

INTEROFFICE

To: ALL MINISTERS

Date: May 16, 1976

Department:

Subject: Systematic Theology Project

From: Robert L. Kuhn

As you know, Mr. Ted Armstrong has for years wanted an official handbook of the doctrinal teachings of the Worldwide Church of God--for the standardization of our teachings; for the edification of the ministry; for the instruction of the brethren--for the entire world to know.

Mr. Ted Armstrong has asked me to coordinate the project for him. (It is, of course, an absolute pleasure--as the subject of true doctrine is particularly important and interesting to me. I've never enjoyed a better assignment!). Working directly on the project with us are Dr. Lester L. Grabbe and Dr. Charles V. Dorothy of Ambassador College's Department of Theology; Mr. John R. Schroeder, Assistant Managing Editor of the Good News and Mr. Richard Sedliacik, Managing Editor of the Correspondence Course and the Bulletin. We will also be working very closely with Mr. Ronald Dart, Mr. C. Wayne Cole, Dr. Herman Hoeh, Mr. Brian Knowles, Mr. George Geis and Mr. Leon Walker.

The following preliminary outline of the doctrines of the World-wide Church of God is a first step toward the realization of Mr. Ted Armstrong's goal. It is designed to both give you an immediate framework for doctrinal sermons and teaching, as well as for the present planning of the Systematic Theology Project. Our next objective is to produce a substantial number of doctrinal papers by the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. Some subjects have already been assigned--but many are still open. If you desire to contribute material on any of the subjects listed in the outline--and we hope many of you do because our degree of success both in time and in quality depends on it!--we would most appreciate it. Please contact my assistant, Miss Anita Dennis, at 577-5147 or 577-5176 and give her the topics of your choice.

This assignment is not a PT or GN article. It is a simple statement of doctrine, not an argumentative proof for doctrine. The statement should be thorough yet concise, descriptive yet precise. The style should be "Biblical Encyclopedia"--not evangelistic PT/GN. Use the most important scriptural references but don't feel constrained to marshal all the various arguments or peripheral speculations which might have place in a sermon or magazine article. What we want is a clear but brief statement of the major beliefs of God's Church--the beliefs upon which it was founded. Hardly any topic should take more than 10 double-

spaced pages and none more than 15 or 20.

With respect to the outline itself, suffice it to say that there would be many ways to organize it. Our objective has been and will be, simple: to produce a practical product that is the most useful to those of you at the front-line in God's Work--you who daily must teach and preach these doctrines to the Church membership, to prospective members and to the world.

Since we would like to provide you with as many papers as quickly as possible, we recognize that these will just be first drafts. In fact, the Systematic Theology Project will never be fully completed. We should be constantly revising each paper so that we can approach the best possible explanation and presentation of God's Truth.

In this regard your participation will be invaluable.

Considering both the vastness and the importance of this project, it is absolutely essential to get the collective input, counsel, and understanding of the entire ministry of the Church regarding all aspects of doctrinal organization, explanation and presentation.

To be ultimately successful, we need all of you (who are constantly teaching and preaching God's true doctrine) to assist us in the project. You have the experience to know what makes sense and what does not. Whether by suggestions, critiques or by actually writing (the most helpful), your active involvement is requested.

One recommended approach is to take your two or three best doctrinal sermons, sharpen them up with additional Bible study, preach them to your congregation, and then write them up and forward them to us. Don't worry about the technical quality of the writing--we'll be editing everything many times here anyway. What we need now is the raw material--well thought-out by the experienced ministry of God's Church.

We are convinced we can develop an outline--and eventually a massive series of well organized documents--that we all can be enormously proud of. It will solidify the teachings and emphasis of the ministry. It will unify the ministry--Mr. Ted Armstrong has again reemphasized what he has said for years: that such a comprehensive series of doctrinal papers will give confidence to the Church. The "questions" that a few have had in the past will seem laughable beside the awesome testimony of the beliefs of God's Church. And

it also happens to be fun to do!

As you begin to participate in the project (in any way), feel free to contact Dr. Dorothy, Dr. Grabbe, Mr. John R. Schroeder, or myself for any specific help we may be. Mr. Schroeder will be of particular value to those who would like to write. He can provide you with lists of articles published in the GOOD NEWS, TOMORROW'S WORLD, or The PLAIN TRUTH, of particular relevance to your choice of subjects. He can even xerox the articles and forward them to you if you so desire.

The timing and the importance of producing a comprehensive statement of Worldwide Church of God doctrine is particularly important considering the strong efforts we are now making to promulgate our message via radio, television and periodic publications. For as the church gets more and more well known through its own activities, through AICF and even through the articles written "against us"--a greater amount of attention will begin to focus on our doctrinal beliefs.

We can even foresee a time when a hard-cover book on the doctrines of the Worldwide Church of God would be available in bookstores and libraries throughout the world--and this book would come under the closest scrutiny of educated persons, as well as the great interest of the masses. (Mr. Ted Armstrong just speculated that the attached outline might be fairly close to a Table of Contents for such a book!). What better way to follow up the work of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong in fulfilling the great commission to preach the gospel of the kingdom in all the world for a witness than by producing this comprehensive yet comprehensible statement of the true doctrines of God's True Church!

it also happens to be true in fact

As you know, the investigation in the present case was conducted in the
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particular value to those who would like to write. He can provide
you with lists of articles published in the BAPTIST, CHRISTIAN
WORLD, or THE BAPTIST REVIEW, or whatever reference to your choice
of subjects. He can even make the articles and forward them to
you if you so desire.

The listing and the importance of producing a comprehensive statement
of the various Church of God doctrines is particularly important
considering the strong efforts we are now making to promote
our message via radio, television and periodical publications. It
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activities through BICM and even through the various writers
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on our doctrinal beliefs.

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Government.