

## VISITING PROGRAM TRAINING CLASS

### Sixth Class

December 1, 1968

#### FORMAT:

1. Open with prayer.
2. World news discussion and drill (5-8 minutes).
3. Difficult scripture drill (30 minutes).
4. Sermonettes and evaluations (30 minutes).
5. Recess (10 minutes).
6. Lecture (one hour)
7. Assignments for next class.

#### DIFFICULT SCRIPTURES

I. Disprove: Christians will go to heaven and be there with Christ forever (I Thess. 4:17).

- A. Paul is speaking of the resurrection of Christians at the second coming of Jesus Christ (Verse 16). They will rise to meet Christ in the air -- the atmosphere over this earth (Verse 17). Thus they will be with the Lord.

Then what? Where do they go from there? Since they will be with Christ the question to ask is where Christ will be.

- B. Christ is coming to this earth. Zechariah 14:4 shows that on the very day mentioned in I Thessalonians 4:17, Christ will be standing on the Mount of Olives which is on this EARTH.
- C. He is coming with all glory and with His angels to judge all nations (Matt. 25:31-32).

His saints will be given power to rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27).

They will be kings and priests with Him and will reign on the earth (Rev. 5:10).

II. Disprove: Christ said He would return during the lifetime of some of His disciples (Matt. 16:28).

- A. The next two verses tell when this occurred. Remember, men have placed these chapter divisions. They do not reflect the original Greek.
- B. He was referring to His transfiguration which was soon to occur. Six days after Christ made the statement in Matthew 16:28, He took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain. They saw Christ transfigured before their eyes in all His power and glory (Matt. 17:1-2). He was manifested the way He is now (Rev. 1:14-16) and the way He will appear at His second coming to set up the Kingdom of God on this earth.

Years later Peter referred to this event. He says in II Peter 1:16 "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty."

- C. Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ. They will be co-rulers with Him in God's Kingdom. Peter knew when this would be fulfilled -- at the time represented by the Feast of Tabernacles. He wanted to make tabernacles or "booths" for the three of them.
- D. This was a vision (Verse 9). Christ was not literally glorified before their eyes. Exodus 33:20-23 shows that no man can look upon God and live.

These disciples did not see Christ come to this earth to set up the Kingdom of God. But, they did see Him "come in His Kingdom" in vision -- in the vision of His transfiguration.

### III. Disprove: The thief on the cross entered paradise on the day he was crucified.

- A. Jesus said the crucified thief would be with Him in paradise. Paradise is located in the presence of God's throne (II Cor. 12:2-4).
- B. Christ did not go to paradise that same day. Christ went to the grave (Acts 2:31).

Jesus had not yet ascended unto the Father in heaven (paradise) the day following the resurrection (John 20:17).

- C. The truth of this scripture lies in the proper punctuation. A comma placed before the word "today" is incorrect. The comma should follow it -- "verily I say unto you today, thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Remember that punctuation was not used in the original Greek which

Luke wrote. It was added into the Greek and English centuries later by men.

The inspired original Greek could be read either way. Since the punctuation can change the meaning entirely, we need to let the remainder of the Bible interpret what Christ said.

- D. By using the word "today," Christ was stressing the time he was making the promise -- not the time that the thief would be in paradise. Christ was saying that He could make this promise today, even as He hung on the stake. He could see by the attitude of the thief that he would repent when he was resurrected for the Great White Throne Judgment and that he would then enter paradise -- God's Kingdom.

## GOD' S MASTER PLAN CARRIED OUT THROUGH THE THREE RESURRECTIONS

### I. HOW GOD IS FULFILLING HIS PURPOSE

#### A. God Is Preparing A Ruling Family

It is Almighty God's intent and purpose to add multiple billions of sons to the God Family to share with Him the indescribable pleasures that He and Jesus Christ enjoy and assist them in recreating and ruling THE LIMITLESS UNIVERSE.

Hebrews 2:7-8 -- God intends to put all -- everything in the universe -- into subjection under man, but He has not done so -- YET! After recreating the earth, He created man and gave him dominion over the earth and the potential -- if he would yield himself to his Creator, overcome his human nature and rule GOD'S WAY -- of qualifying to rule the universe as a son of God, at which time he would be given full power, glory and life forever to carry out his greater responsibilities.

God's Family is a KINGDOM -- an organized, ruling Family! God is filling up the ranks of His Government in an organized way. In short, God's purpose is to bring BILLIONS of rulers into His Family, fitting each one into a position of authority in His Government to share in the RULERSHIP OF the UNIVERSE!

