taught. "... baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." Notice here, this does not and cannot refute Jesus' own statement that "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him." The GREAT COMMISSION was not a commission to try to persuade ALL in those nations to come to Christ. Jesus said plainly "make disciples OF [within] all nations." He referred to those whom God had *called* - and they were, comparatively, exceeding FEW by proportion to the whole population. Then Jesus continued... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:16-20, Revised Standard Version).

The apostles were NOT sent forth on a soul-saving crusade, but to TEACH those whom God had called and made willing to listen. That is what God's apostle does to this day. Today we are able to utilize modern methods of MASS COMMUNICATION - radio, television, the printing press. We TEACH - the good news of the coming KINGDOM - to those whom God calls and makes willing to listen. In this way we TEACH and PROCLAIM the true GOSPEL MESSAGE to many MILLIONS, worldwide. Our magazine, *The Plain Truth*, has more than THREE MILLION subscribers, and estimates are that each copy is read by at least three people - actually reaching nine or 10 MILLION people! And we teach all *who willingly listen* to observe all that God commanded His apostles!

Now notice Mark's account of the GREAT COMMISSION: "... Afterward He appeared unto the eleven... and he said unto them, Go YE into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:14, 15). Naturally Jesus did not mean every human being on earth - but all they might reach who would hear. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." Yet only those God *called* would be able to believe - for Jesus meant believe what was SAID - believe the GOOD NEWS!

However, this is quoted from the 1611 King James Version, but nearly all other translations omit it, saying Mark did not write these words - beginning verse 9 - but that they were added by some later editor trying to make it harmonize with Matthew 28:18-19.

But the great commission was given to the apostles - not the Church as a whole - although as cited above, the Church completely, prayerfully, wholeheartedly backed up and supported the apostles. That was their part in the great commission.

Now, PURPOSE of Church

Now let's get our bearings and understand the PURPOSE of the Church - its function.

Remember, the Church was called out of a world CUT OFF from God - a world, as Jesus said, in which "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father draw him." The Church was the "*called-out* ones" - called out from the world. "Wherefore come out from among them [of the world] and be ye separate, saith the Lord..." (11 Corinthians 6:17).

REMEMBER, too, that from Adam God had called out of this world *only* those He chose to USE in a mission PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM!

The archangel Lucifer and his angels had been disqualified - changed into Satan and demons. Adam had chosen Satan's WAY of "GET" and rejected God as source of basic knowledge, as God and ruler and as Savior. According to Adam's decision God cut THE WORLD *off* from access to Him. BUT, since God cut them off before they were born, God does not hold them responsible - they have not been judged - the responsibility is GOD'S - not theirs - for that which has been hidden from their minds.

But now the time had come when the "second Adam" - Jesus Christ - had overcome Satan and QUALIFIED to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD to earth and establish the KINGDOM OF GOD - which is the divine FAMILY OF GOD, ruling the world - and ultimately the UNIVERSE!

Jesus DID NOT come on a soul-saving crusade. Those uncalled and unsaved were NOT "lost." Just NOT JUDGED - YET! They shall be in the millennium and Great White Throne resurrection and judgment.

Jesus came 1) to overcome Satan and QUALIFY to establish the KINGDOM OF GOD; 2) to call and teach His future apostles; 3) to proclaim the GOOD NEWS of the coming Kingdom of God, 4) to pay the penalty of the sins of the world by His death on the cross with His shed blood, thus reconciling *those called* to contact with God the Father: 5) to be resurrected from the dead after three days and three nights in the tomb, making the resurrection to IMMORTAL LIFE possible for those who are God's; 6) to ascend to the throne of God in heaven, there, as the HIGH PRIEST of the Church and IT'S LIVING HEAD, to direct the Church and intercede for it with God. And 7) having received the Kingdom from God, to come AGAIN as the KING of kings and LORD of lords, in supreme almighty POWER and GLORY, to set up and rule THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

Jesus ANNOUNCED the fact of the coming Kingdom, which, by His overcoming Satan, had made it ASSURED!

He specially called and trained His apostles, started the Church with them and the 120, and then ADDED to the Church such as He needed to back up the apostles' ministry to THE WHOLE WORLD.

To those He called, upon complete repentance and faith, He gave the gift of the Holy Spirit. THUS THEY BECAME PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE (II Peter 1:4).

The PURPOSE and FUNCTION of the Church was:

1) to back up with loyal support the apostles, as *their part* in the GREAT COMMISSION - and as GOD'S MEANS of,

2) overcoming Satan, developing God's holy, righteous CHARACTER within them through the Holy Spirit, thus qualifying *them* also, to sit with Christ in His throne in Jerusalem, with power for ruling the whole earth. (Revelation 3:21, 2:26-27). This latter promise applies to those CALLED OUT OF THE PRESENT WORLD - not to those who shall be called (as ALL will) during the millennium!

