

52_780603 HLH Underlying Problems in the Church GTA HWA

If you were to compare the coworker letter of Mr. Ted Armstrong in which he quotes his father and then the next coworker letter from Mr. Herbert Armstrong in which he quotes the letter to his son, you would have to say that this is an unusual sequence of events.

And I want to address it directly because I think we should understand something.

It has become not so much a major crisis at the moment.

I was approved for having said this by one of the brethren here.

It left, I think, the brethren with shell shock in the sense that it seems so illogical to have such a sequence of letters one after the other.

And then this past Thursday an interview was carried out by the Pasadena Star News and published in Friday indicating a kind of reconciliation.

I didn't bring that headline.

I felt it would be better not to unnecessarily.

But we have to ask ourselves why does something like this in which a crisis between two individuals responsible in the church spills over into the coworker letters and into the press and into administration and into college ramifications.

Now I'm saying it as a third party.

I'm saying it not as either of them.

And I want to say it from the point of view of other examples in the Bible of problems.

I want to try to be understanding and let you realize that this is not a crisis that some enemies of the church have pictured it to be.

Now this I agree with Mr. Rader.

It is, however, not the crisis that it is even pictured to be in the church.

That is the point.

If you understood what the underlying problems are, and I would tell you that one of our guests here in the front row I think understands it very well.

Another lady who recently has deceased understood the problem very well.

And the Bible lays out similar problems.

And I would like to turn to the Bible, which will give you an insight that we are not dealing with what some people think we are.

We're dealing with a verse, I should say, an event that has a number of parallels in a unique story here.

And I could answer perhaps your questions in another fashion, but I'd like to do it in a way that treats the problem with proper deference as it should be.

And it gives some biblical examples because it may be that the same problem that besets the Armstrong family and those immediately surrounding who were involved is a problem that exists in more than one home in Recita.

And therefore we ought to take a look because maybe it was in your family as you grew up.

I would like to turn to a book of the Bible, chapter 25, the book of Genesis.

Isaac was 40 years old, verse 20, when he took Rebecca to wife, who was the daughter of Bethul, the Aramean of Payden Aram, and the sister of Laban.

So Isaac's wife was the sister of Laban.

Laban was not an ordinary man, as you remember the story with Jacob.

Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren, and the Lord was entreated of him and Rebecca, his wife, conceived.

The children struggled together within her, and she says, if it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord, and the Lord said to her, two nations are in your womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from your bowels.

The one shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger.

And winter days to be delivered were fulfilled.

Behold, there were twins in her womb, and the first came out reddish, all over like a hairy garment, and they called him, or his name, Esau.

And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel, and his name was called Jakob or Jacob.

And Isaac was 60 years old when she was born.

That's the King James wording here.

And the boys grew, and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field.

And Jacob was a plain man.

The Hebrew word might more parallel our English word tame, if you know what the Hebrew word is.

In other words, he was not a wild, but a tame man.

He was a plain man dwelling in tents, since here being not someone who is a cunning hunter in fields and forests, but one who is a gentle person, more like a shepherd of the land, and he dwelt in tents.

Isaac loved Esau, because Esau provided Isaac with the venison he liked.

And Rebecca loved Jacob.

And that is the subject today.

Is it possible for parents to have two children, and one parent loved one child, and the other parent loved another child? And is it possible that when parents are divided in their affection toward

children, that the way the children are disciplined and instructed and grow up is reflected in that parental variation? And the answer, of course, is yes, as you will see.

And this underlies the problem that really is at the basis of the controversy, the presence swirl of events.

It is not something that will tear the church apart as heresies do.

It is not a doctrinal controversy over heresy.

Nothing of that sort at all.

It is not even a question of authority that one wants to take from the other.

So that is often read into it, and could be read out of it, but it is not at the root of it.

What is it the root? There's a parallel in the story of Isaac and Rebecca.

Jacob saw a page.

Esau came from the field, and he was faint.

Esau said to Jacob, feed me, I pray thee, with that lovely red, and this was little soup, which is one of my favorites, too.

For I am faint, therefore was his name called Edom, because he loved this red little soup.

And Jacob said, sure, you know, I'll prepare the soup, but you sell me this day your birthright.

