

January 4th, 1936

Dear Otto:

Greetings in Jesus' name. Haven't heard from you for a long time. What is happening down there? Are you all well?

I have heard of a new movement starting in Southern California, started, it appears, by two men, one a man named Miller. I have heard from three sources that Brother Oberg has resigned from the Church of God and joined it, and that he went immediately to "headquarters" as soon as he arrived there, and signed up with the new movement at that time. Is this true? I have heard it is sweeping things like a storm down there, and that John Hidley has gone into it, and I have wondered if you have, too, and that is why I have not been hearing from you since my last letter.

Things are moving along splendidly here. The Alvarado meetings came to a close two weeks ago tonight, and the next day, Sabbath, we held the first Sabbath meeting there and a new church was organized--all new to the Churches of God, and a group of splendid, substantial, earnest Christian people. They are mostly the more substantial, sound people of the neighborhood, who have the respect of the entire community. We have people in the new church who can lead in prayer, give a good testimony, etc., --things we did not have in the Jeans church. Whole families, too, with several young people, 14 to 20. About 20 in it now, but we hope to add another 10 or so in a few weeks of private home Bible studies, personal work, and further meetings to be resumed in another week, two nights a week. Bro. Hazelbaker is not, of course, a member until he gives up his tobacco, but I had another talk with him yesterday, and went after it from a new angle of avoiding all APPEARANCE of evil, and not causing a brother to stumble, and the effect on young people, and he said I had him on that argument, and I believe he will now quit it entirely. I suppose you saw from the Bulletin the news of the new Church, the radio, etc.

I want especially to ask you, Otto, to read the article in the Plain Truth on "Tongues" at least TWICE. I think your viewpoint on it has been a little different from this article, and you will not grasp it with one reading. But I want to ask you to first read carefully, then STUDY it, point by point, with much PRAYER, and I believe the Lord will lead you to see, as I believe He has me, after hours upon hours of prayer, that this is the SCRIPTURAL TRUTH. We must interpret EXPERIENCES according to God's Word, not God's Word according to EXPERIENCES. I know you'll realize I am not fighting the REAL THING, and therefore this is not in ANY manner a reflection upon your wife, Sister Ellis, Helen Beck, and brethren whom we KNOW by their fruits to have the GENUINE, and not a counterfeit. But many

... of seeking the L rd, the GIVER of the gifts—seeking fleshly, sensual
...INGS, and THRILLS, and SELF-BLESSINGS, instead of seeking power to serve the
Lord and help fellow-men—seeking WRONG things in a way that is a great deal like
the prophets of Baal were acting before Elijah brought the fire from heaven,
instead of seeking power of UNDERSTANDING, power to OVERCOME SIN, power to IT-
NESS, and LEAD OTHERS to Christ, and to EDIFY/OTHERS. Instead of surrender, and
obedience, and faith, they seek it by repeating words, parrot-like, over and over,
by begging, teasing, nagging, agonizing for something God LONGS to give, IF they
would only accept it ACCORDING TO HIS TERMS AND CONDITIONS. I believe God needs no
begging or pleading. But WE need a more complete surrender to HIS WORD, and a greater
measure of HIS FAITH. For THAT, we need much prayer. But that is what we should
pray for, and not to try to beg and nag God into giving us something while we
remain like stubborn, disobedient, unyielded spoiled children, unwilling to OBEY
Him. Neither do I believe just a FORM of PRAISING GOD with WORDS will "flatter"
Him into giving us His wonderful precious gift while we rebel at HIS/ terms and
conditions. If you fully grasp what I mean, I am sure you'll agree with me, and
Sister Hasber also. If this article is contrary to the SCRIPTURES, and any can
point it out to me, I'll surely correct any errors in the next issue.

What has happened to my licence and credentials? I have never received
them. If the Holy Spirit really directed the drawing according to lot a year ago,
the Holy Spirit selected me as one of the 70. But some men in the organization
held up the issuance of the credentials as directed by the Holy Spirit, which
certainly appears to be placing their judgment as a higher court of appeal over
and above that indicated by the Holy Spirit. What is the use of selecting men by
LOT, if these human men at the head of the organization can overrule the work
of the Holy Spirit? Why not let these men do the selecting in the first place?
Brother Dodd and one or two others, as a result of Brother Kay's efforts, mis-
understood my stand and attitude, and changed the selection of the Holy Spirit by
lot. Then when one of the Twelve, Brother Alexander, was here and went into it
with me PERSONALLY, and came to UNDERSTAND my attitude and my stand, he took it
up with the 12, and the TWELVE, the highest human body in the organization, whose
decisions in such matters are supposed to be FINAL, voted me licence and creden-
tials. At the same meeting they voted Bro. Stewart licence and credentials. He
got his about two months ago. Once more, some men, not on the 12, seem to have
power and authority superior to the Twelve, and once more they are held up.
Frankly, Otto, it looks like I am not wanted in the organization. Frankly, if
men in charge of nothing more than business and financial affairs are going to
have power to overrule the working of the Constitution, by doing the selecting
themselves that is to be done, according to the Constitution, by LOT—and if
these same men are going to exercise, in practise, power superior to the 12, and
to overrule the decisions of the 12, and these men have some unfounded personal
animosity toward me, and would continually oppose me, then I feel that I cannot
serve the L rd in the organization as well as I can outside of it, can add nothing
to it, and it can add nothing to the fruit borne by my efforts in the L rd.