CHURCH a spiritual organism yet well ORGANIZED

At this point a bit of personal experience will help to UNDERSTANDING.

Jesus had called his apostles and taught them IN PERSON. Jesus Christ is the WORD OF GOD, in person. The Bible is the Word of God IN WRITING!

As the personal Word of God taught the original apostles, so He called and taught His modern-day apostle by the WRITTEN WORD OF GOD - the SAME TEACHING - the SAME TRUTH!

After calling, giving His apostle the initial teaching, having him ordained, God added the 19 members that started His Church of this Philadelphia era. Then, as one "SENT FORTH" with the Gospel message, Christ had opened before His apostle the means of MASS COMMUNICATION of the printed word, radio and later television.

With such vast mass communication facilities, *one* apostle could reach *many times more* people with the Gospel message than the original 12, plus the apostle Paul and others sent to gentile nations. I soon saw the need, as God's Word sets forth for the CHURCH, of evangelists, pastors, other elders and teachers - as well as people trained in ADMINISTRATIVE responsibilities.

So God raised up Ambassador College to provide training for the supportive functions behind the apostle, in the GREAT COMMISSION.

Remember, the Church is still in the six millenniums of this PRESENT EVIL WORLD. We are "called-out ones" - called to be SEPARATE!

Just as the angels on earth (pre-Adamic) needed the GOVERNMENT OF GOD to synchronize the various functions into a team unit, so was this necessary in God's Church.

The operation of the GREAT COMMISSION, especially in this 20th century, requires, as the New Testament clearly states, organization.

So God set HIS GOVERNMENT in His Church. And God's government is authority from the TOP down. God the Father is in supreme authority over all. Next in authority under Him is Jesus Christ, living *Head* of the Church. On the human and earthly level, next in authority under Christ is His chosen apostle. God organized ancient Israel, under Moses, with captains over thousands next under Moses, then under them captains over hundreds, over fifties, etc., as God led Moses to choose.

I will here inject an incident in point. Christ had led His apostle to appoint the apostle's son next under him, because he was the best qualified, in the office of executive vice president. Perhaps it was a mistake to use such a modern business title. Nevertheless the son, like David's sons, Absalom and Adonijah, began to simply take over. He innovated policies he was not authorized to set. He wanted to secularize the college, the magazine, *The Plain Truth* and even the Church. He wanted this world's accreditation for the college. He demoted or shanghaied away the top-ranking ministers who had been trained under and were loyal to Christ's apostle.

Meanwhile the apostle, as "one sent forth" with Christ's Gospel message, was going into all the world - and away from headquarters up to 300 out of the 365 days in the year. As the son departed from the ways of his father and of God (as did the sons of Eli and of King David) the son SHUT OFF ALL AUTHORITY ABOVE HIM. He *threatened* with loss of their positions in the Work any under him who in any manner contacted or revealed to his father how he was departing from God's ways, watering down doctrines and teachings - first in the college, then starting also in the Church. Cowed with fear, those who knew how the son was destroying the Work of the living GOD, kept silent.

Finally, four leaders under him took courage and came to God's apostle, saying, "God forgive us for keeping silent so long, but we were afraid for our jobs. But now we have to report to you that your son is systematically destroying all that Christ has built through His apostle

and building something for himself. Like a spoiled child, he wants his own way."

God's apostle, to be not guilty of Eli's sin, removed his son from all authority and disfellowshipped him from the Church.

The son had represented that no one dared "take it over his head," by going to Christ's apostle - that ALL authority in a then great worldwide Work of God *stopped with him!* - that he had SHUT OFF all authority above himself.

But even Christ's apostle has no authority to SHUT OFF all authority above him. In God's government, the one in lesser authority is still UNDER the authority of those over him. Authority does not END, at any point, under God the Father.

The end of this incident in point is that all in God's Church now know that the door to Christ's apostle is always open to ALL under him!

God's Church is NOT a worldly ORGANIZATION - it is a SPIRITUAL ORGANISM, called out of this world and its ways by Christ. Yet it is WELL ORGANIZED - must be to function. The Church consists of the begotten children of God - the DIVINE FAMILY TO BE!

The HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

Actually the Church is, on the human level, the BEGOTTEN FAMILY OF GOD. To the gentile converts at Ephesus, God inspired Paul to write, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of *the household of God*" (Ephesians 2:19). In other words, of the begotten FAMILY of God. Continue:

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles [New Testament] and the prophets [Old Testament], Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy TEMPLE in the Lord" (verses 20-21). So God reveals here that the Church is:

1) the HOUSEHOLD or begotten FAMILY of God; 2) a building - a HOLY TEMPLE - fitly joined together - that is, *well organized* (and, of course, on GOD'S pattern).