And Esau said, behold, I'm at the point to die, what profit will a birthright be to me? That's reasoning.

Jacob said, swear to me this day, and he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob, and Jacob generously gave Esau bread and potage of lentils, and he did eat and drink, and he rose up and went his way.

Thus Esau despised his birthright.

There was a different nature here in these two sons, drawing no other parallel, and I'm going to point up that when you have differences in children and in parents, you do tend to have stresses.

Now we'll move along in the story in chapter 26.

Esau had become 40 years old, verse 34, and when he took to wife Judith, the daughter of B. R. I. the Hittite, and Bashamath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite, there was grief of mine to both Isaac and Rebecca.

So Isaac discovered that his favorites still created problems for him.

On occasion, it came to pass, verse 20, verse 1 of chapter 27, that when Isaac was old and his eyes were dimmed so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son and said to him, my son, and he said to him, behold, here am I.

Isaac said, I'm old, I do not know the day of my death.

Now therefore take, I pray thee, your weapons.

Now Isaac at this point certainly was over 100 years old, but we don't know how old at this moment.

Now therefore take, I pray thee, your weapons, your quiver, and your bow, and go out to the field and take or get me some venison and make me savory meat such as I love and bring it to me.

Now Isaac, of course, was a kind of chef Robert of his day, I guess.

He was a connoisseur of fine things.

He was reared by Abraham to appreciate what is proper.

Now my soul may bless you before I die.

Now Rebecca heard what Isaac said to Esau.

Esau went into the field to hunt for venison and to bring it.

Rebecca then immediately speaks to Jacob, her son saying, behold, I heard your father speak to Esau, your brother, saying bring me venison, take me savory meat that I may eat and bless thee before the Lord, before my death.

Now therefore my son, obey my voice according to that which I command you.

Go to the flock, fetch me from them two good kids of the goats, and I will make them savory meat for your father such as he loves.

And you shall bring it to your father that he may eat and that he may bless you before his death.

But Jacob reminded his mother that Esau was a hairy man and Isaac and Jacob was comparatively smooth.

My father will feel me and I will seem to him as a deceiver and I'll bring a curse upon myself and not a blessing.

His mother said to him, upon me be thy curse, my son, only obey my voice and go fetch me them.

He went and fetched and brought them to his mother and his mother made savory meat.

And Rebecca took raiment of Esau out of the closet, or the tent, which were with her in the house and put them upon Jacob, her younger son, so it was hunting garments, you see.

And she put on Jacob's arms the skin of kids, of goats, and on the smooth part of his neck, so his hair, he must have been really a hairy fellow.

And she gave the savory meat and the bread which she had prepared to the hand of her son Jacob.

Then he came to his father and said, my father, and father said, here am I. Who are you, my son? And Jacob said to his father, I am Esau, your firstborn.

I have done according as you bade me to do.

Arise, sit and eat of my venison, that my soul, thy soul may bless me.

Isaac said to his son, how is it that you come so quickly? Behold, the Lord God brought it to me, the venison, said Jacob.

And then Isaac says, come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

And Jacob went near to Isaac's father and he felt him.

The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

And he then discerned him not because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands, and so he blessed him.

Now, this is a story at Great Lakes, as some accounts are in the Bible, because they tell a great deal and they fill in some very significant matter in terms of long-range prosperity of some peoples, or why the United States is more prosperous than Turkey today, or some of the immediate Arab countries that are joining Israel.

For the children of Esau who are numerous, some of whom are Arabic, some of whom are Turkish, do not have the same blessings that the children of Jacob do.

Now, our story here is important because it indicates that from time to time there can be situations in which 10 parents are divided in their concerns for children.

You will discover that the behavior of the children is not what you might have expected.

In other words, clearly Jacob did not feel that Isaac loved him as Isaac loved Esau.

There was therefore a stress without a question between Jacob and Isaac.

We have a situation in which Jacob did not mind going around Isaac because, in a sense, he did not have this much of an attachment to his father.

It is a trait of character. It is written right here. It may have happened in your home. It can happen in others.

We have situations also that I want to turn to one other briefly, which is not as fundamental. First Kings.