#### B. His Plan

##### 1. Man to Learn by Experience His Way is Wrong

To fulfill this purpose, God formulated a 7,000-year MASTER PLAN which He is now carrying out He set aside the first 6,000 years

of this span of time for man to govern himself and to learn by experience the lesson of Proverbs 14:12. He is, in general, keeping "hands off" during this time. Romans 11:8 -- The world as a whole has been left in ignorance of His truth and plan.

II Peter 3:9 -- God wants all to be a part of His ruling Family, but in His great mercy and love, he has shut most of mankind up in unbelief for the present (Rom. 11:32). He has purposed to allow them to go their own way for a certain period of time, and taste the fruits of that way, which will give them much more receptive minds when they are later resurrected and taught GOD'S way.

## 2. God is Dealing with Only a Few First

God has been working with a few individuals in every era during this 6,000-year period for a two-fold purpose.

- a. First, so that the world would always have a witness, and the knowledge of His plan and His laws would be preserved through all generations.
- b. Secondly, God has been calling out a sufficient number of "FIRSTFRUITS" to fill specific offices and positions of responsibility in His Government to help rule and govern this earth during the Millennium. These firstfruits must, of course, be trained and prepared in advance of the time that God begins to deal directly with all mankind to bring them to salvation (John 14:20-23 and Rev. 2:26-27).

II Corinthians 6:2 -- Today is a day of salvation -- not the day of salvation -- as shown in Isaiah 49:8, from which this verse is quoted. Today is the day of salvation for those few, down through the ages, whom God has been calling as the firstfruits for a very important purpose, but it is not for MOST of the world.

## 3. All Men Subject to Death

Hebrews 9:27 -- During the first 6,000 years of God's plan, all men -- good and bad -- after approximately 70 years of life (Ps. 90:10) die. Their physical existence comes to an end, and their physical bodies perish. This is actually a very merciful part of God's plan.

For the people in general, it is a merciful release from sickness, pain, mental and emotional anguish, purposelessness, futility and often oppression and slavery by others. Death insures against any

one individual despot living and perpetrating his special brand of evil and oppression for the duration of the 6,000 years.

For the few righteous men who qualify for sonship, death protects them from the evil to come (Isa. 57:1). They quietly and safely rest in their graves until other firstfruits are called and trained, and it is time for them to take up their positions of rulership in God's Government and Kingdom on this earth at the end of the 6,000 years (I Thess. 4:15 and Heb. 11:39-40).

Death is a kind of "staging area" for all human beings born during the first 6,000 years of God's plan to wait, until God is ready to use them or begin to work directly with them during the remaining part of his plan to qualify them for His ruling Family.

## II. THE FIRST RESURRECTION

I Corinthians 15:21-22 -- Just as through Adam all men are appointed to death -- through the living Jesus Christ all men shall be made alive -- Resurrected! However, there is a definite order and purpose (Verse 23). The faithful few God has handpicked and prepared throughout the 6,000-year period of spiritual darkness for positions of responsibility in His Government will be resurrected to immortal life at the time Christ returns and sets up His Kingdom on this earth (I Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:4-5).

### A. Firstfruits to Fill KEY Positions in God's Government

Christ came first as the "pioneer" of our salvation (Heb. 2:10), and those of us in the first resurrection precede the others for a definite purpose as well.

#### 1. Our Calling as Firstfruits

Revelation 20:6 -- Most of us don't deeply understand and fully APPRECIATE the almost incomprehensible BLESSING of being called to the first resurrection! We lack the vision to realize that we are being given the opportunity to get in on the "ground floor" of God's Kingdom and be given KEY positions in His Government for ALL ETERNITY!

These key positions of rulership must be filled before Christ sets up His Kingdom to govern the earth during the Millennium. Christ Himself has qualified for the top job under God the Father, and down through the centuries, men like Abraham, Moses, Elijah, David and the twelve apostles have been called, trained and qualified for the next highest positions under Him. But all of us have been

called to fill key positions as well!

Just as the men in the first few graduating classes of Ambassador College are the ones filling most of the top positions of responsibility in the Work of God today, the firstfruits in God's Kingdom will be used in most of the key positions of responsibility and service there. Then those who enter the Family of God during the Millennium will be used to assist and fill out each governmental echelon of authority, and those in the Great White Throne Judgment will add multiple billions to an organized, efficient, powerful, Family of God. It will then be ready to RECREATE and RULE the entire universe at last!

It is like a giant governmental pyramid, with Jesus Christ as the Chief Cornerstone at the top, then the firstfruits in the key positions of authority and responsibility under Him, then those during the Millennium and finally those added to the Kingdom after the 100-year period. By the time this last group is added to the ruling Family of God, if you are in the first resurrection, you will have had 1,100 years experience in God's Government as a spirit being.