As a building - the HOLY TEMPLE *to which Christ will come* - it is built on a FIRM FOUNDATION, the apostles, chosen by Christ, and the prophets. MUCH of the New Testament is simply quotations, or citations, from the writings of the prophets of the Old Testament. The things written in the Old Testament were, "... written for our

admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

Again the apostle Paul instructed Timothy, "... from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures [the only Scriptures Timothy could have known from a child were those written by Old Testament prophets], which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (11 Timothy 3:15). The writings of the Old Testament prophets are part of the FOUNDATION of the Church of God!

And of course Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone - the very HEAD of the Church.

The TEMPLE to which Christ will come

There has been much perplexity and discussion as to *when* the temple will be built to which Christ shall come.

Malachi's prophecy speaks of Christ's second coming to His temple (Malachi 3:1-6).

In Haggai's prophecy it is referred to prophetically. Zerubbabel had been sent as governor of a colony to build the second temple 70 years after destruction of Solomon's temple. He built the temple to which Jesus came, though it had been enlarged and embellished by the Roman Herod. But speaking of this temple, as a type and forerunner of the temple to which Christ shall come, at His *second* coming, it is written, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:9).

It is inconceivable that the Israelis, in the present international turmoil over their possession of old Jerusalem, could ever demolish the Arab Moslem Dome of the Rock - now standing on the site of Solomon's temple - and build a new one there of greater splendor and glory than Solomon's! However, as the second temple Zerubbabel was building was a typical forerunner of the temple to which Christ shall come, even so Zerubbabel was the typical forerunner of one Christ would use in building the far more glorious temple to which Christ shall come in His GLORY!

In Zechariah 4:9, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it..." And as Zerubbabel's hands *did* finish that second temple, so shall the one Christ uses in building the temple to which He shall come in His GLORY!

And the Church of God of the present day shall be "... a building fitly framed together [and] groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21).

Church the Bride of Christ

The one and only true Church, a spiritual organism well organized by Christ, is the affianced Bride of Christ - to MARRY Christ, after His coming and after the resurrection and change of the Church into immortality.

In Ephesians 5 this is shown by analogy. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish... for we are members of HIS BODY, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:25-32).

The Church is made up of the BODY of Christ. More on that a little later. But the BODY presented to Christ *will not be a dismembered* body, with an arm, a leg or other parts being separated! It is ONE Church - fitly *framed together* - not dismembered into many parts following many different men seeking to draw away disciples after them.

This coming marriage is again referred to in II Corinthians 11:2: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

The new-covenant MARRIAGE will take place at Christ's coming in GLORY: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, ALLELUIA: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb [Christ] is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:6-7).

It is enlightening at this point to remember Jesus came as "the messenger of the covenant" (Malachi 3:1). He came as the Messenger of the NEW covenant.

The old covenant was a CONTRACT entered into between the children of Israel and the Word (who was to become Christ) - the God of the Old Testament. It was a MARRIAGE covenant. God "proposed" and Israel "accepted" (Exodus 19:6, 8). That "marriage covenant" also set up the kingdom of Israel as one of earth's nations.

The new covenant also will be a MARRIAGE covenant marrying the Church, then changed to spirit immortality, to Christ. But that covenant *also* will set up the KINGDOM OF GOD, ruling all nations with the GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

The old covenant was made with a carnal-minded people on their PROMISE to obey. The new covenant will be made with a Spirit-begotten and Spirit-born people who have ALREADY PROVED THEIR OBEDIENCE!

Modern facilities for mass communication today

The Church members, as a whole, are not called to "GO FORTH" with the Gospel message - but to back up, help, support the apostle in carrying the message into all the world.

I mentioned that one apostle today, with modern facilities for mass communication - the printing press, radio, television, even the telephone by which one may reach another in any part of the world in a matter of minutes or less - can reach more people by far than all of the first century apostles combined.

But this use of modern facilities in our day necessitates a considerable organization of people in various administrative capacities, beside evangelists, pastors and assistants, elders, deacons and deaconesses in local churches worldwide.

In Jesus' parable of the talents (Matthew 25), He pictured Himself as giving talents to various ones left here on earth while Jesus was in heaven.

"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability..." (verse 15). These "talents" - pieces of money - symbolized spiritual gifts and measure of the Holy Spirit, given each. He gave according to the natural ability of each.

The 12th chapter of I Corinthians reveals that there are various offices of administration in the Church - and that God gives various spiritual gifts for those various functions. The SAME PRINCIPLE holds, since God

is consistent and never changes. He gives, through the Holy Spirit, special abilities, according to one's own natural abilities.

I have often talked about the fallacy of "fitting the square peg into the round hole" to illustrate human failure because so many are NOT doing what by natural ability they are fitted best to do.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:4). All these various *special* talents, abilities or aptitudes, though several, are all given by the same Holy Spirit.

"And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God that worketh all in all" (verses 5-6). It is GOD working in us.

"But all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is ONE, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are ONE BODY: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into ONE BODY..." (verses 11-13).

"But now are they many members, yet BUT ONE BODY" (verse 20).