This is a story from Adonijah, 1 Kings 1.5.1.6.

When Adonijah, the son of Haggath, exalted himself saying, I will be king, and he prepared him chariots and horsemen and fifty men to run before him.

And his father, King David, had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why have you done so? He was also a very goodly man, and his mother bore him after Absalom.

We have a situation also recorded in the family of David here and numerous others in which there were clearly stresses between David and his children.

David in Absalom, David in Amnon, David in Adonijah.

Some families have more stress than others, and in some cases, in this case, these were very serious problems as you saw.

In this case, the father, David, apparently had not disciplined Adonijah as he might have.

He had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why have you done so? That is, he never really corrected him and asked him, Why did you do that? Look at the problem. Why did you do it? Think through your action.

Years ago, Mr. Herbert Armstrong gave some sermons from time to time.

The one subject was something like this. There are basically three kinds of women.

Women, I'm speaking of married women now, who put their husbands first in their children's second.

Women who put their children first in the husband's second.

And women who treat them equally.

That is, are able to love both husband and children without any special respect to persons.

Today, of course, he would have added four, and that's the liberated woman who respects nobody except herself.

But this was going back some years ago.

It was some time before we fully realized why Mr. Armstrong did address the church in some of these matters.

He was really addressing a problem in his own family.

There was a problem between himself and Loma de Armstrong that he wrestled with, and probably she did.

I want to be equally fair here if this goes down on tape.

Mrs. Armstrong found it difficult to put her husband and her children always on an equal plate.

And Mr. Armstrong was of the opinion and felt it was a very serious problem he had been living with.

That his children, in part, tended to play a secondary role in the personal life and intimacy of Loma de Armstrong.

I think you need to understand some of this.

And if you do, then I think you will really see why it yoyos and goes up and down.

In the autobiography, the story is there.

I'm not discussing anything that has not been public record by Mr. Armstrong himself.

Richard David, then called Dickie, that was the older son, and Garner Ted, or Teddy, both went to school in the first grade at the same time.

It was Mr. Herman Armstrong's wish that each child should go to school at his proper age.

Mrs. Armstrong held out Dickie because she wanted Teddy to go to school at the same time.

She had of two sons, one who was indeed more special, like Jacob was to Rebecca.

Herbert Armstrong's special delight was in his older son, Richard David.

This is in the autobiography.

You don't have to listen to what I say, you just read it there, and when you do, you can reflect on your own life, you can reflect on others.

And if this is a problem in your family or others, take heed because similar things has took place in the case of Isaac to occur at any time in any family.

The result of this, Mr. Armstrong said, was that Teddy, as distinct from Dickie, was the one whom the girls liked, especially and whom the teachers liked.

He was the teacher's favorite.

The one was an older boy, more awkward, somehow one to two years back, at least one year back of his actual ability to perform.

Mr. Armstrong felt that it was very serious that he had allowed the two boys to go to school at the same time.

But I want you to note, Mr. Armstrong allowed it.

Therefore, he admitted there was a weakness on his part that he could not resolve in his family.

This is autobiographic material.

This is not private gossip.

I'm trying to tell you an account that is of historic importance in the church and is spilling over in the press.

And it's not because some of the things our enemies say, but because some of the things that I'm telling you here underlies the background of the relationships between two people.

You know that when an older boy and a younger boy or an older girl and a younger girl go to school at the same time, that usually the younger one will be favored because something will be thought to be weak in the older one.

Why the older one has been held back.

It was some years later, while in Hollywood, that Herbert Armstrong tried to resolve the problem and brought down the older son first, who was Dick.

By this time and showed him Southern California in Hollywood and then brought down Teddy, or Ted.

And for the first time, Dick showed Ted things.

Mr. Armstrong, in his wisdom, tried to resolve a problem he was incapable of resolving earlier.

And he tried to give Ted the opportunity after he first gave it to Dick because he saw indeed the older one needed it for his maturity and his what we call self-worked.

The boys got along very well with each other.

Dick Armstrong was, in many ways, not the stronger of the two.

He did have many traits of character that would endear him to individuals.

He didn't have the same capacity of talents, but he was a talented person.