There is only one object and purpose of organization further than local
groups or local assemblies, and that is to FACILITATE the spreading of the GOSPEL.
If, and when, organization means only friction, and opposition, and division,
and strife, and retarding the Lord's work, and crippling the efforts of indi-
vidual ministers, then it has ceased to serve any purpose in the L rd and becomes
instead the instrumentality of Satan the Devil. Otto, the Lord is blessing the
work He has given me to do. He is granting a RICH HARVEST. There is much opposition,
especially local opposition—much persecution. But the LORD honors and blesses
it. Souls are being saved. The sick are being healed. Lives are being changed,
and people are being brought into the truth, and the last warning message is being
proclaimed as a witness to many THOUSANDS. I say that not boastfully—for I
could do NOTHING had not the L rd opened the way, and HE has given all the in-
crease. No MAN can do such things. The LORD alone has done it. But if HE thus
honors this work, WHY DO MEN OPPOSE AND FIGHT IT? Are they HELPING, or tearing
down? Are they fighting me, or fighting God? I expect opposition from the

outside world. One whole Sunday church here is praying continually against my work, I am told, and I have been publicly denounced from Sunday pulpits because of the Sabbath question, and state of the dead, and eternal punishment doctrines. That we may expect, and when we have the Devil worried and fighting, it is a good sign, for Jesus said that if they had persecuted Him, soon would they persecute us. But when our own BRETHREN, within the church, within the TRUTH, get to fighting one another, we are only fighting GOD, and lending ourselves as tools of Satan the Devil.

It's like Bro. Wyche said in his letter to the Bulletin. God caused Jobosephat's enemies to fight against one another. And now Satan is causing God's people to fight against one another. Personally, I am opposing and fighting no man. I want to love all. I want to work in HARMONY. And that harmony and unity must be, primarily, in and thru the Lord, and not among ourselves independent of Him, for HE is the Vine, and we are the branches, and one branch is joined to another only thru the vine, so also our connection and harmony and unity one with another must be IN and THRU Christ alone. If I am in Christ, and YOU are in Christ, then you and I are joined together THRU HIM. So when men try to organize according to human standards, or when men have power to misuse a Scriptural and divinely organized church, to the end of insisting on unity of branch to branch, unity one with another according to human ideas and interpretations, rather than in and thru the Lord, we are going contrary to God's Word and our usefulness ends. I do refuse to preach what human-men order, when CONTRARY to God's Word. Nevertheless, there is NOTHING in my stand or teaching that is contrary to, or in any way out of harmony with, the Constitution or 40 points of doctrine of the Church, and the slight shade of difference in minor details is no more than you will find between any and all our ministers. There is absolutely no just grounds for the very strange, and unconstitutional, and discriminatory action that has been taken toward and against me, save that of personal feeling or animosity that in itself surely cannot savor of the kind of LOVE and HARMONY we must have if this organization is to SERVE THE LORD.

I know the Lord has called me into His vineyard. I know that, in spite of mistakes, errors, and handicaps and shortcomings, He is blessing and endorsing the work He has given me to do, and He is granting the richest harvest ever enjoyed in Oregon. I propose to continue to serve Him to the best of my ability. I have accepted appointment as one of the 70 in the Church of God, and it has been endorsed by the 12. If certain men are able to frustrate the work of the Holy Ghost and of the 12, then they merely force me to say, I tried to come in, and they would not, and so it is, after all, THE LORD in whom I trust, and whom I serve, and not men, and as I have had to go thus far thru faith in HIM ALONE, I shall continue I pray earnestly over this new organization before signing up with them. I asked God for wisdom. I felt led to go ahead, and so I signed up, still saying to the Lord, "THY will, not mine, be done," and asking Him, IF this organization was not right in His sight, for reasons I could not see, to prevent my license and credentials from ever coming thru—and IF it is truly HIS organization, and right in His sight, and has His approval, then to cause my application to be accepted. It seems unseen powers have held up my license and credentials, in ways hard to understand. Perhaps it is God's will. I leave the verdict to HIM. HE is my trust, so I have nothing to fear in any event, and shall continue to serve Him with all my might. The last warning message is going to go WITHIN TWO YEARS with a real POWERFUL voice, with the POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, not to scattered dozens as at present, but to MILLIONS all over the earth. Many, many, millions will hear it. If our people are to carry it, we must get the message in a clearer, cleaner-out shape—we must obtain from God the POWER of the Spirit for its delivery—we must come to have a bigger vision, until the work is going in an entirely different and more powerful way than anything the Church of God has ever permitted God to do thru them. There's has, in a word, got to be a NEW AWAKENING. Can't we see it? What's wrong with us, Otha? Is Brother Severson still coming? Are you coming back next month?

With love,