## 2. Our Reward as Members of the Philadelphia Era

Revelation 3:12 -- In addition to the blessing of being called to be in the first resurrection, we in the Philadelphia Era of God's Church have been called to be the "pillars" (strong supports -- mainstays, counselors) at Headquarters in the Temple of God for ALL ETERNITY! In I Kings 22:19-20, we read that even God seeks counsel! If we qualify to be in the first resurrection as a member of the Philadelphia Era of God's Church, we will be in on every major decision made by the God Family for all eternity! This will be our responsibility FOREVER!

Do you see why we must earnestly study God's Word and seek the mind of God in everything we do? Can you understand why competition among ourselves is so ludicrous in view of what God has in store for us? We tend to foolishly compare ourselves with each other (II Cor. 10:12), fearing that someone else will be recognized and "exalted" above us.

John 14:1-2 -- There are many "chambers" or offices of rulership in God's Kingdom. We don't have to compete and strive among ourselves. Our reward does not depend on someone else. It depends on us and us alone!

II Timothy 4:7-8 -- Just as Paul knew he had a "crown of righteous-

ness "laid up for him, we can know that God has a crown FOR us: (Revelation 3:11 --'Let no man take your crown.") This is a position no one else can take from us unless we disqualify ourselves. Paul knew he had qualified. He knew he had "kept the faith" and was thus assured of receiving his crown. We, too, must fight a good fight to the end to qualify.

### III. THE SECOND RESURRECTION

Revelation 20:5 -- After the 1,000-year rule of God's Kingdom on this earth - - after the millions of human beings born during the Millennium have qualified for and been changed to become a part of the ruling Family of God -- all those who have lived and died without the knowledge of God prior to the time of Christ's return, will be resurrected.

Just as the first class of students who attended Ambassador College -- a grand total of four -- were trained and graduated to teach others, who in turn overcame and qualified to teach others, etc., God's Family -- His Government -- will be augmented by those previously trained by it, and they in turn will help train others.

Christ worked with and trained personally Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah and the prophets. He then called and trained the Apostles and set them over the seven eras of His Church to teach and train them. This relatively small group of firstfruits will be resurrected first and used to teach and train those born during the Millennium. At the end of the Millennium this much larger God Family is trained and ready to help bring into God's Family the greater number in the 100-year Great White Throne Judgment.

The vast majority of all people who have ever lived will come up at this time in a resurrection to physical life (Ezek. 37). Most of the kings, all of the presidents of the United States, the millions of men who have died on battlefields, and even some of our own children, parents and relatives will be there. The inhabitants of all the cities of yesteryear will be there (Matt. 11:21-27). All of ancient and modern Israel will be there (Ezek. 37:7-13).

They will be given 100 years to learn and practice Cod's way on a beautiful, productive, peaceful earth in sharp contrast to the earth they remember before they died, and no children will be born during this time (Isa. 65:19-21).

Revelation 20:11-12 -- At this time, they will be judged according to their works, based on "the books" -- the Word of God.

At the end of the 100-year period, all who have qualified -- many billions -- will be born into God's Family as spirit beings, be given eternal life, and receive the power they need to carry out their responsibilities of rulership along with those who had already been given power as resurrected sons of God!

#### IV. THE THIRD RESURRECTION

A very few people out of all the population of the earth through 7,000 years will fail in God's plan. These are those who have known God's way and willfully rejected it (Heb. 10:26-27). It includes those who refuse to repent and obey, as well as those who did repent, were baptized and began to obey God but then gave up, quit, or turned aside through bitterness, rebellion, or some other willful searing of their consciences. In refusing to submit to the Government of God in their lives, they have disqualified themselves from being given the power and eternal life to rule forever in God's Kingdom.

Although God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek. 18:31-32), these sinful people must be put out of the way. They must not be allowed to make themselves and others unhappy throughout eternity by the misuse of the power and eternal life.

All who have totally rejected God's way and have died in their sins will be raised to physical life. This is the resurrection of damnation, or destruction, spoken of by John 5:29. They will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive their reward -- to suffer final extinction in the lake of fire. For them, this is the second death! They will never be resurrected again (Rev. 20:14-15; 21:8). The lake of fire will consume them, their wicked deeds, and ultimately the entire surface of the world that God will have finished using as a testing area in His master plan (II Pet. 3:10-12).

#### V. WE NEED TO BE CHANGED

We need to be looking forward to and striving to qualify for our crown -- our specific position of responsibility God has called us to fill. But even more we need to see and feel the need for the resurrection to change us!