But when you realize that mothers sometimes can favor a daughter or a son, and fathers can favor a daughter or a son, that there are problems that will arise later in life.

And when a mother chooses her children before her husband, there inevitably will be conflicts between father and son over the affections of the wife and mother.

And I think that you will see that a part of the stress factor that could just as easily have occurred today as in the case of Esau and Jacob is this problem.

I may be speaking a little more bluntly than any minister.

I'm trying to also speak it gently.

I know that Mr. Herbert Armstrong would concur not only in this, but in another factor.

He gave a sermon on another subject, a very serious problem of women not disciplining children themselves, but saying, wait till your father gets home.

He's asked a discipline, and when he starts the discipline and the mother takes the side of the children, the father's discipline is too harsh.

And the children then are favored by them are favorites.

Sorry, the mother then is the favorite of the parents in the eyes of the disciplined child.

These are all factors that occurred.

These are all sermons that are recorded.

These are all subjects that stem directly from the family stress.

As the years go by, you will understand.

Therefore, why? There was a certain rapport between Mr. Herbert Armstrong and his son, Richard David, and special concern.

And that there have been stresses that are due to personality differences in the role of the mother in the life.

Now, Mr. Garner-Ted Armstrong, that has made it difficult for both Garner-Ted Armstrong and Herbert W. Armstrong to work as a father-son team could on occasion work.

Mr. Dick Armstrong is the kind of person who would have said like Isaac did to Abraham.

Yes, father.

It is much more difficult for Mr. Ted Armstrong to respond in the same way.

Mr. Ted Armstrong is a far more independent sort of personality with far more independent thinking.

The difference between Isaac and Abraham is very similar to the difference that you would have between Richard David Armstrong would die in 1958 in an auto accident and Herbert W. Armstrong.

There is a father figure and a son relationship.

But Mr. Herbert Armstrong did recognize that Garner-Ted had certain traits that seemed essential for the ultimate caring on of the work.

Especially radio and television, personality, leadership.

Yet here was the problem that this was the son who was given priority over an older brother in schooling.

And who was Mrs. Lomondy Armstrong's favorite son.

There is no doubt or she would not have kept the older son back.

And Mr. Herbert Armstrong recognized it by trying to resolve the problem as recorded in the autobiography.

He was very gentle and careful and didn't directly allude to it as plainly as I have.

But the time has gone where I think that we should, let's say, obscure it in such a way that it is hardly apparent.

Because now it has become sufficiently open that we need to understand it and not be as excited or shell shocked as we might have been.

As the years went by, Mr. Ted Armstrong tended to do things, what we say is his way, that would be natural to a responsibility that fell to him.

Any two men or any two women will never do everything the same way.

And so Mr. Ted Armstrong has his style and Mr. Herbert Armstrong has his style or way of doing things.

In 1967, Mrs. Lomondy Armstrong died.

And I think at that point we could say that Mr. Herbert Armstrong opted to turn more and more executive responsibility to his son.

We didn't know how much he had turned over, but only later did we really find out how much in his own mind he had.

And things were running reasonably smoothly and Mr. Armstrong spent a great deal of time on the London, on the Brickardwood campus of Ambassador College in the late 1960s.

And in a sense, Pasadena was heavily influenced by Mr. Ted Armstrong's personality and thinking.

And more and more the responsibility was passed to him as the executive vice president.

And finally, despite a crisis that occurred in 71 and was dealt with in 72 in Mr. Ted Armstrong's personal life, which goes back to this family problem I'm talking about.

So the inability to exercise discipline in the home in the critical years, having to try to cope with that discipline much later, it isn't easy to try to handle disciplinary matters when a person is 20 or 30 years after teenage.

That's part of the problem, because I have mentioned this matter of discipline and the role that a mother sometimes plays in taking the sides with children who are being disciplined.

Anyway, in 1973, Mr. Herbert Armstrong read a section that David wrote to Solomon, turning responsibility executive-wise over to his son.

Now, you have to understand a statement of Mr. Ted Armstrong in this connection.

He has said correctly of his father, my father finds it difficult when turning over the wheel to someone else to take his hands off.

He finds it difficult when turning the wheel over to another to take his hands off.