What about those who follow a MAN, outside that ONE BODY? God says we are not to follow a MAN. Paul said that "... of your own selves shall men arise... to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

The apostle Paul had to correct the Corinthian church because they were following individual MEN: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye *all speak the same thing...*" - and *WHERE did the Church receive that one SAME THING they were all to believe?* From THE APOSTLES! And the apostles received it from CHRIST. And Jesus Christ received it from GOD the Father! Continue, "... that there be *no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind* and... same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

The apostle reproved them, saying, "... there are contentions among you" (verse 11).

"Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (verse 12). CHRIST is NOT divided (verse 13).

The 'loner' Christian

What about the "loner" Christian, who says, "I will serve Christ in my own way"? What about the one who *leaves* God's Church - either to have *his own private relation* with Christ - to *GET his own salvation* - without *GIVING* his part of the Church effort in sending the true Gospel into ALL THE WORLD?

Or, what about the one who follows a MAN, because of that man's personality, charisma or attractiveness, or some other group?

Stop and THINK!

Is Christ going to marry a number of differing groups, not in complete harmony with each other - yet all "professing CHRIST"?

Jesus said, "He that is not *with me...*" (and since He is the Head of God's one and only Church, He plainly meant with Him where HE is working - in God's one Church). Repeat, "He that is not *with me* [where He works] is against me; and he that gathereth not *with me* scattereth abroad" (Matthew 12:30).

Jesus Christ is going to marry THE ONE AND ONLY TRUE CHURCH - not a number of scattered groups or scattered individuals.

God's law and way of life may be summed up in the one word "LOVE" - which is outflowing - the way of "GIVE" - while Satan's way is that of "GET." The one who tries to GET his salvation apart from the one Church Christ is going to marry is on the "GET" way. Those loyally in the Church are GIVING of their prayers, loyalty, encouragement and support behind Christ's chosen apostle in GIVING the GOOD NEWS to the world - its ONLY HOPE!

In other words, he that seeks to GET his own salvation *without* GIVING his part in the *team effort* of the Church - or follows a man or some other group - is surely NOT BUILDING ON THE ONE SURE FOUNDATION of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone.

Again, "Unless GOD build the house, they labor in vain that build it..." (Psalm 127:1).

The Church is the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD and a BUILDING - the glorious TEMPLE to which Christ shall come!

How well organized?

Notice again how well organized is the one true Church - for getting the GREAT COMMISSION to the whole world:

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21). Again, "From whom the whole body *fitly joined together* and compacted [pressed together, knit or drawn together, consolidated] by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of *every part...*" (Ephesians 4:16).

"And He [Christ] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, TILL we all come in the UNITY of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-13).

The true Church of God has these offices, as the living Christ put them in His Church.

A TITHE-paying Church

God's continuing original Church is also a tithe-paying Church.

The Church receives that ONE SAME THING they all are commanded to believe! As stated before - even as the Church beginning A.D. 31 did - from the APOSTLES who received the doctrines and teachings FROM CHRIST! The Church of God under Peter, Paul and the first-century apostles was a TITHE-PAYING Church, beside GIVING offerings!

Tithing started BEFORE Moses and the Old Testament Israel. It started with Abraham, who, after the slaughter of the kings, gave the tithe of all to Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God (actually the one who became Christ). Write for the free reprint article, ["The Mystery of Melchizedek Solved."](#)

Tithing to God - PAYING a 10th of one's "increase" - became a law in Old Testament Israel. After both Israel and Judah had gone into captivity and slavery, the prophet Malachi, writing about 450 B.C., as one of the prophets who with the apostles, and Christ, form the FOUNDATION of the Church, wrote, PROPHETICALLY concerning our time today: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS! Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation" (Malachi 3:8-9). Both the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah had long before been taken out of their land as slaves. A comparatively small contingent was sent back to Jerusalem, 70 years after Judah's captivity, by King Cyrus of Persia under governorship of Zerubbabel to build the second temple. Some of these Jews were still in Judea when

Malachi wrote - but the two nations, as a whole composing ancient Israel, were not there. THIS WAS NOT MOSAIC LAW - this was PROPHECY for OUR DAY!

Malachi continued, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and PROVE ME NOW HEREWITH, saith the Eternal, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (verse 10).

That is *NOT* "Old Testament stuff" - as God's true Church KNOWS - and because it has TITHED, it has had God's blessing and prosperity.

Speaking of tithes, Jesus said, "... these ought ye to have done..." (Matthew 23:23). Hebrews 7:4-12 binds tithing in the New Testament. I Corinthians 9:1-14 definitely upholds the principle of tithing and GIVING.

Knowledge of God's master plan

Of all the religions - and of all the denominations and sects in "Christianity," God's true Church alone has understanding of the master plan of God for His spiritual creation of man. This is forcibly reminded every year in the Church by the seven annual Holy Days and festivals Christ, instituted in the Church.