This is what the world just does not understand. They want to rule the entire universe, but they want to do it without ever qualifying to rule and as physical human beings. Therefore, they make elaborate plans and spend multiple billions of dollars to design and build elaborate spaceships and develop all the accoutrements necessary for man to travel into space and carry his physical environment with him. They



totally reject: God and His way and try to seize control and rulership of the universe apart: from Him. If they only knew and understood that this is precisely what God has promised them ultimately, but: only after they have qualified by yielding and obeying God and learning to rule His way, and only after God has resurrected them to immortal life, released them from the confinements of the air, the food, the water, the atmosphere of this earth, and given them the power and the righteousness to govern God's way.

#### A. Need To Be Freed From Human Nature

Romans 7:14-25 -- We must come to the place where we really yearn to get rid of this body of death -- this human nature -- where we are sick and tired of it (Rom. 7:24; 8:10)! Romans 7:15, 18 -- Paul knew and deeply understood that in this flesh dwells NO GOOD thing. He understood that God has subjected us to a body and mind, apart from His Spirit, that is bent on self-destruction (Rom. 8:20, 23) and he groaned within himself waiting to shed this evil flesh with all its lustful, vain, self-satisfying goals and put on a new, powerful, spirit body and freedom!

Do you ever feel like Paul did? Are you able to see how this flesh defeats you and hurts you at every turn? Have you made elaborate plans to overcome or accomplish or do good time after time only to succumb to lethargy, self-satisfaction, and gratification, and a lust of the flesh? Paul did! Meditate on Romans 7 and try to grasp and apply what Paul is saying to yourself. He didn't break the commandments in the letter, of course. But he constantly fought jealousy, envy, pride. How about you!

Romans 7:17 -- Paul didn't cover up for himself. It was the "old man," the corpse he was carrying around that he had buried at baptism -- but which won't stay dead until we are changed -- which was the culprit. He was not the real Paul, and is not the real you, if you have really repented. Verse 25 -- the real Paul served and obeyed God's law -- the old man kept pulling the other way. And so it is with us. We are stuck with this rotten human nature and all its carnal pulls until death or the resurrection frees us.

The central doctrine of God's Church, as shown all the way through the New Testament, is the RESURRECTION! This should be the motivating force that drives us to set our affections on things above rather than on this life here below. This hope is the helmet of salvation referred to as a basic part of our Christian armor in many places in the Bible.

We cannot fulfill any position of authority in the Government of God with this rotten nature. We are seeking to qualify, but we can never qualify fully until this nature has been removed!

## B. We Need To Be Freed From This Physical Body

Corinthians 15:50 -- Flesh and blood CANNOT INHERIT God's Kingdom. We cannot live forever and rule in God's Family unless we are changed -- and even if we could, we wouldn't have the POWER to carry out any responsibility we might be given. Just as we urgently need to be freed from our human nature, God has to unshackle us from the limitations of this physical flesh!

II Corinthians 5:1-2 -- Paul looked forward to his spirit body and yearned for it. Verse 4 -- He didn't want to just die, but he didn't want to live forever as he was. He wanted a spirit body, eternal life -- a permanency that will last. He felt burdened -- with carnal nature sickness, weakness, infirmities. He felt shackled, restricted, thwarted by this flesh. This physical life held nothing for the Apostle Paul. Philippians 3:8, 10-14 -- Therefore he set the resurrection as his primary goal. Romans 11:14 -- He forsook the physical and material accoutrements of this life and set himself to strive for all he was worth to attain to the fantastic calling of becoming a spirit-born son in the ruling Family of God (I John 3:1-3). He was willing to give up anything -- even his own life to attain this end!

We must be of the same mind! We must be sick and tired of our rotten human nature, human frailties, and weaknesses and desperately long for the resurrection to become spirit beings in God's Kingdom. Are you at the point where you fervently cry out for God's Kingdom to come, and the resurrection to deliver you from this body of death?

If so, at Christ's return very soon now, you will be changed -- made POWERFUL, RIGHTEOUS, the shackles thrown off, GLORIFIED, PERMANENT for all eternity. There will be no more pain, no more sickness and weakness, no more crying nor sorrow, nor death (Rev. 21:4), no more vanity, envy, wrong thoughts to fight -- YOU WILL BE FREE! The old man will be gone forever. Philippians 3:21 -- Jesus Christ will change your vile body to be like His! Blazing, surging with power, real life and crackling energy (Rev. 1:13-16). You will have fulfilled your purpose for being, and qualified to be given the power, glory, eternal life to take on your new responsibilities of rulership in the Kingdom of God!

ASSIGNMENTS FOR NEXT CLASS

1. "Ending Your Financial Worries," booklet by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.
2. "A Balanced Budget from the Bible," by Mr. John Portune, GOOD NEWS, January 1965.
3. "Finances in Your Life," by Mr. Albert Portune, GOOD NEWS February 1968.