Summarizes the statements reflected in the last two co-worker letters.

Mr. Ted Armstrong was given the wheel in terms of executive responsibility beginning in 1973 and step by step.

This was written up and it was spoken.

Mr. Armstrong viewed it as doing so with the hope that it would work out, but always with his hand and part on the wheel so that every move that wasn't his own could be stopped.

And this is not the way you turn over executive responsibility.

Mr. Herbert Armstrong always said he was a loner.

He was not a great manager, like a corporate manager who can sit behind a desk and run a complex corporation.

And in a sense, when Mr. Ted Armstrong does something differently than he would, in a different manner, in a different way, it presents a problem.

Now, the problem may be twofold.

It may be, in fact, a difference that leads to no different results, or it can lead to different results depending on whether Mr. Ted Armstrong has given time to reflect on the subject, or has been so busy with other things that he has not had time to get all of the facts, you see.

So it came to be that under the financial stresses of inflation, the decision was made to close the Bricked Wood campus.

That decision I felt by Mr. Ted Armstrong and concurred in by his father was very properly arrived at.

I must say, I thought it was arrived at one year too late, but I was not asked.

The campuses were coalesced into two.

Then the occasion under the stress of inflation occurred, and a campus had to be closed and it was decided to close Big Sandy.

It was my judgment that I was not asked that Big Sandy should have been closed at least one year earlier, if not at the same time as Bricked Wood.

Because we're always forcing ourselves to make a decision in this work after all the screws have been put on and we have no room to maneuver.

We should be able to make a decision in advance.

Now, I don't say that I would have made any better decisions.

I'm only telling you that as I view it and as I have said it, this has been a problem.

Under the circumstances, Mr. Ted Armstrong has been busy enough that he made a move to have the two campuses join at Pasadena.

Now, a little forethought would have told us that Pasadena is not the place in the 70s and into the 80s to continue an undergraduate program when we don't have housing for the students.

They have to live in many ways places off campus and when we would have to buy housing at prohibitive prices instead of the prices as they used to be.

A house that might once have cost the work \$39,000 now would cost \$390,000.

It may be 15 years time, it's going up 10 fold.

So it would be impossible to find housing and hence the character of the college will never be the same.

And Mr. Ted Armstrong came to realize and I wholly agree, and I supported it and so said in Phoenix, let's say here, that I wholly agree that it made no sense to continue the undergraduate program of Ambassador College any longer at Pasadena.

And if we were going to continue it, Big Sandy is the only alternative we have and I would support such a move.

What happened of course was that Mr. Herbert Armstrong approved the decision, having assumed or not having assumed but having given no thought to the financial matters as to how it could be done.

And Mr. Ted Armstrong made the recommendation before the financial report was in and when it came in it was quite apparent we couldn't even afford to move the campus nor could we afford to continue it, which was the problem in Pasadena.

And I believe it was the factor that Mr. Ted Armstrong has in the way he does things, sometimes made recommendations or decisions before all the facts were in and the fact that a person was appointed to be president of the campus and he was a responsible individual who Mr. Armstrong does not know anything about and made Mr. Armstrong absolutely refuse to approve in final form to transfer the campus to Big Sandy.

Because he felt that either himself or Garner Ted should be the president of the college and not a third party.

As a result of that as a result of the feelings that Mr. Ted Armstrong had acted in an executive capacity independently with his hands on the wheel Mr. Herbert Armstrong made a decision to take the wheel back and what you have seen is a whole reversal of responsibility and he assumed the responsibility again himself as he said in the letter that he expected his son to begin to do things the father's way and it's a boss employee situation and it's not a crew situation in which a father and son have the kind of freedom that Mr. Ted Armstrong is both used to and is natural to him if you know his flair and his style.

The problem is not over doctrine.

The problem is not that one is trying to take power from the other.

Mr. Ted Armstrong and I can assure you 100% has never asked for any responsibility from his father.

His father forced all responsibility on him or gave it to him.

The son has never demanded any responsibility from his father in executive roles.

Therefore the enemy's statement of a power struggle is false.

When Mr. Ted Armstrong asks, let me correct my statement, to take the wheel the question is how much of the wheel and that has never been defined.