Small as the Church is in numbers - Jesus spoke of it as the "little flock " and said that as they had persecuted Him so would they His Church - nevertheless the Church's great annual autumnal Feast of Tabernacles is the LARGEST church conclave, convention or festival held on earth!

As God made the weekly Sabbath FOR MAN (Mark 2:27) *when* man was made - so He gave His Church seven annual Sabbaths and seven annual festivals - *when* He first established the Church. In Acts 7:38, you will find the Old Testament congregation of Israel called "the church in the wilderness." It was composed of the human-born children of *Israel* - the Church of the New Testament is composed of the begotten children of God. As the Old Testament church was called the congregation of Israel, so the New Testament Church is called the Church of GOD.

To the Church - both Old Testament under Moses and New Testament under Christ - God gave these annual occasions to emphatically remind His people, annually, of His master plan.

No other church or religion, to our knowledge, observes these festivals or knows their tremendous MEANING!

It has been stated before that as the physical creation of man began with the physical Adam, so the SPIRITUAL creation of man begins with the Spiritual Christ.

The first of these annual festivals is the Passover, observed on the eve of the 14th day of the first month of the sacred year. This is the year's most solemn service, on the anniversary, as a memorial, of the death of Christ, to reconcile those called to God.

This is immediately followed by the next seven days - the Festival of Unleavened Bread. All leaven must be put out of members' houses, and nothing leavened may be eaten. Leaven is a symbol of sin. It emphatically reminds God's called-out ones daily for seven days through the stomach that we must *put sin out* of our lives. Also it is a memorial, on the anniversary of Israel's exodus out of Egypt. Egypt also is symbolic of sin - and Israel was taken out by God with miracles - as He delivered His people today from the bondage of sin. There are two annual Holy Days in this Festival - the first and the last of the seven.

The third annual festival is the Feast of FIRSTFRUITS, called in the New Testament of the Bible "Pentecost," because this is the one set-apart time of year when the Church COUNTS to calculate the proper day. It is 50 days, counted beginning on the "morrow after the weekly Sabbath," which occurs during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. "Pentecost" is simply the Greek "fifty-count." This pictures the coming and infilling of the Holy Spirit, begetting the "firstfruits" - those relative first few called to spiritual salvation. The Holy Spirit came on the very 50th day the first time the Holy Spirit was given to a group, which formed the Church of God. This annual festive occasion reminds God's people yearly that they are merely the first to be called to spiritual salvation - that the world, except the few called, is CUT OFF from God - neither "saved," nor "lost" - just not yet called! Therefore not yet judged.

Another incidental proof of the identity of the one true Church is the knowledge that with the foundation of the Church of God "the time is come that JUDGMENT must *begin* at the house of God." Those called into God's Church *are* now being *judged*. Others are not - YET!

These annual festivals are built around the annual harvest seasons in Jerusalem. The first three portray the early grain harvest, typical of the first early spiritual harvest in the conversion of man. The last four correspond to the final great autumnal harvest. They all come in the seventh sacred month.

Festival No. 4 is the Feast of Trumpets, on the first day of the seventh month of the sacred calendar. The Feast of Trumpets pictures and reminds the Church yearly of the SECOND COMING of CHRIST to reign over all the earth.

Largest convention on earth

The fifth festival is the Day of Atonement, called in Jewish Judaism *Yom Kippur* - a solemn fast day. No food may be eaten from sunset to sunset. It pictures to God's people the making of man AT-ONE-MENT with God. The world, cut off from God these 6,000 years, has been deceived and led by the god of this world, Satan. Jesus Christ QUALIFIED to replace the former Lucifer on the THRONE of the earth. When He comes as KING of kings, Satan shall be deposed, bound, shut up (Revelation 20:3) for 1,000 years. Without Satan, who has "worked IN the people of the world" (Ephesians 2:2), humanity at last may be made AT ONE with the true Creator GOD!

The sixth festival is the Feast of Tabernacles - a seven-day festival, with the first day the sixth annual Holy Day. This is followed by an eighth day, a one-day Holy Day - making in all an eight-day festival.

This pictures the millennial reign of the KINGDOM OF GOD, ruling all nations for 1,000 years. During this millennium, ALL living will be called to repentance and faith and eternal salvation through the reigning CHRIST - with no Satan to overcome. More of the details of this time will be given under PROOF No. 7, to follow.

The seventh and final Holy Day begins at sunset just as the Feast of Tabernacles is ending. As stated earlier, small though the Worldwide Church of God be in numbers, this is the largest convention or conclave held annually on earth - with Festival sites all over the world.

When the billions shall be called

The final eighth day (the seventh festival), brings to mind again every year what is in God's master plan for the BILLIONS of people who have lived and died since Adam - *CUT OFF from God* - UNjudged - neither "lost" nor yet "saved."

They will be resurrected after the millennium in a special resurrection (Revelation 20:11-13). This is also described in Ezekiel's prophecy of the "valley of dry bones" (Ezekiel 37). All previously uncalled will be resurrected MORTAL, and with the 7,000 years of humanity past, will face up with what their experience in sin really proved. All then will be called to repentance and ETERNAL LIFE.

Final fate of the incorrigible

There shall then be one more resurrection - of those who *were called* to salvation, but rejected it - the incorrigible wicked. They will be resurrected MORTAL to realize their fatal decision. They will be "cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Revelation 20:14-15). This "lake of fire" is pictured by Peter in his second letter:

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets [Old Testament], and of the commandment of us the apostles [New Testament] of our Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3:1-10).

Malachi adds, of that final destruction of the willful rebellious into unconscious (Ecclesiastes 9:5) annihilation:

"For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch... for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts" (Malachi 4:1-3).

The NAME of the true Church

The NAME of God's true Church is important - but not alone the exclusive proof of identification, because a small number of professing Christian sects use the name. Yet the one and only original Church founded A.D. 31 by Jesus Christ most certainly will have the true NAME!

God names things and people what they *are*. This is a basic principle. The "church in the wilderness" - the Old Testament Church (or congregation) was named the "congregation of Israel" because it was composed of the physically born children of Israel. The two-letter word *of* denotes ownership or origin.

The New Testament Church organized by Christ is called, 12 TIMES in the New Testament, "the CHURCH OF GOD," some times with a modifying word or phrase, as, "the Church of God, which is at Corinth," or the "Churches of God in Judea." Today it is known as the Worldwide Church of God.

The English word *church* is translated from the Greek *ekklesia*, and the Greek word used in the original writing of the New Testament means, simply, a group, an assembly, etc., without specific reference to a *church*. At Ephesus, for example, the city council - political - was called an *ekklesia*, with no religious connotation at all.

The ONLY FACTOR that makes the word *church* sacred is when called the Church of GOD - in other words, the group, congregation, assembly or church that BELONGS TO GOD. It is GOD'S name connected with it that lends sanctity to the name.

For example, the name "Roman Catholic Church" means a "universal" (catholic) church of Rome. The "Lutheran Church" is that group or body of people following or established by Luther. The "Methodist Church" means (in its name) a group or body of people following a certain method. The "Baptist Church" by name means a group or combination of groups who believe in baptizing and follow John the baptist. The name "Congregational Church" simply implies a group of people who believe the lay people ought to have the authority. The name "Presbyterian Church" means an associated group who believe the "presbytery" or officiating clergy have the authority.

The name "Church of God" means that group of "called-out ones," called out from this world, who look to GOD as the authority - and government from God through Christ, through (on the human level) apostles chosen by Christ - NOT elected by the people!

So there is vital MEANING to the name of the true Church. And the name is IMPORTANT!

In Jesus' last prayer to God before being crucified, He prayed, "I have manifested *thy name* unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world... And now... I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in *thy name*..." (John 17:6, 11-12). (To be concluded next issue.)

Good News - December 18, 1978

SEVEN PROOFS of THE TRUE CHURCH

WHERE is the one and only true Church today - the Church founded by Jesus Christ in A.D. 31? Seven major eye-opening proofs identify it unmistakably.

The first six proofs of the true Church appeared in The Good News, Nov. 20 and Dec. 4.

This installment concludes with Proof No. 7.

by Herbert W. Armstrong
page 4 Good News December 18, 1978

PROOF NO. 7

THE REIGN OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

HOW INCONGRUOUS! The churches calling themselves "Christian" do not know that the true Gospel is the GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. They know nothing of what the earth will be like under the rule of the KINGDOM OF GOD!

They know nothing of the only GOOD NEWS in today's world - of the WORLD'S *ONLY* and *SURE* HOPE!

Don't laugh at the word *UTOPIA*! It is regarded in today's troubled world as an impractical, impossible JOKE! Webster's dictionary defines it: "an imaginary and indefinitely remote place; a place of ideal perfection, especially in laws, government and social conditions; an impractical scheme for social improvement."

Jesus Christ was no impractical dreamer... His Gospel was the GOOD NEWS that a coming UTOPIA is REAL - it is SURE!

Stop and THINK! WHY should it be impossible to have ideal perfection - in laws, government and social conditions? WHY?

"Human nature," you answer? Yes, but as shown earlier, human nature was NOT created in us by GOD - was NOT born in us. It has been injected into humans by the "prince of the POWER OF THE AIR," Satan, who is so powerful that he surcharges the air with his morbid attitude of gloom, resentment, rebellion, selfishness, vanity, strife. Satan *broadcasts* in self-centered *attitudes*, and the "human" spirit in every human is tuned in on his wavelength! Thus Satan is now actually WORKING *IN* the people of this disobedience (Ephesians 2:2).

But when the glorified CHRIST comes in supreme POWER and GLORY to rule all nations, Satan will be totally restrained from humanity. ALL will be *called* to salvation and eternal life - and, as God's people now are, *will become partakers of the DIVINE NATURE!* (II Peter 1:4).