There's where the problem comes.

Mr. Ted Armstrong, he viewed that the manner in which it should be done is in accordance with the responsibility that was given him to make decisions in most areas except in doctrine and Mr. Herbert Armstrong reserved that for himself but the rest of the executive management was given to his son deferring only major and final decisions of certain types to the father such as the transfer of the campus or the removal of church headquarters, you know what I mean but not many local things.

Only those things which seem to be critical to the nature of the work and its ongoing viability.

The problem then today is nothing more than an outgrowth of the way two sons were reared the fact that one son was in the affection of the mother perhaps more even than the husband and if you did not know Mr. Armstrong actually wrote the book *God Speaks Out of the New Morality* for his wife as much as for the whole of the American audience and it did help and change her attitude.

Torter husband is what Mr. Armstrong himself said but it took that book to change her own attitude toward her husband and to put a relationship on an even keel between her children and her husband.

Mrs. Loma de Armstrong had certain problems in this nature that were counterbalanced without any question by the most incisive woman's mind I or you have ever met.

She had the ability to arrive at a correct answer and a perception in a few hours time that it might have taken her husband Herbert W. Armstrong weeks to study through.

He has the ability to penetrate and to get down at the root of things but Mrs. Armstrong had the ability to grasp and to perceive what the answer would be almost immediately.

I think this is important to realize but with certain strengths there go weaknesses and her strengths were in the sense counterbalanced by certain weaknesses that in the upbringing of the family have led to some of the yoyoing in the administration of the church today.

I'm happy to say and to assure you 100% that though you might have read a power struggle out of the literature it is not the case at all.

Mr. Ted Armstrong has no intent to take from his father what his father wants to retain.

The problem is that neither of them has decided what has been given and what should be taken back.

It is an intensely human drama of personalities.

In the complex of course come such names as Rader and Kuhn who have acted as arbiters between the two of them and that's a whole other story of how decisions sometimes are made so that the people in between come to an agreement and when the two of them, Kuhn and Rader could come to an agreement it seems to be agreeable to either Armstrong.

But sometime in the future it is probable that each of these individuals whom God has used in various ways as each of you who may have similar problems can come to grips and see the root of the problem.

And so it was that undoubtedly Mr. Ted Armstrong in distress of the apparent implications of the letter most recently sent out as a co-worker letter did come to his father in such a way as to put himself in a position to do radio and television where he is no longer let's say in exile and not doing radio and television where he can sit down and influence his father.

It is true that Mr. Herbert Armstrong to make certain decisions cannot have a son near him because he will be influenced by his son and defer to his son's decisions and when he has in his own mind the feeling that the decision would be wrong.

Mr. Herbert Armstrong finds it very difficult to turn a son's persuasive arguments down and he sometimes can do it only when his son is absent and hence the yet lost feeling from that letter while

I make some decisions and I'm using my own terms here because to keep Mr. Ted Armstrong persuasive influence from being there in a general council of numerous individuals because Mr. Armstrong felt that Mr. Ted Armstrong's time and his personal lifestyle have in some ways intruded into the responsibility of an executive nature and with this I would certainly say that even Mr. Ted Armstrong's closest friends would recognize that sometimes there are intimate things in his life that do intrude in his desk responsibilities as it could intrude in yours or mine.

You just have to realize these things.

It is my judgment that the latest newspaper report of a turnaround will be reflected in some letter of future that will go to coworkers because I know that many are upset.

Some men have called me from the field and expressed it that they wish that these problems would settle themselves because they seem so needless to have to be conveyed to the public.

Because in reality I think I can say without any doubt that Mr. Ted Armstrong would never break away and revolt from this work.

I think you don't know him if you anticipate such a thing as a possibility.

I'm not even sure that Mr. Herbert Armstrong would have the same absolute conviction that I do.

I think I know Mr. Ted Armstrong well enough that this is one thing he would not do but divide the work between himself and his father.

It will either be his father's responsibility or his, but it would not divide it between the two.

And cut the work up.

I am not sure that Mr. Herbert Armstrong's advisors would assure him the same thing that I can assure you.

I feel perfectly safe in making that comment. I think I know him well enough.