"Human nature" will be GONE! The earth will be as full of the knowledge of the Eternal as the ocean beds are full of water (Isaiah 11:9).

Science's postulate of the FUTURE

World-famous scientists foresee three possibilities for the future.

1) Some optimists think we shall soon have the magic push-button century 21 - with such an array of gadgetry produced by technology that human labor will be all but eliminated, and the world shall be entranced and bedazzled by material technology. But, of course, this would not rid us of human nature. Crime would escalate, family life would break down completely, morals would sink even lower - if possible!

2) We shall have more and more evils, and, with nuclear power and other means of mass destruction, humanity will soon be erased from the earth.

3) Some say the world's only hope, now, to escape cosmocide is to form one gigantic world government, controlling the only military power and weaponry - yet in the same breath they admit the impossibility of it. WHO would sit on the throne RULING the world? The United States and Europe would never accept a Communist in supreme command. The Communists would never accept an American or Western European.

WHY? - yes, WHY should we have a world where more than half of all its people live in illiteracy, abject poverty, filth and squalor, racked

with diseases and pains and without hope? WHY? - when the human mind can produce the marvels of technology, the computer, send men to the moon and back, transmit photographs from the surface of Mars to the earth?

Can't we realize there has to be a CAUSE for all these evils - and that the GREAT MAJESTIC GOD has power to eradicate the causes and usher in a REAL utopia? Don't sell God short!

The two alternatives

Let's face it! Right now there are two alternatives. Either there does exist the living almighty GOD of supreme mind and power, who will very soon intervene and SAVE HUMANITY FROM ITSELF, or else HUMAN EXTINCTION is now imminent!

There is no other alternative!

But thank God, there is the GOOD NEWS of the soon-coming PEACEFUL, HAPPY WORLD TOMORROW!

When the supreme Creator-RULER comes again to earth, already crowned as KING of kings, in supreme POWER and GLORY and all the holy angels with Him, the gentile nations actually will FIGHT to resist Him!

But "... their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth" (Zechariah 14:12).

The living CHRIST is coming to RULE WITH DIVINE FORCE! And one of His first acts will be to depose Satan! The CAUSE of the world's evils will be removed!

Jesus, after His resurrection, ascended to heaven, in clouds taking Him up out of sight. He shall return in clouds.

The mighty Lord shall descend with a SHOUT! - with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God. The dead in Christ shall rise in a glorious resurrection to SPIRIT IMMORTALITY! The living *in* Christ shall then be caught up in the air with them, *changed* to spirit immortality - to MEET the descending Lord in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Christ's feet shall stand that same day on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:4). The immortal saints shall be continually with the Lord - reigning with and under Him from Jerusalem over all nations!

With Satan gone, the KINGDOM OF GOD shall be set up in power. Everyone whom God has *called* out of this world of Satan's has been called to a special mission *preparing for this Kingdom!*

The GOVERNMENT OF GOD will be restored, worldwide! The humans left on earth will be ruled over. No mortal humans will rule - only those who PREPARED and QUALIFIED to rule during their earthly life after receiving God's Spirit.

The government organization

God has *not* revealed in specific detail how His government will be organized. He does reveal that it shall be government from the TOP down. Christ will be KING of kings over all nations. It is specifically revealed that King David of ancient Judah, resurrected, shall be king over the nations descended from the 12 tribes of ancient Israel (Ezekiel 34:23; 27:24-25; Jeremiah 30:9). Jesus Himself revealed that the 12 original apostles shall sit on 12 thrones, each ruling one of these nations (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30).

As a theocracy, with government from the top down, it also is revealed that God the Father is the supreme LAWGIVER, and head over Christ and therefore ABOVE ALL. The Kingdom of God is the FAMILY OF GOD - and the Father is supreme head over His family!

Jesus Christ is coming as KING of kings *and* LORD of lords, so the Kingdom of God shall combine Church and state, as did ancient Israel - with Christ earthly King and LORD.

NOTE WELL THIS PRINCIPLE: In a world *cut off* from God, God has called out of the world those predestinated. And in every instance the call has been to a definite DUTY, and also in every case that duty has been one PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

God called Abraham. All the PROMISES of our eternal salvation were given to Abraham, and we inherit them from the fact Abraham is the "father of the faithful." This reveals that Abraham will have higher position in the Kingdom than David. He will be NEXT UNDER CHRIST.

Then again, the Scriptures use the phrase "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," grouping them together as a team. All the PROMISES were repromised also to Isaac and to Jacob. This indicates they shall be a headquarters TEAM - next under Christ - over both Church and state, with Abraham chairman of the team. In Luke 13:28, Jesus said definitely that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob shall be in that glorified Kingdom.

One government over all

When the KINGDOM - the divine FAMILY of God - reigns on earth, it shall be the ONE GOVERNMENT over ALL nations. There shall be ONE God, ONE government, ONE religion.

In the transfiguration vision, Peter, James and John saw Christ transformed into the GLORIFIED Christ, His face shining as the sun (Matthew 17:1-7), and with Him in the Kingdom Moses and Elijah. These two, in the vision, represented the offices of Church and state.

Both Moses and Elijah, in their human lifetime, qualified for chief positions in Church and state, respectively, next under Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - Moses over all national GOVERNMENTS - Elijah over Church. It was Elijah who restored KNOWLEDGE of the worship of the true God.

All these men, who were CALLED to special missions by God during their physical human life, were prepared and qualified for these positions in the KINGDOM.

Actually, the preaching of the Gospel and spread of religion IN THE KINGDOM, will be primarily RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - since ALL shall be called, and the decision will be made individually by each person. It is significant that Elijah had founded THREE COLLEGES (II Kings 2:3, 5; 4:38) at Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal, teaching God's TRUTH in a world corrupted by false paganized education.

For further details of the organization in the KINGDOM OF GOD, see our book, [Tomorrow - What It Will Be Like](#). This will be available in bookstores, beginning spring, 1979.

When ALL shall be called

The one original true Church of God is UNIQUE in the knowledge that THIS WORLD HAS BEEN CUT OFF FROM GOD - its inhabitants who were uncalled are therefore NOT BEING JUDGED - YET! They have been neither "saved" nor "lost." But THEY HAVE BEEN DECEIVED!

As Jesus said, many would go out claiming to represent Him, proclaiming that Jesus was the CHRIST (Messiah) - yet DECEIVING THE MANY! (Matthew 24:4-5, II Corinthians 11:13-15).

Millions have been deceived into a FALSE SALVATION. What about all these sincere people - are they "LOST"? Of course not. But neither did they receive the "salvation" they were deceived into expecting. They simply were not - YET - judged. THEY SHALL BE - all who have died -

in the resurrection of the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-13).

Salvation shall surely come to all who - once the TRUTH is revealed, and they are undeceived - are as willing as salvation they were deceived into accepting! This will include many whom our readers may have supposed were "lost." It is a GLORIOUS HOPE!

Now notice Matthew 25:31 on.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory." Combine that with other scriptures already covered. When Jesus comes in His glory, He will come as He went to heaven - in clouds. The dead shall rise - in a resurrection - first, then the living *in* Christ shall be instantly changed to spirit immortality and be caught up in the air with them to meet the descending Lord. His feet shall stand that same day on the Mount of Olives. The resurrected and changed saints shall be continually from then with Him. Then He shall sit on the throne of His glory - in the City of David, Jerusalem.

All the holy angels will be with Him. In Revelation 12 we find that a third of the angels followed Lucifer into rebellion. But what about all these HOLY angels - the other two-thirds? I have said angel creation was not COMPLETE until by their own decision CHARACTER - either righteous or evil - had been formed in them. What about this two-thirds of angels, here called HOLY! God does not reveal HOW their character and therefore their creation, was completed. But, in some manner not revealed, it is apparent the two-thirds had formed holy and righteous character, for here they are called HOLY angels, and in many parts of both Old and New Testaments they are described as definitely holy and in God's service.

All nations gathered

Now continue, Matthew 25:32, "And before him [Christ] shall be gathered all nations..." This can refer only to the people in all nations still remaining alive at that time - all MORTAL, human, flesh-and-blood people.

Remember, many who had been called and truly converted will then be sitting with Christ in His throne at Jerusalem. Continue: "... and he shall separate them one from another..." (remember the dead and living *IN* Christ had already been separated and risen to meet Christ in the air. This separation refers to the still-living MORTALS - who had not previously been called - who had, up to now, been cut off from God

and from salvation. But now, with Christ on the throne and Satan gone, ALL are spiritually called! Now continue, still verse 32: "... as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then [verse 34] shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

All then still living will be called. Those who decide for God's Kingdom - with Satan then out of the way - will INHERIT the Kingdom of God - be BORN INTO IT!

"Then [verse 41] shall he say also unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels [demons]." That fire has been described above - the face of the earth becoming a molten inferno - burning up the mortal incorrigible. However, this fire will not take place until the end of the millennium.

Verse 46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." That "everlasting punishment" has been construed by the deceived to mean "ever-lasting punishING - but it is punishMENT - and the wages of sin is DEATH (Romans 6:23). True, some few scriptures speak of the fire NOT BEING QUENCHED - and the deceived misconstrue this to mean an eternally burning hell. Often I have illustrated this before audiences by placing a small piece of paper in a metal pan and lighting it. I say to the audience, "Now watch! This fire shall not be quenched!" Then I put the remaining ash on the floor, step on it and quote Malachi 4:3, ... they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet..."

WHAT A FABULOUS POTENTIAL lies ahead of all humans willing to BELIEVE when called!

WHAT WONDERFUL TRUTH God has revealed to His one and only true original Church, small and persecuted, yet vigorously ALIVE with GOD'S WONDERFUL TRUTH!